

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

(Issued under the Authority of the Minister for the Environment)

Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999

List of Threatened Species Amendment (*Petaurus australis australis* (289))
Instrument 2022

Background

The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (**Act**) provides for the protection of the environment and conservation of biodiversity, including the protection and conservation of threatened species.

Subsection 178(1) of the Act provides that the Minister must, by legislative instrument, establish a list of threatened species (**List**) separated into the following categories: Extinct, Extinct in the wild, Critically Endangered, Endangered, Vulnerable and Conservation Dependent.

Paragraph 184(a) of the Act relevantly provides that the Minister may, by legislative instrument, amend the List referred to in section 178 by including items within the List in accordance with Subdivision AA.

The species being included in the List met the criteria for listing in the Vulnerable category under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Regulations 2000* (**Regulations**) (see below).

Purpose of Instrument

The purpose of this Instrument is to amend the List by:

- Including *Petaurus australis australis* in the Vulnerable category in the List.

This species is considered to have undergone a substantial reduction in numbers and is threatened due to habitat loss and modification, climate change, introduced species and fencing of agricultural land (entanglement with barbed fences).

Subsection 186(1) of the Act provides that the Minister must not include a native species on the List (whether as a result of a transfer or otherwise) in a particular category unless satisfied it is eligible to be included in that category.

Subsection 179(5) of the Act provides that a native species is eligible to be included in the Vulnerable category at a particular time if, at that time, it is not critically endangered or endangered and it is facing a high risk of extinction in the wild in the medium-term future, as determined in accordance with the prescribed criteria.

Regulation 7.01 of the Regulations provides that for section 179 of the Act, a native species is in the critically endangered, endangered or vulnerable category if it meets any of the five criteria for the category mentioned in the table to that provision.

The Minister was satisfied that the requisite criteria was met for including *Petaurus australis australis* in the Vulnerable category in the List.

Consultation

The process for making amendments to the List to include or transfer an item is set out in Part 13, Division 1, Subdivision AA of the Act. Consultation was undertaken before the Instrument was made, in accordance with the processes outlined in Part 13, Division 1, Subdivision AA of the Act.

Notice of the proposed amendment and a consultation document was made available for public comment for a minimum of 30 business days as required by subsection 194M(3). Any public comments received that were relevant to the survival of the species were considered by the Threatened Species Scientific Committee (**Committee**) as part of the assessment process.

The Committee prepared a written assessment of whether the nominated species was eligible for inclusion in the List. The Committee assessed *Petaurus australis australis* as eligible for inclusion in the Vulnerable category in the List.

In making this Instrument, the Minister considered the Committee's written assessment and any comments received during the consultation period in accordance with Part 13, Division 1, Subdivision AA of the Act.

This Instrument is a legislative instrument for the purposes of the *Legislation Act 2003* and commences the day after registration.

Authority: sections 178 and 184(a) of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

Statement of Compatibility with Human Rights

*Prepared in accordance with Part 3 of the
Human Rights (Parliamentary Scrutiny) Act 2011*

List of Threatened Species Amendment (*Petaurus australis australis* (289)) Instrument 2022

This Legislative Instrument is compatible with the human rights and freedoms recognised or declared in the international instruments listed in section 3 of the *Human Rights (Parliamentary Scrutiny) Act 2011*.

Overview of the Legislative Instrument

The purpose of this Instrument is to amend the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* list of threatened species to:

- Include *Petaurus australis australis* in the Vulnerable category in the List

The species being included in the List met the criteria for listing in the relevant category under the Regulations.

Human rights implications

This Legislative Instrument does not engage any of the applicable rights or freedoms.

Conclusion

This Legislative Instrument is compatible with human rights as it does not raise any human rights issues.

**The Hon Sussan Ley MP
Minister for the Environment**