# [***VIC:New council to fight biodiversity loss***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:671H-0D41-DYG0-955C-00000-00&context=1516831)

AAP Newsfeed

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**Body**

  Experts from a range of Australia?s universities have joined forces with philanthropists to spearhead a new think-tank to advise and advocate on ***biodiversity*** issues.

   The ***Biodiversity*** Council will inform policy discussion on matters including the economic cost of ***biodiversity*** ***loss***, conservation to enhance climate adaptation and opportunities to improve Indigenous outcomes through work on country and caring for ***biodiversity*** and nature.

   The 2021 State of the Environment report released this year found a growing list of threatened species in Australia and forecast extinctions would increase in coming decades if current management efforts, conservation investments and regulations on habitat destruction were not increased.

   The federal environment minister will address the council launch on Wednesday evening.

   ?It?s my great pleasure to launch the ***Biodiversity*** Council at the University of Melbourne,? Tanya Plibersek will say.

   "One of my first decisions as minister was to declare a goal of zero extinctions.

   "But to achieve that government needs to work hand in hand with scientists, advocates, First Nations and the community."

   The council will be funded by philanthropists and the 11 universities, and incubated at Melbourne University.

   Inaugural Chief Councillor Dr Jack Pascoe, Yuin man and Conservation and Research Manager at the Conservation Ecology Centre, said there was crucial role for the council.

   "I think we're in a time where the environment is really under stress for a whole range of factors," he told AAP.

   "The recently-released State of the Environment report underscoresthat Australia?s ***biodiversity*** is declining dangerously fast, with significant implications for our economy, food systems, health, wellbeing and culture.?

   Dr Pascoe said he was looking forward toensuring First People's voices, issues and ideas were heard regarding problems facing country health.

   Incoming Council Executive Director Ilsa Colson said there was growing momentum and investment to find solutions.

   ?***Biodiversity*** ***loss*** and climate change are the two existential challenges of our time, yet ***biodiversity*** ***loss*** receives much less attention than the climate crisis," she said.

   "The council will seek to change this."

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