

I would like to make a submission to the Victorian Extinction Inquiry.

Jonathan Hughes (also representing Jodie and Siena Hughes).

[REDACTED]

I am happy for the content of my submission to be public but not my details

My submission:

Victoria is a wonderful state. I am an immigrant from the UK, married to an Australian. Since I have been here, I have appreciated how much more diverse the Australian environment is, how unique many of the species are and thankfully how much of the country has been untouched.

This isn't so much the case in Victoria, given its population size. It is a smaller state with a large population and consequently has the highest level of cleared land, 66% of native habitat. This has meant that over 700 native plants, animals, insects and beautiful ecosystems are under threat, 120 Victorian animals, birds, plants, insects and fish are now at the brink of extinction and more than 70 threatened species make their home in forests that are still being logged.

We as a family spend time camping, holidaying and enjoying nature in Victoria, whether it be around Eildon, the King Valley, or the east and west coasts. I also spend time in Mallacoota this year as a volunteer firefighter and saw the destruction of the bushfires. In addition, I love fishing but it saddens me that the invasive Carp have taken over so much of our waterways. Thankfully there seems to be better protections for the ocean based life, at least ignoring the Federal Government trying to reduce the number of marine parks.

Although I recognise that Victoria is the most progressive state in Australia, it is still not doing enough to protect our at risk animals and their environment. And given that the Federal response is woeful, all the more reason the Victorian Government needs to look after Victoria.

We have seen mass devastation due to the bushfires, losing so much habitat, and still it seems business as usual for Vic Forests removing the rest of the habitat. And we have seen so many reports that the public entity which is under the government has also been logging illegally without any recompense or penalty.

There are so many other areas that also need help, eradication of invasive species etc, as well as restoring natural habitat.

We are also seeing reports that not only is the extensive logging threatening so much of the indigenous species, it is also increasing the bushfire risk to the country and taking away the valuable resource of trees turning CO2 back into oxygen.

We need strong nature laws that are not only fair and sustainable, but are also actually used properly, unlike the Federal ones which are being ignored and also falsely accused of increasing 'green-tape' by those that want to develop without consequence.

The Victorian Government needs to support the people and the environment, and look to the long term. The continual short term and profit or jobs driven actions will only harm our beautiful state, country, and contribute further towards global heating if we don't start to think and act differently, and more responsibly.

For instance, supporting the Timber Industry in continuing to log forests and not plantations, trying to support jobs, is not sustainable. The industry needs support to quickly transition to primarily plantation timber, and only selective harvesting of natural forests where it is not harming the environment, water catchments, habitat. This is a mirror of what we need to do in terms of moving away from coal and gas to provide our fuels and electricity especially.

Please push for better protections and more responsible action. There are so many ways we can have a wonderful and recovering natural environment at the same time as creating new better cleaner industries, jobs and energy generation.

Yours sincerely,

Jon Hughes



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