

1. The Acts purpose, objectives and environmental principles need to be updated to more strongly reflect the protection of species and their habitats, threatened communities and identifying threatening processes. The *Precautionary Principle* should be clearly identified early in the Act.

2. A central focus of the revised Act should be landscape scale conservation and ecological restoration.

This would include:

- a more robust legislative framework to govern the new *Biodiversity Plan* including that it needs to be updated every five years and that it should be working towards 20-year biodiversity targets;
- a new incentives framework for landscape scale restoration activities. This would centre around the preparation of 'Landscape Action Plans' for regionally threatened communities and landscapes.

3. Threatened species assessments and listing processes should be retained but strengthened so as to significantly improve their capability to protect threatened species.

This would include:

- the listing process needs to be streamlined and more efficient to administer whilst still maintaining a high standard. Moving to the proposed Common Assessment Method and use of IUCN criteria and processes is a sensible approach
- The granting of exemptions to application of the FFG Act for public authorities should be amended. No public authority should be exempt from any new Act provision. These bodies should in fact be obliged to show how their work supports the goals of the Act and publish annual reports giving details of all relevant threatened species issues encountered.
- species protection tools (eg. Critical Habitat Determinations and Interim Conservation Orders) need to be updated and become regular actions to address the conservation of species and their habitats.

4. The revised Act needs to have environmental justice provisions incorporated.

This would include:

- an effective enforcement and compliance regime that includes a scale of penalties for non-compliance including sufficiently dissuasive fines and community service orders, as well as options for criminal prosecutions for serious offences
- the incorporation of access to justice mechanisms to enable individuals and conservation organisations to challenge decisions through the courts (and for this not to be financially prohibitive)
- environmental information made accessible, and
- creating a new entity to monitor compliance and enforce the provisions of the FFG Act

5. The Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC)

- The SAC should continue to assign the listing status of species, communities and threatening processes. To a great extent it also defines biodiversity conservation issues – this should continue
- The SAC should continue to be independent and focused only on 'conservation advice' via its recommendation reports and with the planned conservation advices. This would also include any other 'conservation matters' as per the current Act, this should be retained in the revised Act
- We understand that the change in 2009 making the SAC answerable to two Ministers when making its recommendations for listing has not helped the listing process. This should revert to the original wording and intention of the Act with the environment minister having the responsibility.