

**From:** Karen Johnson <campaigns@good.do>  
**Sent:** Thursday, 27 August 2020 11:16 AM  
**To:** ecosystems  
**Subject:** Submission to Parliamentary Inquiry into Ecosystem Decline in Victoria

**Categories:** Submissions

Dear Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the Victorian Parliament's Inquiry into ecosystem decline in Victoria.

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Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the Victorian Parliament's Inquiry into ecosystem decline in Victoria.

As a Victorian I'm concerned about the state of our environment. The deterioration in the environment is alarming as reported by the Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability. Only 11% of the environment is considered to be in good health with 30% deteriorating.

What is the government going to do that makes real positive change to health of our environment?

I love the fact that I can ride my bike along the bike paths in Melbourne and enjoy the beauty of areas like the Mullum Mullum Creek trail, where removal of invasive species and replanting with indigenous flora has seen this area flourish.

This is an area where renewal is happening and the environment is being cared for, but it is only a small area compared to other parts of the state that are in need. Victoria is the most cleared state in Australia with 66% of our land has been cleared of native trees, shrubs and plants, the habitat that supports our native wildlife. That plight has been exacerbated by last summer's bush fires that burned 1.4 million hectares and destroyed more than 50% of the habitat of 185 rare and threatened Victorian animals and plants, which makes appropriate action even more necessary and urgent.

The contrast between what is happening with land clearing, as shown in 'Fight for Planet A', the ABC program, and the amazing work some Farmers are doing to renew their land and become more profitable, creates both tears and hope. How as a state and a country are, we to survive unless we have plans that integrate the needs of the environment into development plans and the welfare of community? The task is complex but with commitment to programs, appropriate funding and workers we can save our environment.

So what is needed to protect and care for the environment? Successful programs show that with commitment and funding there are solutions.

- A huge program of weed and invasive species eradication – this would create thousands of jobs, clearing weeds and humanely managing introduced animals like cats, deer, rabbits and foxes.
- A treeplanting workforce to restore habitat in both city and country
- A program to revive species facing destruction
- An end to habitat destruction and strengthened nature laws.

There are many programs and solutions being put forward by individuals and groups that understand the science, economics and the workings of community groups that can say far more than I can, I ask that you listen to them.

I know, the Government has big challenges with Covid 19 but that doesn't mean we can put looking after the environment on hold. We need to keep doing the planning and the work that will ensure the future of our environment for our health and wellbeing.

We especially need to do it for the sake of the children, my grandchildren and your children. This is what brings me to tears and keeps me awake at night. We need to not shrug our shoulders and say as Donald Trump did when confronted with the number of Covid 19 deaths in The States, "It is, what it is".

I look forward to seeing strong action to protect and restore Victoria's environment as a result of the work of this committee.

I am happy for my submission to be made public.

Yours sincerely,

Karen Johnson

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