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To: ecosystems
Subject: Victorian Extinction Parliamentary Inquiry Submission

Categories: Submissions

To the Inquiry leaders

I wish to make a submission concerning the loss of our wonderful ecosystems in the state of Victoria.

Having spent so many wonderful and memorable times in the Otways in my childhood I am devastated and heart broken to see our beautiful bushland disappear and ravaged by logging and clearing of land. I still see a koala in the trees occasionally and it is an incredible treat to see our most iconic and beautiful wildlife still surviving in what is left of it's habitat. We have seen the Platypus go from being sighted regularly to almost gone for ever.

Victoria is the most cleared state in Australia. We have a shocking track record with 66% of land cleared of native trees. We are at the tipping point now where there will not be enough bush land for our wonderful native animals to survive.

One of the main concerns I have is the need for eradication of feral animals. This is an urgent issue that must have more resources put towards it.

- Funding and Resources need to urgently be put towards eradication of feral animals including horses, pigs, foxes, cats and rabbits
- But especially feral cats.
- One recommendation I would like submitted is that all domestic cats in Australia should have to be desexed and only registered breeders be permitted to breed cats.
- Any kittens bred by the registered breeders must be desexed before sold.
- Any homes built in especially delicate bush areas should not be permitted to own cats.

Our ecosystems are under threat. 120 Victorian animals, birds, plants, insects and fish are on the brink of extinction. This moment in time is vital to save these before they are forever made extinct. This Government has the chance to make a vital impact now, once extinction occurs it can never be reversed.

Much bushland in the Otways has also been sold to private land owners. Where it is not cleared and should be part of the national park, I would like to put forward my recommendation that there be a buy back of bush properties to stop these from being further cleared for farming. They are also a fire risk for people to live there.

I also believe there is a huge amount of farm land in Victoria that is under utilised. Land that has been cleared should need to be used for farming or be re generated back to bushland. So much of it is left to go to weeds and erosion and not managed properly.

- Countries like England, in some areas, have a covenant over farm land which ensures the land must be used for profitable farming or the owners have to sell it.
- There is no need to clear more land for farming when there is so much cleared land that is underutilised.
- Regenerative farming practices and protection of rivers and waterways should be put into practice and more water put back into the rivers for environmental needs.

One main point I would like to strongly state is that VicForests must be closed and all native forest logging must stop now. So often it has been up to small dedicated environmental groups to take VicForests to court to stop them breaking the law and logging in areas they are not permitted to.

- Our State Government should not own a logging company. And should not have purchased a sawmill. The jobs being protected for this industry are small compared to the number of jobs that are being created through renewable energy and nature tourism.
- More jobs could be created in re generation of our degraded bushland through tree and vegetation planting and re establishment of degraded water ways back to slow moving creeks that are favoured by Platypus.

Tourism and the Economy:

- Economically it is more beneficial to preserve and grow our natural environment as these are the places tourists go to see. Tourists go to see the Penguins at Philip Island and Whale watching at Warrnambool. Tourists come to a country to see it's natural beauty, like driving the Great Ocean Road. This brings jobs and money into towns and the bush.
- Our most important tourist attractions are based around animals and nature. This is what people want to see and enjoy. If it is destroyed and ruined then the tourists won't come to regional towns and jobs will be lost.

A healthy and protected natural environment is vital to the health and well being of all people in this country. Look to other states and Countries to see what is being done there and find the best practice and introduce it in Victoria. We need to lead the way and save what is still remaining and help our precious animals thrive. When the natural environment thrives then so do it's animals and people. As the representatives of the people of this state, please use this opportunity to make the changes that are needed to save our land and animals. There are many solutions that can restore habitat and wildlife. These solutions are achievable with the right commitment and funding from the Government.

Thank you for accepting my submission. I look forward to seeing the outcome of this inquiry.

Yours respectfully

Julia Burns


I am happy for my submission to be made public