

Media Release

The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP
Minister for Climate Action
Minister for Energy and Resources
Minister for the State Electricity Commission



Wednesday, 24 April 2024

PROTECTING BIODIVERSITY IN THE ENERGY TRANSITION

The Allan Labor Government is taking action to protect Victoria's unique wildlife while building new renewable energy projects that will bring down emissions and deliver cheap and reliable power across the state.

To achieve this, the Labor Government will develop a new suite of tools and guidelines that will ensure native wildlife are not harmed by renewable energy projects.

By July 2024, the Government will release new state-wide maps that identify key habitat areas for native wildlife which will help renewable energy developers and planners to build renewable energy in areas that will have the least impact on wildlife.

By October 2024, research will be completed to better understand how wind turbines could impact threatened bird and bat species - this will determine the flight height of the Southern Bent-wing Bat, ways to reduce bird and bat collisions with turbines and detailed research on Brolga breeding sites, so they can be protected.

This research will inform the *Handbook for the development of renewable energy in Victoria* – new guidelines on the planning and construction of renewable projects in Victoria which must be followed.

This will include a new list of at-risk wildlife that renewable energy developers will need to consider in their planning and measures they can take to prevent harm to those species. The handbook will also include a template for bat and bird management plans.

This will give industry access to the best scientific and mapping information available so they can factor the protection of our precious wildlife early on in the planning phase - resulting in a more efficient and timely approval process.

The handbook will be finalised following public consultation and engagement with Traditional Owners and industry.

Backed by a \$3.8 million investment these new measures build on the Labor Government's move to streamline planning approvals and help get renewable energy build faster.

Quote attributable to Minister for Energy and Resources Lily D'Ambrosio

"This is about giving communities and industry certainty that native wildlife will be protected while we build the renewable energy required to drive down power bills and cut emissions."

Quote attributable to Minister for Planning Sonya Kilkenny

"These new tools will help ensure we mitigate biodiversity impacts while we get more renewable projects off the ground to help Victoria transition to cleaner, cheaper energy."

Quote attributable to Minister for Environment Steve Dimopoulos

"Victoria is home to fantastic species indigenous to our lands and waters – we're making sure they're best protected as we head towards net-zero emissions."

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