

Media Release

The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP

Minister for Energy, the Environment and Climate Change
Minister for Solar Homes



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SUPPORTING VICTORIA'S MUCH LOVED WILDLIFE ATTRACTIONS

The Victorian Government is giving some of the state's favourite wildlife attractions a financial lifeline to help them get through the coronavirus pandemic and save nearly 800 jobs.

Zoos Victoria's three sites – Melbourne Zoo, Werribee Open Range Zoo and Healesville Sanctuary – and Phillip Island Nature Parks will share in \$14 million to ensure they can continue to operate and retain permanent staff until it's safe to open their doors again.

Zoos Victoria and Phillip Island Nature Parks are among Australia's most popular tourist destinations and, together, contribute almost \$800 million to the Victorian economy each year.

However, ongoing public health directions to help slow the spread of coronavirus have forced all four sites to remain closed to the public since March, resulting in substantial revenue loss.

The emergency support package will allow these popular tourist destinations to continue their operations at a modified capacity and keep 785 staff employed.

It will also allow both organisations to continue their crucial conservation work with threatened flora and fauna, marine wildlife rescue and ongoing rehabilitation for native species impacted by the recent bushfires.

The support package includes \$5.5 million for Zoos Victoria and \$8.8 million for Phillip Island Nature Parks, which is more dependent on international visitors.

Just under 2.7 million visitors came through the gates of Zoos Victoria's three zoos last year exceeding all previous records.

Each year Phillip Island Nature Parks attract more than 1.1 million visitors from around the world to its 1800 hectares of land dedicated to conservation. This includes the world-class Phillip Island Penguin Parade visitor centre, which alone attracts more than 700,000 tourists each year.

The Government will also provide support for Victoria's Alpine Resorts while considerations about the upcoming ski-season are being assessed.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Energy, the Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio

"This support protects jobs and allows these incredible organisations to continue their crucial conservation work while their doors are closed."

"We all want to see these wonderful attractions re-open and this funding will ensure they can do just that on the other side of the pandemic."

Quote attributable to Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Martin Pakula

"These much-loved Victorian attractions are favourites of locals and tourists alike – this support will ensure they can continue to bring joy to millions of people each year once it is safe for them to reopen."

Media contact: Nicole Bland 0417 375 623 | nicole.bland@minstaff.vic.gov.au