



Australian Government

Australian Law Reform Commission

Priorities for Law Reform

Potential Topic Three: Environmental Law

The information below describes one of seven potential law reform topics proposed by the ALRC for comment by stakeholders and the general public as part of its Priorities for Law Reform project.

Through an online survey, individuals and organisations will have the opportunity to provide comments on potential law reform topics and make their own suggestions about areas of law they believe are in need of reform. For more information about the project, please visit <https://www.alrc.gov.au/inquiries/where-next-law-reform>.

The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth) ('the *EPBC Act*') provides a legal framework to protect and manage important flora, fauna, ecological communities, and heritage places of national environmental significance. There is concern that the *EPBC Act* is outdated and fails to account for climate change. Some have suggested a complete overhaul of the legislative framework and enforcement mechanisms is required.

In June 2018, the Senate referred an inquiry on Australia's faunal extinction crisis to the Environment and Communications References Committee. This inquiry is looking into the ecological impact of faunal extinction, the adequacy of Commonwealth environment laws, and the adequacy of monitoring practices, assessment process, and compliance mechanisms for enforcing Commonwealth environmental law.

In order to adequately protect Australia's environment, a broader approach to law reform may be required to complement the work being done in the Senate on faunal extinction.