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Regarding the proposed Biodiversity Act for South Australia

I support the intent and direction of the proposed Act but as a landholder and long-term 'bush carer', I would like to make two points.

1. The Government of South Australia is currently not managing its reserve system for biodiversity conservation and the NPWS is not structured around that. It will be difficult to uphold a Biodiversity Act without setting an example. For instance, invasive plants are one of the biggest threats to biodiversity conservation yet there are few DEW/NPWS resources dedicated to this. Strategies, management plans and expertise are sadly lacking. In most cases, invasive plant management has been devolved to Friends groups who, absurdly, must then seek grants to manage the Government's land. If biodiversity conservation is a true priority, this area needs an overhaul. Friends groups were established to support the work of Rangers, not replace them. Rangers should be given vegetation management plans and budgets to undertake any biodiversity conservation work that is beyond the scope of the Friends groups.
2. Despite our current legislation and numerous restructures of DEW (i.e. DENR, DEWNR etc.) and the Landscapes Boards, our record on biodiversity conservation ground continues to worsen. The 'No Species Loss' direction of previous Governments is no longer mentioned. How will this Act be any different? Will it redirect significant resources from the frontlines of biodiversity conservation and therefore not achieve its stated goal? Please avoid 'rearranging the chairs' and use your resources wisely, bearing in mind that the time, energy and money spent on development of a new Biodiversity Act potentially removes resources from the coal face.

With thanks for your consideration,

Marne Durnin