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To the Environment Planning Committee

RE: Inquiry into Ecosystem Decline in Victoria

20/10/2020

To the Chair,

My name is Ian Crick and I manage my family's sawmill trading as Pyrenees Timber, located in Western Victoria and I would like to express my views of VEAC, their Central West Investigation and the impact this organisation and their recommendations have had on the Victorian ecosystem.

VEAC's findings within the report do not represent the views of our local community. Although VEAC consulted with myself as a user of Forest produce and with the local community, we both clearly advised VEAC that improved conservation measures were needed, and that sustainable forestry had a key role to play. Changing the status of our State Forests to National Parks is not what the local community wanted.

Both research and practice have proven that the present system of "Land Protection" being implemented by VEAC is damaging the forest by reducing the level of care it receives. This has an additional double impact on the economy by reducing the sustainable logging industry and also through the vast damage caused by bushfires.

As all the VEAC council members have a conservation background, I believe that self-interest was more likely the motivation for recommending National Parks rather than community support or promoting "Ecologically Sustainable Development".

VEAC must be abolished and the Central West Investigation report must also be dismissed. Pyrenees Timber would support the creation of a Victorian Public Land Use Commission to perform the role presently handled by VEAC.

Yours Sincerely,

Ian Crick