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From: POV eSubmission Form <ecosystems@parliament.vic.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, 28 August 2020 10:41 PM
To: ecosystems
Subject: New Submission to Inquiry into Ecosystem Decline in Victoria

Categories: Submissions

Inquiry Name: Inquiry into Ecosystem Decline in Victoria

Dr Ying Gu

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SUBMISSION CONTENT:

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To the Environmental and Planning Committee,

My name is Ying Gu and I'm an obstetrician and a mother of two. I'm deeply concerned by the ongoing degradation of the our ecosystems and its consequences on human health.

I thank the Environmental and Planning Committee and the Parliamentary Inquiry into Ecosystem Decline in Victoria for the opportunity to make a submission.

Last summer like many other families, we planned to visit East Gippsland but instead the thick smoke triggered acute wheezing from my niece and a detour to the closest Emergency Department. Despite the impacts of the fires and the link between climate change and increased fire severity and frequency, the Victorian government renewed all of its Regional Forest Agreements for another 10 years.

I ask the Parliamentary Inquiry to recommend transition of the native forest logging industry to sustainable plantation only timber production by 2030 to be brought forward and support of recycled paper production. Cessation of logging of our native forests will restore ecosystems and the biodiversity they support. By protecting such ecosystems, we will also be protecting our innovative capital for future medical advances because up to half of all medicines used by humans are derived from nature. It shocks me that tax dollars are going into subsidizing such destruction of public native forests and I urge the inquiry to stop grant renewal for the "Western Community Forestry" and any similar agreements in the region.

Instead, tax dollars should be used to adequately fund ecosystem management, monitoring and improvement. For example, only 6% of the 281 management actions listed in the Department of Environment Land Water and Planning's Ramsar management system database are completed despite most Ramsar management plans were developed in 2014. The poor oversight and management record is worsened by plans to build a gas import terminal at Westernport Bay, home to one of our Ramsar wetlands.

Victoria should stop the proposed gas import terminal at Westernport Bay. This project, like VicForests will further threaten diverse ecosystems and contribute to climate change. Victoria needs to make science-based Emission Reduction Targets. By doing so, Victoria has the opportunity to play a leadership role in keeping the global temperature rise under 1.5 degrees Celsius and target one of the key drivers of ecosystem decline.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to contribute. We all depend on healthy ecosystems for our clean air, water, soils and a stable climate. Let's not waste this opportunity to halt the decline in our ecosystems together, as our health and unique flora and fauna depend on it.

Yours faithfully,
Ying Gu

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File1:

File2:

File3: