



THE HON JOSH FRYDENBERG MP
Minister for the Environment and Energy

THE HON LISA NEVILLE MLA
Victorian Minister for Water

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

23 April 2018

INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR VICTORIAN WETLANDS

Glenelg Estuary and Discovery Bay has become Australia's 66th *Wetland of International Importance* under the internationally recognised Ramsar Convention, ensuring greater protection of the unique area now and into the future.

Located in Victoria near the border of South Australia and stretching more than 22,000 hectares, the Ramsar site comprises the western part of Lower Glenelg National Park, most of the Discovery Bay Coastal Park and the Nelson Streamside Reserve.

The area is known for its rare peatlands and dunes which support a hugely diverse range of waterbirds, fish and plants – a number of them threatened species. Listing the site under the Ramsar Convention means it will be managed to the highest possible standard, mitigating threats to its ecological character, such as invasive plants and animals.

Glenelg Estuary and Discovery Bay is Australia's first listing since 2013.

"I acknowledge the efforts of the community, traditional owners and governments who have been involved over many years to help us deliver this wonderful outcome," Minister Frydenberg said.

"The internationally recognised listing will not only help protect the natural and cultural heritage of the area, but also potentially provide a boost for tourism, including sightseeing, walking, camping and recreational fishing.

"Australia was one of the first countries to sign the Ramsar Convention – and the Northern Territory's Cobourg Peninsula became the world's first *Wetland of International Importance* in 1974.

"Today, 66 Australian wetlands are listed under the Convention, covering approximately 8.1 million hectares – an area greater than Tasmania."

"This listing of this important site is great news for Victoria and will mean that this wonderful sanctuary will be internationally recognised and protected for future generations," Minister Neville said.

"We're focused on improving the health of this magnificent wetland and its local wildlife and protecting our waterways and catchments."

Glenelg Estuary and Discovery Bay provides a home for 95 waterbird species, 24 of which are listed under international migratory bird agreements, including the endangered eastern curlew and curlew sandpiper.

The Glenelg Estuary also supports at least 14 species of fish that migrate between habitats for parts of their lifecycle, including mulloway which recent tagging activity indicated may have migrated up to 400 kilometres from the Estuary to the Murray Mouth to spawn.

The site has great cultural significance to the Gundjitrara Indigenous people who have a living association with this landscape, part of their Koonang (sea) and Bocara Wooroowarook (river forest country).

The Victorian Government has committed \$215,000 over the next three years to help manage the Ramsar site.

Ends

Media contacts:

Kane Silom – Office of the Hon Josh Frydenberg MP – 02 6277 7920

Jessica Evans – Office of the Hon Lisa Neville MLA – 03 9637 9586

The Hon Josh Frydenberg MP | Minister for the Environment and Energy | MELBOURNE