

From: Jane Cisera <campaigns@good.do>
Sent: Sunday, 16 August 2020 8:38 PM
To: ecosystems
Subject: Submission into the Inquiry into Ecosystems Decline in Victoria

Categories: Submissions

Dear committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission into the Inquiry into Ecosystems Decline in Victoria.

I am not a scientist but I am passionate citizen concerned about our environment and the future sustainability and consequently livability of our beautiful country and state. I am making an impassioned plea to you to undertake the task of custodianship of our biodiversity and environment with the utmost seriousness and urgency it so desperately needs.

There are a few areas that greatly concern me. Land clearing (for development and logging), bush fires, climate change and slack environmental laws are seeing a sustained and continued net loss of habitat and a fracturing of habitat/biodiversity.

Land clearing for development is something I am becoming increasingly alarmed at. It's insidious and seems to be happening at ever increasing frequency. In Bendigo (where I live) this land clearing happens without community knowledge (only those in the immediate area have to be informed) as developers are gaining offset permissions to push through large swathes of land clear felling. Removal of all vegetation and stripping the land of any landscape features is the preferred method to gain the maximum number of housing lots. Our natural forests, along with the vulnerable species, are continually being encroached, eroded and fragmented. The livability of "The city within the forest" is in serious jeopardy. If you chose to object to a development plan it is notoriously difficult to understand all the departmental jargonistic language to know where to begin. Big developers or those with money will come before the environment every time simply because the process required to o

bject is limited and skewed in favour of development. I suspect this is not something unique to Bendigo but is happening statewide.

Logging in Victorian old growth forests must be halted before 2030. It needs to stop now. During the Covid 19 response the government has proven it can and will shut down key industries to protect lives. Biodiversity protects lives. Deforestation in this country is disastrous We cannot afford another 10 years of loss and fracturing of habitat. Too many species in this state are being pushed to the brink and we have no clear plan on how to bring them back from this perilous position. After the devastation of the summer bush fires we need an urgent injunction on logging in our old growth forests. We need time for our scientists to complete research into what's been lost, which species now need extra support and how best to begin the restoration process. More than ever we need to completely rethink our current practices and look at ways we can better protect the environment going forward.

Climate change is no longer being debated. It is upon us and we are now seeing policy being developed in how to live in a world that will certainly see more frequent catastrophic weather patterns of drought, floods and fire. Ongoing policy must address carbon emissions, support innovation in sustainable living and work to mitigate extreme weather patterns/events. Again the government (state and federal) have proven they can and will take decisive action when lives are in danger. Climate change is a far bigger threat to humanity and the larger world than Covid 19 ever will be.

The EPBC review has been comprehensively damning! And alarming. How can we have so catastrophically failed in our role to protect and enhance our natural environment and all the creatures and flora it supports? On a state level we are fairing no better. Since 2003 Australia has lost over 7,000,000 hectares of habitat without intervention. Victoria is sadly over represented in this figure. In fact Victoria has a dismal past and current record. Now is the time to implement change where we put the environment first. Once biodiversity is gone we can't get it back. To think that we can continue "business as usual" is the height of human arrogance. We need biodiversity to live and we need to learn to live in more harmony with nature.

Strong nature protection laws will provide the backbone for a healthier future for Victoria's ecosystems, ensuring the people, places and wildlife we love can thrive for generations to come.

Thank you for considering my submission.

Yours sincerely,

Jane Cisera

[Redacted signature]

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