

Media Release

The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP
Minister for Energy, the Environment and Climate Change
Minister for Solar Homes



Wednesday, 20 October 2021

GREAT OCEAN ROAD PROTECTED BY LANDMARK REFORMS

The Victorian Government has delivered once in a generation reforms which will better protect the iconic parks and coast along the Great Ocean Road, improve the tourism experience for visitors and support local jobs.

The *Great Ocean Road and Environs Protection Bill 2021* passed in the Victorian Parliament on 14 October 2021.

Before the reforms, land management arrangements were fragmented across multiple competing agencies, with no over-arching plan or single authority covering the length of the road.

The changes mean the area's special environment will be better protected with a coordinated approach to managing the visitor experience, investment, conservation, delivery of Traditional Owner self-determination, visitation numbers and community engagement.

The changes will help the region bounce back from the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic by stimulating nature-based tourism and supporting local jobs.

Land currently managed by other entities will be transferred progressively to the Authority to manage by November 2025, with a focus on ensuring the knowledge and expertise of existing land managers is not lost.

The Authority will continue to rely on Parks Victoria's scientific and field expertise to ensure ongoing protection of National Parks.

A sustainable funding model is being developed for the Authority. Any proposed fees and charges will require a full regulatory impact statement and public consultation.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change, Lily D'Ambrosio

"These reforms make the Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks into a parks manager that is dedicated to the care and protection of the iconic coast and parks along the Great Ocean Road."

"This major reform – four years in the making – will benefit local communities, and ensure the amazing environment is protected for future generations."

"A huge thanks to locals right across the region for their input in developing these reforms. I look forward to seeing the Authority grow, build strong relationships and deliver benefits for everyone."