

Nature Conservation (Scientific Committee) Appointment 2025

Disallowable instrument DI2025-315

made under the

**Nature Conservation Act 2014, s 36 (Scientific committee—appointment of members)
and s 37 (Scientific committee—chair and deputy chair)**

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Section 31 of the *Nature Conservation Act 2014* (the *Act*) establishes the Scientific Committee. The Scientific Committee has the following functions:

- to advise the Minister about nature conservation (section 32 (a) of the Act)
- to advise the Conservator of Flora and Fauna about nature conservation (section 32 (b))
- to exercise any other function given to the committee under the Act or another territory law (section 32 (c)).

This appointment instrument is made under sections 36 and 37 of the Act. Sections 36 (1) and (2) provide that the Minister must appoint seven members to the Scientific Committee and must ensure that at least four members of the committee are not public servants. The Minister must not appoint a person to the committee unless satisfied that the person has appropriate scientific expertise in biology, ecology, conservation science, or conservation management.

The previous Minister for the Environment appointed the current Committee for the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2027, including the positions of Chair and Deputy Chair ([DI2024-100](#)). Those members, who are not public servants and who have the relevant scientific expertise, are:

- Associate Professor Simon Clulow (conservation ecology and management of Australian fauna, especially amphibians and reptiles)
- Dr Martin Westgate (landscape ecology/conservation biology with focus on impacts of land management, disturbance and climate on biodiversity).
- Professor Fiona Dyer (eco-hydrology, flow-ecology relationships focussed on vegetation and management of freshwater ecosystems)
- Associate Professor Megan Head (evolutionary ecologist specialising in how environmental change affects reproduction in fish and insects)
- Dr Frank Ingwersen (botany and plant ecology including landscape scale ecology and fire ecology relating to biodiversity conservation)

- Honorary Professor Mark Lonsdale (ecology, biology and biodiversity with application of ecological research to conservation issues, invasive species)
- Dr Linda Neaves (genetics/biology in conservation management/policy and reintroduction/translocation of native species)

No public servants are being appointed.

Due to a change in the geographical location of the chair who was appointed in DI2024-100, the Minister has decided to reshuffle the roles of chair and deputy chair, after significant consultation with the Committee. This instrument appoints Associate Professor Simon Clulow as the chair and Dr Martin Westgate as deputy chair of the Scientific Committee.

The appointment of members of the Scientific Committee, including the chair and the deputy chair is until 30 June 2027. Section 36 (5) of the Act requires these appointments to be for a period that is not longer than 3 years.

Section 228 of the *Legislation Act 2001* requires the relevant standing committee of the Legislative Assembly to be consulted as part of the process for appointments by the Minister (with some exceptions; in particular, not relating to the appointment of public servants). The Standing Committee on Environment and Planning has been consulted on the appointments in this instrument.

Section 36 (7) of the Act provides that this appointment instrument is disallowable.

A regulatory impact statement (*RIS*) is not required for this disallowable instrument, under section 34 of the *Legislation Act 2001*, as the appointment of members of the Scientific Committee is not likely to impose appreciable costs on the community or a part of the community. A RIS is also considered unnecessary under section 36 of the *Legislation Act 2001* because this instrument is an administrative matter only and not of a legislative nature.

This appointment instrument does not engage any human rights.