

Wetlands

- The Greens (WA) believe that we have a responsibility to protect our wetlands as part of our natural heritage
- The Greens (WA) are concerned that a systematic survey of wetlands or wetland values across the state has yet to be carried out
- Twelve Western Australian wetlands are recognised under the Convention of Wetlands or Ramsar Convention.
- 70-80% of the original wetlands on the Swan Coastal Plain have been cleared, drained or filled since European settlement. Wetlands on the Swan and Scott coastal plains are being lost or degraded at an alarming rate by altered catchment water balance, drainage, development, salinity, acidity, pollution discharge, dieback, weed encroachment and insensitive fire management.
- Climate change is an additional and accelerating threat (see also The Greens (WA) [Climate Change](#) policy)
- Given that 90% of the land in the Avon River catchment has been cleared, many Wheatbelt wetlands do not reflect their pre-European settlement condition. Wetlands in agricultural areas are particularly threatened with ground and surface water inputs of salts and nutrients.
- Very little is known about the effects of grazing, feral animals, urban development and mining on wetlands in rangeland and arid areas

Aims

The Greens (WA) want:

- a full assessment of the wetlands of Western Australia, with those considered of international significance under the Ramsar Convention to be immediately protected
- a comprehensive, adequate and representative system of reserves for the protection of wetlands communities (see also The Greens (WA) [Biodiversity](#) policy)
- protection of the remaining wetlands on the Swan Coastal Plain

Measures

The Greens (WA) will initiate and support legislation and actions to:

- protect the Swan Coastal Plain wetlands using a combination of incentives and existing conservation and regulatory mechanisms
- ensure all Bush Forever sites¹ are permanently protected
- implement the revised Wetland Conservation Policy for Western Australia
- implement the Water Resource Statement of Planning Policy and the Guideline for Determination of Wetland Buffer Requirements
- prohibit clearing in local government areas with less than 15% native vegetation remaining and prohibit further clearing of vegetation types that have less than 10% of their pre-European extent

- greatly improve monitoring of illegal clearing and breaches of conditions set under the Environmental Protection Act 1986 and take effective action against such breaches
- encourage and resource local groups to protect and manage wetlands in their area
- establish a public trust for the sustainable use of wetlands outside of reserve areas
- ensure our obligations under international treaties (such as Ramsar, JABA² and CAMA³) are fulfilled by adequately funding the protection and management of all internationally significant wetlands and enshrining these obligations in Federal legislation
- ensure a co-ordinated approach to managing Western Australia's wetlands
- provide co-ordinated and uniform monitoring of the health of Western Australia's wetlands

(See also the [Australian Greens Water and Inland Aquatic Environments](#) policy)

Glossary

1. **[Bush Forever](#)** - the public policy framework that aims to protect the biodiversity of 51,000 ha of bushland representing the 26 vegetation complexes of the Swan Coastal Plain portion of the Perth Metropolitan Region.
2. **JABA** –Japan Australia Migratory Birds Agreement
3. **CAMA** - China Australia Migratory Birds Agreement

Wetlands policy ratified by The Greens (WA) in 2017