



Environment Institute  
of Australia and  
New Zealand Inc.

# Industry Election Statement

## Five critical priorities for a better Australia

### About EIANZ

The Environment Institute of Australia and New Zealand (EIANZ) is Australasia's peak body for environmental professionals. We represent 3,500 members and certified environmental practitioners in our region, as part of a global network over 100,000.

Our members come from a diverse range of technical professions, including scientists, policymakers, engineers, lawyers and economists. They are at the forefront of issues such as impact assessment, biodiversity, climate change, and nature positive. We represent environmental practitioners at all stages of their career, from student and early career practitioners to senior leaders.

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Australia is facing catastrophic biodiversity loss and land degradation, with more than 2,000 species listed as threatened and most ecosystems in decline.<sup>1</sup> 2024 marked Australia's second-warmest year ever recorded, marginally behind the record set five years earlier.<sup>2</sup> Across the nation we are experiencing increased extreme heat events and fire weather and flooding, as well as rising sea levels.<sup>3</sup>

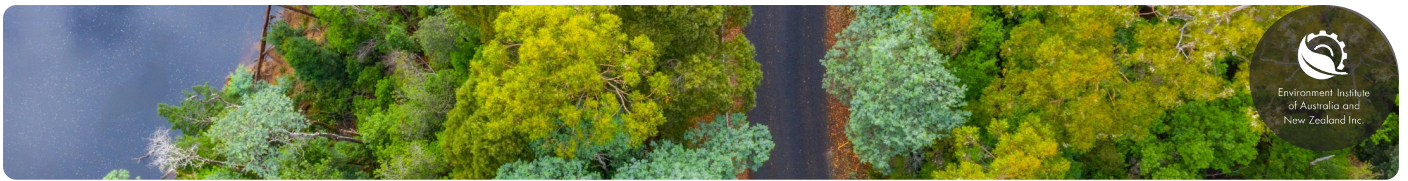
Biodiversity loss and the broader impacts of climate change will have a significant impact on Australia's economy, with more than half of Australia's GDP dependent on nature and its services.<sup>4</sup> Australia also has an obligation to act to protect nature in accordance with the [Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework](#) (GBF), to which we are a signatory.

A majority (97%) of Australians want more action to protect nature, with nearly 70% indicating that nature conservation issues would influence how they would vote in future federal elections.<sup>5</sup>

**EIANZ therefore urges all parties and candidates contesting the upcoming federal election to make ambitious environmental protection a policy priority.**

The urgency of the climate and biodiversity crises requires the federal government to coordinate a nationwide response that facilitates rapid and effective regulatory and societal change. Policies must also recognise the interconnectedness of the challenges facing our natural environment with other policy challenges, such as the housing crisis.

Environmental issues span many important policy areas, and we cannot cover them all here. In consultation with our senior membership, EIANZ has identified five critical priorities for the next government, each expanded upon in appendices. As environmental practitioners bound by a [Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct](#), we adopt an ethical and evidence-based approach to these issues.



## Critical priorities

### 1. *Take decisive regulatory action on climate change, positioning Australia as a leader in our region*

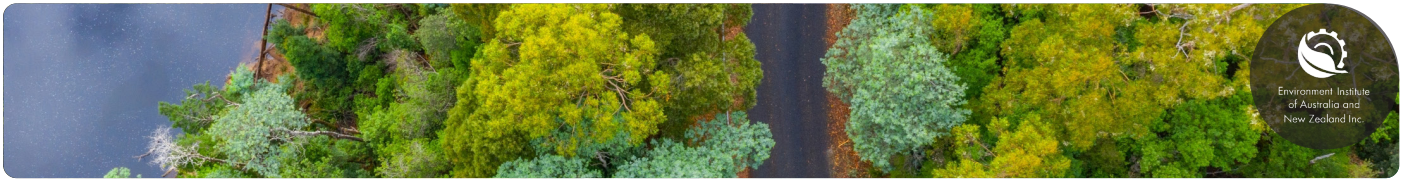
#### Milestones

- a. Over the next Parliamentary term, meaningfully accelerate climate change planning, mitigation and adaptation.
- b. Ensure all policies are consistent with Australia's commitments under the Paris Agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 43% by 2030 and achieve net zero emissions by 2050.
- c. Set Australia's 2035 emissions reduction target (Second Nationally Determined Contribution) at a minimum of 71%.
- d. By the end of 2026, declare greenhouse gas emissions (both domestic and embedded in exported products) a Matter of National Environmental Significance under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act*, with a view to ending Commonwealth approval of further expansions, or new developments of, coal or gas projects.
- e. Commencing 2026, report annually on national emissions embedded in internationally traded goods.
- f. Commit to working with Australia's major trading partners on development and implementation of net zero supply chains.
- g. From 1 July 2026, phase out financial support for high carbon activities such as diesel fuel rebates.
- h. In the first year of this parliamentary term, convene a national cabinet on taking rapid action to reduce Australia's greenhouse emissions. Make this an ongoing national cabinet priority.
- i. Continue to seek hosting of COP31 in 2026, in collaboration with Pacific Nations.
- j. Commission biennial, independent socio-economic modelling of the costs and benefits of the net zero transition for Australian communities.
- k. By 2027, launch a comprehensive community education program that builds understanding of climate change and biodiversity loss, as well as the necessity of action.

### 2. *Use policy levers to achieve nature positive through regulation and the power of markets*

#### Milestones:

- a. Commit to achieving nature positive by 2030 as defined by the global Nature Positive Initiative.<sup>6</sup> Ensure policymaking across all areas of government is informed by this commitment.
- b. In the first year of this parliamentary term, establish an independent national Environment Protection Authority, supported by meaningful and clearly enforceable National Environmental Standards as recommended in Professor Graeme Samuel's review of the EPBC Act.<sup>7</sup>



- c. Commit to funding regular internal audits of the federal government's approvals processes to ensure effective functioning and delivery of the best environmental outcomes.
- d. In the first year of this parliamentary term, proceed with establishing the proposed Environment Information Australia (EIA).
- e. Integrate and mandate nature-related disclosures with climate-related disclosures and corporate reporting obligations.
- f. Appoint a single independent market regulator-operator to oversee all environmental markets (e.g. carbon, nature, waste, water).
- g. As recommended by the Biodiversity Council, invest at least \$2 billion annually in restoration and protection of threatened and extinct species, and \$2 billion annually to drive ecosystem restoration.<sup>8</sup>

### *3. Build a skilled workforce for pressing environmental challenges*

#### Milestones:

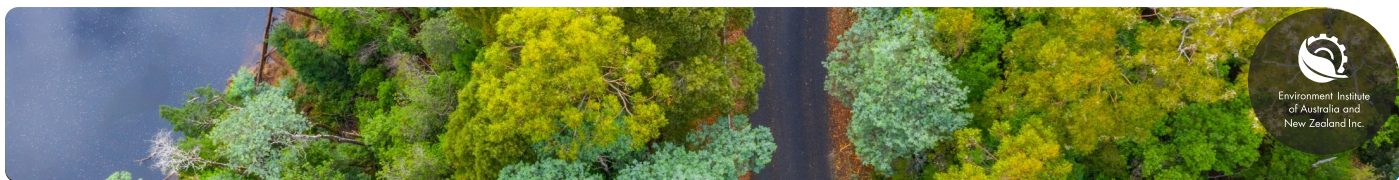
- a. In the first year of government, commission a review of environmental education and training opportunities in Australia to quantify gaps, opportunities and solutions in building a skilled workforce for pressing environmental challenges and the clean energy transition.
- b. Support and elevate the role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in environmental management, including as rangers.
- c. Require all environmental advice mandated by regulation (such as the EPBC Act) be given by suitably qualified practitioners, such as Certified Environmental Practitioners (CEnvPs), and members of professional associations bound by Codes of Conduct.
- d. Build capacity in the clean energy workforce by supporting women and migrants to excel in the sector.
- e. Invest in aiding transitioning sector workers to reskill for the transition.

### *4. Formally recognise and integrate the cultural values, rights and decision-making processes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples into environmental assessment and management processes*

#### Milestones:

- a. Implement the recommendations of the [A Way Forward](#) report in full.<sup>9</sup>
- b. In the next parliamentary term, implement Professor Graeme Samuel's recommendation<sup>10</sup> for a National Environmental Standard for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement and participation in decision-making.
- c. Ratify the [International Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage](#) (2003).
- d. Formally adopt the [Dhawura Ngilan Vision](#) for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage in Australia and the Best Practice Standards in Indigenous cultural heritage management and legislation.<sup>11</sup>
- e. Legislate to protect Indigenous Culture and Intellectual property (ICIP)<sup>12</sup> as a foundation for meaningful transfer of traditional knowledge, with appropriate remuneration.





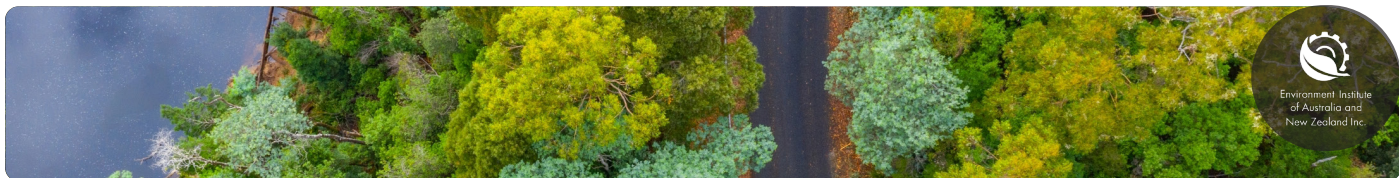
## 5. Use policy and financial measures to address the housing crisis in concert with the climate and biodiversity crisis

Milestones:

- a. Introduce robust regional planning to identify preferred areas for nature positive housing development that offer liveable neighbourhoods while also ensuring protection of biodiversity and key ecosystems.
- b. Raise housing and building standards to include stringent liveability and environmental parameters – for example, enabling efficient public transport, reducing energy and water use, and nature positive development including urban canopy requirements.
- c. Commission a review of state and territory land use planning systems that examines how these systems can set standards that facilitate concurrent responses to the climate, biodiversity and housing crises.
- d. Ensure that energy efficiency and biodiversity targets (state, territory and federal) exemplify best practice and are set concurrently with housing supply targets.
- e. Establish a dedicated Commonwealth funding program for independent research into housing and nature positive urban policy.

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## Appendix 1: Climate change and energy

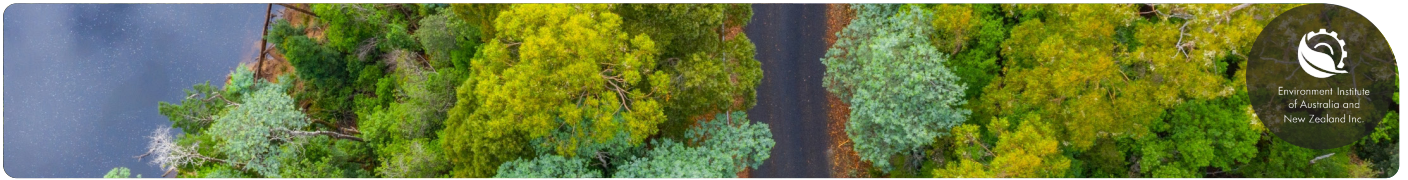
Australia's climate has warmed by around 1.5C between ~1910 and 2024.<sup>13</sup> We have already seen increased extreme heat events and extreme fire weather, decreased rainfall, and rising sea levels that put communities at risk. Together with domestic energy security risks and high energy costs, climate change is now jeopardising Australian's economy and way of life.

Australia must play its part in limiting the global temperature increase consistent with the Paris Agreement and ought to aspire to be a global leader on climate change mitigation. This will only be achieved with bold and comprehensive domestic targets, plans and actions.

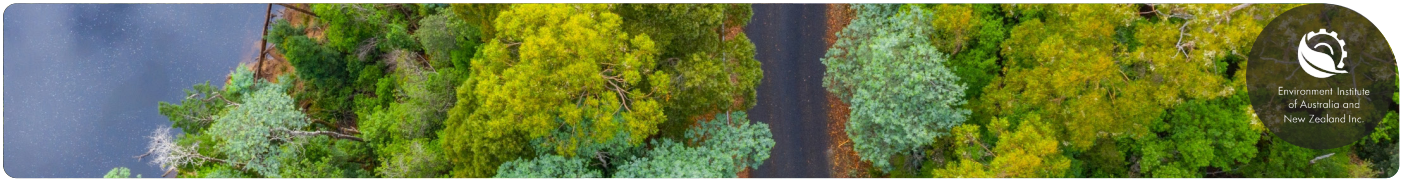
EIANZ calls upon the next government to:

### *Take decisive regulatory action on climate change, positioning Australia as a leader in our region*

- a. **Over the next Parliamentary term, meaningfully accelerate climate change planning, mitigation and adaptation, by:**
  - Accelerating development and implementation of sectoral net zero plans to address the nil or restricted emissions reductions since 2005 in all sectors other than energy and land management.<sup>14</sup>
  - Accelerating development and implementation of Australia's climate adaptation plan .
  - Updating Australia's energy market rules so they are fit for tomorrow's energy needs. This includes updates to demand side, transmission and local distribution rules to optimise low-cost energy sources for local communities.
  - Ensuring Australia's migration policy is fully aligned with our climate commitments and that population, per capita emissions and national emissions are properly linked in policymaking.
  
- b. **Ensure all policies are consistent with Australia's commitments under the Paris Agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 43% by 2030 and achieve net zero emissions by 2050.**
  - Reporting by the CSIRO and Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) suggests nuclear power generation would likely have at least a 15-year lead time in Australia.<sup>15</sup>
  - The Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering has found that a mature market for small modular nuclear energy reactors would take until the late 2040s to develop.<sup>16</sup>
  - EIANZ is therefore concerned that pursuing nuclear power generation may cause delays in achieving the Paris Agreement targets, thereby breaking our commitments to the international community. It would also leave Australia's energy generation network vulnerable to power disruptions from end-of-life coal-fired power stations.
  - At the very least, Australia must continue rapid deployment of currently technically available (renewables, storage, energy efficiency, electrification and associated transmission) technologies consistent with our Paris Agreement Commitments until all the hurdles to nuclear power generation have been successfully cleared.

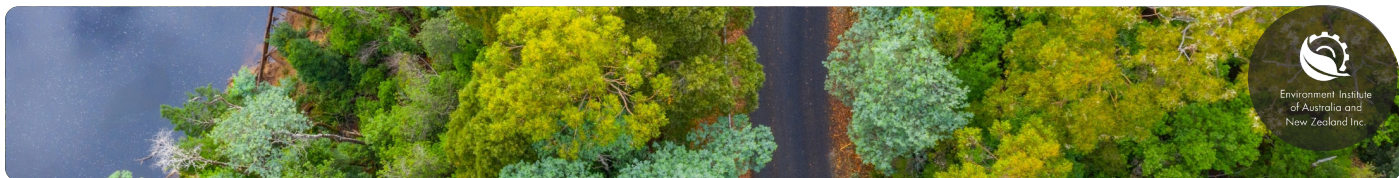


- c. Set Australia’s 2035 emissions reduction target (Second Nationally Determined Contribution) at a minimum of 71%.**
- Australian states and territories have effectively already committed to emission reductions of 66 – 71%.<sup>17</sup> This suggests 71% should be the baseline from which Australia sets its 2035 target.
  - Any future developments approved under the EPBC Act should be consistent with these emission targets.
- d. By the end of 2026, declare greenhouse gas emissions (both domestic and embedded in exported products) a Matter of National Environmental Significance under the EPBC Act, with a view to ending Commonwealth approval of further expansions, or new developments of, coal or gas projects.**
- Declaring greenhouse gas emissions a Matter of National Environmental Significance will ensure that the likely emissions of a project proposal are assessed, and that projects likely to undermine Australia’s emissions reductions are unlikely to go ahead. The Assessments / Enforcement Branches of DCCEEW must be fully funded to adequately support this.
  - As part of this, work with state and territory governments to cease all native forest logging by January 2029, and remove land clearing loopholes that exist under the EPBC Act.
  - The government should also provide practical guidance to developers as to how embedded emissions need to be assessed.
- e. Commencing 2026, report annually on national emissions embedded in internationally traded goods.**
- Australia does not currently report on emissions that occur as a result of goods exported by Australia (such as iron ore, coal and natural gas).
  - While reporting on embedded emissions is not required by the Paris Agreement, it is essential to building an accurate picture of Australia’s contribution to global emissions and associated risks. EIANZ’s [statement on scope 3 emissions](#) provides further detail.
- f. Commit to working with Australia’s major trading partners on development and implementation of net zero supply chains.**
- g. From July 1, 2026, phase out financial support for high carbon activities such as diesel fuel rebates.**
- h. In the first year of this parliamentary term, convene a national cabinet on taking rapid action to reduce Australia’s greenhouse emissions. Make this an ongoing national cabinet priority.**
- Due to its significant and escalating impact on Australians, climate change ought to be treated with the same urgency as recent crises such as Covid-19.
  - A challenge of this scale requires a coordinated response. The government must promote federal, state and territory policy cohesion with respect to targets, assessments, land management and other relevant strategic decisions.



- The next Commonwealth Government must work with States and Territories on climate resilient and net zero emissions cities, communities and lives.
- i. **Continue to seek hosting of COP31 in 2026, in collaboration with Pacific Nations.**
  - Hosting COP31 is a clear signal to the region and the world of the seriousness of Australia’s commitment to climate change action.
- j. **Commission biennial, independent socio-economic modelling of the costs and benefits of the net zero transition to Australian communities.**
  - Without a strong understanding of the costs and benefits of the transition, the government risks alienating those affected. Independent economic modelling will ensure assistance can be delivered where it is needed.
  - Modelling ought to be carried out by a reputable organisation such as CSIRO and used to ensure individuals impacted by the transition are supported to reskill and regional economies are diversified as needed.
- k. **By 2027, launch a comprehensive community education program that builds understanding of climate change and biodiversity loss, as well as the need for and benefits of emissions reduction and the clean energy transition.**
  - Decisive action on climate change and biodiversity loss requires support from the community. Fostering this support must be a central part of all environment policies.





## Appendix 2: Achieving nature positive

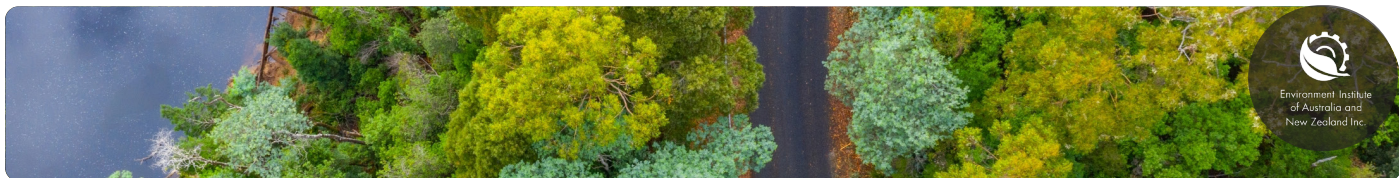
EIANZ commends the move by government and industry to restore our natural environment by seeking to achieve a state of 'nature positive'. We support a definition of nature positive as an agreed goal to 'Halt and reverse nature loss by 2030 on a 2020 baseline, and achieve full recovery by 2050'<sup>18</sup>. The term signifies a shift from merely *minimising* harm of nature, towards actively and substantially *avoiding* harm. It further suggests a *restoration* of ecological health and resilience.

However, successive reviews<sup>19</sup> have shown that current approaches are not sufficient nor fit for purpose. We urgently need stronger legislation, policies and standards to deliver nature positive. EIANZ calls on the next government to:

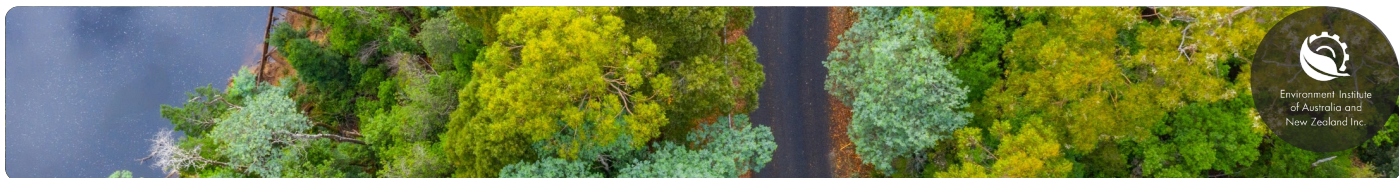
### *Use policy levers to achieve nature positive through regulation and the power of markets*

- a. **Commit to achieving nature positive by 2030 as defined by the Nature Positive Initiative. Ensure policymaking across all areas of government is informed by this commitment.**
  - This definition of nature positive, including a clear baseline against which it will be measured, ought to be included in relevant legislation.
- b. **In the first year of this parliamentary term, proceed with establishing an independent national Environment Protection Authority (EPA), supported by meaningful and clearly enforceable National Environmental Standards as recommended in Professor Graeme Samuel's review of the EPBC Act.<sup>20</sup>**
  - EIANZ understands that the federal environment minister may need to make decisions against the recommendations of the EPA on occasion and calls for legislation to include that this must be done transparently and only for the benefit of society.
  - The recommendations of the [Samuel Review](#), including reforms to the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act* (EPBC Act), should be implemented in full.
  - The National Environmental Standards were the cornerstone recommendation of the Samuel Review, and the new Environment Protection Authority will be meaningless without strong standards to enforce.
- c. **Commit to funding regular internal audits of the federal government's approvals processes to ensure effective functioning and delivery of the best environmental outcomes.**
  - In order for the new Environment Protection Authority to function properly, we need to ensure processes on the ground are regularly reviewed.
- d. **In the first year of this parliamentary term, proceed with establishing the proposed Environment Information Australia (EIA).**
  - The EIA ought to report annually on Australia's natural capital accounts. The most recent federal State of the Environment Report was published in 2021. In order to make sound and informed policy and business decisions, Australia requires more regular comprehensive reporting on the state of our natural assets.





- In line with the United Nations System of Environmental-Economic Accounting, the government should work towards reporting Australia's environmental data at the same time as annual economic reporting.
  - EIA reporting must take into account external pressures on the environment, such as pollution and socio-economic factors. This will build a more complete picture of environmental vulnerabilities and allow policymakers to focus on preventing future degradation by addressing the root causes, as opposed to simply responding to existing environmental damage.
- e. Integrate and mandate nature-related disclosures with climate-related disclosures and corporate reporting obligations.**
- As part of this, accelerate implementation of the [Australian Sustainable Finance Roadmap](#)<sup>21</sup> and legislate for the ASFI's [Sustainable Finance Taxonomy](#)<sup>22</sup> to become mandatory rather than voluntary.
  - Mandating nature-related disclosures will assist in meeting Australia's obligations in accordance with the Global Biodiversity Framework and ensure that the true costs of doing business are transparently understood.
- f. Appoint a single independent market regulator-operator to oversee all environmental markets (e.g. carbon, nature, waste, water).**
- The impact of increasing climate change upon biodiversity loss needs stronger recognition. Without consistent consideration of the nexus, efforts to address either will be undermined and economic benefits will be compromised.
  - A single independent market regulator-operator will ensure meaningful linkages between various markets to facilitate comprehensive environmental protection.
  - This regulator-operator should also have the power to audit markets.
- g. As recommended by the Biodiversity Council, invest at least \$2 billion annually in restoration and protection of threatened and extinct species, and \$2 billion annually to drive ecosystem restoration.**<sup>23</sup>
- Areas of the landscape will reflect different natural capital, environmental and social value and will need to be identified and prioritised for their ongoing protection and restoration.



## Appendix 3: Skilled workforce

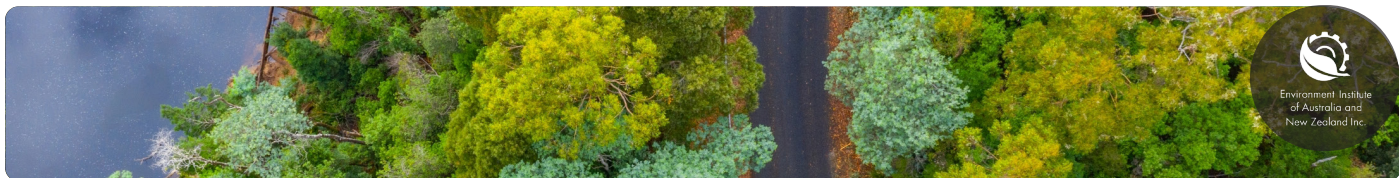
The clean energy transition and push to achieve nature positive will require a highly skilled workforce with specialist environmental skills. EIANZ is concerned that there are not currently sufficient suitably qualified practitioners to meet these demands. Shortages have been identified in the clean energy, environmental engineering and environmental health sectors,<sup>24</sup> while the [Universities Accord Review](#) showed that significant changes are needed in Australia's higher education system to produce the skills and knowledge required to meet current and emerging challenges. There also remain barriers to entry to the clean energy workforce for women, migrants and First Nations peoples.<sup>25</sup>

EIANZ is acutely aware of the need for appropriately qualified and accredited individuals in the sector, which the Institute strives to address through our Qualifications Accreditation Scheme and Certified Environmental Practitioner Scheme. We believe strong investment in, and promotion of, the training of environmental practitioners must be made a priority by the next government to avoid a future skills shortage that would cripple Australia's environmental efforts.

EIANZ calls on the next government to to:

### *Build a skilled workforce for pressing environmental challenges*

- a. **In the first year of government, commission a review of environmental education and training opportunities in Australia to quantify gaps, and identify opportunities and solutions, to build a skilled workforce for pressing environmental challenges and the clean energy transition.**
  - A review should consider environmental industry needs and resourcing and capability of the higher education system, and investigate potential policy measures to incentivise environmental study and career pathways.
  - The review should cover tertiary, VET-level and secondary education.
  - An in-depth review is urgently needed, given the shortages already identified.
- b. **Support and elevate the role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in environmental management, including as rangers.**
  - The elevation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as rangers and environmental managers could be achieved through investment in Indigenous Protected Areas within Australia's Natural Reserve System.
  - The government should also work with and provide ongoing funding to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led organisations such as the North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance (NAILSMA) to support First Nations-led environmental management.
  - In addition to the environmental benefits, land and sea management by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples has been shown to have numerous economic and social benefits.<sup>26</sup>



**c. Require all environmental advice mandated by regulation (such as the EPBC Act) be given by suitably qualified practitioners, such as Certified Environmental Practitioners (CEnvPs), and members of professional associations bound by Codes of Conduct.**

- Any recognised certification should require continuing professional development to ensure current knowledge. Requiring suitably qualified persons be used for the provision of environmental advice will ensure that environmental approvals and other projects are undertaken by professionals adhering to best practice guidelines and the highest ethical standards.
- Certification comes at no cost to government and will lead to improved quality of submissions and reduced administration in determining suitably qualified persons.
- Work with professional accreditation bodies on placement requirements to ensure they match industry and skills needs (as per Recommendation 9 of the Universities Accord Report).

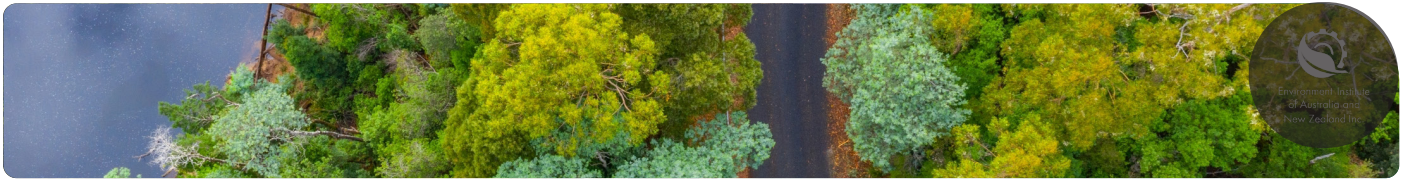
**d. Build capacity in the clean energy workforce by supporting women and migrants to excel in the sector.**

- This requires addressing gender discrimination and sexual harassment reported by women in the engineering and clean energy sectors<sup>27</sup>. It will also mean promoting inclusive STEM-related education and employment pathways for women and migrant groups.
- The sector must be able to attract and retain a skilled and diverse workforce to maximise the capacity of the sector and meet the needs of the energy transition.

**e. Invest in aiding transitioning sector workers to reskill for the transition.**

- Investment could include subsidised upskilling courses and careers counselling for workers impacted by the transition away from fossil fuels.
- Supporting workers in transitioning industries is a 'win-win' : it will not only help build workforce capacity, but also increase support for changes necessary to mitigate climate change and biodiversity loss.





## Appendix 4: First Nations heritage and environmental management

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' knowledge, values and decision-making are essential to effective environmental management, not only of Indigenous Protected Areas (IPAs) but also throughout Australia.

More effective national legislation is needed to both recognise this importance and to implement the international protocols to which Australia is a signatory, with respect to Indigenous rights, biological diversity, and other obligations related to the work of environmental professionals. Australia should ultimately work towards a legislated rights-based approach to First Nations engagement, informed by Canadian models and experiences, to redress a power imbalance in negotiating.

EIANZ calls on the next government to:

*Formally recognise and integrate the cultural values, rights and decision-making processes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples into environmental assessment and management processes*

**a. Implement the recommendations of the *A Way Forward* report<sup>28</sup> in full.**

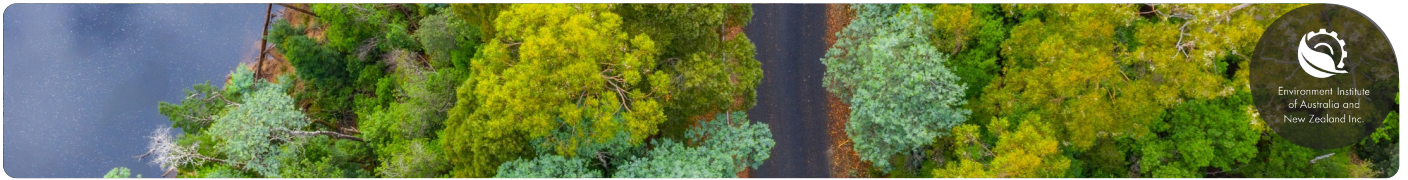
- Of particular significance is the report's recommendation to review the *Native Title Act 1993* to resolve inequalities in the negotiating position of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

**b. In the next parliamentary term, implement Professor Graeme Samuel's recommendation<sup>29</sup> for a National Environmental Standard for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement and participation in decision-making.**

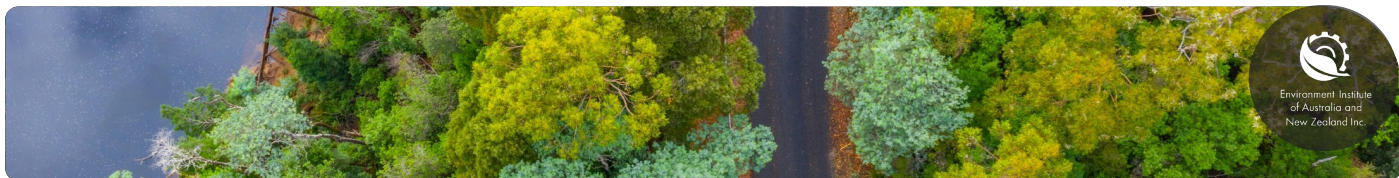
- The National Environmental Standard for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement and participation in decision-making ought to be implemented alongside the Nature Positive Plan and establishing an effective Environment Protection Agency.

**c. Ratify the International Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003).**

- Despite agreeing in principle in 2022 to consider the Convention, Australia is yet to ratify this agreement.
- The Government's reasons for deferral included that it wished to firstly consider the findings of a Productivity Commission report and another report on Indigenous Knowledge by IP Australia. Both reports were handed down later in 2022.
- The Timber Creek (2016) decision<sup>30</sup> in the High Court of Australia formalised the concept of cultural loss of intangible heritage, but this concept has not been codified in legislation.
- EIANZ acknowledges that Intangible Cultural Heritage is complex and may involve sacred or secret aspects of First Nations cultures. This complexity should not prevent Australia from engaging entirely, rather the government should work closely with First Nations peoples to implement the Convention in culturally responsive ways.



- Ratification of the 2003 Convention is especially relevant to the environment profession, because the concept and obligations of ‘caring for Country’,<sup>31</sup> so central to Aboriginal Culture throughout Australia, and the Torres Strait Islander ‘Ailan Kastom’ (Island Custom)<sup>32</sup> are among examples of Intangible Cultural Heritage of world significance.
- d. Formally adopt the Dhawura Ngilan Vision for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage in Australia and the Best Practice Standards in Indigenous cultural heritage management and legislation<sup>33</sup>.**
- Developed by and presented to the meeting by the Chairs of Australia’s national, state and territory First Nations heritage bodies in 2020, these two documents provide a roadmap for improving approaches to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage management in Australia. Both documents are the product of extensive consultation with First Nations stakeholders and relevant peak advisory bodies.
  - Adopting these documents requires allocating adequate, dedicated resourcing.
- e. Legislate to protect Indigenous Culture and Intellectual property (ICIP)<sup>34</sup> as a foundation for meaningful transfer of traditional knowledge, with appropriate remuneration.**
- EIANZ supports the remuneration of First Nations peoples for services relating to the provision of traditional knowledge about places and natural resources.
  - Legislation ought to be informed by ICIP principles such as those developed by CSIRO.<sup>35</sup>
  - Without formal processes in place, there is a risk of exploitative treatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.



## Appendix 5: Housing crisis

The Business Council of Australia has nominated the housing crisis as one of Australia's [2025 election priorities](#). EIANZ shares this concern but urges all parties to recognise and address the links between the housing crisis and the climate and biodiversity crises.

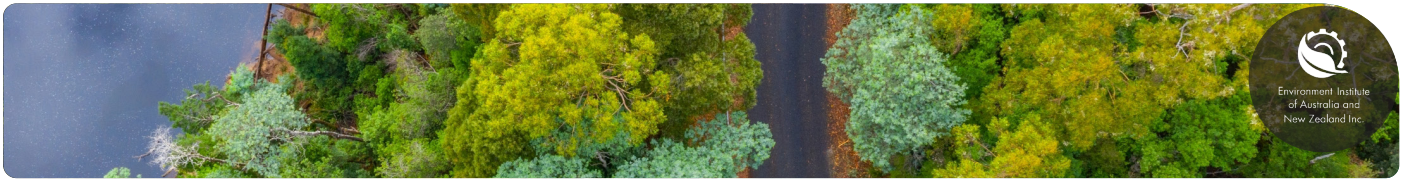
The risks of climate change mean that without careful long-term planning, the housing crisis will only worsen as Australia sees increasing natural disasters and the impact of rising sea levels. Housing must be affordable, liveable and sustainable, and it must be designed with the future in mind. Improving the sustainability of our housing stock is also an opportunity to reduce emissions, with residential buildings responsible for least 10% of Australia's emissions<sup>36</sup> and 24% of electricity use.

EIANZ calls on the next government to:

*Use policy and financial measures to address the housing crisis in concert with the climate and biodiversity crisis*

- a. **Introduce robust regional planning to identify preferred areas for nature positive housing development that offers liveable neighbourhoods while also ensuring protection of biodiversity and key ecosystems.**
  - We need the right development in the right place; a one-size, simplistic solution will not reflect the needs of Australian households nor the complexity of the natural systems underpinning our current and future built environments.
  - Using regional planning to signpost preferred development areas and conservation zones within particular regions will establish a strong foundation for future land use decision making.
  - This could include facilitation of housing in regional towns with high-speed rail connections to metropolitan centres.
- b. **Raise housing and building standards to include stringent liveability and environmental parameters (for example, enabling efficient public transport, reducing energy and water use, and nature positive development including urban canopy requirements).**
  - Housing and building standards ought to promote circular economy housing and enable sustainable housing at the neighbourhood scale as recommended by the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute.<sup>37</sup>
  - Housing should be designed for durability and adaptability (including fire safe housing in at risk areas) and to limit damage and energy in management and maintenance.<sup>3839</sup>
  - Housing developments must also be supported by critical social infrastructure.<sup>40</sup>
- c. **Commission a review of state and territory land use planning systems that examines how these systems can set standards that facilitate concurrent responses to the climate, biodiversity and housing crises.**
  - Consolidate development and building standards between Australia's jurisdictions to streamline upfront costs and reduce lengthy approval processes.





- d. Ensure that energy efficiency and biodiversity targets at all levels of government exemplify best practice, for both new and existing housing, and are set concurrently with housing supply targets.**
- New annual dwelling construction comprises less than 2 per cent of Sydney's total housing stock. Therefore, there are greater gains to be had in adapting existing residential buildings than in building new ones.<sup>41</sup>
  - Greater efficiency can be achieved by measures such as: legislating a target to reduce domestic gas usage, as well as by subsidising the electrification of homes and expanding access to household rooftop solar.
- e. Establish a dedicated Commonwealth funding program for independent research into housing and nature positive urban policy.**
- Research priorities ought to include demography and household characteristics and formation, housing economics and finance, taxation and financial settings for nature positive investment, and housing and governance arrangements (including planning systems and approaches to social housing).
  - Research in this area must be non-partisan and independent of vested interests.

## Appendix 6: Endnotes

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