

Environment and Planning Committee

Inquiry into Ecosystem Decline in Victoria

25/08/2020

Dear members of the Committee,

I would like to make a submission to the Inquiry into Ecosystem Decline in Victoria.

My name is Ila Taylor [REDACTED]. I've lived in Melbourne my whole life and I have been fortunate enough to grow up in an outdoor family, that loves scenic adventures to the bush. I am grateful for the amazing experiences that I have had and they certainly have stemmed and formed the foundation for my passion for the environment and love of nature.

Fortunately, my family are very environmentally friendly, and we are the outcast in the community that I live in. Due to the frustration of looking around at my community going about their irrational and convenient ways in life not thinking about the environment further constructed my passion for the environment and my constant awareness in my daily life. This enabled me to act and become a volunteer for the wilderness society. When I am surrounded by nature I feel humbled and it gives me enlightened happiness. My mind opens up and I feel this freedom just looking at the simplest of things. It's really an indescribable feeling that I believe that it is a right for every human to witness.

My family and I go to the beach every summer and each time I go, there are continuous amount of plastic, in fact each year the plastic build-up on the sand gets larger and larger. One day I was in the water and I came across a clear jelly-fish shaped object and I got so excited to see a marine animal. However, when I got closer I realised that it was a plastic bag shredded into pieces and a feeling of angst and disgust went through my body. I was so frustrated and had a feeling of guilt which I believe any human should feel if they are not only invading and killing another species environment but without them knowing, they're killing their own environment in which all humans live in. Furthermore, it drastically damages one's environment but it also leads to climate degradation and climate change which we are seeing occur rapidly at the moment.



The ocean is the life source it sucks up and absorbs our CO2 elevating greenhouse emissions. Ocean protect stated that “85% of the air we breathe in is from the ocean and 80% of the plastics in the oceans come from storm water drainage and litter”. This signifies that the pollution is clearly from us. This leads to extinction in marine animals due to the plastics stuck in our oceans. Thus, big companies need to stop producing plastic but rather think about other ways of producing their services so quality recycling occurs, thus a circular economy occurs. These facts are not scientific at all but a reality. I believe that it is essential that we educate our community and broader population by putting effective environmental laws intact. Therefore, we will be living in a climate and nature positive society where nature and humans thrive in harmony.

What will our state government implement to be able to achieve this?

2020 has brought us to all stop and think about our actions in our daily lives and I believe that it is detrimental to human life if we do not think about our climate and ecosystem.

As you undertake this important inquiry into Victoria’s extinction crisis, I urge you to ensure that:

Community rights are guaranteed when governments are making environmental decisions, including the right to participate, the right to access necessary information, the right to challenge environmental decisions and the right to transparency in government decision making.

The rights and interests of Traditional Custodians are recognised in all aspects of land and water management, as well as decision-making in relation to their traditional lands, including traditional management practices such as cultural fire.

Victoria needs a new, independent, well-resourced conservation regulator to police deforestation and other destructive industries. The EPA is the independent watchdog for pollution, but currently there is no independent watchdog to ensure industries comply with environmental laws, with numerous breaches to laws continuing to occur and a long history of regulators turning a blind eye.

Thank you for consideration of my submission and I invite any further discussion [REDACTED]

Sincerely,

Ila Taylor