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From: POV eSubmission Form <ecosystems@parliament.vic.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, 31 August 2020 8:58 PM
To: ecosystems
Subject: New Submission to Inquiry into Ecosystem Decline in Victoria

Categories: Submissions

Inquiry Name: Inquiry into Ecosystem Decline in Victoria

Dr Guy Dutson

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SUBMISSION CONTENT:

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As a professional ecologist, I can state without reservation that Victoria’s biodiversity continues to decline at rates which will have a significant impact on Victorians, their economy and their well-being. There is clear evidence, such as die-off of species of as flying-foxes and of ecosystems such as eucalypt woodlands, let alone the bush fires, that this decline is starting to accelerate under the already apparent impacts of climate change.

This decline has happened and is continuing despite the efforts of decades of regulation such as the FFG Act, so we must conclude that the regulations and/or the governments' ability to meet these regulations, are inadequate. As a local ecologist and tour-leader, one glaring failure is the under-investment in ParksVictoria - they don't even have the funds to fence the Ramsar wetlands where I live to prevent trampling by livestock. Another egregious example is the taxpayer's subsidizing of VicForests to exacerbate this environmental decline for the sake of a very small number of jobs (and many fewer than would be funded by tourism and sustainable use.

The technical solutions to reverse this decline are known, they just require the political will be implement them. Mots importantly, this means preferencing environmental sustainability alongside or over other paradigms such as economic growth. For example, any COVID economic recovery plan needs to be at least environmentally neutral, and there are massive-scale win-win opportunities for a green-led recovery.

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