



From: POV eSubmission Form <ecosystems@parliament.vic.gov.au>
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To: ecosystems
Subject: New Submission to Inquiry into Ecosystem Decline in Victoria

Categories: Submissions

Inquiry Name: Inquiry into Ecosystem Decline in Victoria

Mrs Teresa Hicks



SUBMISSION CONTENT:

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Thank you for allowing me to make a submission to your Inquiry into our Ecosystem decline.

My name is Teresa Hicks, and my family has, over many years, visited our National Parks and other forest areas, showing our children and later our grandchildren the wide and varied natural habitat of our species of flora and fauna. However, we're now witnessing the rapid decline of its ecosystem, the rivers, the habitat and our native wildlife. The climate and the fires, that have become worse with every passing year, have made such visits more risky, and plans have often had to be changed or cancelled due to risks of fire danger.

The current Flora & Fauna Act (1988) has in my view not been effective in protecting these places and I therefore welcome this review.

The changes which will now be put in place must not allow history to continue to repeat itself with further losses of our precious forests and animals. Sadly, our own Fauna Emblem, the Leadbeaters' Possum is critically endangered. In the assessment method, triggers must be set in place for action to be taken at the earliest possible point of decline in numbers. Delays in taking action may accelerate the decline in a species - leading to its loss. I urge you to put in steps to ensure the ability to quickly issue Habitat Conservation Orders.

A large contribution to this decline has, in my view, been extensive logging. Victorian forests have been heavily logged for decades - even areas that are supposed to be protected, like coups which were home to leadbeaters' possum, which have been logged. These laws must be strengthened and heavy fines imposed for breaking the law. Overall, I believe there is no longer the need for logging as it employs an exceptionally small number of people and does immeasurable damage. I believe the time has come to end this unacceptable loss of our forests by funding and retraining workers in this area.

Climate change has played a large part in the fires we experienced in the past and the horrendous, more recent fires. This will have to be taken into consideration and decisions made, with no gaps - to provide nature with a chance to restore itself.

I urge you to recommend stronger laws to safeguard the future of our environment, our ecosystems and our vulnerable species and their habitat.

Thank you,

Teresa Hicks

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File1:

File2:

File3: