

## Environment Budget Slashed

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Environment Groups have called into question the Carr Government's commitment to the environment following a slashing of the budget for the Department of Environment and Conservation and a giveaway of Crown Lands.

"The government's green credentials are in jeopardy. The Department of Environment and Conservation has a huge task to manage our National Parks, regulate pollution and waste, and protect our threatened species. They can't be expected to do this effectively with a \$30million budget cut," said Nature Conservation Council Executive Officer, Ms Brooke Flanagan.

"The conversion of Crown Lands perpetual leases to freehold title is a massive windfall for property developers across the State. The complete absence of a filter to protect important natural areas means that a raft of treasured environmental values will be sold off to the highest bidder," said Total Environment Centre Director, Mr Jeff Angel.

Environment Groups expressed cautious support for the creation of the Department of Primary Industries.

"The large number of conservation programs within the former departments should not be put at risk. In particular, areas of fisheries research programs, the Fisheries Office of Conservation and fisheries licence buy-outs should be protected as a priority," said Ms Flanagan

"The removal of State Forests from the super-portfolio of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources removes a nagging conflict between the game-keeper - DIPNR, and the poacher - State Forests. The ongoing reform of the discredited Department of Land and Water Conservation with removal of excess staff and the beefing up of Catchment Management Authority resources and compliance lays the foundation for more strategic planning and the hauling in of illegal activity," said Mr Angel.