

# Submission Guide

## ACT Nature Conservation Strategy

Following extensive targeted stakeholder consultation, the ACT Government has released and is seeking public comment on a draft of the [ACT Nature Conservation Strategy 2026-2036](#). This is an important opportunity for everyone who cares about protecting and restoring our natural environment. Together, we can shape the future of nature conservation in the ACT.

You can provide feedback before **27 March 2026** on the [YourSay platform](#), or email your submission to [natureconservationpolicy@act.gov.au](mailto:natureconservationpolicy@act.gov.au)



The Council welcomes the development of the new Strategy and supports the Government's vision of a nature-positive ACT. The Strategy represents a clear shift towards a landscape-scale approach to conservation and greater recognition of areas of high ecological value outside of the ACT's formal protected area system. The Council particularly welcomes the Government's intention to establish a new Nature Conservation Network, to be identified and defined in the forthcoming ACT Landscape Plan. This aligns with the Council and Friends of Grasslands call to establish a Biodiversity Network to permanently protect areas of high ecological value outside the reserve system.

There are many other strong elements of the strategy, including identifying Priority Conservation Areas, implementing nature stewardship programs for landholders, and a focus on building understanding and capacity to respond to climate risks. However, there is room for improvement, and a number of critical details are still to be finalised. We will continue to advocate for nature positive outcomes, including:

- **Timely development and implementation of the ACT Landscape Plan, critical to establishing the Nature Conservation Network**
- **Consultation on amendments to the Nature Conservation Act, which will operationalise aspects of the Strategy**
- **Consultation on the criteria for identification of Priority Conservation Areas**
- **Permanent protection for Priority Conservation Areas outside the ACT's protected areas**
- **Rigorous application of the mitigation hierarchy (Avoid, Mitigate, Offset) to all new developments**
- **Offsets, when proposed, are to be genuinely additional, valuable and 'like for like'; with net gains achieved against a baseline before the impact is allowed to occur.**

We also urge the Government to ensure the Strategy is backed by a **significant uplift in ongoing funding** to ensure it can be successfully implemented. **Business as usual funding has not been enough to prevent biodiversity and habitat loss - under the previous Strategy, the overall extent and condition of lowland native vegetation in the ACT declined.**<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Conservator of Flora and Fauna 2024. ACT Nature Conservation Strategy 2013-23 - PROGRESS AGAINST IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 2 (2019-23). Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate, ACT Government, Canberra, pp.2.

## Tips for writing an effective submission

### Recognise the positive elements

- Strategies such as these take a significant amount of time and resourcing to develop. It's important to thank the Office of Nature Conservation for their work, outline positive elements of the Strategy and highlight their alignment with your or your organisations work and values.

### Make key recommendations

- What are you asking the ACT Government to include in the Nature Conservation Strategy? Make your key recommendations and demands specific, measurable and action-oriented, and highlight them in the beginning of your response.

### Make it original

- The most effective submissions are unique and written in your own words. They outline a few key concerns specifically relevant to your circumstances or your organisation. Keep in mind submissions may be published publicly, so only include detail you are comfortable sharing online.



---

## Don't have time to write a submission?

**Use our template below, or adapt these key points into your own submission:**

**To:** [natureconservationpolicy@act.gov.au](mailto:natureconservationpolicy@act.gov.au)

**Subject:** [Your name] - Submission on the Draft ACT Nature Conservation Strategy

Dear Office of Nature Conservation

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission on the draft ACT Nature Conservation Strategy.

*[Introduce yourself - begin your submission with a brief introduction to yourself or your organisation, share why nature conservation matters to you, and what your vision of a nature positive future for the ACT looks like.]*

I welcome the release of this Strategy and commend the significant work that has gone into its development.

In particular, I support the shift towards a landscape-scale approach to conservation and the establishment of a new Nature Conservation Network. This will be critical for the ACT to move beyond isolated development assessments towards accounting for the cumulative impacts on biodiversity at a landscape scale. I also welcome the identification of Priority Conservation Areas, to ensure areas of high ecological value outside of the ACT's formal protected area system are conserved.

I encourage the ACT Government to ensure the following priorities are addressed in the finalisation of the Strategy:

- 1. Timely development and implementation of the ACT Landscape Plan, critical to establishing the Nature Conservation Network**
- 2. Consultation on amendments to the Nature Conservation Act, which will operationalise aspects of the Strategy**
- 3. Consultation on the criteria for identification of Priority Conservation Areas**
- 4. Permanent protection for Priority Conservation Areas outside the ACT's protected areas**
- 5. Rigorous application of the mitigation hierarchy (Avoid, Mitigate, Offset) to all new developments**
- 6. Offsets, when proposed, are to be genuinely additional, valuable and 'like for like'; with net gains achieved against a baseline before the impact is allowed to occur.**

I also ask the Government to ensure the Strategy is backed by a **significant uplift in ongoing funding** to ensure it can be successfully implemented. I am concerned that business as usual funding has not been enough to prevent biodiversity and habitat loss and to restore natural values.

*[Add any specific concerns or recommendation relevant to your organisation]*

I look forward to seeing a final Strategy that delivers lasting protection for the ACT's natural environment.

Yours sincerely,

*[Your name]*

*[Organisation]*

*[Contact details]*