



## Talking Points

- The things we love – our reefs, forests, wetlands and wildlife – deserve to be protected by national law from any development that could destroy or pollute them.
- Pushed by big business and the states, the Federal Government has signalled plans to discard national protection for many of Australia’s environmental assets by allowing state governments to have the final say on more development proposals.
- Historically, federal governments have had to intervene to stop state governments from turning the Alpine National Park into a cow paddock, sand mining Fraser Island and damming the Franklin River.
- Recently, the Federal Government had to step in to defend the Great Barrier Reef when the Queensland Government tried to pass a poor environmental assessment of a massive coal mine. This came just after UNESCO warned that the Great Barrier Reef could need to be added to the world heritage list of ‘sites in danger’ if the rate of development approvals in the area did not slow.
- State governments have a track record of putting short-term economic and political gains ahead of national environmental interests when assessing development.
- River flows, ocean currents and wildlife migrations don’t stop at state boundaries – state governments will may consider the threats of development that go over their borders.
- Land clearing, coal-seam gas, mining, damming and dredging proposals should not be rushed through – their repercussions will last longer than any of our lifetimes.
- Australia’s natural assets are finite. Lax development checks will deny our kids and our grandkids the chance to enjoy their beauty as we have.
- We need checks and balances in place to protect Australian places and wildlife from big developers – these are things that are special to all of us and to the rest of the world.
- The proposed reforms would make it easier for developers and resource extraction companies to further endanger our most threatened species and irreparably damage reefs, wetlands and heritage areas by taking away a vital layer of scrutiny and review.
- If the Prime Minister cedes these powers over to the states, she will set environmental regulation back 30 years, and sow the seeds for divided communities and further loss of our natural heritage.