



## EPBC ACT – PROTECTING HERITAGE PLACES

National heritage places and World Heritage properties are matters of national environmental significance under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act).

By law, no-one can take any action that has, will have, or is likely to have, a significant impact on a matter of national environmental significance without approval. Any action that is likely to have a significant impact on the values of a National Heritage place or a World Heritage property must be referred to the Australian Government Minister for the Environment and Water Resources (the Minister) for consideration. If the Minister decides that the action is likely to have a significant impact on a matter of national environmental significance, then the action requires approval under the EPBC Act. Substantial penalties apply for taking such an action without approval (civil penalties up to \$5.5 million or criminal penalties up to seven years imprisonment).

### World Heritage

A declared World Heritage property is an area that has been included in the World Heritage List or declared by the Minister to be a World Heritage property.

World Heritage properties are places with natural or cultural values which are recognised to have outstanding and universal value. Properties in Australia include: Kakadu National Park, Northern Territory; the Great Barrier Reef, Queensland; and the Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens, Victoria.

### National Heritage List

The EPBC Act establishes the National Heritage List, which includes natural, historic and Indigenous places that are

of outstanding national heritage value to the Australian nation.

It is the national heritage values of a place that are recorded on the National Heritage List and it is these values that are protected through listing.

The National Heritage List commenced on 1 January 2004 and includes places such as:

- Dinosaur Stampede National Monument, Queensland
- Brewarrina Aboriginal Fish Traps (Baiaemes Ngunnhu), New South Wales
- Melbourne Cricket Ground, Victoria
- Australian War Memorial and Anzac Parade, Australian Capital Territory
- Old and New Parliament Houses, South Australia
- Stirling Range National Park, Western Australia
- Hermannsburg Historic Precinct, Northern Territory *and*
- Port Arthur Historic Site, Tasmania.

### Commonwealth Heritage List

The EPBC Act also establishes the Commonwealth Heritage List, which includes natural, Indigenous and historic heritage places on Commonwealth lands and waters or under Australian Government control, identified by the Minister as having Commonwealth heritage values.

Australian Government-owned places include telegraph stations, defence sites, migration centres, customs houses, lighthouses, national institutions such as parliament and High Court buildings, memorials, islands, marine areas and other places which reflect Australia's development as a nation.



The Commonwealth Heritage List commenced on 1 January 2004 and includes places such as:

- Shoalwater Bay Military Training Area, Byfield, Queensland
- Cape Byron Lighthouse, Byron Bay, New South Wales
- Melbourne General Post Office, Melbourne, Victoria
- Old Parliament House and Curtilage, Parkes, Australian Capital Territory
- Cape Wickham Lighthouse, Tasmania
- Murray Mallee – Calperum Station and Taylorville Station, South Australia
- Geraldton Customs House Complex, Geraldton, Western Australia
- Adelaide River War Cemetery, Darwin, Northern Territory *and*
- Mawson’s Hut Historic Site, Antarctica

### Management Plans

Once a heritage place is listed under the EPBC Act, special requirements come into force to ensure that the values of the place will be protected and conserved for the benefit of future generations. The EPBC Act provides for the preparation of management plans which set out the significant heritage aspects on the place and how the values of the site will be managed.

### List of Overseas Places of Historic Significance to Australia

On 1 January 2007 the EPBC Act established a new heritage list, called the List of Overseas Places of Historic Significance to Australia (LOPHSA). This list provides for the symbolic recognition of sites of outstanding historic significance to Australia which are located outside of the Australian jurisdiction.

The LOPHSA enables Australia to recognise and celebrate those overseas places of greatest importance to the development of our nation in a way that is respectful of the rights and sovereignty of other nations.

The list aims to help tell the story of the most significant parts of Australia’s history that occurred outside our natural borders.

### Nominating heritage places under the EPBC Act

Each year the Minister will make a general call for nominations to the National and Commonwealth Heritage Lists. Anyone may nominate a place in response to this call. For the National Heritage List, particular heritage themes may be established and given priority in a year.

Members of the public can request a nomination kit from the Department of the Environment and Water Resources by telephoning 02 6274 1217, visiting the web site at [www.environment.gov.au/heritage](http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage) or by writing to:

The Nominations Manager  
Heritage Division  
Department of the Environment  
and Water Resources  
GPO Box 787  
Canberra ACT 2601

Further information about the EPBC Act and protection and management of Australia’s heritage places is available from the Department of the Environment and Water Resources web site [www.environment.gov.au/epbc](http://www.environment.gov.au/epbc), or by contacting the Department’s Community Information Unit, email [ciu@environment.gov.au](mailto:ciu@environment.gov.au), or freecall 1800 803 772.

Ramsar wetland, Bruce Gray  
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park,  
iStockphoto  
Australian War Memorial,  
Steve Wray/DEH  
Southern Right Whale, Dave Watts  
Box Gum woodland, J. Vranjic

Printed February 2007