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**STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT SHOWS GAINS MADE BUT MUCH
WORK STILL TO DO**

The Australian Government has today tabled the fifth edition of Australia's State of the Environment Report which shows we have made significant gains in improving our environment, but there is still work to do.

The report has been compiled by leading scientists across the built environment, biodiversity, land and marine fields and has taken two years to bring together and provides the most comprehensive assessment of Australia's environment since 2011.

The reporting system, which was first established as an initiative under the Howard Government, examines recent trends, management and the future outlook for the environment across Australia.

Consistent with 2011, the report shows that our marine environment and habitat, natural and cultural heritage areas, the Antarctic environment and the air quality of our cities are in generally good condition.

Since the last report, ozone levels have improved while sustainable diversion limits and water efficiency are having a positive impact on water bird and fish stocks as well as natural vegetation in the Murray Darling Basin.

Communities, landholders and individuals are playing an increasingly vital role in the management and protection of the environment while more than 17 per cent of our land is now being managed to protect species, up from 13 per cent in 2011.

However, our unique biodiversity remains under pressure. That is why we've complemented our protected and managed lands with a Threatened Species Strategy and appointed the first Threatened Species Commissioner, with an action plan focused on 20 birds, 20 mammals and 30 plants by 2020.

The report also confirms the challenges associated with coral bleaching on the Great Barrier Reef and the need to continue the implementation of our Reef 2050 Plan which will see on-ground action to improve water quality and the management of crown of thorns starfish over the next 30 years.

Arguably the most significant development since the 2011 report is Australia's commitment under the Paris Agreement to reduce our emissions by 26-28 per cent on 2005 levels. This target is comparable with other advanced economies and will halve our per capita emissions making it one of the strongest targets in the G20.

Published on a new interactive digital platform for the first time, the report enables decision-makers, researchers and the public to explore and discover its findings in a variety of ways.

Information contained in the report will help guide and prioritise the Federal Government's significant investment being made to protect the environment.

The Federal Government thanks all those who contributed to the production of Australia's State of the Environment Report 2016.

The report can be located via: <https://www.environment.gov.au/science/soe>