AUSTRALIAN CONSERVATION FOUNDATION

MEDIA RELEASE

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Opportunities for our environment

The Australian Conservation Foundation has congratulated Julia Gillard on being able to form government with the support of three independents and the Greens.

"ACF looks forward to working with the new Parliament to tackle the environmental challenges facing the country, including those in rural and regional Australia," said ACF executive director Don Henry.

"The independents' statements of support for effective action on climate change and renewable energy, which complement the agreement between the Government and the Greens, provide a solid foundation for progress.

"We particularly welcome the recognition by Tony Windsor and Rob Oakeshott of the enormous opportunities for regional Australia that come from investing in renewable energy.

"I urge the new government to move quickly to establish the promised climate change committee, because cutting pollution will need a carbon price.

"This committee should be set up in the next 30 days and the timetable for its work should be established to allow for a price on pollution to be legislated in 2011."

ACF also called on the new government to act quickly on election commitments to:

- implement a scientifically robust Murray-Darling Basin Plan and continue the program of water buybacks to restore the river system to health
- establish a network of marine parks based on good science and consultation
- develop a national green corridors plan to build environmental resilience to climate change
- make it a legal offence to import timber products that cannot be verified as having been legally harvested
- incorporate the Indigenous lands of Koongarra, near Nourlangie Rock, into Kakadu National Park to ensure this land can never become a uranium mine
- develop a sustainable population policy by 2011
- introduce Sustainability Impact Assessments for Cabinet submissions.

“Australians want this government to invest in our vital life support systems and lead the nation on the transition from a pollution-dependent economy to a clean economy,” Mr Henry said.

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