

Elizabeth Hope



Dear Minister Andy Meddick and other Ministers for this enquiry

Firstly, I would like to thank you all for giving people the opportunity to voice their concerns regarding our wildlife.

I care about the environment including all our wildlife, the forests, the land, rivers and seas.

I have a young son and I would like him and his descendants to experience our amazing environment and the unique animals that are so very important for our eco systems to work which ultimately helps us live a healthy life. All plants, grasses, trees, Old Growth Forests, animals, birds, insects, reptiles, fish and marine animals all serve a role in maintaining a healthy habitat.

I love hiking and getting out in nature. The gratitude and gratefulness that I feel for being able to see our amazing unique wildlife and environment is fading as we continue to disregard nature.

My submission will cover the following :-

1. My experience with chemical sprays such as Roundup where I saw Rosellas fall from the sky
2. Logging of Old growth Forests
3. Fire prevention and fire fighting
4. Land Clearing by Farmers
5. Disrespecting our Indigenous people's totem animals
6. Land Clearing by Developers and Industry such as Mining
7. Bush Fire prevention
8. Support and funding for our CFA volunteers and our wildlife carers
9. Funding for rehabilitation of our wildlife after bush fires, floods, road trauma, land clearing of their habitats
10. Funding for researching a cure for our wombats suffering from mange or our koalas suffering from chlamydia, etc
11. Summary
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Chemical Sprays such as Round Up

I will never forget the day when I visited an orchard on the outskirts of Melbourne and I saw birds like Rosellas fall from the sky after the farmer had done a spray. It was like a horror movie. Some of them were still alive after dropping to the ground but did not survive the drive to the Burwood East RSPCA. What a cruel way to die by poisoning and pain from the

drop to the ground! This farmer sells his fruit to our major supermarket for consumption by us. Consequently, I rinse all my fruit and vegies in water and vinegar. Where possible, I buy organic. The Farmer has to be tested every 6 months.

My mum's gardener sprayed her garden beds so much that the soil has literally died. It is so hard that a worm cannot get through it let alone the rain. So why would we allow our drought affected farmers to use it? It is not healthy for them, for us, the soil, birds, the insects and most importantly, the bees which we need to pollinate!

One of my favourite destinations for a getaway is the beautiful town of Bright in Victoria. It is situated in a valley at the base of some of our best Alpine country. It has several rivers running through it. However, the town and surrounding areas are being bombarded by aerial sprays by the local pine forest logging company and farmers. The spray gets into their water supplies. Not only do they worry about their wildlife and drinking water, they worry about their health and their children's health.

Logging

Coming across the devastation of a logging coupe while out enjoying nature is quite alarming as is seeing a news story such as the one in the following paragraph.

I recently watched ABC's Four Corner's episode 'Extinction' in 2019. There are very weak laws for loggers not to log or correctly identify Old Growth Forests or important habitats of endangered species such as the Lead Beater Possum or Great Glider or koalas or any of our precious wildlife.

Victoria only has 1% left of Old Growth Forest and in those forests are some endangered species such as the Great Glider and the Lead Beater Possum. Recently, a submission went through via Engage Victoria on how to identify Old Growth Forests. I have not heard the outcome and I am very alarmed that we have not got that right when we have so little Old Growth Forest left? These forests are more carbon efficient than the Amazon. We can't lose them.

At what percentage will the government stop logging now? Victoria's Regional Forest Agreement was just renewed for another 10 years. What will the loggers do once those forests have gone? Why can't you stop now? Why can't Victoria negotiate with Reflex paper? There must be a clause to get out of this contract? We need the forests for rain, clean air and water. We can't rely on the Amazon. We need to be self sufficient going into the future.

Solution for logging communities

As seen on ABC Landline, the Tasmania town of Derby has recreated themselves after the timber mills closed by designing and building a mountain bike track through the forest that ends at the pub. The town is booming! Or loggers could become paid forest fire fighters?

Lets get our 'Just Transition' people and economists together to work out a solution of how to generate an economy based on a healthy environment with an abundance of wildlife.

Bush Fire Prevention

Please form a strong body of representatives from all governments, ecologists such as David Lindenmayer and Fire Experts such as Professor David Bowman from the University of Tasmania and Indigenous Fire Practitioner, Victor Stephenson that are sympathetic to the plight of our environment.

Fire prevention, fire fighting and climate change

We need to address climate change and learn to listen to what our environment is telling us. The recent catastrophic bush fires caused such devastation and the loss of so much wildlife. It was more than warning for us. To lose so much wildlife and their habitat and food sources was devastating to everyone.

As mentioned in a previous paragraph, if our wildlife are left to flourish and we don't keep taking their habitats so they have enough food, then they can help us maintain our forest in an effort to help prevent such catastrophic bush fires.

Look after the CFA more and give them better equipment and paid insurance at the very least so they have a better chance of protecting our wildlife and their habitats.

Please talk to our fire chiefs and experts to help us prevent such catastrophic events that we saw earlier this year:-

Prof David Lindenmayer – Ecologist

Prof David Bowman – Fire Ecologist from the University of Tasmania

Indigenous Fire Practitioner: Victor Steffenson

NSW Ecologist Mark Graham on Clouds Creek Old Growth Forests

Farming

While there are some amazing farmers moving into more sustainable regenerative and conservation style farming practices, there are still so many who don't get the fact that by clearing the land of trees and spraying poison is not only harming themselves but our environment and our wildlife and even the insects like bees and worms that they need to help them. They need to leave the trees to help it rain and retain our soil health.

And why are we still allowing Feed Lots as per the proposed Feed Lot in the Brisbane Ranges? It will end up looking like a desert. Not only is it unhealthy for the live stock, it is unhealthy for our environment which then affects our wildlife and us.

Why can't the drought prone farmers or feedlot farmers or factory farmers or live export farmers transition to grow bush tucker plants for which we have over 3000 varieties in Australia? Some of which can be grown in arid areas. This could reduce the affects of climate

change on our environment, improve soil health without the use of chemicals or too much water if they grow the correct variety for each region.

Australia has something that no one else has. Bush tucker is a largely untapped market and it could revolutionise farming and sustain them into the future. Our Indigenous bush tucker plants have amazing qualities in terms of nutritional and medicinal properties as well as taste.

They are easier to grow in our unique environment as well! Less need of water and no sprays?

We just need to market the hell out it like we did with meat, dairy, wool and wine as this could help save habitat and food resources for our wildlife as well as sustain farmers.

Farmers living in harmony with our wildlife

As per Bruce Pascoe's book, Dark Emu, the Indigenous people grew enough bush tucker crops outside the main crops so the wildlife did not touch their main crop and thus lived in harmony with the wildlife. Why do they get treated like a pest? They are not pests. They belong here.

Further, as per our Indigenous people and our ecologists, our wildlife can help maintain our land and water. Eg Native animals that eat ground fodder help gently turn the soil with their tail and hooves or burrowing and they help reduce bush fire fuel by keeping the ground fodder low without damaging the soil. Other native animals help maintain the health of the river banks and rivers.

We need to change the mindset of farmer in terms of our wildlife and environment so they all live in harmony.

Land Clearing by Developers and Industry

Our wildlife are being culled as we keep moving into their habitat and taking it away or polluting it with development, farming, logging and industry.

The ugly holes in the ground by mining companies must stop. We need to seek alternative eco friendly energy.

Climate change and carbon dioxide are affecting our wildlife. They are suffering from heat exhaustion eg flying foxes drop dead out of their trees, their food sources are compromised. The moisture and the quality of the gum leaf is impacting the koalas as is the habitat loss.

Developers need to design housing estates away from important habitats or incorporate wildlife overpasses such this one in QLD <https://www.abc.net.au/gardening/factsheets/highway-haven/9703394> or planting only native plants, building eco friendly houses with eco friendly paint, etc and special storm water drains and by reducing speed limits to prevent road kill.

The DELWP need to drop their culling policy and work with experts to find solutions. The Housing and Industry ministers need to work with the agriculture and environment minister to ensure our wildlife are protected forever. The Education minister needs to retrain the mindset of everyone and take our wildlife and environment into account when educating for all industries. All the ministers need to stop making the Environment Minister compromise the environment.

Funding for the rehabilitation of our wildlife after bush fires, floods, road trauma, land

clearing of their habitats

Our wildlife carers need more funding and support as do our wildlife. Never before have our wildlife needed us more. Never forget our wildlife in a bush fire again.

We probably need water supplies in all forest areas to provide water in drought and bush fire situations.

Funding for research for eg a cure for our wombats suffering from mange and our koalas suffering from chlamydia, etc

Again, our wildlife carers are dealing with a lot without government funding. We need more funding into research and solutions for :-

- Wombat mange
- Koala Chlamydia
- Flying foxes suffering dropping dead from extreme heat
- Managing predators in humane ways
- Road kill – maybe look into the Karawatha Forest wildlife corridor on ABC Gardening Australia when they interviewed Professor Darryl Jones, Ecologist at Griffith University, to see how project is going and if going well, then do more.
- It is great how various governments are researching how to protect our bees from both the bee mite and chemical sprays by isolating bee hives in places like Rottnest Island.

Summary

Remember short terms gain decisions to create jobs by sacrificing more of our environment and native habitat will ultimately harm our children and their descendants. We must also remember our Indigenous People whose totem animals are being harmed by our farmers, our loggers, hunters, urban developers, our industries and our governments (such as the DELWP) doing mass culling. I am so alarmed at the blatant disregard for our animals on the verge of extinction. Have we learnt nothing over the past 200 years?

Please be very careful of what government contracts are signed and ensure there is a clause to get out especially with mining and RFAs. Please also restrict farmers on land clearing and poisoning. Our environment is so important as are our amazing wildlife.

References

Four Corners 'Extinction' episode

<https://www.abc.net.au/4corners/extinction-nation/11241318>

Prof David Lindenmayer – Ecologist

https://climate.anu.edu.au/about/people/academics/professor-david-lindenmayer#acton-tabs-link--tabs-person_tabs-middle-1

Prof David Bowman – Fire Ecologist from the University of Tasmania

<https://www.utas.edu.au/profiles/staff/plant-science/David-Bowman>

Indigenous Fire Practitioner: Victor Steffenson

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=2474854839461043>

Book

Bruce Pascoe – Indigenous author who wrote ‘Dark Emu’.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dark_Emu_\(book\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dark_Emu_(book))

Bees including chemical use as well as the bee mite

1. **See Foreign Correspondence**
https://www.facebook.com/ABCForeignCorrespondent/?_tn=%2Cd%3C-R&eid=ARBW9ltjh93bwqMPHFAh8JTerdA27adjmwx58esglMnr-tSrn2NMEZckafb24uj4XsnZJaHJekAsXrhG
2. **Bees project by WA government see on ABC TV Landline**
<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1694321703961403>
3. **Post by Dan Andrews re: the bees**
<https://www.facebook.com/DanielAndrewsMP/posts/2562552437142610>
4. **ABC News and David Attenborough – Bees are dying** <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-06-25/bees-are-dying-are-we-next/9904464>
5. **ABC** <https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/earshot/the-last-golden-age-of-the-bee-people/11473396>
6. **Colin’s goats eating their way through weeds along the Dandenong creek in the suburbs of Melbourne without using chemical sprays or eating natives**
<https://www.abc.net.au/gardening/factsheets/my-garden-path---colins-goats/10313788>

Regenerative farming

https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-10-26/eco-premium:-regenerative-agriculture-pays-off-for/11643296?fbclid=IwAR288N6uwzAmMlzQf_UxEZyqnsxM_QTizRUVkUOsYwx2jX_pNUzRIBVY

Bush Tucker – ABC Landline

<https://www.facebook.com/LandlineABC/photos/a.655982667795317/2684560028270894/?type=3&theater>

Farmer in Portland uses a bulldozer to clear trees with koalas in them

<https://7news.com.au/news/animals/hundreds-of-koalas-allegedly-killed-in-massacre-on-private-logging-plantation-in-victorias-west-c-677103>

Farmer poisons Wedge-tailed eagles

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-09-24/man-poisoned-wedge-tailed-eagles-in-gippsland-jailed/10298426>

Logging

Ecologist and Prof David Lindenmayer on Toolangi Old Growth Forests

<https://www.thesaturdaypaper.com.au/culture/portrait/2019/02/01/professor-david-lindenmayer/15489744477364>

The Tasmanian former logging town of Derby recreates itself

<https://www.facebook.com/LandlineABC/videos/1772454316148141/UzpfSTg4NDEzMjMwODU5OTc2ODo5ODE5NTMwNjg4MTU2OTE/>

NSW Ecologist Mark Graham on Clouds Creek Old Growth Forests

<https://www.nature.org.au/our-campaigns/ending-deforestation/save-clouds-creek-forest/>

NSW considering re-classifying Old Growth Forests like Kelang

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/jul/17/nsw-remaps-old-growth-forests-to-open-up-reserves-to-logging>

Saving our wildlife from road trauma

<https://www.abc.net.au/gardening/factsheets/highway-haven/9703394>