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Bush Heritage Australia welcomes new CEO



Highly respected conservation sector leader Rachel Lowry joins Bush Heritage Australia as the organisation's new CEO.

"We are absolutely thrilled to welcome Rachel Lowry to the role. We undertook an extensive recruitment process to make sure we found the best possible candidate – and we're confident that we've done just that with Rachel's appointment," says Sue O'Connor, President of Bush Heritage Australia.

Rachel Lowry is currently Chief Conservation Officer at the World Wide Fund (WWF) for Nature Australia and brings a track record of delivering regenerative conservation outcomes for some of Australia's leading conservation organisations.

"Rachel is a recognised leader in the conservation sector and known for her strategic approach, her focus on positive outcomes and her ability to deliver great results. She leads with hope and empathy. She'll be a wonderful CEO for Bush Heritage as we deliver our ambitious 2030 strategy to deepen and double our impact by the end of this decade."

Prior to joining WWF-Australia, Rachel spent nine years as Director of Wildlife Conservation and Science for Zoos Victoria. She's been an advisor to Australia's Threatened Species Commissioner and is a former Chair of Centre for Sustainability Leadership. Rachel sits on various advisory Boards, is a Councillor at the Biodiversity Council and has developed award-winning conservation programs domestically and abroad.

She has watched Bush Heritage grow from a small organisation into one of Australia's largest conservation organisations with a reserve network of 42, spanning 1.2 million hectares – and partnerships covering many more millions of hectares.

"I feel incredibly privileged to join Bush Heritage in a role that brings together all the things that I love about this country and I enjoy about leadership. A strong, innovative vision grounded by science, a willingness to listen and learn from the incredible knowledge of first peoples, and an unwavering love for Australia's natural landscapes and wildlife," says Rachel Lowry and continues:

"BHA's vision to double and deepen by 2030 shows an ambition so desperately needed in Australia right now. Australia is home to so many unique, stunning, and important landscapes. As threats to these areas continue to intensify, so too should efforts to protect them. I'm looking forward to joining the efforts of Bush Heritage staff, partners, and supporters to build on the mission of securing healthy country protected forever and cannot wait to see more right way science in action right across Australia."



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Rachel will join Bush Heritage in early February. Until then, Interim Co-CEOs Mark Dwyer (Company Secretary and CFO) and Rob Murphy (Executive Manager of Conservation Operations) will continue to lead the organisation supported by Dr Rebecca Spindler (Executive Manager of Science & Conservation) as the spokesperson for the organisation.

About Rachel Lowry

Rachel has spent the past five years as Chief Conservation Officer at the World Wide Fund (WWF) for Nature Australia, leading WWF-Australia's Species, Oceans, Food Security, Climate, Innovation, Impact Investing and Social Development (Equity) portfolios.

Prior to this, she worked for nine years as Director of Wildlife Conservation and Science for Zoos Victoria, where she led the organisation's environmental sustainability, conservation, animal welfare, community conservation, volunteer, and research portfolios.

Rachel currently serves on the Boards of the National Koala Recovery Team and the Biodiversity Council. She is also a member of the Industry Advisory Board EoP at the University of Melbourne. She was previously an advisor to Australia's Threatened Species Commissioner and former Chair of Centre for Sustainability Leadership and International Zoos Educators Association.

In 2018, Rachel's leadership contribution to conservation and gender equity in the workplace was recognised when she was awarded a position on the Top 50 Women in the Victorian Public Service by the Institute of Public Administration Australia.

Rachel has utilised her leadership positions to champion change that benefit people, nature and climate. In her most recent role as Chief Conservation Officer at WWF-Australia, Rachel helped lead organisational efforts to secure and mobilise over 50 million dollars in emergency bushfire funds. In addition to this effort, Rachel reflects that one of her proudest achievements has been helping WWF-Australia significantly grow the composition of on-ground indigenous-led conservation programs, through the multi-million dollar *Regenerate Australia* program, activating innovative regeneration efforts across Australia.

She holds a Bachelor of Science degree, double majoring in Zoology and Australian Wildlife Conservation and environmental science co-major, a Bachelor of Education, a Diploma in Lean Practitioner Program and several certificates including a Certificate in Conservation Psychology.

About Bush Heritage

Bush Heritage Australia is a leading not-for-profit conservation organisation that protects ecosystems and wildlife across the continent. We use the best science, conservation and right-way knowledge to deliver landscape-scale impact. We're on the ground, working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the agricultural sector to make sure our impact is deep, sustainable, and collaborative.

Today we work across 1.2 million hectares of land through our network of reserves and many millions of hectares through our partnerships. Together we protect threatened ecosystems and 7,735 species of plants and animals, including hundreds of threatened species (see our annual [Impact Report](#) for details).