



Australian Government
Department of the Environment and Energy

Nationally threatened flying-foxes

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Overview



EPBC Act

- The EPBC Act is the Australian Government's key piece of environmental legislation.
 - 9 Matters of National Environmental Significance
 - Threatened Species
 - Provides for the listing of Threatened Species.
 - Christmas Island flying-fox (Critically Endangered)
 - Spectacled flying-fox (Vulnerable)
 - Grey-headed flying-fox (Vulnerable)
 - Two other mainland species are not MNES and EPBC Act does not apply to these species.
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Requirements under the EPBC Act

- **Protect and manage** the listed flying-foxes:
 - Decision to have a Recovery Plan within 90 days.
 - Seek the co operation of the State or Territory with a view to implementing the plan jointly with the State or Territory.
 - Take the views of each of those States and Territories into account in making the Plan.
 - Obtain and consider the advice of the Scientific Committee on content of the Plan.
 - Consult with public about the Plan and consider comments.
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Recovery Planning

- Recovery plan decision for all three species:
 - Recovery Plan in place for the Spectacled Flying-fox (April 2011)
 - Recovery Plan for the Grey-headed Flying-fox nearing release as draft for public comment
 - Christmas Island Flying-fox Recovery Plan in development
 - Statutory content requirements.
 - Importance in regulatory decision making.
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Requirements under EPBC Act (cont)

- A person must not take an action that has, will have or is likely to have a significant impact on any of the matters of environmental significance without approval from the Australian Government Minister for the Environment.
 - *Actions to manage flying-fox camps involving vegetation clearing or disturbance*
 - *Actions to disperse problematic camps*
 - *Actions which involve clearing of foraging habitat for flying-foxes*
 - *Actions involving culling where numbers are likely to result in a significant impact*
 - Substantial penalties of up to \$8.5 million or up to seven years imprisonment apply for undertaking an activity, to which the EPBC Act applies, without approval.
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Policy – referral guideline

- Referral guideline for management actions in Grey-headed and Spectacled flying-fox camps (September 2015).
- Developed in consultation with all states and territories with the aim of consistent approaches to management.
- What is and is not a significant impact and likely or unlikely to require referral:
 - Defines routine non significant activities
 - Nationally important camps
 - Mitigation standards
 - Strategic thinking and consideration of national population stress
- Uses information from the National Flying-fox Monitoring Program

National Flying-fox Monitoring Program

- A Commonwealth, State and Territory partnership to monitor flying-foxes and identify population size and trends.
- Based on a peer reviewed monitoring methodology.
- Error estimation project to estimate the accuracy of flying-fox counts made through the program.
- A significant improvement in the knowledge of the number and location of flying-fox camps across eastern Australia.
- 16 national monitoring events undertaken to date with published reports.
- Preliminary population estimate and trend analysis.

www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/threatened/species/flying-fox-monitoring

Habitat focused actions



- Great opportunities for local governments through 20 Million Trees, Green Army, National Landcare Programme.
 - Nightwings Rainforest Centre
 - Bats QLD
 - Trustee for Parramatta Regional Park Trust



Strategic planning

- Recommend strategic approaches or planning with multiple dispersals / very large camps
- Conservation Agreements
 - carry out activities that promote the protection and conservation of biodiversity in accordance with national recovery plans.
 - Refrain from, or control, activities that may a significant impact so they do not.
 - Ensure net benefits to the species.
- Sunshine Coast Regional Council & Eurobodalla Shire Council

Research



THE SHARED URBAN HABITAT

- Investigating practical strategies for conserving flying-foxes in Australian cities.
- Identify priority urban camp sites that are both socially acceptable and robust to climate change, including a likely increase in extreme heat events over the coming decades.
- Spatial distribution of flying foxes in cities and the food they are eating.

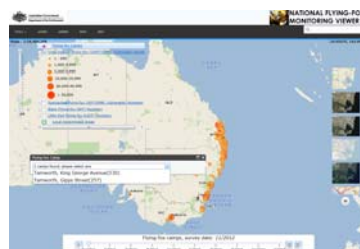
SAVING THE CHRISTMAS ISLAND FLYING-FOX

- Evidence and its interpretation to improve conservation outcomes for the Christmas Island Flying-fox.

www.nespthreatenedspecies.edu.au and www.nesurban.edu.au

Education and awareness

- Webpage
- SPRAT
- Interactive web viewer



- Christmas Island Flying-fox and the Threatened Species Strategy

www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/threatened/species/flying-fox-law

Next steps for the Department

- Release the draft national recovery plan for the Grey-headed Flying-fox.
- Monitor nationally threatened flying-foxes.
- Review the conservation status of the Spectacled Flying-fox.
- Coordinate recovery efforts for nationally threatened flying-foxes.

Thankyou



Images courtesy of Adam McKeown and Ross Rowe.