

**From:** POV eSubmission Form <ecosystems@parliament.vic.gov.au>  
**Sent:** Sunday, 30 August 2020 7:00 PM  
**To:** ecosystems  
**Subject:** New Submission to Inquiry into Ecosystem Decline in Victoria

**Categories:** Submissions

Inquiry Name: Inquiry into Ecosystem Decline in Victoria

Mrs Yolanda Avery

## SUBMISSION CONTENT:

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Dear Members of Parliament,

Being a past student of the Biological Sciences, it is with much interest and optimism in which the 'Biodiversity Loss and Ecosystem Decline' report is submitted. Even though the subject maybe physically and emotionally daunting. It is the aspiring positive nature of many environmentally conscious organizations such as Animal Justice Party, Animals Australia, Bob Brown Foundation, corporations such as IBM, Seventh Generation, Green Homes Australia and local community groups such as Links Community Garden (Lalor), Friends of Darebin Creek and Edgar's Mission Australia, which strive to make effective positive environmental change. These institution's surmounting contribution to both people and animal lives, and their environment, motivate individuals to interact mindfully in our communities.

After much discussion with environmentally conscious communities. The concept of a designated, protected and mapped 'Creative Green Spaces' - allotments managed by local community members has been proposed throughout many regions. Suggestions using dormant public/private land space in Victoria both urban and rural to be granted, gifted, leased, etc. to/by local community custodians for the benefits of establishing or reestablishing a parcel of land for beneficial environmental regeneration. These interactive creative green spaces should enhance health, wealth and local knowledge, stimulate biodiversity and encourage ecosystems to flourish.

Whilst also highlighting, in this submission, the difficulties and obstacles associated with the erosion of biodiversity and ecosystems. Focusing on the cause and effect on habitat degradation. Implementing Creative Green Spaces should counteract their destruction on small scale or large-scale projects. However, a mindful community contribution to 'Country' should evoke further community motivation to the develop projects reaching their full potential. Also to consider is a subjective entrepreneurial approach to invigorating ecosystems. Transcending beneficial community ideas into developing positive outcomes for the entire ecosystem in which locals inhabit.

Input investment for habitats:

\*\*Every suburb to have a community garden or specifically designed ecosystem

\*\*Aboriginal communities encouraged to take part, especially Elders—land care custodians with vast knowledge of Country. Their knowledge and experiences and expertise invaluable.

\*\*Structured programs to support different age and ability groups included in establishing, foreseeing, and managing the curation of land.

- \*\*Parks/Reserves should educate and transform local knowledge enhancing sustainable environments for local fauna, flora, and some specific native species
- \*\*Ponds, waterways, nesting boxes, sheltered sites, edible gardens, friendly walkways established for inhabitants
- \*\*Flora should be practical, useful, specific, and beneficial for human and wildlife use
- \*\*Nature strips should comprise wildflowers and unproductive green corridors constructed into fields, hosting food crops such as maize, sunflowers and millet for native wildlife consumption
- \*\*Commercial and Community involvement encouraged for ecological awareness, engagement, and participation.
- \*\*Courses and Activities held by local and guest participants, encouraging traditional teachings, experiences, local knowledge and academia
- \*\*Involvement from professional and trade careers, to name a few: artists, musicians, biologists, engineers, bricklayers and plumbers

The current issues we are facing are:

- \*\*A lack of community involvement with local wildlife and their required environment. A greater understanding as to how this translates to positive outcomes for the community
- \*\*A need to bring different community groups together for a common purpose and understanding of regional community growth through project involvement
- \*\*Lack of suitable environments to attract native wildlife
- \*\*Non incentives, diminishing inspiration throughout the general community. Empowering leaders advising their community of positive physiological effects created by 'green spaces'
- \*\*Assimilating threatened species into newly created environments
- \*\*Modern applications of design and construction relating to urban landscapes which house dwelling for fauna and flora
- \*\*Creative Green Spaces appropriately designed to suit landscape, culture, and local communities' expectations. The causes at which they do not focus suburbia/regional areas on development or preservation of natural habitats, may be because of:

- \*\*Cost involved in project management
- \*\*Difficulty gaining volunteers and local government approval for community involvement
- \*\*Issues with location of establishment, difficulty gaining permits/licenses, zoning restrictions and insurance
- \*\*Lack of community awareness, as to the overall benefits of natural habitats
- \*\*Time demands at which people can get involved with projects

Solution to these problems:

- \*\*Encourage community groups to establish community gardens/nature reserves, specific ecosystems on unused land corridors or vacant crown land
- \*\*Commercial and Local Government incentives to the establishment of projects should support incentives or enhance an ecological environmental development through design, development and management for wildlife habitats
- \*\*Schools and Universities encouraging students to explore and develop their academic and practical skills, establishing a work ethic toward developing good will amongst the community
- \*\*Commercial and community involvement should comprise implementation of resources into establishing what they could then show-cased as professional work, therefore gaining community interest for sale of ideas or product
- \*\*Integrating indigenous animals and plants, encouraging other native species to the environment, reestablished by the ongoing growing ecosystem

The Focus of the Submission is:

- \*\*To engage with the local community through Victorian state parliament, Local council, Commercial enterprise, Aboriginal Elders and Community Leaders. Activating community groups, such as: multicultural groups, sport, arts, crafts, writing, music, etc. to take part in present ecological development of beneficial land use
- \*\*Introduce investors to promote in environment enterprise, i.e. - shop local products, tourism, garden festivals, environmental research projects - Citizen's Science
- \*\*Fauna and flora established to sustain local and introduced threatened species, hence looking to develop breeding programs for endangered species

Commercial Implementations:

- \*\*If Victorian suburbs had commercial community green spaces—these areas could educate, propagate, and innovate the current and new generation of residents. Projects could develop into:
- \*\*Better designed communal areas for urban landscapes
- \*\*Focusing on other important ecological factors, such as water retention, soil nutrients, light for energy, also considering other sources of green energy

**\*\*Developing park land for education, trade and tourist–this would bring much economic activity into an area.**

Conclusion:

In the last 20 years Victoria has developed an extensive network of national parks, bushland trails and coastline reserves. However, there is still significant empty habitat space on both public and private land.

It requires an expensive report to identify and map the need to secure permanent protection of developing habitats to complete a conservation chart map, (and local creative green space for residents is a cost efficient alternative) inclusive of suburbs and regions within Victoria. A report which documents the protection to all habitat types being developed. Further investigation should be to understand the needs of specific threatened species; their needs and requirements when introducing them to new and establishing regions, the implications of climate change, or other management factors such as fire and flood affect areas. Establishment of new conservation areas of open green space would secure long-term protection for some species which are in decline across Victoria.

Some developed local sights could house Australian native fauna and flora such as Greater Gliders, Brush-tailed Possums, Angle-stemmed Myrtle and Pink Pimelea.

Something noted by members of my local community, that Victoria was once a leader in the creation and maintenance of national parks (being called the Garden State for many years), however it now seemly has one of the lowest levels on new parks in a decade.

There are still significant gaps in the green space arena which need development, and the government should consider a task force such as 'Green-Space Eco Keepers'. The GSEK task force could develop and manage under-represented habitats, act as mediators, and initially establish local habitats to suit local needs. Once, designated, established, locals would continue its maintenance. Being mindful of its establishment to accommodate and nurture local needs and that of threatened species.

GSEK - National leaders in nature conservation. Enriching the way to protecting diverse green spaces. Developing and safeguarding valuable land for future generations.

**\*\*Written by Yolanda Avery, 26 August 2020\*\***

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File2:

File3: