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Subject: South Australia's new Biodiversity Act - Comments from Stephen Morris

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Dear Biodiversity Act Team,

Thank you for the chance to provide feedback on the draft Biodiversity Bill. I completed the survey and would also like to make the following comments:

Few people and organisations acknowledge that solving human population in our state and globally is vital to protecting our environment. Population action is part of the climate solution. More people mean more carbon emitters and greater threat to reforestation and revegetation programs. I commend your team for mentioning population within your FAQs but recommend that this factor takes a more prominent role in discussions on biodiversity.

Population growth is a key force behind all five drivers of biodiversity loss: habitat reduction, overexploitation, climate change, pollution and invasive alien species. We live in the driest state on the driest continent and 'growth' has detrimental effects on the natural world.

As you note, Australia and is ranked as the second worst among the 7 countries responsible for 60% of the world's biodiversity loss between 1996 and 2008. It is worth noting that during this Howard era, net annual migration to Australia was increased dramatically from a 20th Century average of 80,000 to over 200,000. In more recent times, our net migration is more than double these already high levels.

If South Australia wants to protect biodiversity, we need state governments and environmental bodies to lobby Australia's federal government to transition to a stable national population. It is our responsibility to the natural world to avoid relentless growth.

Regards

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