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Subject: New Submission to Inquiry into Ecosystem Decline in Victoria

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Inquiry Name: Inquiry into Ecosystem Decline in Victoria

Mrs Josephine Jakobi



SUBMISSION CONTENT:

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I have lived in Rural East Gippsland almost all of my life. I was born here, fourth generation on the same land, in the forest. Throughout my life I have watched the slow breakdown of the ecological systems. The selective, hand cut harvesting of timber gave way to a mechanised version, followed by clear felling coups in large blocks, where every vestige of habitat is destroyed.

Wet forests have dried, rain forest has all but disappeared. Fauna is greatly reduced and species are disappearing. Now I see around me forests that are managed by human authorities. Forests that were continuous closed loop systems of rich ecological diversity are now sparse, diminished ghosts of what once was. Native animals are struggling to compete with deer and other introduced species that are rapidly increasing in number. The recent bushfires have drastically reduced native animal numbers and their habitat, yet clear felling of the remaining trees is still going on. I see that the fires have created a fear that encourages fuel reduction burns that further dry out the land. This drying is exacerbated by the warming of the planet.

I ask for an end to the harvesting of native forest. I ask for a recognition of the rights of other species to exist on this shared planet. I ask for the science on climate change to be acknowledged as the greatest risk to the future and the scientific advice be acted upon. I ask that decision makers put a true value on the natural world and make their decisions with a view to the future in 50-100 years from now. It is our responsibility to do what we can to restore the balance of the Earth's systems.

The Biosphere of the Earth exists because of a long slow evolution. Everything needed for its continued existence is already in place. We should be working with the established patterns of the Earth as our guide. Financial gain cannot outweigh the reality of this.

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