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Minister for the Environment and Water



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Action

MEDIA RELEASE

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AUSTRALIAN FIRST CENTRE BRINGING FROGS BACK FROM THE BRINK

The Albanese Labor Government and Andrews Labor Government are protecting some of Victoria's rarest frogs as part of their investment into the state's precious biodiversity.

Federal Minister for the Environment and Water Tanya Plibersek and Victorian Minister for the Environment and Climate Action Lily D'Ambrosio today opened a world leading frog breeding facility at Melbourne Zoo.

The Amphibian Bushfire Recovery Centre houses breeding habitats for the Spotted Tree Frog, Watson's Tree Frog and the Southern Giant Burrowing Frog.

This state-of-the-art facility will help boost populations of all three species, which range from being listed as vulnerable to critically endangered under national environment law.

All three species have suffered dramatic population declines in the wild, worsened by the disastrous impacts of the 2019-2020 Black Summer bushfires, and are also threatened by a deadly disease called chytrid fungus which is affecting frog populations around the world.

The Recovery Centre is the first dedicated disease-controlled amphibian facility in Australia.

It will allow long term management of these species through a biologically sealed and temperature-controlled area to protect populations from disease.

The breeding and research program will increase understanding about the frogs to improve conservation methods, control threats to the species and ultimately allow for their return to their natural habitat.

More than 150 Southern Giant Burrowing Frogs, which were reared from tadpoles at the zoo, have already moved into the new facility to start this vital recovery program.

The Federal Labor Government is continuing to support recovery of bushfire affected species through a \$200 million recovery package, a \$1 million investment provided to support Zoos Victoria, including the construction of the Amphibian Bushfire Recovery Centre.

The Victorian Labor Government has invested more than \$305 million in Zoos Victoria since 2014. Over the same period, the Government has invested more than \$560 million in protecting biodiversity – more than any other in Victorian history.

Quotes attributable to the Minister for the Environment and Water Tanya Plibersek:

“Through this world leading facility, we are giving three of Victoria’s rarest frogs a lifeline,” Minister Plibersek said.

“In recent years, our frogs have had an extremely tough time, fighting the impacts of disease and the devastating impacts of the Black Summer bushfires.”

“The State of the Environment Report told us the challenges we are facing are large, but I am committed to protecting Australia’s threatened species.”

“That’s why we have committed \$224.5 million in establishing the Saving Native Species Program, to protect all our native species – from the iconic koala to a giant burrowing frog.”

Quotes attributable to the Victorian Minister for the Environment and Climate Action Lily D’Ambrosio:

“These new facilities allow the Zoos Victoria’s amphibian team to expand their vital work to help threatened frog species,” Minister D’Ambrosio said.

“Zoos Victoria is celebrating 160 years of integral conservation work, supported by our record investment in our state’s precious biodiversity.”

ENDS

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