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**From:** POV eSubmission Form <ecosystems@parliament.vic.gov.au>  
**Sent:** Sunday, 30 August 2020 2:16 PM  
**To:** ecosystems  
**Subject:** New Submission to Inquiry into Ecosystem Decline in Victoria

**Categories:** Submissions

Inquiry Name: Inquiry into Ecosystem Decline in Victoria

Mrs Veronica Hocking  
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**SUBMISSION CONTENT:**

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Dear Environment and Planning Committee,  
I would like to make a submission to the Victorian Ecosystem decline Inquiry.  
My name is Veronica Hocking and I am retired and live in Garfield, just south of the Bunyip State Park, which was badly burned in March 2019 . My husband and I are keen bushwalkers and members of the West Gippsland Bushwalkers Club. We love walking in those parts of the Park that are now open and seeing the bush regenerate after fire.  
We sometimes lead walking groups in the Yarra and Tarago State Forests around Powelltown and Noojee and over the years we have seen the dreadful degradation of these areas through logging. In fact it is difficult to find a walk where you do not pass through scenes of utter devastation and look across the ridges and valleys and see logging coupes in various stages of growth. The beautiful forests I remember from decades ago are disappearing and it breaks my heart. The loss of habitat for the birds and animals that lived in these forests is a national disgrace.  
After the enormous fires of the last summer, all of Australia mourned the loss of millions of our wildlife and yet we continue to see the forests logged to prop up an unsustainable industry. Vicforest has been shown in the recent Federal Court decision, to have illegally logged in 22 coupes. In the past they have admitted to using 'fuzzy maps' and they are never held to account. In East Gippsland they have just added another 100 coupes to log and this is an area that suffered through terrible fires. No wonder Australia's wildlife is going through an extinction crises.  
The transition from logging must be brought forward and the local communities helped through this time of change. I would love to see the creation of the Great Forest National Park to protect the forest in the highlands near Melbourne. This would create so many opportunities in eco tourism. We need strong environmental protection laws and a well resourced agency to protect our natural heritage.

Yours sincerely  
Veronica Hocking

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File1:

File2:

File3: