



## TECHNICAL BULLETIN

### EXTINCTION DENIED PROGRAM

Issue 18 2011

INCORPORATING WILDLIFE LAND TRUST NEWS

### REDD+ Partnership: Setting up for REDD+ action

Australia is a member of the international REDD+ Partnership established last year, which currently lists 71 member countries. The core objective of this Partnership is to serve as an interim platform for action by the Partners to scale up REDD+ actions and finance whilst UNFCCC negotiations continue to develop a formal REDD+ agreement and methodologies. Knowledge transfer, capacity enhancement, mitigation actions and technology development and transfer are to be facilitated by the Partnership.

Australia also announced at the Cancun Climate conference in December that it was joining the Norway – Indonesia Partnership on REDD+. The use of one framework by Indonesia for REDD+ participation is significant and it is important to ensure that policy priorities are in place that are targeted to most effective emissions reduction and concurrent benefits for biodiversity and for indigenous peoples living in the forests.

Australia committed an additional \$30m for REDD+ in Indonesia drawing from the \$273m for REDD+ under its 6 year International Forest Carbon Initiative (2007-08 – 2012-13), which includes partnerships with Indonesia and Papua New Guinea (HSI had been involved in helping the original Commonwealth forest-carbon initiative get airborne).

HSI has been prominent in attending and making representations at REDD+ Partnership meetings (and the UNFCCC process) regarding how to go about getting REDD+ activity onto the ground. HSI's Alistair Graham and the Wilderness Society's Peg Putt are a part of the *Ecosystems Climate Alliance* who have been working hard at Cancun and other venues, our key points being:

- **Protect the big carbon stores:** avoiding emissions caused by deforestation and by degradation of intact natural forests (e.g. by industrial logging) needs to be the primary focus of REDD+. Keeping natural ecosystems intact and restoring degraded ones are where the big, quick gains are to be made and comprise a rare opportunity to make significant early progress.
- **Capture co-benefits:** protect those stores with high biodiversity values. The science tells us that areas rich in biodiversity generally have high carbon stocks, and that maintaining this biodiversity gives stability to those stocks and enhances resilience to climate change (HSI provided seed funding for UNEP/WCMC's ground breaking mapping work to identify high biodiversity and carbon density hotspots).
- **Take an ecosystem services' approach:** preparing for REDD+ can be the first step in the delivery of, and reward for, a range of ecosystem services — carbon, biodiversity and water. These parallel opportunities should be borne in mind when developing readiness, capacity building, institutional arrangements, and planning instruments.
- **Address demand:** it is important to reduce the human pressure on forests and curb demand, including that of developed countries, that drives the destruction and degradation of forest carbon stores. Some of this demand is direct (e.g. wood) and some is indirect (e.g. beef or soybeans).

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Scott Portelli, Wildlife Photographer.

### Mountain and eastern lowland gorilla conservation support

Following on from the growing success of the program to protect **mountain gorillas** (*Gorilla beringei beringei*) by the **International Gorilla Conservation Program** (IGCP) in the 450 square kilometre Virunga Massif in central Africa (within the **Eastern Afromontane biodiversity hotspot** — the world's tenth most threatened forest hotspot) supported in part by **Humane Society International**, we have recently developed a new agreement to help protect the **eastern lowland gorilla** (*Gorilla beringei graueri*).

According to research by the **Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology** in Leipzig, Germany, the work of the IGCP program and others has seen mountain gorilla numbers increase by some 26% since 2003, with an increase in numbers from 380 to 480 individuals, estimating that the Virunga Massif mountain gorilla population is increasing at a rate of 3.7% per year.

The success of the programs in the **Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)**, **Rwanda** and **Uganda** has been put down to the proper and full engagement of local communities that result in real economic opportunities for villagers so that they don't need to poach, and fewer gorillas dying from diseases and injuries, due to the presence of veterinarians. But the primary reason for population growth rate appears to be the significant increase in anti-poaching patrols in the Parks concerned.

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Tarsier. © iStockphoto.com/Simon Gurney.

## ■ REDD+ Partnership: Setting up for REDD+ action

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Indonesia is making substantial progress in implementing the partnership agreement with Norway that Australia has now joined. They have set up a high-level REDD+ Task Force that reports directly to the President and is committed to supporting all nine forested provinces in managing forests sustainably.

The Task Force's chairman, Dr Kuntoro, recently put out a statement urging "*all forest provinces must work hard so that Indonesia can reduce emissions significantly*". The nine provinces are: Central Kalimantan, West Kalimantan, East Kalimantan, Aceh, Jambi, Riau, South Sumatra, Papua and West Papua. Central Kalimantan (Kalimantan Tengah) has been selected as the pilot province for testing roll-out of the initial stage of Indonesia's REDD+ implementation arrangements.

Note: "REDD+" refers to the text of clause 1(b)(iii) of the Bali Action Plan — the framework agreed at the UNFCCC COP in Bali in 2007 for a 'new deal' on climate change. The Bali COP decided to expand the scope from the original proposal of the Coalition of Rainforest Nations for 'RED' (reduced emissions from deforestation in developing countries) to become REDD ('reduced emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries').

REDD+ further expands the scope as set out in the rest of the clause to include '*... conservation, sustainable forest management and enhancement of carbon stores.*' REDD+ is thus a much wider concept than that originally envisaged, potentially encompassing all aspects of forest management. Indeed, the process of expanding the concept continues with talk of 'REDD++' to mean inclusion of carbon conservation and management in agricultural and other natural ecosystems. There is a certain inevitability in the expansion of the concept to its logical conclusion — encouragement of better terrestrial carbon conservation and management everywhere by everyone.

A REDD+ mechanism failed to be agreed at the Copenhagen COP in 2009, some progress was made in Cancun and a conclusive result is now anticipated for the forthcoming Durban COP in December 2011. The *UN-REDD Program Strategy 2011-2015* has recently been released by FAO/UNDP/UNEP. Opposite is HSI's media statement in response to the outcomes of the Cancun meeting.

## ■ Mountain and eastern lowland gorilla conservation support

*Continued from page 1*

Now, in cooperation with the **Born Free Foundation UK**, and after negotiations with the **Chief Warden of the World Heritage Kahuzi-Biega National Park** in the DRC, **Radar Nishuli**, we have finalised a proposed three-year program for the protection of eastern lowland gorillas within that Park. HSI is also contributing to the **Gorilla Rehabilitation and Conservation Education (GRACE)** Centre in the DRC, run by the '**Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International**' and partners.

In late March 2011, attended by HSI, the "*First Meeting of the Technical Committee of the UNEP/CMS Agreement on the Conservation of Gorillas and their Habitats*" took place in the Rwandan capital Kigali, and formulated new strategies for the protection of all gorilla species in Africa. HSI had also attended the first meeting of the Parties to the CMS gorilla agreement in late 2008.

HSI had previously been talking with **Interpol's Environmental Crime Program** about the problem of gorilla conservation and the illegal wildlife trade, and HSI was very pleased to financially help **Interpol**

(**David Higgins**) attend this critical conservation meeting. Interpol's presence was well appreciated by all, and they were able to offer their considerable enforcement expertise to future gorilla conservation efforts.

HSI also travelled to the Kahuzi-Biega National Park to view eastern lowland gorillas in the wild, courtesy of Chief Warden Nishuli, and where we were able to conclude arrangements for the new three-year HSI support program. The arrangements for our visit and the successes of the CMS Technical Committee were in no small part due to the help and expertise of **Ian Redmond OBE**, UNEP's **GRASP** representative (Great Apes Survival Project) and Ambassador for the CMS agreement.

Meanwhile, our national campaign to recycle mobile phones and help reduce the mining pressure on gorilla habitats, as companies seek to extract precious metals, is gathering pace, with thousands of phones already sent in by HSI supporters and the public. We would like to declare our appreciation to the **Western Australian Newspaper** who recently gave significant free advertising space to promote the mobile phone recycling campaign (see back page of this Technical Bulletin). Go to following link for media release following CMS meeting:

<http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.Print.asp?DocumentID=664&ArticleID=8683&l=en&t=long>



## Cancun makes progress in tackling climate change and saving forests

**Sydney: December 2010:** Humane Society International (HSI) today welcomed the progress made at the Cancun climate change talks in tackling climate change and saving forests. It is good to see some consolidation of Copenhagen pledges, which HSI hopes will set the scene for more progress on emission cuts in South Africa at the end of next year. There has been general agreement that there should be a second commitment period of agreed developed country emission reduction targets (Kyoto Mark 2). There has also been agreement to establish a new Green Climate Fund (for which Climate Change Minister, Greg Combet should be congratulated for his leading role). These are both positive outcomes.

However, Australians and the global community should all be very concerned that the existing country emission reduction pledges will not prevent global temperature rise remaining below 2 degrees centigrade. *"We now face an average global temperature rise of up to 2.5 degrees Celsius, and even possibly higher, unless very urgent action is taken to increase country commitments within the next year,"* said **Michael Kennedy, HSI Campaign Director**.

HSI welcomes the solid progress on measures to reduce deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries (i.e. REDD+). A number of new elements of the REDD+ framework have been agreed, but still more needs to be done. *"HSI is concerned that a decision to use market mechanisms to implement REDD+ has been deferred and it is difficult to see how anything like the necessary funding to save the world's forests will be achieved without the use of the market,"* said **Rod Holesgrove, HSI's Biodiversity Policy Adviser**. *"Historically government funding for forest protection has been quite insufficient,"* he said *"and there are few indications that this situation will change."*

Because there is no market mechanism, the REDD+ agreement may not provide much encouragement for Australian business, under an Australian carbon price scheme to invest in protecting tropical forests in our Region. However, HSI is pleased to see that some of the agreed basic goals and objectives of REDD+ have some real positives, including recognition that REDD+ is about slowing and reversing forest cover and carbon loss, and that REDD+ actions should be consistent with the conservation of natural forest and biological diversity. *"HSI is pleased to see that it has been agreed that REDD+ should not be used for the conversion of natural forests,"* said **Alistair Graham, HSI's International Policy Adviser**. *"However it has also been agreed that REDD+ will allow so called 'sustainable forest management', which means that logging of native forests will be permitted under REDD+. The Australian public will no doubt question why an international agreement to save forests will allow logging,"* said Alistair Graham.

HSI is of the view that the Government should legislate to ensure that REDD+ credits derived from the logging of forests are not allowed to be used in Australia. HSI is pleased to see that the REDD+ agreement has a strong statement on the need to address the drivers of deforestation. *"It is therefore very important that the Government introduce legislation as soon as possible to ban import of illegally logged timber,"* said **Rod Holesgrove**. *"This was promised in the first term of the Rudd/Gillard Government but did not eventuate,"* he said.

HSI is also pleased to see that Cancun had some positive outcomes in relation to what developed countries can and cannot do with regard to Kyoto mechanisms relating to land based emissions. A very good outcome in this regard was the decision that developed countries could reduce emissions under the Kyoto Protocol by rewetting peat lands. *"This is a tremendous achievement,"* said **Alistair Graham**, *"as the draining of peat lands provides about 6 per cent of all emissions."* HSI was pleased to see that Cancun did not approve a loophole that would allow developed countries under Kyoto to increase their annual forestry emissions by up to half a million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> without penalty. These emissions would fully wipe out all the reductions made under the Kyoto Protocol.

*"This issue will come back at future climate change meetings and Australia, as a leading proponent of the 'logging loophole', must stop pushing this matter,"* said **Alistair Graham**. Overall, Cancun was a good step forward and HSI looks forward to continuing its work in 2011 in trying to achieve the required emission reduction agreements as well as agreements to protect as much as possible of the world's remaining natural forests, wetlands and other ecosystems, which are critical to human survival.

HSI also wishes to acknowledge the significant contribution made to the Cancun outcome by the **Ecosystems Climate Alliance (ECA\*)**. The ECA, of which HSI is part, is an alliance of NGOs committed to keeping natural terrestrial ecosystems intact and their carbon out of the atmosphere. Decisions on rewetting peat lands, overall REDD+ goals, drivers of deforestation and ensuring REDD+ will not contribute to the conversion of forests are amongst the decisions in regard to which ECA made a significant contribution.

\* Environmental Investigation Agency, Australian Orangutan Project, Global Witness, Humane Society International, Nepenthes, Rainforest Action Network, Rainforest Foundation Norway, The Rainforest Foundation UK, Wetlands International, and the Wilderness Society. [www.ecosystemsclimate.org](http://www.ecosystemsclimate.org)

**Update:** Continuing our climate change efforts internationally, advisers Alistair Graham and Peg Putt are variously representing Humane Society International, the Wilderness Society and the Ecosystems Climate Alliance at the UNFCCC April meetings in Bangkok, Thailand. These include the sixteenth session of the *Ad Hoc Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex I Parties* under the Kyoto Protocol (AWG-KP 16), the fourteenth session of the *Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperation* under the Convention (AWG-LCA 14), as well as the REDD+ Partnership meetings and workshops pursuant to the *Cancun Agreements*. Prior to the Bangkok meetings, Alistair Graham and Peg Putt drafted an **HSI Special Bulletin "Truth in Targets"**, Part 1, urging developed countries to get real about the impact of land and forestry sector climate emissions on their economy-wide emission reduction targets. It was circulated to hundreds of climate bureaucrats, politicians and negotiators globally, and has been well received at the talks in Thailand. The publication can be found at [http://www.hsi.org.au/editor/assets/Publications/Special%20Bulletin%20March\\_2011%20Truth%20in%20Targets.pdf](http://www.hsi.org.au/editor/assets/Publications/Special%20Bulletin%20March_2011%20Truth%20in%20Targets.pdf). Following these sessions, HSI will be attending the 34th session of the UNFCCC *Convention Subsidiary Bodies for Implementation* (SBI 34) at the beginning of June in Bonn, Germany. Geoff Evans from the US and Lasse Bruun from Denmark will also be attending for HSI.



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## Australia and other developed countries need to include terrestrial carbon in their climate obligations

Australia and other developed countries have been failing to make an international commitment to reduce their own land and forest emissions below business as usual levels, or even to account comprehensively for those emissions. This failure is undermining the targets for emissions reductions proposed by developed countries. Concern is such that the role of developed country 'land use, land use change and forestry' sector (LULUCF) in contributing to the gap in global aspirations will be examined by a UNFCCC workshop in April this year.

Australia has significant carbon stores in native forests and in other ecosystems across the landscape, such as wetlands, grasslands, shrublands and woodlands. Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation is a reasonable expectation for all developed countries to meet in order to tackle climate change, but in international climate negotiations this is only explicit for developing countries wishing to participate in a REDD+ mechanism, and not for us.

Instead, proposed new Kyoto Protocol carbon accounting rules for land and forests are notorious for their emissions loopholes including a huge logging emissions loophole of almost half billion tonnes created by the use of *projected reference levels* (see diagram). After a concerted campaign from environment groups and raised eyebrows from developing countries these were unable to be agreed in Cancun despite strong pressure from Australia and others to do so. This leaves an opportunity to take up transparency and a genuine commitment to emissions reductions from Australia and other developed nations this year, but will only eventuate if there is a change in policy approach on behalf of those developed countries. Meanwhile, the potential of the domestic *carbon farming initiative* would be greatly undermined if it is harmonised with perverse LULUCF accounting rules.

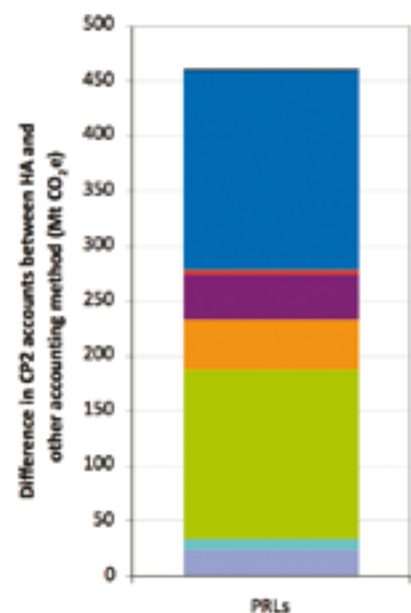


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### How big is the accounting gap?

- 461 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>e:
  - 230 Mt from using projected reference levels
  - 185 Mt from using 1990 base year
  - 45 Mt from using zero sink
  - ~1 Mt from using 2001-2005 base year
- PRLs compared to the historical average 1990-2008
- We assume Parties realise their own forecasts for CP2

Australia Canada EU27 Japan  
New Zealand Norway Russian Federation Switzerland



Source: CAN International LULUCF Working Group 2010



## What needs to happen?

Australia should adopt forest carbon conservation and extend further to other stores of terrestrial carbon, maintaining the natural carbon carrying capacity in the landscape by making it our ambition to protect and restore intact native vegetation.

### At the UNFCCC:

- Acknowledge the impact of the LULUCF loopholes in undermining developed country targets and take a 'truth in targets' approach;
- Abandon proposed accounting loopholes for logging ('forest management') and bio-energy and instead adopt mandatory accounting for logging emissions, relative to an historical base period;
- Adopt land-based accounting to replace the current activities-based approach, commencing with more comprehensive accounting of terrestrial carbon;
- Account for carbon stocks (reservoirs) and not just carbon flows.

## Carbon Farming Initiative

HSI has supported development of the Commonwealth's voluntary Carbon Farming Initiative (CFI) but we are concerned at how it is to be implemented in CFI legislation to be introduced into the Parliament, and at the apparent lack of integration with the proposed 'carbon tax/emissions trading scheme' arrangements to put a market price on emissions. HSI's principal concerns remain:

- The need to ensure that a commitment to include 'avoided deforestation' is retained and expanded, interpreted or defined to cover avoiding all forms of native vegetation carbon store degradation, including deforestation as an extreme form of such degradation;
- That such 'avoided degradation', is counted as giving rise to 'Kyoto credits' and that, if the government's market arrangement is to exclude terrestrial carbon, it is designed to allow offsetting by purchasing recognised terrestrial carbon Kyoto credits;
- That, regardless of any market relationships, adequate funding needs to be provided for the development of appropriate methodologies for reporting and accounting for carbon stores maintained by 'avoided degradation' projects, including for voluntary carbon trading purposes.

Unfortunately, only formal linkage to a compliance market is likely to generate significant revenue for protecting terrestrial carbon stores from degradation. HSI's support for the introduction and passage of legislation that provides for an effective carbon pricing regime (where our preference remains for immediate introduction of a cap and trade scheme) was predicated on the assumptions that: a) it would either include terrestrial carbon store management or allow offsetting by purchasing terrestrial carbon credits; and b) similarly, would be linked to overseas market arrangements, especially offsetting by purchasing credits issued for REDD projects in Indonesian rainforests.

HSI is disappointed and frustrated that recent government decisions neither appropriately include 'avoided degradation', domestically or internationally, in the CFI nor appropriately link the CFI to market arrangements. It was Malcolm Turnbull, when Environment Minister, who allocated \$200M to help our Indonesian and PNG neighbours with their REDD-readiness work with such carbon trading prospects in mind. *The Gillard government continues to spend this money but appears to have forgotten what it's for.*

**HSI will soon publish its full response to the Government's CFI legislation.**

## A carbon price and Garnaut's recent thoughts

The Government announced new carbon price proposals, supported by the Greens, to deal with climate change — proposals which have some similarities to the Government's previous emissions trading policy — will start with a fixed price period for three to five years before transitioning to an emissions trading scheme.

The policy notes that it will be important to determine how to maintain and enhance the carbon carrying capacity of the landscape, as well as noting the important sustainability and biodiversity conservation co-benefits. At the same time the policy states that emissions from sources covered under the proposed CFI would be excluded from coverage under the carbon pricing mechanism. These two positions seem to contradict each other but overall HSI welcomes the Government and Greens' recognition of the need for measures to protect and enhance green carbon stores.

In March Professor Ross Garnaut, the Government's principal independent climate change adviser, released his *Update Paper 4: Transforming Rural Land-use*. The report appears to validate much of what HSI has been saying about green carbon and supports our fundamental premise that the landscape green carbon sector needs to be fully covered in both international and national climate change mitigation arrangements, including in the CFI. For example the report states, "*Movement toward comprehensive coverage of all land sectors under a carbon pricing mechanism would yield economic and environmental benefits.*"

As HSI continues to argue, the report recognises the importance of biodiversity resilience of natural ecosystems in tackling climate change and that as well as ensuring natural landscapes are covered in domestic climate change policy, that additional complementary biodiversity conservation incentives will be needed.



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## ■ Convention on Biological Diversity: recognition of climate and biodiversity linkages and new global goals

The tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the *Convention on Biological Diversity* (CBD) and accompanying events held in Nagoya, Japan last October had a strong focus on the relationship between climate change and biodiversity, adopted new global goals for the conservation of biological diversity and concluded a new Protocol establishing an international regime on access to genetic resources and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from their utilization.

HSI's directors and staff have a long history of involvement in the development of the CBD, including as members of the Australian Government CBD negotiating team in the early nineties and in key meetings of the Parties since its coming into force in 1993. Peg Putt attended the CBD COP 10 and the *Aichi-Nagoya Ministerial Meeting of the REDD+ Partnership* in October 2010 in Japan on behalf of Humane Society International, the Wilderness Society and the Ecosystems Climate Alliance.

### Biodiversity and climate change

A formal decision on *Biodiversity and climate change* was adopted. This recognized the impact of climate change on biodiversity and the need to take measures to safeguard biodiversity and enhance adaptation and resilience such as through strengthening protected area networks and connectivity measures, integrating biodiversity into wider seascape and landscape management and restoring degraded ecosystems. Importantly, the role of ecosystems in mitigation of climate change was also addressed, mentioning the protection of natural forests, natural grasslands and peatlands, sustainable management of wetlands and their restoration, and the conservation of mangroves, salt marshes and seagrass beds.

Further, the CBD has outlined a range of collaborative activities that need to occur, especially between the CBD and the UNFCCC in relation to the implementation of REDD+. These involve coordination of capacity-building on biodiversity and ecosystem-based carbon sequestration and the conservation of forest carbon stocks; providing advice on the application of biodiversity safeguards; identification of indicators to assess the contribution of REDD+ to achieving the objectives of the CBD and how to monitor impacts on biodiversity of REDD+ and other ecosystem-based climate mitigation measures; identification of gaps in knowledge that prevent integration of biodiversity considerations into climate related measures; and development of ways to address barriers to such integration of measures.



'Jaloran' — Lisa and Jens Stephan.

Awareness of and preparedness to take up these important linkages and to work on the synergies between the conventions is not reciprocated in any great measure at the UNFCCC. Regrettably, the UNFCCC did not formally acknowledge the approach of the CBD nor include the biodiversity considerations advanced by the CBD into the climate body's scientific work program at their Cancun conference in December.

### Strategic Goals and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets — adopted at CBD COP 10 in Nagoya

Against the background of ongoing loss of biodiversity and a failure to achieve the 2010 target, 20 headline targets under 5 strategic goals were adopted. These comprise both aspirations for achievement at the global level and a flexible framework for the establishment of national or regional targets. They are to be delivered by 2015 and 2020. A move from counting the costs of environmental protection to considering the costs of the loss of biodiversity was clearly evident.

There is plenty for Australia to do to follow up. They are committed to:

- **Address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss by mainstreaming biodiversity across government and society.** This includes general awareness; integration into development and poverty reduction strategies, planning, accounting and reporting systems; elimination of harmful subsidies and introduction of positive incentives; and implementation of sustainable production and consumption.

- **Reduce the direct pressures on biodiversity and promote sustainable use.** By 2020: the rate of loss of all natural habitats is at least halved and where feasible brought close to zero, whilst degradation and fragmentation is significantly reduced; all fish, invertebrate stocks and aquatic plants are sustainably managed applying ecosystem based approaches, avoiding overfishing and adverse impacts on threatened species and vulnerable ecosystems; areas under agriculture, aquaculture and forestry are managed sustainably, ensuring conservation of biodiversity; pollution has been brought to levels that are not detrimental; and invasive species and their pathways are identified, prioritized, controlled or eradicated. By 2015: human pressures on coral reefs and other vulnerable ecosystems impacted by climate change and ocean acidification are minimized.

- **Improve the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, species and genetic diversity.** By 2020: at least 17% of terrestrial and inland water areas and 10% of coastal and marine areas, especially those of importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services are conserved through ecologically representative and well connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures; the extinction of known threatened species has been prevented and their conservation status improved; and the genetic diversity of cultivated plants, farmed and domesticated animals and their wild relatives is maintained and genetic erosion minimized.

- **Enhance the benefits to all from biodiversity and ecosystem services.** By 2020: ecosystems that provide essential services are restored and safeguarded; ecosystem resilience and the contribution of biodiversity to carbon stocks has been enhanced through conservation and restoration of at least 15% of degraded ecosystems, thereby contributing to climate change mitigation and adaptation; and the Nagoya Protocol is in force and operational.

- **Participatory planning, knowledge management and capacity building enhances implementation.** By 2015: each country has developed, adopted and commenced implementing an updated biodiversity strategy and action plan. By 2020: the traditional knowledge and practices of indigenous peoples and their customary use of biological resources are respected and integrated into implementation; science, technologies and knowledge relating to biodiversity and the consequences of its loss is improved, widely shared and applied; and mobilisation of financial resources for effectively implementing the new strategic plan will increase substantially.





Brown Tree Snake on 'Casper's Hideaway' — John McCann.

## Australia's National Biodiversity Conservation Strategy

Australia's *Biodiversity Conservation Strategy 2010–2030* was released in October 2010. HSI has been actively pushing for effective national strategic approaches to biodiversity conservation since its establishment in 1994. HSI's Michael Kennedy was a member of the original *Biological Diversity Advisory Committee* established by ALP Environment Minister Ros Kelly MP in 1991, to develop the very first draft *National Strategy for the Conservation of Australia's Biological Diversity*. Since the publication of the final national strategy in 1996, HSI has continued to lead the push for high-level prioritisation of national biodiversity policy goals through many avenues, including playing a very key NGO role in the passage of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act, 1999*.

In 2004 HSI initiated the establishment of the *National Biodiversity Alliance* (NBA\*) which developed proposals for a new *National Biodiversity Initiative* (NBI). The NBI had some influence over the National Heritage Trust and a significant impact on the design of Labor's *Caring for our Country* program (CFOC). HSI also launched its *Future Proofing Australia* strategy. HSI consultant Rod Holesgrove helped design the CFOC package as an adviser to Peter Garrett when Garrett was the Shadow Minister for the Environment.

HSI therefore welcomed the decision to update the national biodiversity strategy which was announced in May 2009. Unfortunately the consultation draft for *Australia's Biodiversity Conservation Strategy 2010–2030* left much to be desired. In particular, we were concerned that the proposed actions were extremely vague, with no real commitments either in time or funding allocation. Hence we proposed that the Strategy needed rewriting with SMART targets — *specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely*. The resulting and improved *Australia's Biodiversity Conservation Strategy 2010–2030* was released by Minister Burke in October 2010. While the Strategy could not be described as comprehensive and still lacks any financial or program commitments, it now includes "10 national targets" (see opposite). While still generally vague, the completed Strategy does provide a somewhat improved basis for national action.

HSI, in cooperation with WWF and the ACF had a significant impact on the original design of CFOC. While we have been happy with some aspects of CFOC, particularly the significant increase in funding for protected area establishment including indigenous protected areas, we continue to be critical of the overall level of funding. CFOC funding of \$2.25 billion over

five years is the level of funding budgeted for by the Howard Government. In other words there has been no increase in funding for national biodiversity and natural resources management programs, under four years of Labor. The recent adoption of the *Aichi Biodiversity Targets* at CBD COP 10, Nagoya, provides an excellent platform for a Federal government commitment to increased funding.

Another long-standing call from HSI has been for CFOC to be effectively and financially aligned with other related policies and programs such as climate change, water management, agriculture and, of course, *Australia's Biodiversity Conservation Strategy 2010–2030*. Such alignment remains elusive.

### Australia's Biodiversity Conservation Strategy: 10 national targets:

1. By 2015, achieve a 25% increase in the number of Australians and public and private organisations who participate in biodiversity conservation activities.
2. By 2015, achieve a 25% increase in employment and participation of Indigenous peoples in biodiversity conservation.
3. By 2015, achieve a doubling of the value of complementary markets for ecosystem services.
4. By 2015, achieve a national increase of 600,000 km<sup>2</sup> of native habitat managed primarily for biodiversity conservation across terrestrial, aquatic and marine environments.
5. By 2015, 1,000 km<sup>2</sup> of fragmented landscapes and aquatic systems are being restored to improve ecological connectivity.
6. By 2015, four collaborative continental-scale linkages are established and managed to improve ecological connectivity.
7. By 2015, reduce by at least 10% the impacts of invasive species on threatened species and ecological communities in terrestrial, aquatic and marine environments.
8. By 2015, nationally agreed science and knowledge priorities for biodiversity conservation are guiding research activities.
9. By 2015, all jurisdictions will review relevant legislation, policies and programs to maximise alignment with Australia's Biodiversity Conservation Strategy.
10. By 2015, establish a national long-term biodiversity monitoring and reporting system.

\* Members of the National Biodiversity Alliance were: Humane Society International (incorporating the Community Biodiversity Network), WWF Australia, Australian Wildlife Conservancy, Bush Heritage Australia, Birds Australia, Green Australia and the Australian Centre for Environmental Law. Scientific Advisory Panel: Prof. Andy Beattie, Dr Gerry Cassis, Dr Hal Cogger AM, Dr Chris Dickman, Dr Gordon Friend, Dr Warren Musgrave, Prof. Henry Nix, Prof. Tony Norton, Prof. Hugh Possingham, Paul Sattler and Dr Denis Saunders AM.



## Wildlife Protection Units at Bukit Tigapuluh National Park, Jambi, Sumatra

HSI has been supporting forest protection work in the **Bukit Tigapuluh National Park** and surrounds in Sumatra since 2009, with programs carried out by the Australian Orangutan Project and the Frankfurt Zoological Society. The area is not only important as a tropical lowland forest refuge for critical populations of Sumatran orangutans, elephants and rhinoceros, but is also a *Global Priority Tiger Conservation Landscape*. The Australian Orangutan Project's President Leif Cocks tells the story of the success of the *Wildlife Protection Units* in his report below.

"Thanks to the continued support of the Humane Society International, the Wildlife Protection Units (WPU) in the Bukit Tigapuluh (BTP) ecosystem have been able to continue with their valuable work. The goals of the WPUs are to secure the released Sumatran orangutan population and its habitat; to stop poaching and prevent illegal logging as the major threat for all wildlife and their habitats, and to collect wildlife data in order to produce baseline data for Buffer Zone management and as an evaluation tool for ecosystem conditions within BTP.



© Michael Kennedy.

From the second half of September 2010, WPUs were involved in: patrolling the access roads and the surroundings of the Open Orangutan Sanctuary (OOS) and Sumatran Orangutan Release Centre (SORC), preventing forest encroachment and monitoring illegal activities, as well as patrolling a grid system within the BTP ecosystem, collecting information about wildlife distribution and preventing encroachment, illegal logging and poaching. There have recently been joint patrols with the Indonesian Ministry of Forestry to legally follow up information on illegal activities. At any one time, six units have been consistently deployed in the field. Four WPUs undertake regular patrols and activities and now two units have been specifically trained as Elephant Conflict Mitigation Units (ECMU). These units are deployed to mitigate human-elephant conflicts and raise public awareness about Indonesian conservation law within the local communities, in and surrounding the national park. The next WPU recruitment is being scheduled to further increase the number of Units.

In recent months the WPUs were mainly deployed in the South Western and Eastern part of the national park. It has been eight months since ECMU involvement in elephant conflict mitigation. In the area of operation, they have been able to gain trust and respect of the local communities. The locals are now directly contacting the ECMU members whenever conflicts occur. ECMUs also have done remarkably good work in motivating the local community to be actively involved in elephant conflict mitigation through various training sessions. These training sessions involve small groups formed into teams. The ECMUs have given training on how to use 'scare guns' (carbide bazooka), the construction of watch towers, and how to make fire and crop guarding techniques. Two watchtowers have been constructed during workshops, with three more watchtowers independently built by the local communities. In November 2010 two members of the ECU (Elephant Conflict Unit) from the 'Hutan' Wildlife Rangers from Sabah, Malaysia, visited the ECMU in Bukit Tigapuluh. The Malaysian unit is very experienced with conflict mitigation techniques. They joined ECMU patrols in the field for seven days. This kind of knowledge sharing and experience has further increased the ECMU effectiveness in BTP.

To assist WPU Management, a quarterly performance evaluation sheet was launched in the first week of December 2010. The evaluation sheet consists of thirty questions that need to be answered by WPU squad leaders. Following feedback, for the next quarter this evaluation sheet will be further revised to make it easier to fill in and reduce time. A reward system is also being developed to motivate the WPUs to further achievement. Quarterly performance evaluation on all personnel will also be used as a filter to select future WPU squad leaders.

As usual it is very difficult to maintain vehicles in the harsh operating conditions of the BTP ecosystem. The fleet of circa 1980 Toyota Land Cruisers are struggling to be maintained on the road/dirt tracks and the cost for maintenance is increasing. Options are being explored to keep the necessary 4WD vehicles operational. There is also now one motorbike mechanic currently undertaking 'on the job training'. There are a total of nine WPU motorbikes. Eight motorbikes are used by the ECMU, while one motorbike is used as an operational vehicle in the town of Tebo."

**Leif Cocks**  
President, Australian Orangutan Project

**Foot note:** At the behest of AOP, HSI has been writing to the Indonesian Government about a range of threats to the Bukit Tigapuluh landscape area. Recently, President, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono seems to have responded positively to an HSI letter on the topic, causing the Ministry of Forestry to request information on a proposal NGOs have been promoting to reclassify one of the most critical forests for orangutans into a conservation concession.



## ■ Baluran National Park, East Java, Indonesia

Through our on ground partnership with ProFauna Indonesia, and in cooperation with the Born Free Foundation in the UK, HSI has provided funds to **Baluran National Park (BNP)** in East Java, Indonesia, for improving the Park's management program.

Covering approximately 25,000 hectares, Baluran has been a protected area since 1997. It is prime habitat for a number of endangered species including the banteng (*Bos javanicus*), water buffalo (*Bubalus bubalis*), Asiatic wild dog (*Cuon alpinus*), and leopard (*Panthera pardus*). Overall, the population of large mammals in BNP has been decreasing significantly over the past couple of years, particularly Baluran's banteng, water buffalo, and wild boar populations. The banteng population, for example, has decreased from an already small population of 282 in 1997 to an estimated size of 20-35 individuals.

The reasons for the loss of wildlife within BNP has been as a result of a culmination of threats, including poachers, who are now also poaching smaller prey; local military training groups using BNP for recreational hunting; a decreasing water supply; habitat and ground feed changes due to invasions of *Acacia nilotica*; and heavy local forest product harvesting and logging.

In implementing the program, ProFauna Indonesia was invited to work in partnership with BNP authorities. The objectives of the program included activities to decrease poaching and support population growth of local wildlife, particularly the conservation of the banteng population, as it was the species for which the BNP was awarded protected status. Discussions and field assessments held between ProFauna Indonesia and BNP formalised plans to establish support for intensive patrol units to continue operating within the Park. This includes ProFauna Indonesia providing funds for patrol equipment, which is needed to support long-term patrol operations.



Rosek Nursahid of ProFauna in Baluran National Park.

**Update:** Results of the Baluran NP patrol reports for the end of 2010 have shown positive results, with no signs of hunting activities in the patrolled areas.

## ■ HSI announces proven new method to control the rate of reproduction in African elephants

Late in 2010, the Humane Society of the United States and Humane Society International announced the results of a long-term research project which demonstrates that contraception can be used to humanely and effectively control reproduction in African elephants in small to medium private game reserves. HSUS/HSI have been funding the research in the **Makalali Game Reserve** for 10 years, as well as the vaccine production in veterinarian Henk Bertschinger's laboratory at the University of Pretoria for the last seven years.

The contraceptive method provides reserve managers with a proven alternative to culling or other inhumane or invasive procedures. The findings, obtained from a field project supported by HSUS/HSI since 2000 at the Makalali Conservancy in South Africa, were announced at a symposium on Compassionate Conservation: Animal Welfare in Conservation Practice, held in Oxford, England, Sept. 2-3, 2010.

*"We are delighted with the results of our research which demonstrate that it is possible to control small to medium-sized African elephant populations through immunocontraception,"* said Bertschinger, one of the project's leaders. *"The method, which is reversible and has minimal side effects at the injection site, is already very popular for the contraception of wild elephants in small to medium-sized game reserves in South Africa. Failure to control the reproduction of this species in reserves like this soon leads to a population that exceeds the carrying capacity of the reserve and to habitat degradation."*

Immunocontraception is a birth control method that uses the body's immune response to prevent fertilisation and thus pregnancy. The method does not require capture of the animals for treatment. It is a non-hormonal method that is safe within the food chain and poses no environmental threats. The vaccine is delivered by a dart fired from a vehicle or a helicopter. Treated cows develop antibodies that prevent sperm from penetrating and thus fertilizing the egg. To develop sufficient antibodies cows need to be vaccinated three times during the first year of treatment and to maintain the effect an annual booster is given. Reversal is achieved by stopping vaccination of individual cows.

*"Remotely delivered wildlife contraception has already proved to be humane and cost-effective (when one considers all the costs) for ungulates in the United States and we are confident it will become the method of choice for small and large elephant populations in Africa and Asia,"* said Dr. Andrew Rowan, CEO of HSI.

Research is underway to produce a "one-shot" vaccine that will mean that females will only have to be darted once during the first year and then every alternate year. This will reduce costs by at least half, increase the practicality and allow the treatment of much larger numbers of elephant cows in any one area. HSI Australia also committed resources to this important project.



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## African wild dog and cheetah conservation in Namibia and Zambia

HSI has been supporting African wild dog (painted dog) conservation activities in Africa for many years now. While still committed to the critical work of our partners in Zimbabwe (*Painted Dog Conservation*) we have recently begun to support an additional research and recovery program: a region-wide conservation initiative for African wild dog and cheetah, focusing on **Kafue NP** in Zambia and neighboring Namibia. Coordinator Robin Lines of the *Wild Dog Project* of the *Namibian Nature Foundation*, outlines the program aims below.

“**Kafue National Park (KNP)** in central western Zambia is situated at the heart of the vast miombo woodland biome that stretches from NE Namibia to the Atlantic Ocean. KNP is Zambia’s largest protected area at 2.2 million hectares, though the broader (unfenced) ecosystem extends over 6 million hectares when including the adjacent multiple use **Game Management Areas (GMA’s)**. Two-thirds of this total area is categorised as wilderness — devoid of roads or human habitation.

Kafue is also part of world’s largest terrestrial conservation network — the **Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area** incorporating 17 protected areas (and additional wildlife management areas) across 5 countries. The total area approaches 28 million hectares — about the size of Italy.

Like many large protected areas in post-Independence Africa, Kafue has suffered from decades of under-funding, and endured intense poaching during periods of political insecurity. Miombo woodland is under immense pressure from *inter alia* extractive industries, expanding subsistence farmers and large scale agricultural developments. In recent years investment and tourism in Zambia have gathered pace and Kafue’s biodiversity is coming under increasing domestic and international attention.

### Cheetah and African wild dog

The cheetah is the world’s fastest land mammal and listed as vulnerable throughout its range, with a (declining) population estimated between 7,500-10,000 adults. African wild dogs are endangered throughout their range with (declining) population estimates between 3,000-5,500 adults and yearlings. Both species require immense areas to maintain population viability and have broadly overlapping conservation requirements. They are also the focus of increasing conservation concern and considered both flagship and umbrella species.

### Research and Management

The 2008 *Region-wide Conservation Plan for cheetah and African wild dog* identified Kafue as the most important refuge for both species in Zambia, and perhaps throughout Southern Africa. The subsequent National Management Plan developed by the *Zambia Wildlife Authority (ZAWA)* flagged both species as a priority for research and management in Kafue. Subsequent discussions resulted in a partnership between the ZAWA, the Zambia Carnivore Program and the Kafue Trust to investigate the status of both endangered species and implement appropriate conservation interventions.

In December 2010 the ZAWA promptly awarded research permits for undertaking the study.

### Project Objectives

1. Describe the population size and dynamics of cheetah and African wild dog across representative samples of KNP and adjacent GMA’s;
2. Train and support local ZAWA ecologists in the field techniques necessary to research and monitor cheetah through a mentoring program;
3. Investigate the implications of poaching and human-wildlife conflict in GMA’s on the core populations;
4. Study additional influences on the core populations (prey availability, disease, competition with lion & hyena);
5. With assembled data assist ZAWA to develop and implement appropriate management interventions to maintain population viability, and connectivity with adjacent conservation areas within the Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Program.

### Next Steps

High rainfall (c.1200mm/pa), limited road infrastructure, flooding rivers and boggy conditions restricts *in situ* field activities until most park camps reopen around April.

After construction of basic research facilities in the park’s northern section, the project will embark upon a tourism-based photo census of cheetah and African wild dog, using image recognition software to generate preliminary minimum population estimates. Baseline data will then be used to initiate a non-invasive mark-recapture study, developing an understanding of population dynamics and individual lifecycles.”

**Robin Lines**  
**Wild Dog Project of the Namibian Nature Foundation**



## ■ Wildlife Advocates Seek Protection for African Lions under U.S. Endangered Species Act

**WASHINGTON (March 1, 2011)** — A coalition of wildlife groups — Humane Society International, The Humane Society of the United States, International Fund for Animal Welfare, Born Free USA, Born Free Foundation and Defenders of Wildlife — filed a petition with the United States Department of Interior to list African lions as *Endangered* under the U.S. Endangered Species Act.

The population and range of the African lion are in alarming decline. During the past two decades, the number of African lions has declined by at least 48.5 percent as a result of retaliatory killings, loss of habitat and prey species, over-exploitation by recreational trophy hunters and commercial trade, disease, and other human-caused and natural factors. Today, there are fewer than 40,000 African lions remaining — most of them in just a handful of countries. Of the remaining populations, two-thirds are neither protected nor viable over the long-run.

“The African lion is facing an uncertain future at best. There is a real possibility that more African countries will lose their wild lions altogether if the current situation is not reversed,” said Adam Roberts, executive vice president of Born Free USA. “Currently, lions are not adequately protected by existing regulatory measures at national, regional or international levels. We need to take urgent measures to conserve the African lion before it’s too late.”

The petition documents that international trade in African lions and their parts, including trophy hunting, is playing a role in the reduction of the population. From 1998 through 2008, at least 7,445 wild lions were traded internationally with the United States importing a minimum of 4,021. Additionally, 64 percent of the 5,663 wild lions traded internationally for recreational trophy hunting purposes were imported to the United States.

“The king of the jungle is heading toward extinction, and yet Americans continue to kill lions for sport,” said Jeff Flocken, Washington DC office director of IFAW. “Our nation is responsible for importing over half of all lions brought home by trophy hunters each year. The African lion is in real trouble and it is time for this senseless killing and unsustainable practice to stop.”

Despite the significant and continued declines in population and range, the number of lion trophies imported to the United States is increasing. In 2008, trophy imports to the United States were greater than any other year in the preceding decade and more than twice the number in 1999.

Listing the African lion as Endangered would generally prohibit the import of lion trophies into the United States, an essential step to reversing the current decline of the population. Moreover, the listing would stop imports of commercially traded lions and lion parts that do not benefit lions in the wild.

“The United States is the leading importer of lions and lion parts for commercial and recreational trade — this includes skulls, claws, hides, and live lions,” said Teresa Telecky, director of the wildlife department at The HSUS. “Americans’ thirst for exotic goods and trophies to hang on their walls is driving lions to extinction. The African lion simply cannot endure this level of exploitation if their long-term survival is to be ensured.”

Protection under the ESA would also help increase global awareness to the plight of the African lion and may generate additional resources to tackle in-country threats such as poisoning, persecution and habitat loss that currently confront wild lions.

“The U.S. government must recognize that African lions are in danger of extinction throughout a significant portion of their range, acknowledge our nation’s significant role in the lion’s fate and bring greater scrutiny to all factors contributing to the decline of lion populations,” said Bob Irvin, senior vice president for conservation programs at Defenders of Wildlife. “The African lion is a vital cultural asset, a symbol of the world’s last great vestiges of wildness, and a critical part of healthy ecosystems that must be protected.”

The Secretary of the Interior has 90 days to assess whether an Endangered listing under the ESA may be warranted, 12 months to decide whether to propose listing and then another 12 months to make a final decision. For more information, visit [www.saveafricanlions.org](http://www.saveafricanlions.org).



Michael Simmons.



## ■ HSI / CI\* — habitat nomination program update

### 1.3 million hectares of Coolibah – Black Box Woodland listed by Feds

More than a decade after HSI first nominated them for listing as Threatened Ecological Communities (TECs) under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act, 1999* (EPBC Act), ‘**Coolibah – Black Box Woodlands of the Darling Riverine Plains and the Brigalow Belt South Bioregions**’ and ‘**New England Peppermint (*Eucalyptus nova-anglica*) Grassy Woodlands**’ have finally been listed under the EPBC Act as *Endangered* and *Critically Endangered* respectively. The listing of both of these ecological communities will help to ensure the long-term conservation of some of Australia’s most threatened habitat. It will also assist in the protection of those plants and animals dependent on the communities, some of which are listed as threatened species in their own right.

These threatened communities have been listed under the NSW *Threatened Species Conservation Act, 1995* (TSC Act) following HSI nominations since 2002 (New England Peppermint Grassy Woodlands) and 2003 (Coolibah – Black Box Woodlands) and have both endured long and winding paths to finally achieve national listings, with that of the Coolibah – Black Box Woodlands being particularly riddled with controversy.

The New England Peppermint Grassy Woodlands’ listing is a merger of two HSI nominations which separated the community into occurrences on basalt and sediment, both of which were initially submitted at the end of 2000, a little over half a year after our original EPBC Act nomination of Coolibah – Black Box Woodlands.

Unfortunately, shortly after these nominations were submitted there was a huge farming sector backlash after former Environment Minister Robert Hill, listed **Bluegrass (*Dichanthium spp.*) dominant grasslands of the Brigalow Belt Bioregions (North and South)** — also nominated by HSI as an endangered ecological community — the first under the EPBC Act. We understand that subsequent Environment Ministers were instructed to sit on EPBC Act ecological community nominations by Prime Minister Howard, and as a result did their level best to postpone the day they had to list Coolibah – Black Box Woodlands, using farcical arguments and abuses of the law. However HSI refused to give up and let the nominations fall off the agenda, persevering with efforts including the triggering of an Australian National Audit Office (ANOA) review into delays regarding EPBC Act listings.

Repeated lobbying from the farming sector had sought to have the protection provided Coolibah – Black Box Woodlands under the TSC Act undone (they failed), but potential national protection for the ecological community received a boost when a change of Government saw Peter Garrett assume the position of Environment Minister and include both Coolibah – Black Box Woodlands and New England Peppermint Grassy Woodlands in the 2008 Finalised Priority Assessment List (FPAL).

With a decision date of September 30, 2010 for both, we were thrilled to receive notice that on the recommendation of the Threatened Species Scientific Committee (TSSC), Commonwealth Environment Minister Tony Burke had listed New England Peppermint Grassy Woodlands as *Critically Endangered* and Coolibah – Black Box Woodlands as *Endangered*, ending close to 11 years of Commonwealth delaying tactics. As their distributions range outside NSW, nationwide protection under the EPBC Act is the best chance for these ecological communities’ management and survival outside of direct reservation, while those remnants already protected under the TSC Act are now backed up by, and have bolstered conservation benefits under, Commonwealth law.

\* Conservation International (CI) is now partnering HSI’s habitat nomination program.



Coolibah – Black Box Woodlands — DSEWPac.

**Coolibah – Black Box Woodlands’** listing encompasses a higher area of remnant vegetation than any other community recognised under the EPBC Act, with an enormous extent best approximated at 1,321,103 hectares (approximately 3.3 million acres), down approximately 65% from the pre-European estimate of 3,814,797 hectares. Unfortunately these remaining instances are highly fragmented and many have lost their integrity through degradation since European settlement. Ongoing threats to the community include: clearing; changes to the hydrological landscape; inappropriate grazing regimes; weed invasion; lack of recruitment of plant species; and a relatively low level of protection in reserves.

Coolibah – Black Box Woodlands provide habitat for a wide range of both vertebrate and invertebrate fauna species. A number of characteristic habitat features of value to particular fauna include a grassy understorey with scattered fallen logs, areas of deep-cracking clay soils, patches of thick regenerating *Eucalyptus* saplings and large trees containing a diverse bark and foliage foraging resource and an abundance of small and large hollows. The community is a eucalypt woodland occurring on the inland floodplains of northern New South Wales and southern Queensland, an association which indicates its particular importance for birds, both as woodland habitat and in providing nesting sites for colonial breeding waterbirds that occasionally rely on wetland in addition to woodland habitats. Examples of threatened bird species which the community provides vital habitat for include the Australian bustard (*Ardeotis australis*), bush stone-curlew (*Burhinus grallarius*), grey falcon (*Falco hypoleucos*), painted honeyeater (*Grantiella picta*), Major Mitchell’s Cockatoo (*Lophochroa leadbeateri*), square-tailed kite (*Lophoictinia isura*) and hooded robin (*Melanodryas cucullata*).

**New England Peppermint.** In evident contrast to the size of the Coolibah – Black Box Woodlands, just 14,127 hectares of New England Peppermint (*Eucalyptus nova-anglica*) Grassy Woodlands remain. This represents a reduction of 82.5% from the pre-European estimate of 80,504 hectares, caused by ongoing threats that include dieback, intensified land use, clearing, inappropriate grazing regimes, weed invasion, lack of recruitment of plant species and a low level of protection in reserves.



New England Peppermint Grassy Woodland — DSEWPac.







## ■ HSI / CI — habitat nomination program update Continued from page 12

The ecological community provides important habitat for a wide variety of bird species with its combination of tree hollows and abundant seed bearing grasses and forbs, as well as flowering eucalypts that provide nectar and pollen. The latter are also a seasonally important food source for grey-headed (*Pteropus poliocephalus*) and little red (*Pteropus scapulatus*) flying-foxes and other tree dwelling mammals, while the tree hollows are essential for hollow-dependent arboreal mammals such as the greater (*Petauroides volans*), sugar (*Petaurus breviceps*), yellow-bellied (*Petaurus australis*), feather-tail (*Acrobates pygmaeus*) and squirrel (*Petaurus norfolcensis*) gliders. Although some fauna have been lost from the region, remnants of temperate woodland are important habitat for those species that remain, which are often significant contributors to farm productivity through the provision of ecosystem services. An example lies in native insects, birds and gliders that pollinate crop and pasture plants and assist in the control of leaf-eating insects and pasture grubs.

### Further successful listings by HSI / CI in New South Wales...

In *Technical Bulletin 16*, we announced that the NSW Scientific Committee had made three Preliminary Determinations to list HSI nominated threatened ecological communities as *Critically Endangered* under the TSC Act. In one great swoop last September however we received notice that each of these nominations, 'Mallee and Mallee-Broombrush dominated woodland and shrubland, lacking *Triodia*, in the NSW South-western Slopes Bioregion', 'Marsh Club-rush sedgeland in the Darling Riverine Plains Bioregion' and 'Porcupine Grass – Red Mallee – Gum Coolabah hummock grassland / low sparse woodland in the Broken Hill Complex Bioregion' had been successfully listed after Final Determinations concluded that the *Critically Endangered* criteria had been met in each case:



Mallee and Mallee-Broombrush dominated woodland — J. Plaza.

**Mallee and Mallee-Broombrush dominated woodland and shrubland, lacking *Triodia*, in the NSW South-western Slopes Bioregion.** A merger of two HSI nominations, 'Bull Mallee – White Mallee tall mallee woodland on red sand loam soils in the central western slopes of NSW' and 'Blue Mallee – Green Mallee – Broombrush mallee low woodland of the NSW South-western Slopes Bioregion', this *Critically Endangered* Ecological Community provides habitat for the TSC Act listed *Endangered* bush stone-curlew (*Burhinus grallarius*) and malleefowl (*Leipoa ocellata*), as well as the *Vulnerable* Gilbert's whistler (*Pachycephala inornata*), shy heathwren (*Hylacola cauta*), southern scrub-robin (*Drymodes brunneopygia*) and the herb spiny pepper-cress (*Lepidium aschersonii*). Both the malleefowl and spiny pepper-cress are also listed as *Vulnerable* under the EPBC Act, with reports indicating that malleefowl have seriously declined in the variant of the community dominated by broombush, green mallee and blue mallee, while related accounts from birdwatchers detail that the shy heathwren and southern scrub-robin are also in serious decline in certain regions.

**Marsh Club-rush sedgeland in the Darling Riverine Plains Bioregion.** Marsh Club-rush sedgeland in the Darling Riverine Plains Bioregion is thought to be restricted to the Gwydir River Wetlands, located near Armidale in northern NSW, with an unconfirmed extent estimated to be in the region of approximately 200 hectares. Various estimates of the community's pre-European settlement extent are within the range of 2000-5000 hectares, representing an approximate reduction in size between 90 and 96%. Floodplain wetland communities such as Marsh Club-rush sedgeland have undergone significant changes to their hydrological regimes as a result of river regulation. Since regulation of flows to the Gwydir Wetlands began in 1972 and the development of Copeton Dam in 1976, there has been a decrease in available flows to the wetlands, with a large proportion of the water that historically reached the Lower Gwydir Watercourse now diverted for purposes such as irrigation, stock and domestic use.

Many bird species listed under the TSC Act have been recorded in the wetlands, including the *Endangered* black-necked stork (*Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus*), Australasian bittern (*Botaurus poiciloptilus*) and painted snipe (*Rostratula benghalensis australis*) (also listed as *Vulnerable* under the EPBC Act), and a further eleven species listed as *Vulnerable*: the magpie goose (*Anseranas semipalmata*), blue-billed duck (*Oxyura australis*), freckled duck (*Stictonetta naevosa*), brolga (*Grus rubicunda*), comb-crested jacana (*Irediparra gallinacea*), osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*), red-tailed black-cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus banksii samueli*), glossy black cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus lathami*), turquoise parrot (*Neophema pulchella*), pied honeyeater (*Certhionyx variegatus*) and chestnut quail-thrush (*Cinclosoma castanotus*).

**Porcupine Grass – Red Mallee – Gum Coolabah hummock grassland / low sparse woodland in the Broken Hill Complex Bioregion.** Porcupine Grass – Red Mallee – Gum Coolabah hummock grassland / low sparse woodland in the Broken Hill Complex Bioregion is habitat for a multitude of reptile species, which include the mallee slender blue-tongue lizard (*Cyclodomorphus melanops elongatus*), marble-faced delma (*Delma australis*), and the tawny crevice-dragon (*Ctenophorus decresii*), all listed as *Endangered* under the TSC Act. The community has been identified only on leasehold lands, and is subsequently not known to occur in any conservation reserves. Occupying an estimated total area of approximately 400 hectares in two main naturally fragmented instances, Porcupine Grass – Red Mallee – Gum Coolabah hummock grassland / low sparse woodland was listed as *Critically Endangered* due to it being "very highly restricted, with the nature of its distribution making it likely that the action of a threatening process could cause it to decline or degrade in extent or ecological function over a time span appropriate to the life cycle and habitat characteristics of the ecological community's component species."

The classification of these ecological communities as *Critically Endangered* is an apt recognition of their dire situation, by definition they are facing an extremely high risk of extinction in New South Wales in the immediate future. These listings also ensure that the maximum protection available under the NSW *Threatened Species Conservation Act* can be utilised for their protection.



Porcupine Grass – Red Mallee – Gum Coolabah hummock grassland — S. Sass.





Castlereagh Scribbly Gum Woodland — HSI.

**Castlereagh Scribbly Gum Woodland.** This woodland also recently gained *Vulnerable* status under the NSW TSCA Act. Development and land clearing associated with Western Sydney's rapid urbanisation and population growth, which is set for another boom should the Draft Sydney Growth Centres Strategic Assessment Report remain largely unchanged upon finalisation, is the most significant threat to ecological communities and woodlands in the region. To complement existing listings such as that of *Cumberland Swamp Woodland* (*Endangered*, TSC Act) and HSI nominated *Cumberland Plain Woodland* (*Critically Endangered*, TSC Act and EPBC Act), in late October 2009 we made a TSC Act nomination for the listing of *Castlereagh Scribbly Gum Woodland in the Sydney Basin Bioregion* as a threatened ecological community, prepared by ecological consultant, Steve Douglas.

Consequently, we were delighted to be advised in December 2010 that the NSW Scientific Committee had made a Final Determination to list the ecological community as *Vulnerable* under the TSC Act, due to a reduced and restricted geographic distribution and reduction in ecological function. Castlereagh Scribbly Gum Woodland in the Sydney Basin Bioregion is known to contain an *Endangered* population of *Dillwynia tenuifolia* (listed under both the TSC and EPBC Acts), as well as examples of various threatened plant species: *Grevillea juniperina* subsp. *Juniperina*, listed as *Vulnerable* under the TSC Act; *Acacia bynoeana* and *Grevillea parviflora* subsp. *Parviflora*, both of which are classed as *Vulnerable* under the TSC and EPBC Acts; *Micromyrtus minutiflora* and *Pultenaea parviflora* which are listed as *Endangered* under the TSC Act and *Vulnerable* under the EPBC Act; and *Allocasuarina glareicola* and *Persoonia nutans*, *Endangered* under both the State and Commonwealth legislation.

A recent draft assessment conducted by the NSW Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water of Deerubbin Local Aboriginal Land council lands, which are dominated by remnant Castlereagh Scribbly Gum Woodland, detailed 13 species of threatened fauna that are likely to be found in the ecological community. 12 of these are listed as *Vulnerable* under the TSC Act: the barking owl (*Ninox connivens*), eastern bentwing-bat (*Miniopterus schreibersii oceanensis*), eastern false pipistrelle (*Falsistrellus tasmaniensis*), eastern freetail-bat (*Mormopterus norfolkensis*), gang-gang cockatoo (*Callocephalon fimbriatum*), greater broad-nosed bat (*Scoteanax rueppellii*), large-footed myotis (*Myotis macropus*), square-tailed kite (*Lophoictinia isura*), squirrell glider (*Petaurus norfolcensis*) and powerful owl (*Ninox strenua*), as well as the grey-headed flying fox (*Pteropus poliocephalus*) and large-eared pied bat (*Chalinolobus dwyeri*), both of which are also protected through *Vulnerable* listings under the EPBC Act. The 13th threatened species is the *Endangered* (TSC Act) *Cumberland Plain land snail* (*Meridolum corneovirens*). Very little is known of the species besides it being a fungus specialist, its ability to dig several centimetres into soil to escape drought and, as its name suggests, that it is restricted to a very small area on the Cumberland Plain.

With an estimated area of extent of approximately 3,083 hectares, representing just over 50% of that pre-1750, only 386 hectares of Castlereagh Scribbly Gum Woodland are known to be reserved within the National Parks estate, a figure which highlights the need for increased planning and consideration of environmental factors in development assessments impacting on the Threatened Ecological Community and the subsequent importance of this *Vulnerable* classification. HSI is urging the NSW State Government to utilise all the conservation tools available under the TSC Act in order to ensure this listing is effective.

### And some additional good ecological community news...

Late last year, the *National Park Estate (South-Western Cypress Reservations) Bill 2010* was passed through the Parliament of New South Wales, transferring 46,000 hectares of State Forest to the National Parks Estate, including the Coradgery, Blue Mallee, Jimberoo, Wilbertroy, Killonbutta, Carrabear, Stackpoole, Lake Urana, Mandagery and Yathong State Forests — identified by the National Parks Association as high priority due to their substantial areas of *endangered ecological communities*, particularly the HSI nominated *Sandhill Pine* (TSC Act) and *Inland Grey Box Woodlands* (TSC and EPBC Acts). The Coradgery State Forest, which comprises over 700 hectares of high-quality, largely undisturbed Inland Grey Box Woodland, now forms part of the South West Woodland Nature Reserve after being transferred, along with the majority of the State forests, on the 1st of January, 2011.

The majority of the new National Parks have been, or will be established between Narrandera and Dubbo, an area which includes some of the most heavily cleared landscapes in the State. Although accurate extent of Threatened Ecological Communities contained within the new 46,000 hectare South-Western Cypress Reservations area are unknown, the HSI nominated EPBC and TSC Act listings that were a vital aspect of the decision to transfer the State Forests have unquestionably delivered critical environmental benefits.



Callitris glaucophylla – Maireana pyramidata woodland on sandplain — J. Plaza.



## ■ Indicative Distribution of Threatened Ecological Communities (Predominantly Native Vegetation) within the Murray-Darling Basin

With the expert help of the Commonwealth's *Environmental Resource Information Network* (ERIN) HSI sought the development of indicative maps to illustrate the extent of *Threatened Ecological Communities* (TECs) within the Murray-Darling Basin region.

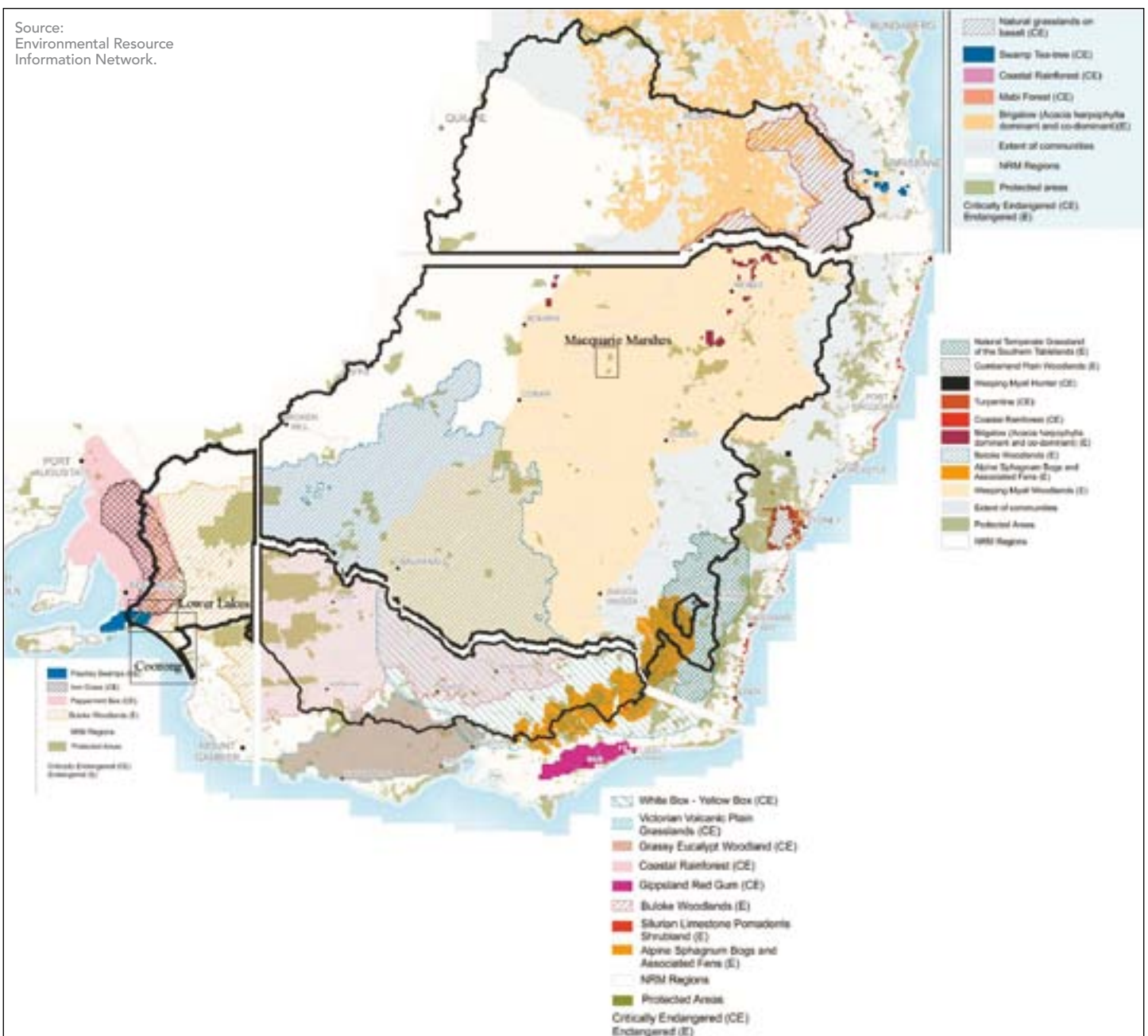
These maps should be viewed in conjunction with each other as, collectively, they represent all threatened ecological communities listed and protected in the schedules of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act, 1990* (EPBC), as they occur in Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia. They are consequently EPBC Matters of National Environmental Significance.

At the time of writing, HSI's scientific nominations program\* is responsible for the listing of approximately 1.95 to 2.48 million hectares of threatened communities under the EPBC Act, or approximately 75-80% of all listed EPBC ecosystems, primarily occurring within the Murray-Darling Basin.

These statistics and the maps do not reflect three very recent ecological community listings under the EPBC Act, following HSI nominations, which also occur within the Murray-Darling Basin. They are the **Grey**

\* Conservation International (CI) is now partnering HSI's habitat nomination program.

Source:  
Environmental Resource  
Information Network.



Indicative Distribution of Threatened Ecological Communities within the Murray-Darling Basin, Map 1.



**Box (*Eucalyptus macrocarpa*) Grassy Woodlands and Derived Native Grasslands of South-eastern Australia**, with an extent of approximately 530,000 hectares, **Coolibah – Black Box Woodlands of the Darling Riverine Plains and the Brigalow Belt South Bioregion**, covering an area of some 1.3 million hectares, and the **New England Peppermint (*Eucalyptus nova-anglica*) Grassy Woodlands**, approximately 14,000 hectares in extent.

Many of the ecosystems within the Murray-Darling Basin successfully nominated for the EPBC Act by HSI have received double protection through listings under the New South Wales *Threatened Species Protection Act, 1995*, following similar HSI proposals. This includes the Grey Box Grassy Woodlands and Coolibah – Black Box Woodlands.

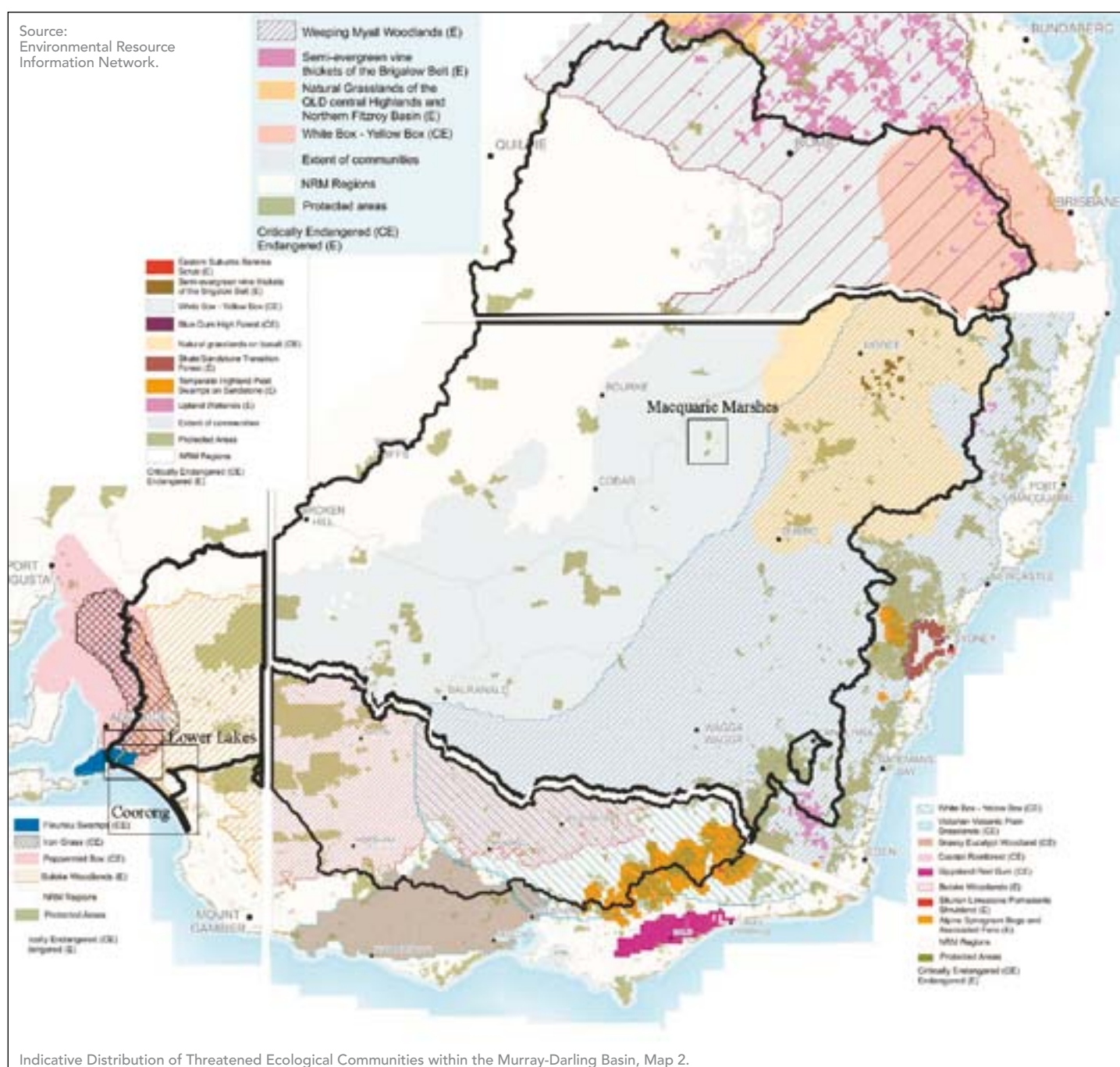
Pending HSI ecological community nominations of note, in the context of Murray-Darling wetlands and lakes, are the **Coorong and Lower Lakes (Lakes Alexandrina and Albert)** and the **Wetlands of the Darling Riverine Basin** (also known as the **Macquarie Marshes**). They are highlighted as boxes in the maps shown. (Both are currently under priority EPBC Act assessment by the Commonwealth).

**Source Data:**

Map data collated from a series of maps developed for the *Caring for our Country Business Plan 2010-11*, which were created by Environmental Resource Information Network (ERIN) Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts, 2009 Geographic Coordinate System on the GDA94Datum.

**Murray-Darling Basin boundary data:**

The data was supplied by the Murray-Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) as custodian of the data, and that the MDBA retains proprietary rights over the data.





## Pending HSI / CI\* heritage nominations under EPBC heritage provisions

Name	Proposed status	Year nominated	Progress
Daintree Lowland Rainforest (1)	National Heritage	2006 (re-nominated 2011)	Awaiting priority assessment
Tarkine Wilderness Area (2)	National Heritage	2004 (re-nominated 2011)	Currently under assessment
Fitzgerald River-Ravensthorpe Range Area	National Heritage	2006	Currently under assessment
Beekeepers-Lesueur Coomallo Area and Nambung National Park	National Heritage	2006	Currently under assessment
Townsville Field Training Area	Commonwealth Heritage	2008	Currently under assessment
Coringa-Herald Nature Reserve, the Coral Sea	National Heritage	2010	Awaiting priority assessment
Lihou Reef Nature Reserve, the Coral Sea	National Heritage	2010	Awaiting priority assessment
Great Western Tiers (2)	National Heritage	2004 (re-nominated 2011)	Awaiting priority assessment
Great Western Woodlands (Western Australia)	National Heritage	2007 (re-nominated 2011)	Awaiting priority assessment
Lake Eyre National Park and Elliot Price Conservation Park	National Heritage	2007 (re-nominated 2011)	Awaiting priority assessment
Cooper Creek sub-catchment	National Heritage	2008 (re-nominated 2011)	Awaiting priority assessment
Brisbane Water and Bouddi National Parks	National Heritage	2006 (re-nominated 2011)	Awaiting priority assessment
Paroo River catchment	National Heritage	2005 (re-nomination 2011)	Awaiting priority assessment
Barrow Island and the Montebello/Barrow Islands Marine Conservation Reserves	National Heritage	2005 (re-nominated 2011)	Awaiting priority assessment
Australian Antarctic Territory (AAT) and Australian Antarctic Whale Sanctuary (EEZ)	National Heritage	2005 (re-nominated 2011)	Awaiting priority assessment
The Coral Sea (3)	National Heritage	2008 (re-nominated 2010)	Awaiting priority assessment
Prince Regent National Park, Kimberley (4)	National Heritage	2006	Incorporated into the assessment of the West Kimberley National Heritage review
Drysdale River National; Kimberley (4)	National Heritage	2007	Incorporated into the assessment of the West Kimberley National Heritage review
Augustus, Bigge, Unwins, Wollaston and Middle Osborn Islands off West Kimberley coast for their dingo populations (4)	National Heritage	2006	Incorporated into the assessment of the West Kimberley National Heritage review
Frazer Island dingo population	National Heritage	2006	To be included in future review of Frazer Island WH values
Kakadu/Kapalga dingo population	National Heritage	2006	To be included in future review of Kakadu WH values

\* Most of those of the places in the chart have been re-nominated for a second time.

(1) With ARUP and the Daintree Rainforest Foundation.

(2) Jointly with the Tasmanian Conservation Trust.

(3) In cooperation with the Pew, ACF, TWS, AMCS, WDCS and CAFNEC.

(4) As a member of the inaugural Australian Heritage Council, HSI's Campaign Director helped ensure that the Kimberley was given top ten priority for national heritage assessment.

\* Conservation International (CI) is now partnering HSI's habitat nomination program.



## ■ Flying-foxes have their day in court

In issue 17 we reported on HSI's recent efforts regarding flying-foxes, including our plans to provide Bat Advocacy NSW Inc. with financial assistance to take the Federal Environment Minister and the Royal Botanic Gardens to the Federal Court regarding the dispersal of grey-headed flying-foxes from the gardens in Sydney.

The matters Bat Advocacy believed require review include the failure of the Federal Environment Minister to consider the loss of critical habitat to the grey-headed flying-foxes, the 29 year approval period for the dispersal, the social impacts of the relocation, and the failure to consider information regarding previous attempted flying-fox dispersals.

HSI supported the case because of its broader implications, in particular our belief that it would be an essential case to help demonstrate the importance of critical habitat for all species, not just grey-headed flying-foxes. By clarifying the importance of critical habitat we hope it will also promote the need for greater protection for threatened species and see greater emphasis placed on critical habitats under Commonwealth and state laws.

The Federal Court hearing took place over two days, Thursday 11th and Friday 12th November 2010. Detailed submissions were made by Bat Advocacy's barrister, and the representative for the Federal Minister, with supportive statements made by the Royal Botanic Gardens' representative. The judge subsequently retired to consider his ruling, which was received on 17th February.

Justice Cowdroy ruled that Bat Advocacy's challenge to the dispersal of grey-headed flying-foxes from Sydney's Royal Botanic Gardens be dismissed. HSI is deeply disappointed at the outcome of this case, which we had hoped would help demonstrate the importance of critical habitat not only for the threatened grey-headed flying-foxes but for all species. Bat Advocacy and HSI with the help of our solicitors EDO are currently appealing this judgement. In the meantime HSI and other organisations continue to closely monitor activities in the Gardens to ensure that all activities are in line with the conditions on the dispersal's approval. The dispersal is due to get underway on 1st May 2011, however preparation work, in the form of banding or tagging the flying-foxes, has already begun. **The appeal was held on April 8th, but was dismissed by the Federal Court.**

## ■ Shooting of flying-foxes in NSW to end

On 4th March, HSI was delighted to hear of the NSW State Government's announcement to phase out the licensed shooting of flying-foxes over three years, in a commitment due to start in July. This commitment has been matched by the Coalition, who has promised to phase out the licensed shooting of flying-foxes over a period of two years. This commitment has been matched by both parties with \$5 million funding towards the installation of full exclusion netting around orchards. Grants will be provided to orchardists for 50% of netting costs.

HSI is delighted at this news, which has come following many years of campaigning by many dedicated animal welfare groups. In recent months HSI developed a relationship with the NSW Farmers Association, which also supports the introduction of grants towards the installation of nets and liaised closely with them throughout this period. No doubt it is this substantive weight of opinion that has resulted in the commitment by both parties to end this barbaric practice.

Whilst HSI is pleased with the results, our aim is for an immediate end to shooting, given the cruelty resulting from shooting of flying-foxes. We will therefore continue to monitor this situation closely over the phase in period, continuing to call for the end of the shooting of our native, threatened flying-foxes as soon as possible. With a Coalition win at the March NSW election, we now await Government action.



Nick Edards.

## ■ Climate Change — identifying key biodiversity refugia

Following on from an important ALP policy commitment made at the outset of the new Government; the release by the Minister for Climate Change and Energy Efficiency, Greg Combet, of the *National Climate Change Adaptation Research Plan for Terrestrial Biodiversity*; and the announcement of a \$3.3 million funding program under the *Climate Change Adaptation Research Grants Program*, there was a public call for research proposals.

This call for project proposals by the Commonwealth under the Terrestrial Biodiversity NARP (*National Adaptation Research Plan*) closed at the start of 2011. One of the key priorities for immediate investment was:

**“Identifying key refugia to maintain Australia's terrestrial biodiversity under changing climate conditions.**

Research is needed to identify key refugia for terrestrial species, systems and taxonomic or functional groups under changing climate conditions: refugia will include those reflecting evolutionary and ecological factors, contemporary land use and management pressures and also novel refugia that may exist under climate change. The products of this research must support sound decisions about selecting and managing protected areas and management regimes across landscapes with the objectives of minimising the loss of genes, species and ecosystem functions, and maximising conservation of biodiversity and provision of ecosystem goods and services at the regional and national scales. It is possible that a second component integrated with this could be developed under the Freshwater Biodiversity theme to provide an integrated approach to identifying, protecting and managing refugia across landscapes.”

HSI congratulates the Government on these moves, and understands that conditional upon the quality of applications, a full project proposal is likely to be approved and commenced by the middle of the year.



## ■ Wildlife Land Trust hits 100 Australian Sanctuaries

In early 2011 the **Wildlife Land Trust (WLT)** passed the milestone mark of 100 sanctuaries. At the time of publishing the count sits at 111 sanctuaries while applications continue to arrive in our post box. These WLT wildlife sanctuaries range in size from 1 acre to 2,500 hectares, with 53 to be found in New South Wales, 30 in Queensland, 13 in Victoria, and 7, 5 and 3 in Western Australia, South Australia and Tasmania respectively. Together they amount to over 14,700 hectares (36,500 acres) of land providing a safe haven for hundreds of species of native wildlife and their habitats.



## ■ WLT helps purchase important Tasmanian rainforest block



Tasmanian Devil — Rainforest Rescue.

Late last year, the WLT responded to a call from Rainforest Rescue for monies to help purchase “Forest Lodge” a property containing 80 hectares of pristine old growth forest in Tasmania. WLT and HSI were very pleased to be able to make a modest financial contribution to the purchase of this important sanctuary. A short report from Rainforest Rescue below outlines the property and the background to the purchase.

“In November and December 2010, Rainforest Rescue appealed for funds to purchase 80 hectares of pristine old growth rainforest in the north east of Tasmania. Our appeal to purchase this special property, called ‘Forest Lodge’, was successful and Rainforest Rescue now has the funds to go ahead. We are currently arranging settlement on the property. This involves having a covenant placed on the title, and registering it with the Tasmanian Government. This will ensure that this special piece of rainforest is protected in perpetuity. The process is expected to take four months and we will provide an update once it is complete.

### *About Forest Lodge*

This stunning property is comprised of old growth rainforest on the Rattler Range. The Mount Victoria Forest Reserve surrounds it on three sides. The property has extensive views from the top plateau out onto the beautiful east coast of Tasmania. The rainforest on the property is quite spectacular. Large myrtle-beech and sassafras trees dominate it. These are ancient species of trees that evolved from trees growing in Gondwana, more than 130 million years ago, before eucalypts and acacias evolved. In addition, it is home to rare and endangered animals such as the Spotted Quoll, Tasmanian Devil and Wedge Tailed Eagle. We are very excited about purchasing and protecting Forest Lodge — it is truly ancient rainforest and is important in so many ways.

### *The background to our Tasmanian Rainforest Buy-back Project*

Over the years we’ve been asked by our supporters on many occasions if we have any plans to buy land in Tasmania. In June 2010, Gunns Limited auctioned 28,000 hectares of Tasmanian land, after a strategic decision to stop the native forest logging part of their operations (they are still in plantation logging). A small number of properties were sold to a range of private parties — many of them likely to be other logging companies. However, two philanthropists — Robert Purves and Kathmandu founder Jan Cameron — have assisted the Tasmanian Land Conservancy to purchase the remaining 27,388 hectares of the Gunns-owned properties — at a total cost of \$23.3 million.”

### **Rainforest Rescue**



## ■ WLT Sanctuary Profile: Wallibree, New South Wales

**Wallibree**, a wildlife sanctuary owned by Anne Heinrich and Harold Ralston, is a recent addition to the Wildlife Land Trust network that covers approximately 45 hectares (111.2 acres) of land near Comboyne, New South Wales.

Featuring a forested ridge between two creek lines at the northern end of a basalt plateau, 43.67 hectares of the sanctuary are protected by a Voluntary Conservation Agreement (VCA) with the NSW Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water. The plateau section of Wallibree is of tertiary age, with some sections thought to be up to 30 million years old.

Since 2000, Anne and Harold have kept detailed records of fauna and flora occurring within the VCA area on Wallibree, documenting an astonishing count of native species including 155 bird, 11 amphibian, 22 reptile and 17 mammal varieties, as well as an impressive 210 floral species.

Native bird species of particular note include the swift parrot (*Lathamus discolor*), a regular visitor to the sanctuary that is listed as *Endangered* under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act, 1999* (EPBC Act); the Wompoo fruit-dove (*Ptilinopus magnificus*), masked owl (*Tyto novaehollandiae*) and sooty owl (*Tyto tenebricosa*), each of which is a breeding resident classed as *Vulnerable* under the *New South Wales Threatened Species Conservation Act, 1995* (TSC Act); and the glossy black cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus lathami*) and barking owl (*Ninox connivens*), which are also TSC Act listed *Vulnerable* species and occasional visitors to Wallibree.

Mammal species listed under the EPBC Act that are known to be present on the sanctuary include the *Endangered* spotted-tailed quoll (*Dasyurus maculatus maculatus*) and *Vulnerable* grey-headed flying-fox (*Pteropus poliocephalus*), while the iconic dingo (*Canis lupus dingo*) has also been sighted.

At least three separate vegetation communities occur on Wallibree, each with a diverse variety of native understorey flora: sub-tropical rainforest, which exists on the edge of and in sheltered areas below the plateau and is dominated by red cedar (*Toona ciliata*), black booyong (*Heritiera actinophylla*) and rosewood (*Dysoxylum fraserianum*); tall wet eucalypt forest, occupying the main ridge running through the sanctuary and dominated by Sydney blue gum (*Eucalyptus saligna*), tallowood (*Eucalyptus microcorys*) and brush box (*Lophostemon confertus*), with young rainforest trees, ferns and herbaceous species featured in the understorey; and warm temperate rainforest, which dominates the sheltered valley along Hartleys Creek and is predominantly made up of coachwood (*Ceratopetalum apetalum*), crabapple (*Schizomeria ovata*), sassafras (*Doryphora sassafras*), red carabeen (*Geissos benthamii*) and, as is the case with sub-tropical rainforest, black booyong (*Heritiera actinophylla*).

Areas of tall wet eucalypt forest on Wallibree were heavily logged between 70 to 90 years ago; however the sanctuary is now an extremely good example of what can be done to restore habitats given a reasonable effort and period of time thanks to both the current and previous owners, with some small interventions of weed control and revegetation in struggling patches, allowing the affected instances to naturally restore.

Anne and Harold have stated that nature conservation is their highest priority on Wallibree, and their continuation of efforts to restore the few weed-infested areas back to natural bushland, combined with their established VCA and membership of the WLT emphasises that this is well and truly the case.



'Wallibree' — Anne Heinrich and Harold Ralston.

## ■ Queensland floods and Cyclone Yasi

The WLT and HSI were eager to give effective support where we could, to help wildlife groups on the ground to cope in the aftermath of the devastating Queensland floods and Cyclone Yasi.

The Trust sought advice on where such help could be best provided, and through the Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland [www.wildlife.org.au](http://www.wildlife.org.au) we received a list of needs, consequently sending emergency funding for the following projects:

- Bat Care — groups in SEQ need to cover cost of fresh food for orphaned and injured flying-foxes/bats, especially since fruit prices have increased substantially since the floods;
- Wildlife carers and rehabilitators in the Toowoomba region — funds to assist with food including milk substitutes, fruit and also cages and towels, blankets etc;
- Project Kial: Bridled Nailtail wallaby recovery project, Rockhampton region — funds for food, fence repair etc;
- Duckpond Reserve, Rockhampton — funds for repairs and revegetation;
- Caboolture/Pine Rivers region — funds toward medication and food for koalas and the replanting of koala food trees destroyed by flash flooding.

Rainforest Rescue [rainforestrescue.org.au](http://rainforestrescue.org.au) has also briefed us on the urgent needs of the already endangered Cassowary, and emergency funding for food and habitat restoration was provided by WLT and HSI.

The WLT and HSI are ready to provide further support when needed. If you would like to contribute to Queensland disaster wildlife relief work you can donate via HSI and we will pass it on, or alternatively directly to the websites above.



## ■ WLT supports rainforest protection in Sulawesi

During 2010, the Wildlife Land Trust head office in Washington alerted us to a local NGO in Sulawesi that was seeking funds to purchase a small but critical piece of rainforest habitat. WLT Australia was asked if we might have an interest in the program, and we are glad to say that we have been able to make a modest financial contribution to this important conservation initiative. Marcy Summers, Director of the Alliance for Tompotika Conservation explains about the program below.

The new Tompotika Forest Preserve, now in the process of being established by The Alliance for Tompotika Conservation (AITo), consists of approximately 10,000 ha of native Sulawesi lowland, hill, and submontane forest in the foothills of and largely encompassing Mt. Tompotika, Kabupaten Banggai, Central Sulawesi Province, Indonesia. The project consists of several parts:

- Several hundred hectares of privately-owned land being purchased or leased from local villagers in the key “gateway” area that controls the main access route to the mountain and its forests (exact total acreage being determined);
- Approximately 9,000 ha of government-owned “Hutan Lindung” forestland being proposed for long-term lease for conservation purposes (purchase is not allowed);
- Up to several hundred additional hectares of riparian corridors, key forest areas, and buffer zones being proposed for purchase or long-term lease from private individuals and/or village-level government to enhance the core preserve in various ways.

The entire Tompotika Forest Preserve project, when completed, will protect most of Mt. Tompotika and its pristine tropical rainforests, as well as the mountain’s main Northern access point, which is currently being used to gain access to the area for illegal logging and other anthropogenic threats to the forest and its wildlife.

The Tompotika Forest Preserve is being established with the full support and cooperation of local people and governments in the area. Having already been at work in this area for several years with regular eco-tourist groups and other forest-friendly projects, AITo staff have built a strong working relationship with local people that is based on trust, respect, and shared goals. Thus, accompanying the establishment of the new Tompotika Forest Preserve is a sustainability plan that includes a variety of programs to support sustainable livelihoods for local people and ensure their active involvement with all aspects of the project.

These programs include, in the immediate short term: a) patrols of the new forest preserve by teams consisting of AITo staff plus local village forest stewards; b) training in organic farming techniques, which will allow local people to grow plenty of food on existing agricultural lands rather than clearing new forest land for agriculture (“slash and burn”). These two programs will eventually be coupled with a plan for: c) construction of simple huts and infrastructure for ecotourism; and d) a forest restoration program which will hire villagers to help restore forests in the degraded buffer zones adjacent to the new preserve.

The new Tompotika Forest Preserve harbors numerous rare and endangered species such as anoa (*Bubalus depressicornis*), babirusa (*Babyrousa babyrussa*), tonkean macaque (*Macaca tonkeana*), bear cuscus (*Ailurops ursinus*), Sulawesi giant civet (*Macrogalidia musschenbroekii*), and the maleo bird (*Macrocephalon maleo*). In addition, seven new species of reptiles and amphibians have been identified in the last few years and await formal publication as endemic to this area, and found nowhere else on earth. The area has received very little scientific attention to date; future surveys planned for other taxa are likely to yield additional new species.

AITo’s community-based work to conserve Tompotika forests and endangered species earned the organization the 2010 Conservation Award from Mongabay.com, a premiere web source for international environmental news and information.

**Marcy Summers**

**Director**

**The Alliance for Tompotika Conservation**







Elk. © iStockphoto.com/Jason Lugo.

## ■ US Wildlife Land Trust Profile: Larson Wildlife Sanctuary

The **Larson Wildlife Sanctuary** is one of the latest sanctuaries to join the fold of the United States WLT network. It is located in the extreme southwestern corner of Colorado known as the Four Corners, an area under great development pressure with many large properties being divided into small ranches and residential lots.

The 146 hectares that comprise the sanctuary, however, will never be subjected to such divisions or development after the Wildlife Land Trust accepted the donation of a conservation easement on the property from owner Galen Larson in 2004. The protection of the Larson Wildlife Sanctuary was the fulfillment of a dream he shared with his late wife, Willetta, as although they were approached by property developers multiple times, according to Mr. Larson, they could never give the land over for such a purpose.

The WLT sanctuary is a forested and open tract, dominated by pinyon pine (*Pinus edulis*) on the upper slopes and plains above the canyon, while the lower slopes, canyon floor and southeastern corner of the property are dominated by big sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*).

An abundance of wildlife thrive on Larson Wildlife Sanctuary, including mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*), elk (*Cervus canadensis*), mountain lions (*Puma concolor*), both red (*Vulpes vulpes*) and gray (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*) foxes, black-tailed jackrabbits (*Lepus californicus*), coyotes (*Canis latrans*), raccoons (*Procyon lotor*) and a variety of snakes. Countless birds nest here and many more pass through during seasonal migrations, with the sanctuary known to be home to pheasants, owls and bald (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) and golden (*Aquila chrysaetos*) eagles among others.

In addition to the Larson Wildlife Sanctuary being protected as wildlife habitat now and into the future, the multitude of wildlife who call this land home are further protected due to recreational and commercial hunting and trapping, as well as destructive logging practices, being permanently prohibited.

Although this sanctuary remains privately owned, the Wildlife Land Trust has an obligation to perform periodic inspections to ensure that the wildlife habitat remains in good condition and that the terms of the conservation easements are being met.

## ■ New online consumer guide to animal welfare labels

In conjunction with continued work for *Truth in Labelling* and our campaign to develop a nationally consistent and mandatory labelling scheme for the method of production (meat, eggs and dairy), HSI has developed an *Online Consumer Guide to Animal Welfare Labelling*.

Amidst a market of animal products supported by a variety of schemes and standards, the *online consumer guide* aims to provide transparency to such a competitive market, and provide consumers with information they can use to make informed purchasing decisions.

The *online consumer guide* aims to:

- collect and present information on Australian welfare certifications and standards in a collective and public forum;
- increase transparency around the standards supporting welfare labels; and
- provide consumers easy access to information to enable them to make informed purchasing decisions.

The *online consumer guide* comes at a significant stage in consumerism where ethical shopping has the market power to improve environmental and welfare conditions for animal derived produce.

The *Online Consumer Guide to Animal Welfare Labelling* is available online at [www.animalwelfarelabels.org.au](http://www.animalwelfarelabels.org.au).

## ■ Independent Ministerial Review of Food Labelling Law and Policy — Final Report

The Review of Food Labelling Law and Policy (the Review) was announced by the Australian and New Zealand Food Regulation Ministerial Council (the Ministerial Council) in October 2009, and its *Final Report* has just been published.

HSI's submission to the Review focused on our *Truth in Labelling* campaign and presented evidence for the need for a legally enforceable labelling for method of production of animal products.

Producing 61 recommendations designed to address an approach to food labelling within a framework of broad public health strategies, consumer values and rights to information, and market and industry developments, the Review's *Final Report* covers a wide scope of recommendations and aims to provide a clear path to guide government decisions.

Corresponding to HSI's submission, the *Final Report* identified issues directly relating to method of production as specific consumer issues which have the potential to develop more agreed definitions. Specifically, it was determined that, "where the market operates efficiently there is no need for mandatory regulation, although in certain cases with specific values issues there may be advantages in developing a prescriptive definitional framework to ensure a level playing field."

Recommendations were also made to, "consider the benefit of establishing agreed standards under the auspices of Standards Australia for terms related to animal husbandry; and that industry and special interest groups develop and apply a responsive and more structured self-regulatory approach to consumer values issues".

Whilst recommendations remain ambiguous for *Truth in Labelling*, certain aspects of the *Final Report* do present an opportunity to pressure industry and government to do more.

The Review's *Final Report* can be accessed through <http://bit.ly/bNEspA>.



## ■ The Coral Triangle and its tropical forest surrounds

The Coral Triangle is a critical marine area under intensive development pressure, represented by the nations of Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Timor Leste and the Solomon Islands — nations that can also boast a large part of the world's last remaining tropical forests.

It is also the most highly biodiverse marine region on the planet, with over 30% of the world's coral reefs — a glorious *marine biodiversity hotspot*, nestled within and around the terrestrial *global biodiversity hotspots* of Sundaland, Wallacea, the Philippines and the East Melanesia Islands.

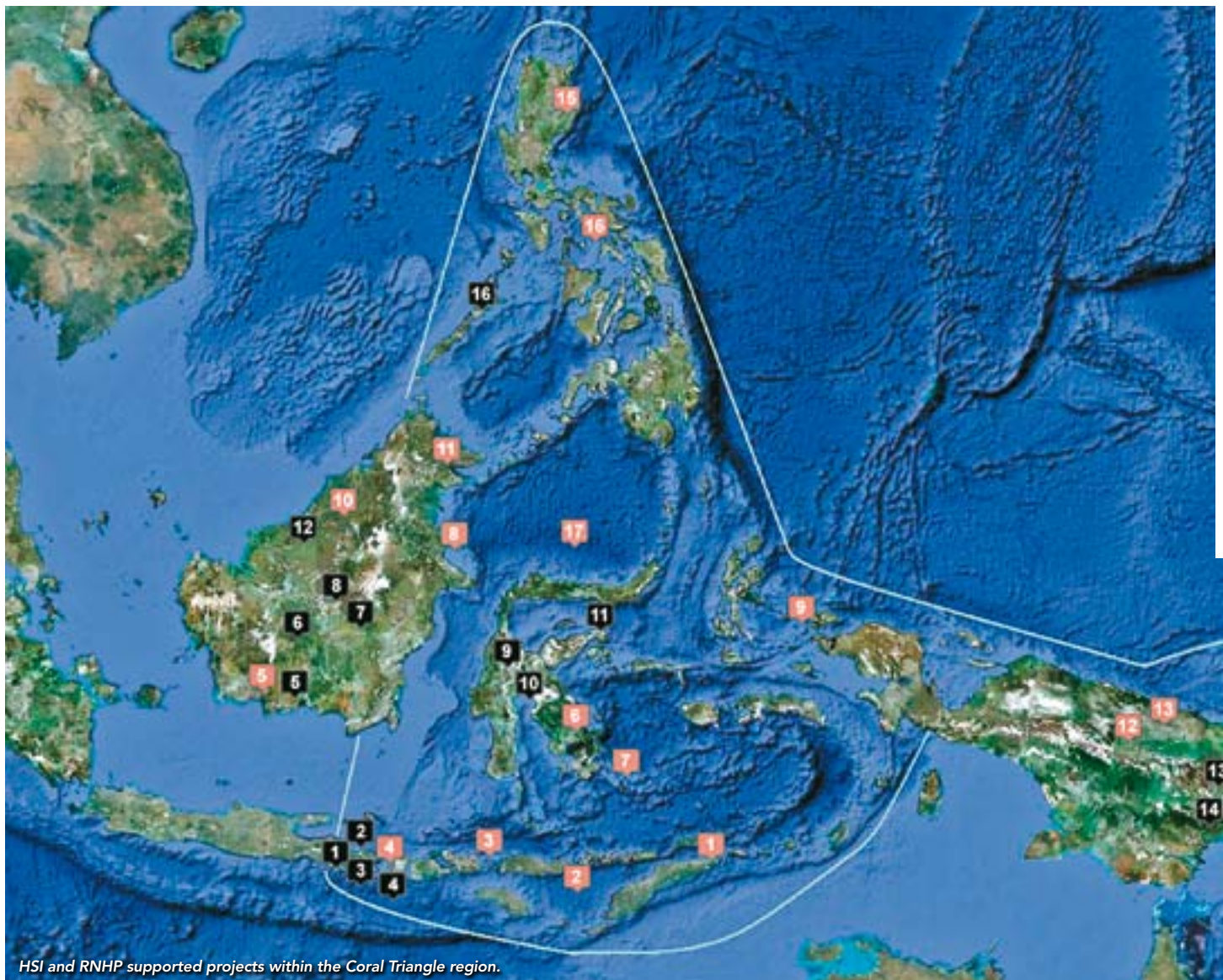
In reviewing its current “*Extinction Denied*” regional small grants program, HSI undertook a quick analysis of our past and existing program support efforts in the region. This also included looking at the resources allocated by the Commonwealth's \$10 million Regional Natural Heritage Program (RNHP) — an initiative HSI helped trigger, working in cooperation with Senator Meg Lees and Prime Minister John Howard's office in 2004. We are using this assessment to determine our priorities and resources allocation for the future implementation of the “*Extinction Denied*” grants program. HSI is also urging the Commonwealth to reignite a RNHP type program, allocating monies to NGOs in SE Asia/South Pacific regions for on-ground biodiversity/climate change work.

The following tables indicate both marine and terrestrial program support in the Coral Triangle and immediately surrounding terrestrial regions over the past decade, where HSI and the RNHP have collectively allocated around

\$3.5 million. In 2009, Environment Minister Peter Garrett also announced \$2 million for protection measures in the region, as a first Australian contribution to the Coral Triangle Initiative (CTI). HSI currently supports 12 projects in the region, with an eye to maintaining such a focus in the near future.

### HSI supported projects (marine and terrestrial) in Coral Triangle nations

- 1 Bali Wildlife Rescue Centre (Bali, Indonesia)**  
Full operational support for the Bali Wildlife Rescue Centre.
- 2 HSI Marine Turtle Protection with ProFauna Bali (Bali, Indonesia)**  
Full operational support for the ProFauna Bali office, maintaining a large range of marine turtle protection programs over the past eleven years (jointly funded with the Born Free Foundation, UK).
- 3 WLT/FNPF Conservation Education and Reforestation (Nusa Penida, Indonesia)**  
Implementation of Friends of the National Parks Foundation/Wildlife Land Trust education and community support program in the Nusa Penida Island Bird Sanctuary, and concurrent reforestation programs.
- 4 Nusa Penida Bird Sanctuary forest purchase (Indonesia)**  
Off the Bali coastline on the Island of Nusa Penida, HSI/WLT purchased a 13 acre coastal rainforest block contributing to the protection of the Nusa Penida Bird Sanctuary for the Friends of the National Parks Foundation.





- 5 Tanjung Puting National Park (Kalimantan, Indonesia)**  
An integrated and diverse conservation and development program conducted through the Friends of the National Parks Foundation, helping to protect Tanjung Puting National Park and surrounds (Sekunir River) in Kalimantan, including marine turtle protection.
- 6 Preparation of island orangutan rehabilitation site (Kalimantan, Indonesia)**  
Borneo Orangutan Society program to establish an island half-way house for rehabilitated orangutans (Kaja Island). Supporting local community consultation and botanical surveys.
- 7 Illegal Turtle Egg Trade Report (Kalimantan, Indonesia)**  
Recent 2010 investigation into the illegal trade in marine turtle eggs throughout Kalimantan, conducted by ProFauna Indonesia.
- 8 Anti-palm oil education campaign (Kalimantan, Indonesia)**  
Friends of the Earth's anti-palm oil education campaigns.
- 9 Sulawesi Forest Turtle (Sulawesi, Indonesia)**  
Study into the habitat characteristics, distribution, natural history and current status of the threatened Sulawesi Forest Turtle. A Turtle Conservation Fund project.
- 10 Turtle conservation program (Sulawesi, Indonesia)**  
Lalumpe Beach turtle conservation project with ENRICH and local communities in Central Sulawesi, Indonesia, assessing importance/status of multi species nesting sites and community programs.
- 11 Rainforest purchase, Mt Tompotika (Central Sulawesi, Indonesia)**  
HSI/WLT supporting the Alliance for Tompotika Conservation (AlTo) with the purchase of a coastal rainforest block in Central Sulawesi, as an essential gateway to a large area of community owned protected forest.
- 12 Southern river terrapins study (Malaysia)**  
Study into the habits and habitats of threatened southern river terrapins in the Setiu River, Terengganu, Malaysian Borneo. A Turtle Conservation Fund project.
- 13 Tropical forest protection (Papua New Guinea)**  
Funding legal activities and court actions of the PNG Eco-Forestry Forum striving to protect 5 million hectares of tropical forest in PNG.
- 14 Environmental education (Kikori Delta, Papua New Guinea)**  
Grass roots environmental education programs highlighting freshwater turtle protection in the Kikori Delta, PNG. A Turtle Conservation Fund project.
- 15 Shark finning research (Papua New Guinea)**  
Supporting investigations into shark finning in Papua New Guinea.
- 16 Philippine Pond Turtle (the Philippines)**  
Study into the husbandry of the critically endangered Philippine Pond Turtle in its only range country assurance colony. A Turtle Conservation Fund project.
- 17 International biodiversity conference (Solomon Islands delegates)**  
Supporting the attendance of NGO delegates from the Solomon Island to present award winning papers at an international biodiversity conservation conference in Sydney.

## RNHP supported projects (marine and terrestrial) in Coral Triangle nations

- 1 Nino Konis Santana National Park (East Timor)**  
Building partnerships and conservation priorities for East Timor's first national park, with Birdlife International.
- 2 Savu Sea (Indonesia)**  
The Nature Conservancy: Protecting the heart of the Coral Triangle: strengthening marine protected areas in eastern Indonesia.
- 3 Komodo National Park (Indonesia)**  
The Nature Conservancy: Protecting the heart of the Coral Triangle: strengthening marine protected areas in eastern Indonesia.
- 4 Marine Protected Areas (Indonesia)**  
The Nature Conservancy: Protecting the heart of the Coral Triangle: strengthening marine protected areas in eastern Indonesia.
- 5 Tanjung Puting National Park (Kalimantan, Indonesia)**  
RNHP supporting conservation and development through Friends of the National Parks Foundation to help protect Tanjung Puting National Park.
- 6 Protected Areas Networks and Management in the ASEAN Region (Indonesia)**  
Strengthening Protected Areas Networks and Management in the ASEAN Region with IUCN-Birdlife International.
- 7 Wakatobi National Park (Indonesia)**  
The Nature Conservancy: Protecting the heart of the Coral Triangle: strengthening marine protected areas in eastern Indonesia.
- 8 The Derawan Islands (Indonesia)**  
The Nature Conservancy: Protecting the heart of the Coral Triangle: strengthening marine protected areas in eastern Indonesia.
- 9 Marine Protected Areas (Raja Ampat, Indonesia)**  
The Nature Conservancy: Protecting the heart of the Coral Triangle: strengthening marine protected areas in eastern Indonesia.
- 10 Protected Areas Networks and Management in the ASEAN Region (Malaysia)**  
Strengthening Protected Areas Networks and Management in the ASEAN Region with IUCN-Birdlife International.
- 11 Orangutan conservation (Malaysia)**  
Securing the largest population of *Pongo pygmaeus morio*, through the Malua Segama Wildlife Survey Australian Orangutan Project.
- 12 Torricelli Mountain Range (Sandaun Province, Papua New Guinea)**  
Establishing a legislated area for biodiversity conservation in the Torricelli Mountain Range. Zoos Victoria.
- 13 Scott's Tree Kangaroo, Torricelli Mountain Range (Sandaun Province, Papua New Guinea)**  
Community Conservation of Scott's Tree Kangaroo in the Torricelli Mountain Range. Zoos Victoria.
- 14 Bismarck Sea (Papua New Guinea)**  
Wildlife Conservation Society: Conservation of Coral Reef Hotspots in the Bismarck Sea, Papua New Guinea.
- 15 Conservation biodiversity Sierra Madre Mountain Range (Luzon, the Philippines)**  
Conservation of Key Biodiversity Areas within the Sierra Madre Mountain Range, Luzon Island, the Philippines. Conservation International.
- 16 Protected Areas Networks and Management in the ASEAN Region (the Philippines)**  
Strengthening Protected Areas Networks and Management in the ASEAN Region with IUCN-Birdlife International.
- 17 Sulawesi Marine Ecosystems (the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia)**  
WWF Australia, ICRAN, UNEP South East Asian Regional Seas Program: Coral Triangle Marine Resource Conservation Priorities, Protected Areas and Community Based Management for Marine Ecosystems.





## ■ Conservation of the radiated tortoise (*Astrochelys radiata*) in Madagascar



© Turtle Conservation Fund.

The Conservation of the radiated tortoise (*Astrochelys radiata*) in Madagascar is one of 16 projects in 11 countries to date, that HSI has helped fund through its membership of the global *Turtle Conservation Fund* (TCF), a partnership of leading turtle conservation organisations and individuals dedicated to the conservation of threatened tortoises and freshwater turtles.

Edward E Louis, Tsilavo Hasina Rafeliasoa, Susie McGuire, and Tahiana Andrian-anjamanantsoa, were successful in their application for funding to help protect one of Madagascar's most threatened tortoises. Following is their summary of the project.

The dry spiny forests of southern Madagascar have the lowest representation in the country's protected areas network, and is considered economically the most poverty-stricken region of Madagascar. One of the emblematic species of these forests, the radiated tortoise (*Astrochelys radiata*), is categorized as *Critically Endangered*.

The Radiated Tortoise Project (RTP), part of Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo and the Madagascar Biodiversity Partnership (MBP), was initiated in 2000 to conserve this flagship species through a combination of community outreach and conservation education. Lavavolo was selected as the initial site for long-term grassroots conservation efforts since the people of this area still maintain the local *fady* (taboo) against eating or harming the tortoises.

The major threat to the radiated tortoise in Lavavolo is habitat loss due to charcoal production, clearing for agricultural purposes and invasive flora species. To address these issues, the RTP will initiate pilot programs including the following: habitat evaluation and restoration, radiated tortoise diet in pristine vs. impacted habitat, and community education program. Complementary to these pilot programs will be efforts to evaluate the effectiveness of desalination technologies, potential for cash and food crops, and biofuel methodology of local resources. Using the radiated tortoise as the flagship species, the RTP is modeled on the philosophy of combining community development and conservation goals in an effort to connect the local people with the wildlife and habitat.

## ■ Determining the performance of head-started southern river terrapins in Malaysia

Determining the performance of head-started southern river terrapins is another of the projects that HSI has contributed to in cooperation with the *Turtle Conservation Fund*. Pelf-Nyok Chen and Eng-Heng Chan, were successful in their application to learn more about the habits of threatened southern river terrapins in the Setiu River, Terengganu, Malaysia. Following is their summary of the project.



© Eng-Heng Chan.

The objectives of this project are to determine the performance of head-started Southern river terrapins (*Batagur affinis*) that have been released into the Setiu River between 2005 and 2009. Terrapins that are found or caught in fishing gear are surrendered to the project investigators, who will microchip, weigh and measure the terrapins before releasing them into the river. Through the multiple mark-and-recapture study, the growth of the head-started Southern river terrapins as well as the population size in the river can be assessed. The survival rates of these terrapins can also be elucidated.

Additionally, project investigators will also follow the fishermen whenever possible to gather the necessary data such as the exact location the terrapins are found (GPS), time and the corresponding tidal cycle, etc. Basking traps will also be deployed to trap terrapins in selected sampling locations along the river. Painted terrapins (*Batagur borneoensis*) that are caught opportunistically through the mark-and-recapture activities will provide the opportunity to determine the population structure and size of the painted terrapins in the river.



## ■ Investigative report on illegal turtle egg trade in Kalimantan

Late last year, HSI and the Born Free Foundation UK, supported Indonesian project partners ProFauna, in conducting investigations into the illegal trade of turtle eggs occurring openly in Kalimantan, Indonesia.

Indonesian legislation for *Natural Resources and Ecosystems Conservation (Act 5, 1990)* protects all of the six species of sea turtles found in Indonesian waters — the green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*), hawksbill turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricate*), olive ridley (*Lepidochelys olivacea*), leatherback turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*), flatback turtle (*Natator depressus*) and loggerhead turtle (*Caretta caretta*). Trafficking perpetrators of protected species, including sea turtle eggs, are liable for imprisonment of five years and a fine of 100 million IDR (approx. 10,000 AUD). Nevertheless, the illegal market for sea turtle eggs is still heavily active.

As a significant amount of the illegal trade occurs in Kalimantan, ProFauna Indonesia sent teams to locations within the four provinces of Kalimantan to survey illegal trade activities, including sites where eggs were sold and harvested. (See map opposite).

Findings from the report, *Trade of Sea Turtle Eggs in Kalimantan*, confirmed that the illegal trade in turtle eggs remains a lucrative market in Kalimantan. ProFauna estimates that within Samarinda (East Kalimantan) alone, there is an average of 1,000 turtle eggs sold per day. Overall, the report estimated that approximately 100,000 turtle eggs are illegally traded in Kalimantan every month.

What this demonstrates is that Indonesia's conservation efforts thus far are at high risk if the illegal trade of turtle eggs continues. Among the 29 visited locations across Kalimantan, 62% harboured illegal turtle egg trading. There is also evidence that a large proportion of illegally harvested eggs are smuggled across the border to Malaysia, confirming that illegal trade crosses national boundaries. Worryingly, the report has further disclosed that the turtle eggs traded in Kalimantan came not only from this island but are supplied from several other regional locations. Of particular significance are suppliers who illegally harvest turtle eggs from the regional nature reserves of the Sembilan Islands in South Kalimantan.

This recent report shows clearly that in order to secure the survival of Indonesia's marine turtle populations, the illegal trade of turtle eggs in Kalimantan needs to be brought under control, particularly in areas of high trade activity such as the province of West Kalimantan.

**ProFauna Indonesia**



Sea turtle eggs sold at market in Kalimantan.

© ProFauna.



Sea turtle egg trade routes, Kalimantan.

© ProFauna.

**Update:** The *Trade of Sea Turtle Eggs in Kalimantan* report has proven invaluable as ProFauna Indonesia and HSI have successfully used it to lobby the Indonesian Government for stricter law enforcement efforts. Having already shown commitment to ending the illegal trade of turtle eggs across Indonesia, the Government has now invited ProFauna Indonesia to take part in discussions on the matter in Jakarta.



## ■ HSI's efforts on Southern Bluefin Tuna finally pay off, but global discussions remain in limbo

HSI was relieved when in late November 2010, the Federal Environment Minister, Tony Burke MP, confirmed that he would list Southern Bluefin Tuna (SBT) as conservation dependent under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act), as a result of an HSI nomination put forward in December 2006. HSI had been trying to convince successive Governments for the need for protection of SBT for over 10 years. Previous Environment Ministers rejected our earlier nominations on grounds HSI considered a cover for concerns over the economic and political fall out of protection for this highly lucrative species, even though the Minister's own science advisers had previously determined the species to be endangered.

Sadly, since 2006, the situation for SBT has gone from bad to worse, and now the species qualifies as critically endangered, with the population reduced to 4.6% of its unfished biomass. Internationally, IUCN recognises SBT as critically endangered and this recognition was also supported by Australia's own science advisers who acknowledge that the species qualifies for listing under the EPBC Act as critically endangered. Whilst we were hopeful that the Australian Government would list SBT as critically endangered, the significant fishing interests in this species have prevailed.

Listing of the species as conservation dependent is the lowest protection available for threatened species, allowing fishing to continue, but gives the Federal Environment Minister stronger opportunities to intervene in management to ensure recovery. We hope that the Environment Minister makes the most of these opportunities, and that the listing serves as a warning shot, before stocks are further depleted.

Reconsideration of the 'business as usual' approach to this critically endangered species is also urgently required. In the meantime HSI will continue to call for a zero catch of SBT by Australia, so as to afford the species the greatest possible chance of recovery. This position is supported by scientists who have predicted that only a zero catch gives the SBT population a decent chance of recovering to 20% of its unfished biomass in 20 years — the standard Australian Government policy above which all fisheries must be maintained.

### International negotiations key to SBT's future

To monitor the international process, HSI's consultant Nigel Brothers attended the most recent meeting of Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT) in Taiwan in October 2010. Nigel attended this meeting primarily to advocate for better albatross conservation measures within CCSBT, including advocating for better reporting on and compliance with conservation and management measures in place to protect threatened species. Sadly, discussions within CCSBT failed to acknowledge that Country Reports were totally inadequate in this area and until this changes, the stated goal outlined of being able to estimate total mortalities, will never be met. However, HSI was encouraged by the procedures that were agreed to by parties, which will improve assessment of fishery impacts on other species such as seabirds and compliance with the measures to reduce mortalities of these and other bycatch species.

The meeting also dealt with a number of crucial issues, not least whether and how to set a Management Procedure for SBT which would guide the future Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for SBT. Adoption of a Management Procedure is one of the vital steps that need to be taken by CCSBT parties in order that SBT can recover from perilously low levels. Sadly, no agreement could be reached and discussions on the management of SBT were extended and will reconvene at a special meeting in Sydney in August 2011. These discussions are essential for the future management of the SBT, and HSI is hopeful that the most precautionary position will be taken to ensure the fastest possible recovery of SBT stocks with the greatest possible certainty. Failure by parties to CCSBT to agree a Management Procedure in 2011 will result in a 40% reduction in TAC in 2012, making the Sydney meeting a crucial one, and a make-or-break year for conservation of the SBT.

Unfortunately, news nationally on SBT has been mixed, with the Minister signing off the export approval in October 2010 which allows the fishing industry to continue exporting SBT and effectively deflecting management decisions to the CCSBT. (HSI had previously challenged the SBT export program in the Commonwealth's Administrative Appeals Tribunal under EPBC Act provisions). As a result HSI will continue to closely monitor progress within CCSBT of the Management Procedure, calling for the revocation of the export approval if these international negotiations fail to agree on a procedure that ensures the SBT's recovery.



Southern Bluefin Tuna. © Greenpeace/Roger Grace.

## ■ An end to Southern Ocean whaling?

This year's Southern Ocean whaling has been notably different from previous years, in that the fleet's departure was delayed by approximately one month and the whaling 'permit' issued by the Japanese Government indicates that the fleet is planning to leave the Southern Ocean a month earlier than previous years, meaning a shortening of previous seasons by two months. Early 2011 also saw the politics of whaling hit the headlines for a different reason, as a result of the release of numerous whale-related cables by WikiLeaks which were published by the media.

HSI slammed the continuation of Japan's 'scientific' whaling. We believe this continued hunt of whales to be not only an act of bad faith in the face of Australia's ongoing legal case in the International Court of Justice (ICJ) against Japan's 'scientific' whaling program, but also a breach of the HSI-obtained federal court order, the injunction secured in January 2008 against Japanese whale hunts in Australia's Antarctic territorial waters. Therefore, when news reports came through in mid February that the whaling fleet had been recalled from the Southern Ocean early by the Japanese Government, it appeared that this year was set to be remarkably different from all previous whaling seasons.

HSI welcomed the news of the pulling of Japan's fleet from the Southern Ocean, however we are concerned that this will not be a long term position by Japan. HSI will continue to oppose this brutal whale hunt until the Japanese Government formally commits to the ending of its whaling program. Sadly, the Australian Government continues to provide no indication that it is willing to enforce the Federal Court injunction, obtained as a result of HSI's court case in 2008. Nevertheless, we will continue to call on the Government to enforce the injunction, should there be any future Southern Ocean whaling activities.



## ■ Conservation groups join forces to combat bycatch in tuna fisheries

In the last issue (issue 17) we reported on HSI's activities focused on bycatch in tuna fisheries. We reported that at the Kobe II Bycatch workshop in Brisbane in 2010, a number of NGOs joined forces at the meeting to coordinate interventions. Given the success of these efforts, we were keen to continue coordination beyond that meeting, so that effective bycatch measures can be put in place in each of the RFMOs and progress be made as soon as possible. HSI has pursued this approach, as we are keen to see changes taking place within fisheries to address the problem of bycatch as soon as possible. These discussions have resulted in the production of a 'compendium' of conservation and management measures (CMMs). A copy of the compendium, '*A Compendium of Conservation and Management Measures to address the impacts of species bycatch in tuna RFMOs*', is available at <http://bit.ly/fQx0jN>

This document is currently supported by HSI, WWF, TRAFFIC and the Sea Turtle Conservancy, although a number of additional groups have been involved in the development of the compendium.

The 'compendium' contains best practice conservation and management measures for four taxa (sharks, seabirds, sea turtles and marine mammals), and aims to address the impacts of bycatch on each of these taxa. Since publication, it has been presented to the Western Central Pacific Fisheries Commission, and HSI and other NGOs involved in the campaign will be using the compendium for our advocacy activities in the run up to the third Kobe meeting which is due to take place in California in July 2011. This included lobbying at the FAO Committee of Fisheries (COFI) meeting in January, in addition to future meetings of all the tuna Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs).

HSI was also recently invited to provide input into a Federal project to look at the development of bycatch standards and guidelines, specifically on how to ensure stakeholders are engaged in these issues. This is an FRDC (Fisheries Research and Development Corporation) project which is being undertaken by the Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry. Although still a work in progress, HSI hopes that this project will result in bycatch as an issue being taken much more seriously than it has been to date. The draft standards and guidelines are expected to be released in mid May for public consultation.

## ■ HSI takes action on trawling threats to albatross

In the last issue we reported on how the world's attention is turning to the impact of trawl fleets and how these are threatening albatross and other vulnerable seabird populations.

HSI has now taken legal advice and has written to the relevant Ministers to ensure that the proposed vessel management plans contain clear, strong requirements for compliance with the proposed mitigation measures. Only then can the threat of trawling for albatross be minimised.

In addition, as we go to press, worrying information has come to light regarding plans to make longlining trials in the Macquarie Island Toothfish Fishery. AFMA are not only seeking permission to make longlining a permanent part of the fishery, but also downgrading the protective measures put in place to protect endangered albatross populations on the island that have so far been successful during the trial in ensuring no interactions with seabirds occurred. This is wholly unacceptable, and HSI will be working hard in the coming months to ensure that the strict protection measures are maintained as part of the fishery assessment.

## ■ HSI's inaugural Marine Science Grant

In 2010, HSI joined forces with the Paddy Pallin Foundation, Foundation for National Parks & Wildlife and the Royal Zoological Society of NSW to award a 'Marine Science Grant' as part of the Paddy Pallin Foundation Science Grants program. Grants are awarded for research projects will lead to tangible outcomes for the management of Australian ecosystems. Following careful consideration of a number of applicants Dr Peter Macreadie of the University of Technology Sydney, an outstanding young scientist, was awarded \$7,000 to look at the effects of climate change on marine ecosystems by examining seagrasses in Lake Macquarie and Tuggerah Lakes.

Each year seagrasses provide ecosystem services worth \$1.9 trillion, and their estimated value per hectare is nine-times higher than tropical rainforests. They facilitate nutrient cycling, prevent coastal erosion, and provide critical habitat for vast numbers of marine species. Despite covering less than 0.5% of the sea bed, seagrasses and other vegetated coastal habitats store up to 70% of the carbon in the marine realm, making them the most intense carbon sinks on the planet. They also form the basis of the world's primary fishing grounds, supplying an estimated 50% of the world's fisheries and providing critical nutrition for the world's developing countries.

Seagrasses are like the 'canaries in the coalmine' of coastal ecosystems. They are ideal for developing an understanding of the resilience mechanisms as they are the first habitats in nearshore waters to respond to disturbance. Climate change may cause major marine habitat loss through increasing storms, rising water temperatures, changes in rainfall patterns and increases in water turbidity.

Major uncertainty remains about how climate change will affect marine ecosystems, due largely to a lack of understanding of ecosystem resilience. While there is a good theoretical basis for how ecosystem resilience may be achieved, current theory remains largely unchallenged by empirical data. Recent authors have suggested that genetic diversity could be a critical factor for maintaining resilience in coastal ecosystems. Dr Macreadie's project is the largest scale Australian effort to examine the role of genetic variability in determining seagrass resilience and will provide essential information for managing Australia's estuarine ecosystems in preparation for climate change.

Using disturbance-recovery experiments in seagrass habitats, the project aims to test the importance of genotypic diversity for the resilience of NSW seagrasses to disturbance. This research will thus provide important information for the ongoing management of seagrass habitats, which are already in critical decline and face major threat from climate change (HSI has recently prepared a nomination to propose the listing of seagrass beds as a threatened ecological community under the EPBC Act).

Following HSI's grant, we were delighted when Dr Macreadie was subsequently awarded the 2010 Brian Robinson Fellowship at the Banksia Awards in recognition of his work.



© Peter Macreadie.



## ■ HSI continues its shark protection efforts

HSI continues to prepare and submit nominations for a number of shark species, thanks to the help of a number of dedicated volunteers.

The following table identifies those shark species for which nominations have been submitted under both Federal and State legislation, and those for whom nominations are planned in the near future.

Species	Federal	State	Status
<b>Shark species listed following HSI nomination</b>			
Great white shark	Listed – Dec 1997 & July 1999 Amended Sept 2001	Vic – Aug 1998 Qld – July 1997 SA – Jan 1998 WA – Nov 1997	Vulnerable
Grey nurse shark	Listed – Dec 1997 Upgrade to endangered – Aug 2000	Vic – Dec 2000 NSW – 2000	Critically Endangered
School shark	Listed – Feb 2009		Conservation Dependent
<b>Shark nominations submitted 2009</b>			
Dusky shark	Under consideration by TSSC	NSW, SA, QLD, WA submitted	Vulnerable
Great hammerhead shark	Submitted March 2009	NSW, QLD, WA submitted	Endangered
Longfin mako shark	Submitted March 2009	NSW, QLD, WA submitted	Vulnerable
Shortfin mako shark	Under consideration by TSSC	NSW, SA, QLD, WA submitted	Vulnerable
<b>Shark nominations submitted in 2010</b>			
Sandbar shark	Submitted March 2010	NSW, QLD, WA submitted	Vulnerable
Bull shark	Submitted March 2010	NSW, QLD, WA submitted	Vulnerable
Scalloped hammerhead	Submitted March 2010	NSW, QLD, WA submitted	Endangered
<b>Federal nominations to be submitted in March 2011</b>			
Spotted wobbegong	Nomination in progress	—	Vulnerable
Oceanic whitetip shark	Nomination in progress	—	Vulnerable
Porbeagle	Nomination in progress	—	Vulnerable
Common Thresher shark	Nomination in progress	—	Vulnerable
Great hammerhead shark	Revised nomination to be resubmitted	—	Endangered
<b>State nominations in preparation for submission in March 2011</b>			
Sandbar shark	—	NT	Vulnerable
Dusky shark	—	VIC, TAS, NT	Vulnerable
Bull shark	—	NT	Vulnerable
Shortfin mako	—	VIC, TAS	Vulnerable
Longfin mako	—	NT	Vulnerable
Great hammerhead shark	—	NT	Endangered
Scalloped hammerhead shark	—	NT	Endangered
<b>Proposed nominations for 2012</b>			
Bigeye thresher	Nomination in progress		Vulnerable
Pelagic thresher	Nomination in progress		Vulnerable
Ornate wobbegong	Nomination in progress		Vulnerable
Banded or Gulf wobbegong	Nomination in progress		Vulnerable

## ■ US Shark protection is bolstered

Shark conservation efforts for 2011 started well in the US, when on 5th January, President Obama signed the US Shark Conservation Act. The Act will increase protection for sharks from the cruel and wasteful practice of shark finning, requiring that sharks be landed with their fins naturally attached. In July 2008, the US's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration instituted regulations requiring that sharks be landed with their fins attached, but these regulations only applied to US fisheries in the Atlantic, Caribbean, and Gulf of Mexico, not the Pacific. The Shark Conservation Act will bring the Pacific fisheries into line with the rest of the country's fins-attached policy, and strengthen the US position in international shark conservation efforts.

In addition, this legislation will close loopholes in the 2000 US shark finning ban by requiring that fins remain attached to the rest of the shark and that this apply to all vessels, not just vessels that are actively fishing. Unfortunately in order to remove an objection by North Carolina on behalf of its smooth dogfish shark fishery, this species was exempted from fins attached and instead will have to abide by an extremely lenient fin to carcass ratio. Our colleagues in the US will continue to work on this issue to ensure all shark species can be protected by the legislation.

In addition to this federal legislation, the State of Hawaii, the territory of the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands and the US territory of Guam have all recently passed Acts banning shark finning in their waters as well as the possession, selling, offering for sale, trading or distributing shark fins. The US territory of the Marshall Islands also recently placed a moratorium on the trade and export of shark fins. With Palau, the Maldives, and Raja Ampat, Indonesia already having taken strong action to protect sharks, it is clear that the Pacific region is leading the way globally on shark protection. HSI will therefore be working in the coming months to convince Australia to join in these much-needed efforts.



Mixed shark fins.





Spinner Shark.

## Approval given to unsustainable shark fishery

Over the past 18 months, HSI has been closely following the EPBC Act export approval process for a NSW fishery, the Ocean Trap and Line Fishery (OTLF). Our concerns centre on the large sharks targeted by the fishery, including tiger, mako, hammerhead and whaler (particularly sandbar and bull) sharks. Sharks caught in this fishery are primarily caught for the shark fin trade. Mature sharks are targeted as they have the largest fins, and the carcasses are generally of little value or use.

Data from the NSW Beach Meshing Program shows that all these species have declined significantly, whilst in the corresponding period the OTLF shark quota has increased significantly. Despite this, the NSW OTLF has been seeking export approval from the Federal Environment Minister for an increased quota far in excess of the historical average for the fishery. HSI considers this to be unacceptable and has therefore actively engaged in the assessment process for the fishery. Over the past 18 months, further investigation has been conducted into the state of the stocks by the CSIRO, on behalf of the Federal Environment Department, looking at the state of the stocks of the target species. The CSIRO report confirmed that there was a lack of knowledge about the status of the populations targeted in the OTLF; a lack of basic historical catch data; demonstrations of significant stock declines of two target species (sandbar and dusky) in other fisheries in Australian waters; and targeted fishing of large, mature sharks. CSIRO note that in light of uncertainties regarding the effect of removals from the stock, a more precautionary approach is warranted until further data is available.

In addition to HSI's concerns for the target species, we also have particular concerns for two species impacted by this fishery, the white shark and the critically endangered grey nurse shark, as well as observed impacts on sea turtles (such as the green turtle). Reporting of interactions in the NSW OTLF with protected species has been recognised as inadequate to date, and this resulted in specific observer programs being instigated in the fishery. These demonstrated that there are far more interactions with protected species than reflected by earlier logbook data.

HSI was therefore hopeful that the Minister would not grant approval to the fishery, however sadly this was given in December, including a quota far in excess of the historical average. In light of increasing international condemnation of targeted shark fishing, HSI is extremely disappointed at this decision, and is currently seeking further information from the Minister on the reasons for the decision.

## HSI marine sanctuaries campaign

In the last issue (issue 17 2010) we reported on the publication of HSI and WWF's joint report *Protecting Critical Marine Habitats: the key to conserving our threatened marine species* (proposing the protection of approximately 260 critical marine habitat areas). Since the report's publication, we have been busy promoting the document, talking to politicians and Government officials to convince them of the need to identify and protect critical habitat in the marine environment. This includes on-going efforts to see the Government stick with its commitment to establish a network of whale and dolphin sanctuaries around Australia.

HSI is also ensuring that critical habitat is a key consideration within the marine bioregional planning process, and believes that this year will bring substantial opportunities to ensure our threatened marine life is protected within large marine sanctuaries. With such an important year ahead, HSI has decided to add our voice to many other conservation groups campaigning for better protection of the marine environment, in addition to our current work on the East marine bioregional, by joining two alliances.

The first is Save Our Marine Life, an alliance of eleven organisations seeking the establishment of a network of large marine sanctuaries in the south west. Currently, less than 1% of the south west's marine environment is protected, despite being home to a far greater level of unique species than the Great Barrier Reef. The Save Our Marine Life alliance is therefore seeking protection for the area's unique marine values. For more information about the campaign see <http://www.saveourmarinelife.org.au>



The second is Protect Our Coral Sea, an alliance of nine organisations seeking the establishment of a large, world-class, fully protected marine park in the Coral Sea that will provide a safe haven for marine life and recognise its historic significance. For more information about the campaign see <http://www.protectourcoralsea.org.au/help-protect-australia-s-coral-sea>



Simultaneously, HSI has also coordinated development and submission of a nomination for the Coral Sea for National Heritage listing under the EPBC Act. This submission has the support of a number of other organisations, and we remain hopeful that this area can also be recognised for its significant heritage values.

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By recycling your old mobile phone you are helping to preserve the Earth's resources and prevent potentially harmful substances from going into landfill. Refurbished phones are exported to developing countries, where low cost handsets are needed. The remainder are stripped of their components and recycled or reused in a variety of ways. No materials go to landfill.

## HOW DO I GET MY FREE SACHEL?

There is no cost to you to send your mobile back for recycling but there is a cost to the planet if you don't. Please call our **freecall 1800 333 737**, go online at [www.hsi.org.au](http://www.hsi.org.au), email us at [admin@hsi.org.au](mailto:admin@hsi.org.au) or fill in the form below. The satchels hold up to 4 phones so if you need more than one bag let us know. There is no limit!

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

SUBURB: \_\_\_\_\_

STATE: \_\_\_\_\_

POSTCODE: \_\_\_\_\_

NUMBER OF BAGS REQUIRED: \_\_\_\_\_

mobileTB



HUMANE SOCIETY  
INTERNATIONAL

Please send completed form to:  
**Humane Society International Inc.**  
PO Box 439 Avalon NSW 2107  
Freecall 1800 333 737 • Fax (02) 9973 1729  
Email [admin@hsi.org.au](mailto:admin@hsi.org.au) • [www.hsi.org.au](http://www.hsi.org.au)



HUMANE SOCIETY  
INTERNATIONAL

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ISBN 978-0-9871112-0-3