

# A Declaration of Labor's Commitment to Building the New South Wales National Parks Estate



We welcome delegates and visitors to Sydney for the IUCN World Parks Congress, and affirm the Labor Party's commitment to building the New South Wales National Parks Estate.

On behalf of New South Wales Labor, we declare that:

## 1. Labor is committed to building a fully comprehensive, adequate and representative public reserve system in New South Wales.

International scientific consensus confirms that a large national parks system, managed primarily for conservation, is the central piece of an effective biodiversity protection regime.

We celebrate the conservation achievement of the New South Wales national parks system.

## 2. The job of building the public reserve system in New South Wales is incomplete.

Many ecosystems are underrepresented in the national parks estate.

To conserve the full diversity of this state's landscapes, fauna and flora and to protect places of important Aboriginal and non-indigenous cultural heritage, more parks and reserves are needed.

An elected Labor Government will pursue the following priorities, that were identified in the New South Wales National Parks Establishment Plan 2008, for building the national parks estate:

- unrepresented ecosystems and habitats, particularly those most under threat from climate change, future development pressures or loss of natural river flows
- wetlands, floodplains, lakes and rivers
- critical landscape corridors which facilitate the daily and seasonal movement of animals across the landscape and the intergenerational translocation of plants and animals in response to gradual environmental changes, such as climate change,
- lands within important water catchments that protect important downstream aquatic ecosystems, such as high conservation value coastal lakes, wetlands, streams, estuaries and coastal near-shore marine environments
- culturally important places with aesthetic, historic, scientific or social value, with particular focus on places of cultural importance to Aboriginal people
- places of geological significance

- areas important for effectively and efficiently managing existing reserves and which buffer reserves from surrounding land uses and climate change.

We challenge the Liberal and National Parties to make the same commitment as Labor to building the NSW national parks estate.

We note that Labor in government added 3.07 million hectares of land to the national parks estate between 1995 and 2011. To date, the current Coalition Government has added only 51,490 hectares of land to the national parks estate since coming to office in March 2011. At this rate, it will take them 228 years to match what Labor did in sixteen years.

### 3. Labor is opposed to commercial logging, amateur hunting and grazing of hoofed animals in our national parks estate.

These activities are incompatible with the management of public reserves for the conservation of our native flora and fauna.

The principal objects of the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 are the conservation of nature and the conservation of objects, places or features (including biological diversity) of cultural value within the landscape.

These activities will not be allowed to occur under a New South Wales Labor Government.

We commit to defending, protecting and building the world class New South Wales national parks system.



**John Robertson MP**

Leader of the Opposition



**Luke Foley MLC**

Shadow Minister for the Environment

12 November 2014