

## Plant Cuttings – May 2026

### **The vine with a murky past that is strangling Vanuatu's forests – ABC News, 30 April 2026**

Vanuatu's tropical rainforests are suffocating under an invasive species which, according to local lore, was introduced during World War II to camouflage Allied operations.

Commonly known as "big lif", or merremia, its big leaves and ropey vines form a blanket that smothers the forest.

"Big lif is considered to be the biggest driver of deforestation in Vanuatu because it literally strangles the existing vegetation and invades the forest," James Carter, the project manager at the South Pacific World War II museum in Luganville, said.

It is prolific across the islands, but the people of Kole village, in the east of Vanuatu's Santo Island, have had some success keeping their land clear through a pioneering carbon project for the region. Villagers earn money for their conservation efforts, including planting trees in place of the big lif, by generating carbon credits that can be sold to support the village.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2026-04-30/vanuatu-big-lif-killing-rainforests-one-village-fighting-back/106379742>

### **Western Queensland's Pilungah Reserve third to gain special status ending mineral prospecting permits – ABC News, 30 April 2026**

The permanent safeguarding of a remote property in far western Queensland has come as a relief for its traditional owners and the conservationists studying its unique species.

Pilungah Reserve, just east of the Northern Territory border, has been named Queensland's third special wildlife reserve. It means the 229,000-hectare area will have national park-level protections even though it is privately owned.

"We're so intertwined with our culture and those particular areas," Wangkamahdla woman Avelina Tarrago said.

"So, any harm that would come to it would be taken very personally."

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2026-04-30/western-qld-pilungah-special-wildlife-reserve-mining-banned/106620320>

### **Federal government accused of watering down proposal to protect Australia's threatened species and ecosystems – The Guardian, 2 May 2026**

Green groups have accused the Albanese government of watering down a proposal to protect threatened species and ecosystems.

National environmental standards were the key plank of reforms to Australia's nature laws, passed by the parliament in November. The government has been consulting on a draft standard for matters of national environmental significance, including endangered wildlife, world heritage areas and the great barrier reef.

Environmentalists have criticised the latest draft which they say removes the requirement for developments to meet specific environmental objectives.

Changes to the draft standard, released Thursday, would mean developers would be considered to have met the objectives if they follow certain processes or “principles” in their environmental assessments – rather than directly demonstrating the required environmental outcomes can be met.

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2026/may/02/federal-government-accused-of-watering-down-proposal-to-protect-australias-threatened-species-and-ecosystems>

### **Conservation work helps endangered flora recover in Stirling Range – ABC News, 2 May 2026**

If you take a hike across the mountain tops of the Stirling Range National Park in WA's south, you might be lucky enough to come across a plant found nowhere else in the world. The area is home to 1,500 native flora species, many of them rare and endangered. They were at risk of being permanently lost when bushfires swept through the park in 2018 and 2019.

In all, 26 threatened flora species were burnt, including 18 critically endangered species, and experts like Sarah Barrett have been working tirelessly to ensure their survival ever since.

"Of particular concern was *Banksia montana*, which is probably our most endangered of the critically endangered species," Dr Barrett, who is a Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) conservation officer, said.

"Before the fire, we had 37 mature individuals left in the world, and they were all restricted to the Eastern Stirling Range, and all of those were burnt in the fire."

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2026-05-02/endangered-flora-recovers-in-stirling-range-wa/106502284>

### **How salt water is restoring life to parts of the Queensland coast – 2 May 2026**

The tide is turning in parts of coastal Queensland. Conservation groups, traditional owners and landholders are removing tidal gates and barriers that have blocked the flow of salt water into coastal wetlands for the past 50 years.

Already, signs of life are returning. In north Mackay, Christopher Rek has spent decades raising cattle on his family's land. Now he is letting the ocean reclaim parts of it.

"Mackay's getting built in and the animals are running out of space," the 60-year-old said.

"I stole from nature by using all my cows and now it's time to give the land back and let nature do its thing."

An environmental restoration company contacted Mr Rek to remove tidal gates that previously stopped salt water from entering his property.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2026-05-02/removing-tidal-barriers-on-farmland-to-create-wetlands/106496784>

### **Honeybees may be helping spread tree-killing myrtle rust – new research – The Conversation, 4 May 2026**

We know introduced honeybees as the ever-busy helpers of our gardens, farms and orchards. In pollinating crops and fertilising fruit, they support more than a third of the food we eat and are worth billions of dollars to New Zealand's economy. But they could also be unwittingly helping one of the worst natural threats facing Aotearoa's native forests: myrtle rust.

By collecting spores as food, then carrying them from plant to plant, honeybees may be under-appreciated vectors of this recently-arrived fungal disease. Our recently published research adds further weight to this idea, challenging the assumption that myrtle rust spreads mainly by wind alone.

<https://theconversation.com/honeybees-may-be-helping-spread-tree-killing-myrtle-rust-new-research-281430>

### **Warming seas can threaten the hidden relationship that supports seagrass meadows – The Conversation, 6 May 2026**

On the western side of Lake Macquarie in New South Wales, Australia, sits Myuna Bay, a quiet bay with meadows of seagrass waving beneath the water. The most common marine plant species you find there is *Zostera muelleri*. It has long ribbon-like leaves that grow from stems (called rhizomes) buried beneath the sediment and provides important shelter for small fish, shrimp and crabs.

Although Myuna Bay looks quite normal, it is actually a bit unusual. For decades, the nearby Eraring power station released warm water into the lake that was used to cool down their systems, causing water temperatures here to be consistently 1°C to 3°C higher than nearby sites. This made the bay a rare natural laboratory for understanding what warming oceans might mean for coastal ecosystems.

In our new research, published today in the journal *New Phytologist*, we used this setting to investigate what happens to seagrass and the microbes living in the sediment when ocean temperatures increase in the way climate models predict they will in the future.

<https://theconversation.com/warming-seas-can-threaten-the-hidden-relationship-that-supports-seagrass-meadows-278070>

### **Urban trees cool the world's cities more than we thought – but we can't rely on them alone – The Conversation, 7 May 2026**

Cities and towns are usually 1–3°C hotter than the surrounding countryside, because asphalt, concrete and brick absorb heat from the sun and radiate it slowly. Some cities can be as much as 7°C hotter. This effect is known as the urban heat island. This can be dangerous, especially in hot countries. In very hot conditions, dehydration and heat exhaustion become real risks. If it gets too hot, it can be lethal.

There's one simple antidote: urban trees. Authorities around the world have planted more trees to counteract the heat. But how effective is this? How much hotter would our cities be without trees?

To find out, we analysed data from nearly 9,000 cities around the world, home to about 3.6 billion people. As our new research shows, trees almost halve how much heat is trapped by the urban heat island effect. This cooling is welcome. But it is far from even. Wealthier, suburban and humid cities have more trees on average.

<https://theconversation.com/urban-trees-cool-the-worlds-cities-more-than-we-thought-but-we-cant-rely-on-them-alone-281866>

### **A look at Sir David Attenborough's life in his own words as he turns 100 – ABC News, 8 May 2026**

British broadcaster Sir David Attenborough has brought the natural world to living rooms for the past seven decades. But what does he have to say about this extraordinary life of adventure?

To celebrate his 100th birthday, we look back at his work and interviews to capture in his words some of the wisdom and endless sense of wonder that have made him a household name.

A natural sense of wonderment drove Sir David's early childhood explorations around the English countryside during the interwar period. As he told the BBC documentary *Attenborough's Journey* in 2010:

"When I was a boy growing up in the Midlands in Leicester, the rocks and limestones you found in the east of the country were full of the most magical things.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/science/2026-05-08/david-attenborough-s-life-in-his-own-words-as-he-turns-100/106627464>

### **Magnetic South land clearing found not to have breached national environmental law – ABC News, 8 May 2026**

The federal government has found that a central Queensland coal mine accused of illegally clearing vegetation did not breach national environmental laws.

Last year the Queensland Conservation Council (QCC) released drone footage showing about 200 hectares of land that had been cleared at the site of a proposed coal mine near the town of Dingo, 120 kilometres west of Rockhampton.

Mining company Magnetic South said its Gemini Coal project would have a 25-year life span mining up to 1.9 million tonnes of coal a year. In July 2025, the QCC alleged the land clearing activities occurred without a required environment protection and biodiversity conservation (EPBC) referral.

Under the EPBC Act, any activity that has, or is likely to have, a significant impact on nationally protected matters needs a referral. This includes the greater glider, bridled nail-tail wallaby and koalas that are threatened species which may be present in the local area.

At the time, a spokesperson for Magnetic South told the ABC that all its activities had been done lawfully. Now, an investigation conducted by the federal Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) has found no breaches of national laws.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2026-05-08/magnetic-south-found-not-to-have-cleared-land-illegally/106624088>

### **Cyclone Gabrielle exposed the risks of forestry slash. New research suggests little has changed – The Conversation, 8 May 2026**

When Cyclone Gabrielle tore through New Zealand's Tairāwhiti region in 2023, it left behind more than silt and floodwaters. Rivers were choked with forestry debris, beaches littered with logs, and homes, bridges and farmland buried under tonnes of forestry slash swept down from hillsides.

The scale of the impacts – to infrastructure, livelihoods, ecosystems and to Māori kaitiakitanga (guardianship), and the loss of life – triggered widespread public outrage, with a ministerial inquiry launched soon after. This led to new rules requiring foresters to better manage harvest debris on steep slopes and reduce the risk of slash being swept away in floods.

Now, the rulebook is being rewritten again, with the government proposing changes to the National Environmental Standards for Commercial Forestry (NES-CF). This would allow foresters to leave more slash in areas considered lower risk. Detailed government guidance on managing slash risk is still being developed, in a process which will limit opportunity for public input. At the same time, the reforms curtail councils' ability to impose tougher restrictions to address the risks of slash.

<https://theconversation.com/cyclone-gabrielle-exposed-the-risks-of-forestry-slash-new-research-suggests-little-has-changed-282129>

### **A real 'intergenerational equity' budget would address our unceasing environmental decline – The Conversation, 13 May 2026**

Last night, Labor unveiled a budget designed to tackle intergenerational equity in Australia through bold tax reform. It comes at a time where politics is consumed with the international shocks created by US President Donald Trump, whether through chaotic tariff announcements or the US-Israel war with Iran.

But there's a larger intergenerational inequity in our overexploitation of the environment. The extent of greenhouse gas emissions, land clearing, and overfishing over the last 30 years will be a blight on future generations. More so each year we fail to address it seriously.

Our recent research provides evidence that worsening global weather conditions will have profound impacts on economic growth. It is also linked to our cost-of-living crisis through its effects on the productivity of agriculture, which determines the price of food.

So what's in this year's federal budget for the environment and energy?

<https://theconversation.com/a-real-intergenerational-equity-budget-would-address-our-unceasing-environmental-decline-282375>

### **Midnight Oil frontman Peter Garrett on 'closing the circle' to chair Landcare Australia – ABC News, 13 May 2026**

It can be a frustrating time for humans passionate about their roles as caretakers for the land. From felled trees for local projects to climate change and the systematic removal of fossil fuel regulations overseas, there's no shortage of environmental issues to be concerned about.

But according to one of Australia's best-known environmentalists, there's also no better antidote to anxiety than rolling up your sleeves and plunging your hands into the earth.

"I'm fascinated to see that quite a lot of people are saying, 'I love coming down and rolling up my sleeves and being with other people, and being in the bush in the morning and doing that sort of work,'" said Peter Garrett AM, Midnight Oil frontman and former federal environment minister.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2026-05-13/midnight-oil-frontman-peter-garrett-chairs-landcare-australia/106671062>

### **Federal budget disappointment for farmers and environmental groups – ABC News, 13 May 2026**

Federal budget cuts to national pest and weed control programs have been labelled "savage" and "tragic" as feral animal numbers rise across the country. Nearly \$200 million will be cut over five years from agriculture, fisheries and forestry and redirected towards other policy "priorities" within the portfolio.

About one-third of that funding will now go towards securing agricultural export and trade opportunities. More than \$104 million will be cut from grant programs, including the Pest and Disease Preparedness and Response Programs.

Conservation groups are celebrating short-term native species funding that supports feral animal control projects, but say financial uncertainty is leaving agricultural industries and the environment exposed to disease and pest threats.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2026-05-13/federal-budget-farmers-agriculture-pest-control/106671960>

### **Federal Court dismisses legal action over Murray flood plain restoration – ABC News, 14 May 2026**

The Federal Court has ruled there was nothing illegal about a Commonwealth decision to approve engineering works on Murray River flood plains between Swan Hill and Mildura. The court was asked to review whether any legal errors were made by a delegate of the minister for environment and water when the Nyah Floodplain Restoration Project was approved in March 2024.

The project involved the installation of levees, pumps and regulators in Nyah and Vinifera to control the passage of water into the Nyah-Vinifera Park. It was one of nine environmental projects that made up the wider Victorian Murray Floodplain Restoration Project.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2026-05-14/nyah-murray-flood-plain-restoration-federal-court-challenge/106670128>

### **Bosisto's to triple its eucalyptus oil production with new \$10 million distillery in central Victoria – ABC News, 14 May 2026**

Australian company Bosisto's has opened a new distillery in country Victoria, expanding its local production of eucalyptus oil. The \$10 million purpose-built facility near Wedderburn, north-west of Bendigo, triples the amount of oil the company can produce. Eucalyptus oil is extracted from the leaves of blue mallee trees native to the area, using steam.

Bosisto's executive director, Tegan Abbott, said the new distillery is modern and efficient.

"We did previously have a distillery here, but [it was] pretty old and a little bit ancient," Ms Abbott said.

"We wanted to really set things up for new modern manufacturing capabilities, increase efficiencies, increase productivity, and also improve safety."

Eucalyptus oil has been used for its medicinal properties for thousands of years. Pharmacist Joseph Bosisto pioneered the eucalyptus oil trade, establishing a commercial plantation and distillery in Victoria in 1852. While Australia once supplied all of the world's eucalyptus oil, the local industry has declined in recent decades. Bosisto's is now trying to reverse that.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2026-05-14/bosistos-new-eucalyptus-oil-distillery-to-triple-production/106678224>

### **Protect threatened plant and wildlife species at Llandilo event – The Western Weekender, 14 May 2026**

Penrith residents are invited to roll up their sleeves and help protect Penrith's threatened plants and wildlife at a free community event on Saturday, May 23 at Wilson Park, Llandilo.

With up to 90 per cent of Penrith's remaining vegetation classified as threatened, the event offers a hands-on opportunity to learn about local conservation programs, join a guided nature safari and connect with experts on how to make a real difference.

Penrith Mayor Todd Carney said Council's Bushcare Program plays a vital role in protecting the City's unique natural environment.

"Approximately 90 per cent of the vegetation remaining in Penrith is considered threatened under state and federal legislation," Carney said.

"The Land for Wildlife event is a great way to learn more about the threatened species found in Penrith and to seek advice from local experts on how to protect and conserve them if you have them on your property."

<https://www.westernweekender.com.au/2026/05/protect-threatened-plant-and-wildlife-species-at-llandilo-event/>

### **Natural burials begin at NSW conservation cemetery Walawaani Way – ABC News, 16 May 2026**

Cristina Giusti feels at peace when she visits her son's grave. Before her son Adam Clark died in January, the two had discussed how he would like to be buried.

"From a young boy, he loved being out in the bush in the country," she said. "He loved the fact that we could plant a tree on his grave and his remains would go to feed this tree."

Adam was one of the first people buried at Walawaani Way, a conservation burial ground located on a former cattle paddock in Bodalla on the NSW south coast.

Ms Giusti remembered when she first found a spot for her son between two gum trees on a hill overlooking the Tuross River, with cows grazing in the pastures below.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2026-05-16/natural-burials-begin-walawaani-way-nsw-conservation-cemetery/106596496>

### **Meet the women rangers working to protect country – ABC News, 18 May 2026**

At the base of the towering boulders of N'Dhala Gorge on Eastern Arrernte country, where bright green spinifex climbs the ochre-red rocks, Andrina Williams grinds leaves into a thick pulp using two stones. The leaves are called arrethe in her language, and she is using them to make bush medicine, which can help soothe skin.

The Eastern Arrernte woman from Harts Range works the leaves like a grandmother might knead bread — back and forth, hitting, pulling and pushing the green against the grey stone.

Ms Williams is one of dozens of Central Land Council (CLC) Aboriginal rangers who gathered at Ross River, east of Alice Springs, last week for the 2026 Women's Ranger Camp. The rangers are employed by the CLC, to care for and protect the desert landscapes of their ancestors.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2026-05-18/nt-aboriginal-ranger-camp-women-rangers-protecting-country/106678228>

### **Nature is good for business – and we now have numbers to show it – The Conversation, 18 May 2026**

When rivers degrade, pests spread or drought hits crops, nature sends a bill. Yet it's one rarely itemised on any balance sheet, because nature's contribution to business remains genuinely hard to quantify.

One major obstacle is data. Businesses rarely disclose their precise operating locations, while detailed ecological information that can be linked to specific firms is scarce in most countries. This is despite healthy ecosystems underpinning large parts of the economy, from agriculture and forestry to tourism and food production. As the US economist Herman Daly

famously put it, the economy is “a wholly owned subsidiary of the environment, not the reverse”.

As part of a growing body of global research now trying to put hard numbers on what nature actually contributes to the economy, we looked at New Zealand’s case. Our newly completed research turned up a compelling finding: firms operating in areas with richer biodiversity are measurably more productive.

<https://theconversation.com/nature-is-good-for-business-and-we-now-have-numbers-to-show-it-283052>

### **Plant believed extinct for 60 years suddenly reappears – Science Daily, 18 May 2026**

A random photo snapped in the Australian outback has led to the rediscovery of a plant thought extinct for nearly 60 years — proving that ordinary people with smartphones are quietly transforming science. After bird bander Aaron Bean uploaded pictures of a strange shrub to iNaturalist, botanist Anthony Bean immediately recognized it as *Ptilotus senarius*, a rare species missing since 1967.

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2026/05/260517211447.htm>

### **Opinion - Australia’s ‘green Wall Street’ is failing to launch. Threatened species deserve better than the nature repair market – The Guardian, 18 May 2026**

Anthony Albanese’s government swept to power in 2022 and, among many promises made to voters, it firmly committed to end a decade of environmental neglect. Four years later, the federal budget – as well as the newly passed national environmental law reforms – make it abundantly clear that it is failing to deliver on that promise.

This failure is more than just political; it is existential for this country’s remarkable, unique and increasingly imperilled wildlife and ecosystems.

Environmental funding is set to decline from an already paltry 0.06% of the federal budget for on-ground nature programs to less than 0.04% in 2028-29. Even as it retunes its environment policy settings to favour business imperatives, the government is seeking to further absolve itself of its legal and moral environmental responsibilities by doubling down on a highly contentious and unproven nature repair market.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2026/may/18/australias-green-wall-street-is-failing-to-launch-threatened-species-deserve-better-than-the-nature-repair-market>

### **Antarctic plants may face a growing fungal threat from warming soils – Science News, 19 May 2026**

Global warming will expand the tiny Antarctic plant community. But it could also foster pathogenic fungi in soils that might kill those plants.

Analyses of soil samples from southern Chile to the Antarctic Peninsula reveal that fungi that prey on plants grow more abundant and diverse with higher air temperature, researchers

report in the May *Global Change Biology*. By 2100, the team says, projected warming could double the occurrence of those fungi in some coastal Antarctic soils.

Less than 1 percent of Antarctica's land is ice-free. Even the relatively wet, mild Antarctic Peninsula and nearby islands are forbidding to plant life, which can spend up to eight months covered in snow. But some cold-adapted plants, such as mosses and liverworts, cling to life.

<https://www.sciencenews.org/article/antarctic-plants-growing-fungal-threat>

### **Entire Aussie city quarantined as invasive pest threatens to breach state border – Yahoo News, 19 May 2026**

Residents have been warned that should a highly invasive, devastating pest hop state borders and head east, more than half of one city's trees could be at risk of being ravaged. The shot-hole borer is currently confined to Western Australia, sparking a major quarantine across all of Perth. But it could tear through Sydney's famously leafy suburbs if it were to eventually spread, the Invasive Species Council warned.

New research from the council has found almost half of Sydney's urban trees may be at risk from the destructive polyphagous shot-hole borer — an invasive pest already blamed for wiping out thousands of trees in Perth. Conservationists say some of the city's best-known species, including figs, banksias, paperbarks and eucalypts, could be vulnerable to attack.

Invasive Species Council Policy Director Dr Carol Booth said losing large stretches of tree canopy would make suburbs hotter, reduce wildlife habitat and strip streets of much-needed shade.

<https://au.news.yahoo.com/entire-aussie-city-quarantined-as-invasive-pest-threatens-to-breach-state-border-031250110.html>

### **Murray-Darling inflow laws secure water for delicate ecosystems, ecologist says – ABC News, 22 May 2026**

Controversial new legislation could secure critical water supplies for delicate ecosystems while delivering benefits to the Murray-Darling Basin's agricultural sector, a leading river ecologist says.

Last week, NSW parliament passed the Water Management Amendment (Easements for Inundation) Bill, allowing the inundation of private land for environmental water flows. The flows are a cornerstone of the Murray-Darling Basin Plan, aiming to provide water to important natural ecosystems. These include the Gwydir Wetlands, where water flows were halted in April after a landholder threatened legal action.

The move has angered some landholders, who argue they have not been adequately consulted or compensated with regard to easements on their land. University of NSW Centre for Ecosystem Science director Richard Kingsford said the flows were "really critical".

"They're essentially what's sustaining a lot of environments on the rivers," he said.

"That water is helping native fish get up and down the rivers, it's going out to flood river red gums and some of the really special places we have in the Murray Darling Basin.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2026-05-22/murray-darling-basin-inflow-laws-ecosystem-protection/106700210>

### **Climate change threatens global plant species as habitats shrink – Reuters, 23 May 2026**

Some of the plants that make familiar landscapes recognizable may not survive by century's end as climate change becomes an increasingly important driver of species loss, according to scientists, reshaping and often shrinking suitable habitats that the plants need to survive.

Researchers modelled future ranges for numerous species of vascular plants, a category that accounts for almost all the world's plants - those with water- and nutrient-carrying tissues. They looked at more than 67,000 species, meaning about 18% of the world's known vascular plants.

They found that 7% to 16% could lose more than 90% of their range, placing them at high risk of extinction. Examples include Catalina ironwood, or island ironwood, a rare endemic California tree, bluish spike-moss from a plant lineage dating back more than 400 million years, and roughly one third of Eucalyptus species, one of Australia's most recognizable plant groups.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/environment/climate-change-threatens-global-plant-species-habitats-shrink-2026-05-23/>

### **Australia's old environment laws were a box-ticking exercise. Sadly, the new ones could be too – The Conversation, 28 May 2026**

For a quarter century, Australia's environment laws were widely regarded as not fit for purpose. In 2020, a scathing review by Professor Graeme Samuel found the Environment Protection and Biodiversity (EPBC) Act was ineffective and unfit for future environmental challenges.

On the last Parliamentary sitting day of 2025, Labor passed its long-awaited reforms to Australia's nature laws following a deal with the Greens. According to Environment Minister Murray Watt, these reforms would deliver tangible benefits for the environment and "protect what is precious".

Now the dust has settled on getting the legislation passed, conservationists want to know if they will work. The big questions is whether two proposed "environmental standards", a centrepiece in the new laws, are up to the task.

<https://theconversation.com/australias-old-environment-laws-were-a-box-ticking-exercise-sadly-the-new-ones-could-be-too-283069>

### **Legal action filed against federal environment minister's decision to allow land clearing at NT station – ABC News, 28 May 2026**

An environmental organisation has launched legal action against the federal environment minister, arguing his decision not to assess plans to clear nearly 3,000 hectares of tropical savanna at a Northern Territory station, home to threatened species, was unlawful.

Lawyers from Environmental Justice Australia, acting on behalf of the Environment Centre NT, filed documents in the Federal Court on Tuesday afternoon seeking a judicial review of the decision, which drew strong criticism from conservation groups when it was announced earlier this year.

In February, Environment Minister Murray Watt approved Top End Pastoral Company's plans to clear 2,722 hectares at Claravale Station and Farm, about 270 kilometres south of Darwin, to make way for crops, without requiring an assessment under Australia's national environment laws.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2026-05-28/claravale-land-clearing-judicial-review-environment-minister/106714566>

### **Darwin Harbour Middle Arm gas and petrochemical precinct could be roadblocked by endangered herb – ABC News, 29 May 2026**

A tiny endangered herb that has just been added to Australia's national threatened species list could potentially stop the Northern Territory government's plan to build a new mega gas industry precinct on Darwin Harbour.

The NT government hopes its planned Middle Arm Precinct will host gas, petrochemical, minerals and hydrogen processing, and a carbon capture and storage project to bury emissions from a new Beetaloo Basin gas field underground.

The federal government has committed \$1.5 billion to Middle Arm project infrastructure, including gas export jetties. But the ABC can reveal the NT government's own draft environmental impact assessment of the project has found it would have a "significant impact" several endangered species, protected by federal Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) law.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2026-05-29/darwin-harbour-middle-arm-endangered-herb-potential-roadblock/106733212>

## Events and Opportunities

### **Expressions of Interest: Associate Editors – Pacific Conservation Biology**

Pacific Conservation Biology is seeking Associate Editors to join the editorial board. The journal focuses regional conservation, mechanisms for conservation oriented biological research, and results of relevant research. Pacific Conservation Biology is published by CSIRO Publishing. Editors-in-Chief determine the publishing strategy of the journal and lead a team of Associate Editors to manage the peer review process of papers received by the journal. Associate Editors have responsibility for handling manuscripts and determining the suitability of manuscripts for publication. Each Associate Editor may receive approximately 20 manuscripts per year.

<https://connectsci.au/pc/pages/editor-eoi>

### **ESA Awards 2026 – Closing 31 May 2026**

The ESA awards more than 100 prizes each year to students and professionals for research excellence, study, travel, conference presentations and science communication.

<https://www.ecolsoc.org.au/grants-awards/>

### **IUCN Australia 30x30 and Beyond Interactive Symposium – Sydney NSW 20-22 July 2026**

Every year, we produce a major interactive event dedicated to addressing a priority conservation challenge. We provide an inclusive platform for collaboration between Government, Non-Government, Indigenous Peoples, Academia and Industry. Together, we catalyse informed action for nature.

Our 2026 national symposium will centre around Australia's achievement of Target 3 of the Global Biodiversity Framework: Conserve 30% of Land, Waters and Seas.

The 3-day schedule includes a 2-day Symposium, a casual group dinner, and an optional day 3 workshop for anyone interested in learning about the 2027 IUCN World Protected Areas Congress.

<https://www.aciucn.org.au/30x30-and-beyond>

### **International Society of Ethnobiology (ISE) Congress 2026 – Cairns QLD, 26-29 July 2026**

The 19th International Society of Ethnobiology (ISE) Congress invites academics, activists, practitioners, and visionaries from all over the world to explore the theme of “*Indigenous and Local Knowledge Connections: Honouring Heritage and Innovation*”

The International Society of Ethnobiology (ISE), founded in 1988, is a global network focused on preserving the links between human societies and the natural world. It provides a unique

platform for participants to share research and initiatives from diverse disciplines related to human-nature relationships.

Registration and a Call for Abstracts is open.

<https://isecongress2026.org/>

### **National Biodiversity Offsets Conference 4.0 – Canberra ACT, 4-6 August 2026**

Australia's premier forum on biodiversity offsets returns for its fourth iteration, with the theme Nature Positive by 2030: Integrity, Restoration and Net Gain in Action.

The National Biodiversity Offsets Conference draws environmental practitioners, policymakers, regulatory staff, offset brokers, environmental accountants, academics, legal professionals and landholders involved in offset delivery.

Over three days, you'll gain practical insight from those delivering offsets on the ground, hear the latest policy and regulatory developments, explore emerging biodiversity markets, and connect with around 400 peers across government, consultancy, academia and industry.

<https://www.eianz.org/events/event/national-biodiversity-offsets-conference-40-nature-positive-by-2030-integrity-restoration-and-net-gain-in-action>

### **World Ecoacoustics Congress 2026 Cairns, Australia – Cairns QLD, 17-20 August 2026**

The WEC happens every 2 years and attracts hundreds of delegates to discuss advances and innovations in Ecoacoustics.

Call for Symposia and Call for Workshops are now open.

<https://ecoacoustics2026.org/>

### **13<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Cycad Biology (CYCAD2026) – Sydney NSW, 17-22 August 2026**

The theme is “*Cultivating Conservation through Science and Horticulture*”.

CYCAD2026 will gather international delegates including academic researchers, conservation and horticultural experts, representatives from leading botanical institutions, and industry leaders and innovators.

Attendees will explore advancements in plant biology, genetics, ecological restoration, horticulture, and more—through keynote addresses, networking opportunities, and collaborative sessions.

Donate to support the running of the conference here: <https://www.rbg.vic.gov.au/cycad-2026>

### **24<sup>th</sup> Australasian Weeds Conference (24AWC) – Christchurch NZ, 23-27 August 2026**

On behalf of the Council of Australasian Weed Societies (CAWS), the New Zealand Biosecurity Institute (NZBI) and the New Zealand Plant Protection Society (NZPPS) are excited to host the 24th Australasian Weeds Conference.

Please plan to join us in Christchurch, 23 -27 August 2026, at Te Pae, the city's new convention centre.

<https://caws.org.nz/upcoming-awc-2/>

### **15<sup>th</sup> Australasian Plant Conservation Conference (APCC15) – Port Douglas QLD, 24-28 August 2026**

The 15th Australasian Plant Conservation Conference (APCC15) will be held at the Port Douglas Community Hall in the Queensland Wet Tropics from 24-28 August 2026.

With the overall theme '*Plant Conservation: Culture, Collaboration and Change*' APCC15 will explore these three spheres of native plant recovery through rainforest restoration partnerships, collaborations with Traditional Owner groups, impacts of climate change induced natural disasters, management of threatened species and communities, and biosecurity threats such as Myrtle Rust.

Early bird registrations and abstract submissions now open!

<https://www.anpc.asn.au/conferences-apcc15/>

### **Amazing Arid Australia (ANPSA Conference) – Mparntwe Alice Springs NT, 24-28 August 2026**

The conference theme is dedicated to the 70 per cent of Australia that is arid or semi-arid. Over five days the conference will be your chance to hear about and see native plants and their habitats in central Australia. There will be three days of keynote talks, themed breakouts, two afternoon outings and two days of excursions into the MacDonnell Ranges and special places around Alice Springs. We are confident that you will have a wonderful experience learning about Amazing Arid Australia and meeting fellow native plant enthusiasts.

<https://www.anpsaconference.com/>

### **12th Australian Stream Management Conference (12ASM) – Kingscliff NSW, 6-9 September 2026**

The theme of 12ASM will be "Living and evolving with change", recognising the development and maturing of the stream management industry and science that supports it, particularly since the first ASM conference, and how we consider living rivers. We look forward to 12ASM bringing together our peers for a collaborative forum of discussion and debate on new and emerging issues, practical challenges encountered, experimental research findings, emerging trends and recent innovations.

<https://12asm.org/>

## **Nature-Climate Action: Our Opportunity to Lead (2026 ALCA Conference) – Nipaluna/Hobart, 6-9 October 2026**

Australia's biggest land conservation event.

As one of Australia's most significant events for the land conservation sector, this annual gathering is where the critical conversations, partnerships and ideas driving nature action come together.

The 2026 ALCA Conference will bring over 400 delegates together – conservation changemakers and practitioners, First Nations leaders and land managers, policymakers, researchers, business, finance and industry experts, landholders and community representatives – all working to drive collective impacts for nature, people and planet.

<https://www.alca.org.au/events/conference/2026>

## **NZPCN 2026 Conference – Te Whanganui-a-Tara, Wellington NZ, 12-15 October 2026**

The theme is Māhia ngā here - Collaboration for better conservation. This theme celebrates the power of working together, reflecting on past and present collaborations in plant conservation, and exploring how we can strengthen these connections for the future.

The 2026 conference coincides with the 100-year anniversary of the Ōtari Native Botanic Garden and Wilton's Bush Reserve. On Monday 12 October, a formal event will commemorate the centenary, marking 100 years to the day since Ōtari was officially opened.

The conference will run from Monday to Thursday, with workshops and a welcome event on Monday, symposia on Tuesday and Wednesday, and field trips on Thursday. Our field trips and workshops will make the most of the beautiful Wellington flora.

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/nzpcn/events/2026-nzpcn-conference/>

## **ESA 2026: Conference of the Ecological Society of Australia – Brisbane, 29 November-4 December 2026**

Key dates for your calendar:

- Call for Abstracts opens – 4 May 2026
- Early Bird registration opens: 11 May 2026
- Call for Abstracts closes – 29 June 2026
- Conference Travel Grants open 1 July 2026
- Abstract notifications sent by – 13 July 2026
- Early Bird registration closes: 25 August 2026
- Conference Travel Grants close 31 August 2026

<https://esa2026.org.au/>

**Island Arks Symposium IX: Ridge to Reef: Sustaining Biodiversity, Culture and Connection – Norfolk Island, 30 November-2 December 2026**

Norfolk Island National Park, together with the Norfolk Island Flora & Fauna Society and the Australian Island Alliance, is honoured to host the Island Arks Symposium IX on Norfolk Island.

The Island Arks Symposia are held biennially to foster collaboration among practitioners and custodians dedicated to protecting island ecosystems across Australia and beyond. They bring together land managers, scientists, First Nations Peoples, and policymakers to discuss, deliberate, and shape responses to critical issues affecting conservation and sustainable development. Through open knowledge exchange and partnership building, the symposia strengthen networks, build shared strategies, and drive tangible conservation outcomes across island landscapes.

<https://kaigi-islandarkssymposiumix.eventsair.site/>