



Australian Senate

**Christine Milne**

Australian Greens Senator for Tasmania

Tuesday, 28 November 2006

**media release**

## **Tasmanian Liberal senators vote against Macquarie Island rescue plan**

The Australian Greens today condemned Tasmanian Liberal senators for voting against a motion calling for the federal government to immediately fund a rabbit and rodent eradication plan for Macquarie Island.

Greens Senator for Tasmania, Christine Milne, moved the motion in the Senate today.

“It is clear that Tasmanian Liberal senators don’t take seriously the responsibility of caring for World Heritage sites like Macquarie Island,” Senator Milne said in Canberra.

“They are prepared to see threatened species go to extinction.

“Once again the Greens will have to seek the support of the global community through UNESCO’s World Heritage Committee in Paris to put pressure on the Australian government to fulfil its obligations to protect internationally recognised Macquarie Island and its wildlife.”

Senator Milne said the state government also had a responsibility to act.

“State Environment Minister Paula Wriedt should note that her federal ALP colleagues supported the motion and expect action to be taken,” Senator Milne said.

“Tasmania so far has not committed one cent to the eradication plan.”

The text of Senator Milne’s motion appears overleaf.

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Motion moved today by Senator Christine Milne

That the Senate—

- (a) notes:
- i. Australia's obligation under the World Heritage Convention to protect the World Heritage-listed Macquarie Island that provides nesting habitat for nearly four million seabirds, and provides EPBC listed 'Critical Habitat' for two nationally threatened albatross species – the wandering and grey-headed albatross,
  - ii. that the feral rabbit population on Macquarie Island has exploded since the late 1990s from 10,000 to more than 100,000 as a result of reduced effectiveness of myxomatosis, eradication of feral cats and climate change, resulting in increasing rabbit breeding success, and
  - iii. that recent landslips have wiped out hundreds of king penguins and that the grey-headed albatross faces immediate risk of extinction in Australia due to the destruction by rabbits of the birds' only known Australian breeding site on Macquarie Island.
- (b) calls on the Government to:
- i. take immediate action to fund and implement the eradication plan for rabbits and rodents costed at \$15 million so work can start immediately to ensure on-ground baiting can start in winter 2008.