

Australia's Prime Minister Launches the Second Edition of the Australian Restoration Standards

"Protecting Australia's natural environment for future generations"

On Thursday 30th November, in Parliament House, Canberra, Minister Anne Ruston representing the Prime Minister of Australia, Mr Malcolm Turnbull launched the 2nd Edition of the National Standards for the Practice of Ecological Restoration produced by the Society for Ecological Restoration Australasia.

Attendees from across Australia representing First Australians, government, community and non-government organisations listened to Minister Ruston outline the importance of the restoration standards for Australia and why now is the time for all Australians to be part of restoring the health of our ecosystems and biodiversity.

She said "The health of all Australian's depends upon clean water, clean air and good soils". She added " With 51% of Australia disturbed or degraded by humans now is the time for all of us to be part of the restoration economy and rebuild landscapes using the best possible principles and standards".

Senator Ruston went on to say "Never before in the history of this great continent has the restoration of our degraded lands been so urgent and the need so great as it is now". "These Standards represent the instrument to guide Australia on a new journey where key investment by government, the private sector and communities across the nation have the tools at hand to attain the highest standards in restoring bushland" she said, " in the same way that we have Standards in other parts of our lives for the products and services we use everyday".

Senator Ruston said "These Standards matter to everyone. From our multi-billion dollar mining sector to the billion dollar investments by government in caring for our rivers, lands and seas to community groups who volunteer millions of hours each year to restore bushland, coastal areas and wetlands across Australia"

A key part of the standards is a simple tool whereby all restoration, whether restoration of the Great Barrier Reef or mining restoration in the heart of Australia's mining province in the Pilbara region of Western Australia can be gauged on a five star rating system. Known as the 'Recovery Wheel' this tool presents a potent visualisation of just how well a restoration project is progressing towards completion and attaining the highest standard of 5-star.

Chair of the Society for Ecological Restoration Australasia, Professor Kingsley Dixon also announced that the Society launched at the same time, the Recovery Wheel as phone App available for Android and iPhone. The App will enable community practitioners, schools and industry to simply and effectively evaluate just how well they are progressing in achieving restoration outcomes.

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