

ENVIRONMENT, NATURAL RESOURCES AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Subcommittee

Inquiry into the control of invasive animals on Crown land

Sale — 7 October 2016

Members

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Mr Bill Tilley

Mr Tim McCurdy — Deputy Chair

Ms Vicki Ward

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Mr Dan Garlick, planning and delivery manager, and

Mr Shane Heywood, land team leader, West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority.

The CHAIR — Welcome to Mr Dan Garlick and Mr Shane Heywood. Thank you for coming to present today. Just before we move on to your presentation there are just a few formalities. First of all under the parliamentary committees legislation what you talk about today in this public hearing is subject to parliamentary privilege; however, anything that is discussed outside the hearing is not subject to the same parliamentary privilege. You will get a copy of the transcript proof so you can check it for accuracy prior to it becoming public. As I understand it, you have a PowerPoint presentation.

Mr GARLICK — Really brief.

The CHAIR — Okay, and after your 10-minute presentation that will give us plenty of time to ask questions. Thank you very much.

Visual presentation.

Mr GARLICK — Thank you for the opportunity for us to come along. As I mentioned, it is a really brief presentation. It is just a bit of background on the CMA and our role and the patch we cover and then a really quick summary of the written submission that you have seen. I will just run through that and then we can get into the discussion.

In terms of background, catchment management authorities operate under the Catchment and Land Protection Act and the Water Act. There are 10 CMAs across Victoria, 56 regional bodies across Australia and the boards are appointed by the state government.

The West Gippsland region in particular is a large and diverse region, and each region is unique in terms of its characteristics, in terms of its land management, but West Gippsland in particular is extremely diverse, covering the alpine region up the top, which is largely public land, the Latrobe Valley and the MID through the middle, the Strzeleckis and then the coastal strip including Wilsons Promontory National Park. So as you can see, the area we cover is large, extremely complex and diverse.

In terms of our role and the submission, under the CALP act and the Water Act we come at it very much from the impact of invasive animals on public land to the ecological values of our region. In terms of our responsibilities under the acts, our primary role at a regional level is on strategic planning and investment, particularly with a focus on catchment health obviously in an integrated manner. So we are responsible for coordinating agencies, communities and industries to develop the regional catchment strategies and then the subsequent plans and strategies under that that focus on particular areas and issues. That is our primary role.

Then obviously at an operational level we undertake significant amounts of on-ground works with different land managers — private and public — in terms of waterway health management, and that varies from revegetation, weed control, fencing, protecting remnant vegetation and the like as well as working with private landholders, farmers, in terms of programs such as sustainable agriculture and sustainable irrigation throughout the MID. We are also the flood plain management referral agency and work closely with local government in relation to those particular issues. We manage the environmental water entitlement from Glenmaggie, Blue Rock and — —

Mr HEYWOOD — Thomson.

Mr GARLICK — Of course the Thomson, the major one as well. We manage the environmental flows in relation to those in the delivery of those programs throughout the West Gippy region. Fundamental to all that is our key role in terms of partnerships and engagement. We have a strong program that underpins all those other responsibilities in terms of engaging with the community, public agencies and also industry and have really strong relationships in West Gippsland with bodies such as Landcare and GLAWAC, to name a couple, who are the traditional owners for a large part of our area.

Shane and I might tackle this one, but this is basically a quick summary of the written submission you received, which essentially summarises the role that we can play, some of the challenges we face here in

West Gippsland in relation to invasive animals on public land and the key role, as I have mentioned already, in terms of partnerships and engagements.

Fundamental to this issue, similar to other issues from an ecological perspective in the region, we play and can play a really critical role in terms of that strategic planning and coordination of effort throughout the region. We have got a really good handle on it in terms of who is who and who is responsible for what, and we have got a good track record of coordinating effort in relation to particular issues and the like. We see that as being no different from this particular challenge.

We are also well placed and deliver a range of projects to reduce the impact of invasive animals. I might get Shane just to elaborate on a couple of those examples of where we work close with Parks Victoria and DELWP in terms of the delivery of those.

Mr HEYWOOD — There are a couple of key programs that we invest in and also provide support for through a number of means. One of those key programs is a partnership with Parks Victoria and also the East Gippsland CMA and North East CMA in terms of reducing the threat, if you like, on alpine peatlands. In terms of alpine peatlands they are a very unique ecological community and very important for many, many reasons, but certainly they are potentially under a lot of stress purely through climate change impacts. So the idea of this program is to build, if you like, the resilience of these peatlands by reducing these threats to try to build their capacity to avoid, if you like, the impacts from that climate change impact.

There are a number of components of that program but one of the key areas is looking at deer impact on peatlands. Again, through partnership with Parks Victoria we are supporting a trial program for reducing the impact of deer on those alpine peatlands and Parks Victoria is working closely with volunteer hunters and also potentially bringing in professional hunters. That trial was begun about 18 months ago in the North East CMA area and it is due to be expanded into the West Gippsland CMA area over the coming season.

I think a very important component of that is the role that Parks Victoria plays. It is a very complex process for a number of obvious reasons, community safety being one of course, but also there are a number of requirements around regulation permits et cetera. Then also there is the broader community thoughts around how that is best to be done and there are also measures of efficiency — how best do we actually do what we need to do to get the right balance, if you like, in reducing those threats, or the number of threats.

There is also a very important program with Parks Victoria down around the Corner Inlet area, a Ramsar-listed international asset. There is certainly a lot of work that has been done on foxes and wild dogs down there, but more importantly and significant to this particular inquiry is the increasing population numbers and spread of deer. Most recently, only four or five weeks ago, for the first time sambar deer were located at Wilsons Prom. That is a huge issue. Where have they come from? Who knows. It is one of those big unknowns.

But importantly and most especially with the Wilsons Prom project, Dan mentioned our partnerships and some fine examples where we have witnessed some really good outcomes in terms of controlling invasive animals involves that tenure blind approach, where you get the right scale in the right area a very coordinated approach to bring public land managers and private land managers together with a common goal. That has worked extremely well down around the South Gippsland area and it has worked extremely well along the Nooramunga area between both public land managers and private land managers. For efficiency reasons it works well, for strategic reasons it works well and I think from a communication perspective it works well. Even though they may have different drivers everyone still has the same common vision and that is important.

The CHAIR — When you say it is working well, are we talking about hunting, or are we talking about various methods? I was not quite sure.

Mr HEYWOOD — A number of methodologies.

The CHAIR — Would you mind just maybe expanding a little bit on what it is that has happened and in what way it has been successful? That would be good.

Mr GARLICK — The program that we refer to in particular is the fox control program around the barrier islands in the Corner Inlet area, which is part of the Ramsar-listed site. The barrier islands are public land, and Parks Victoria have led an extensive fox control program over many years. But the challenge in that particular area is that at low tide foxes can obviously walk across from the mainland onto those barrier islands, and so the effectiveness of the barrier island control program led by Parks Victoria is only as successful as the program working with private landholders immediately adjacent to the Ramsar site.

Mr RAMSAY — That was principally baiting.

Mr GARLICK — Principally baiting, yes. Together with Landcare, Greening Australia and other community bodies like that, we worked closely in terms of engaging not just any landholder throughout the region but those immediately adjacent to the sites to increase the effectiveness of controlling foxes on those barrier islands, which is critical to protect the migratory and shorebird populations along there. That is sort of the background and the approach that we have taken. Landcare was critical in terms of that role of engaging and working closely with those landholders in terms of their program, which was in line with the Parks Victoria's program on public land. That was the approach, and it has worked really, really well.

Mr RAMSAY — Can I just ask a question on that too? You are not indicating what worked well was the trial work in the Victorian Alps on deer. You are talking about the fox program, not the deer trial program. We are interested to know what worked and what did not in relation to that trial.

Mr HEYWOOD — I think, Simon, it is probably too early to make that call. The reason I say it is too early is that there were some methods that were utilised in the north-east that were proven to be relatively inefficient. Since then there have been further advances — for example, pig imaging, which is proving much more successful in terms of locating and stalking the deer.

The CHAIR — What was the other system, sorry?

Mr HEYWOOD — Basically it was just hunting.

The CHAIR — Okay, just out there.

Mr HEYWOOD — Yes. The other important thing is around gaining trust, if you like. There is a lot of effort that has been put in by Parks Victoria to work closely with the hunters and find that balance. It is not a cull. It is about reducing numbers to a level whereby they reduce the impact as much as possible. As per any challenge similar to this, the partnership arrangement is utmost to ensuring success. Therefore that is where most effort goes initially, and then the more technical or process-driven approach comes second to that. That program is about to be expanded into the West Gippsland CMA region in the alpine area this year and will build upon the learnings from the north-east.

Ms WARD — What about hunting down at the prom — the 45 deer that were shot down there, or 43?

Mr GARLICK — We are not directly involved with the program in Wilson's Prom.

Ms WARD — Do you have any idea of the outcome of that or how that has worked?

Mr GARLICK — No.

Mr RAMSAY — How do the professional hunters and the recreational hunters coexist under the program? Do they have different aims in drivers, as you say?

Mr GARLICK — In relation to the north-east role?

Mr RAMSAY — The alpine trial, the Alps trial.

Mr HEYWOOD — At this stage I would not be able to answer that, Simon.

The CHAIR — I think there are no professional hunters yet.

Mr HEYWOOD — They will be engaged this year.

Mr RAMSAY — In your program in West Gippsland you will have the two groups under trial.

Mr HEYWOOD — That is the plan, yes.

Mr GARLICK — Two key points, just to reiterate: the programs that the CMA are primarily focused on are to protect the ecological values of the impact of invasive animals on peatland and shorebirds down in Ramsar sites. Importantly our submission talked about the holistic nature of invasive animals. I know this is primarily focusing on deer, but from our perspective it is really important to look at it as a holistic package in relation to foxes, cats, dogs and deer.

Mr HEYWOOD — And horses and people.

The CHAIR — Pigs.

Mr HEYWOOD — Yes, pigs.

Mr RAMSAY — Are you envisaging using methods other than hunting — shooting — to control particularly deer?

Mr HEYWOOD — That would not be the call of CMA. It would be purely up to Parks Victoria and the technical people that are advising that program.

The CHAIR — So based on whatever research or technical information, they come up with the plan, and then it is your job to bring in the locals and the organisations and then to implement the plan.

Mr GARLICK — To coordinate the funding.

Mr HEYWOOD — That is correct. I think it is important to note also that what is being implemented alongside the trial program is actually a monitoring program as well in terms of impact, numbers, methodology and questions such as ‘Is it appropriate?’ and ‘Is it effective?’ et cetera. It is also measuring the impact on the threat reduction regarding what it is we are trying to protect. Therefore if we do reduce the number of deer in this particular area, how well does the peatland recover? Because there are assumptions here.

Mr GARLICK — Deer are just one threat. Fire and the like are other threats that have been addressed through this program in a holistic way.

The CHAIR — Was there more of your presentation?

Mr GARLICK — No, that was pretty much it.

Mr HEYWOOD — That was pretty much it; short and brief.

The CHAIR — Okay, we have sort of missed a beat now.

Ms WARD — Going on your experience and what you have seen thus far, are you able to outline for us a step-by-step methodology for how you would eradicate deer from national parks?

Mr HEYWOOD — I think we need to be very careful with the term ‘eradicate’, for a start. I do not think that is possible.

Mr RAMSAY — No-one seems to like that word.

The CHAIR — Control.

Mr HEYWOOD — I think it is about being practical, Simon. That is not possible. I am just trying to come back to your question. A step-by-step process — —

Ms WARD — What methodologies would you do to keep them under control? What would you employ?

Mr HEYWOOD — First of all, I think Parks Victoria are certainly the key agency that should be responsible for coordinating this for a number of reasons that I mentioned before, including safety. They are a one-stop shop. They have very stringent processes in place around occupational health and safety. They are the public land manager and the responsible agent. They are very familiar with the permit process et cetera, and in most cases they have good operating relationships with the key stakeholders that need to be involved in the process. They also have the capacity to draw on the academics, if you like, to monitor what is happening, as I mentioned before, but also to ensure that it has been effective, if you like, in achieving the ultimate outcome.

Mr GARLICK — I was just going to say our role in that process is to support agencies like Parks Victoria and others to understand the priorities from an ecological sense in terms of the impact of invasive animals and to prioritise that effort in terms of particular areas. I think we are well down that track in understanding that and in targeting efforts to protect those important values, peatlands being one, and that we have got a really good handle on it in terms of where the effort needs to be focused. Now it is a matter of us liaising with the key partners, such as Parks Victoria, to implement a program based on their technical knowledge and understanding.

That knowledge around peatlands is quite well established. I think there are some gaps in our knowledge in terms of other impacts in other areas such as the Strzeleckis and around Corner Inlet. It would be good to understand that before we launch into the next effort trailing different methods.

Ms WARD — Do you think it is one method? Do you think it is multiple methods used together? Do you think it is a staggering of methods?

Mr GARLICK — All those.

Mr HEYWOOD — All those. To come back to your original question, Vicki, this trial process for deer control is well documented. There is a well-documented report — a detail of methodology, what the requirements are and the process — which your question was based upon, but also there is a well-adopted methodology around the monitoring program. If the committee was wanting to contact Parks Victoria, I am sure they would make that available to you.

Ms WARD — Thank you.

The CHAIR — We had a few individuals that presented yesterday, and I am not sure you would have a view on this or not, but they, not as their main issue but in passing, complained that they had written to or tried to contact Parks Victoria about certain issues, ideas or suggestions that they had in terms of dealing with invasive animals. I am just trying to look at where they actually lived. I am assuming it was fairly close to some national parks. In terms of engaging stakeholders or consultation, how do you go about doing that? Are individuals also involved, or do you only deal with peak organisations?

Mr GARLICK — It is a good question, Bronwyn. Community engagement and having a range of different methods is really important. Sure, we have got our strong relationships with larger groups, such as Landcare and Greening Australia and the like, but we also have mechanisms where we engage directly with the community to understand and raise these issues, such that we have got formal community advisory groups throughout the region. Specifically in relation to invasive animals and weeds, we work closely with local areas in terms of community weeds task forces. Do you want to talk about the south Gippy one just quickly in terms of the background?

Mr HEYWOOD — Yes, okay. The South Gippsland weeds task force has been formally a group for close to a decade now. It was largely driven exactly by the issue that you have raised. A number of individual private land managers were in a situation of frustration whereby they were doing what they considered was appropriate on their own land, and their neighbour or someone down the road was not fulfilling their obligations, one could say.

In partnership with Landcare we coordinated the gathering of anyone within that localised area that was interested in being proactive around this. It brought individuals together, for a start, to have the conversation and be able to start mapping, if you like, and identifying where key areas were of interest. But more importantly from a CMA perspective, we requested our colleagues in what would have been DPI at the time to come and have the conversation with us. The pressure was being put onto DPI at the time that they should be regulating. DPI were reluctant at the time, because in a lot of cases pure regulation does not work.

The washout of it all was that all parties agreed to take a more strategic approach, so those private land managers that were keen to do works on the land — whether it was foxes, rabbits, ragwort or whatever it may be — committed to be able to do that in a strategic fashion. Therefore you had land manager after land manager after land manager working on that. If there was a local government reserve, the local government committed to do their part within their local government reserve. But what DPI did at the time was say, ‘If we can get an area whereby we have a concerted effort, tenure blind, and we still have an issue with an individual land manager, then we have the justification to go and knock on their gate’. The issue for them, and I fully understand it, is, ‘You have got Mr Smith here and Mr Smith here. Why did you go there and not there?’. But if you can go through a process and build that justification, then you can go and knock on Mr Smith’s door and say, ‘Hey. Control your ragwort. Deal with your foxes,’ or whatever it may be. It works very well at that scale.

Mr GARLICK — So that is just another example that there are a range of different mechanisms that we are involved in in engaging with the community at the local level, particularly around certain issues or around a geographic area.

The CHAIR — Another example, I guess, was people that presented yesterday. They have come up with this technical information, but how they progress it is more of the issue, about feral pigs. They are saying that 1080 poisoned grain has been demonstrated to be the most effective way, but they do not know how to progress that. Okay, it may need some legislative change. They go and see Parks Victoria, who says, ‘Oh well, you can’t do it’ — ‘Why?’ — ‘Because’. Again is that something that your organisation would assist with, or is that more of a referral thing? I do not know.

Mr HEYWOOD — Fundamentally it would go to the agencies responsible for licensing certain chemicals, if you like, for specific purposes. My understanding of that would be DEDJTR, which is DPI/DEDJTR. Within their division they are the ones that regulate.

The CHAIR — In terms of managing stakeholders and individuals, would you assist in that sort of stuff?

Mr HEYWOOD — We could certainly point them in the right direction.

Mr GARLICK — Absolutely yes, and we are really well placed to do that — the one-knock-on-the-door policy. It may not be our particular issue, but we are committed to in terms of understanding the issue and then exploring how we can assist in different ways. It might not be our core business, but we might be able to facilitate the right conversations to take place. There are plenty of examples where we do that.

Mr HEYWOOD — Quite often.

Mr YOUNG — Thanks, guys, for coming in, first of all. You mentioned Parks Victoria and the trial programs and things, and that one of the aims of that was building trust. Can you elaborate a bit more on what you mean by that? Has it been successful? Has it worked? Are the relationships there?

Mr HEYWOOD — I think again you need to put in context the fact that this is the second year, and trust is not built over a very short period. It is a bit like a marriage; you have to put a lot of effort into it, and it is a sustained effort. It was a matter of Parks Victoria identifying recreational hunters that were willing to work within the parameters, if you like, of what is required and in that process assist those hunters to understand why it is, but also to allay fears. As I said before, eradication is impossible. It is not about reducing what they would consider was their recreational vice or sport, however you want to put it. It is a matter of that continued conversation to make people feel comfortable — that is the case — but more importantly understanding why we are going about this.

Mr YOUNG — And that takes time, building those relationships, and that is fundamental to trust.

Mr HEYWOOD — That takes time.

Mr YOUNG — The previous witness said the same thing when talking about cultural changes, about the reasons why we do this and the motivation. There has been a change from, ‘You don’t take what you are not going to use’, to, ‘Yes, maybe there are too many and we need to take a few more’. That is sort of happening naturally as well, but do you think these kinds of programs are progressing that and helping towards those attitude changes?

Mr HEYWOOD — Most definitely.

Mr GARLICK — Yes. Absolutely.

Mr HEYWOOD — Because at the end of the day the greatest spokespeople for these particular activities are going to be the recreational and professional hunters themselves. You have got to build the trust of certain individuals. It is a bit like working with farmers. There are some really great operators out there that are really conscious, and others that probably are not quite so aware. If you build the trust with those trusted and well-respected farmers, they become your spokespeople. It is exactly the same situation.

Mr YOUNG — Yes. Beautiful. Thanks.

The CHAIR — We were talking about professionals and volunteers or recreational. In the organisation that represents a number of companies, the people that make a living out of trapping, baiting or shooting pest animals, there is this concern, because some of the trials, for example, of recreational shooters were in areas where previously that work was done by people that were paid, so that work was being taken away. Do you see how you can manage that? It seems that there is enough work for everybody in this area, but why would it be that paid people would be replaced by recreational shooters in one area as opposed to going to a different area? Is there an explanation for that? This is based on the evidence they gave, whether it is correct or not, but this is what they told us.

Mr GARLICK — As an agency we are probably not in the position to understand that fully and the implications of that. From our perspective we do not deal directly with the hunters, so it is probably not a question that we can directly answer.

The CHAIR — Sure.

Mr HEYWOOD — You are right. We cannot speak on behalf of, in this particular case, Parks Victoria; that is their business operation. Having said that, you are quite right. The numbers out there at the moment in terms of, if you like, particular deer, their populations are increasing, the spread is increasing. The amount of recreational hunters that are being utilised in this type of work is very, very small.

The other important point to reiterate is that we are coming from an ecological perspective. As you would imagine, not the whole landscape out there is a key asset, if you like — to try not to use technical terms here — but there are important areas. An example is the alpine peatlands. That is the asset. That is what we are trying to protect, so therefore that is the area of coverage in terms of reducing that threat, whereas there are other areas that are less important ecologically where the numbers are still there.

The CHAIR — Sure. That is fine.

Mr RAMSAY — We had a witness yesterday that was representing a wild dog committee, but it had no formal links with different other agencies. It is curious, given there is a number of ministerial advisory committees in the north-east that work under the department, DELWP, that are sort of formalised, yet this area of a town does not seem to have a formal wild dog committee; it was a group of farmers that got together because no-one else was doing it. So I perhaps pose the question: why is there not a formalised wild dog committee representing the community and stakeholders in this part of the world?

Mr GARLICK — I suppose the direct response in terms of our focus as an authority is on waterway health, and I guess our focus has been on threats to that. We have not predominantly played a role in the wild dog groups and associated efforts like that. We are aware of those, particularly through our Landcare members and things like that — I am sure they are involved — but I guess that is not our core business, if you like, so we have not predominantly played a role in that space recently and over the period because of our fundamental responsibilities.

Mr RAMSAY — I posed that question because you are the closest thing we have had to government in the last two days.

Mr GARLICK — Yes.

Mr RAMSAY — One thing you do have responsibility for is providing a strategic plan in relation to responding to incursions of weeds and pests. The Victorian Auditor-General provided a report in 2010 on invasive pests and weed control. It was fairly scathing of some of the short-term strategies of Parks Victoria particularly, and you have quoted Parks Victoria extensively in your contribution today as being the primary driver of control. One of the recommendations out of that report was that there was a short-sighted funding mechanism for dealing with pests and weeds and that catchment management authorities are fairly slow at incorporating strategies to respond to those recommendations.

I guess my question is: has your particular catchment authority put in place updated strategic plans in lieu of those recommendations from VAGO, and whether you see perhaps with the funding issue — and I notice you have made a contribution to the trial; I am not sure how much, but you might be willing to tell us how much your stakeholders put into that trial — that there is a financial problem associated with getting outcomes for the issues that VAGO identified and recommended, and also what are your long-term strategic plans in dealing with pests and weeds under your catchment authority?

Mr GARLICK — I will deal with the funding one first and then I might throw to Shane to give us an update in terms of our strategic role in relation to pest plants and animals. Funding is a real challenge in NRM. In terms of natural resource management and weeds in particular, you do need a long-term approach and an ongoing approach to the control, maintenance and protection of the investment. Particularly in natural resource management that is a challenge, and that is why the importance of prioritising effort on particular ecological values is really, really important to ensure that our investment is targeting the priority areas.

In terms of our strategic approach to dealing with these threats, the regional catchment strategy and more recently the regional waterway strategy have been updated to incorporate some of those issues that you have spoken about, but they are regional-wide and focused on — in the regional waterway strategy in particular — threats to waterways. In terms of invasive plants and animals, do you want to touch on that?

Mr HEYWOOD — Again, the RCS is our driver. It is an asset-based approach. Within the RCS the alpine peatlands is a key asset along with Gippsland Lakes, Melbourne waterways et cetera. An example of our commitment, even though funding is extremely difficult to come by — and let us face it there will never be enough to eradicate pests across the entire West Gippsland CMA region — is that between the period of 2007 through to 2012 we provided somewhere around \$1 million to \$1.2 million to both Parks Victoria and also what at the time would have been the DSE, which became DEPI, to look at identifying, treating and doing follow-up treatment of pest plant species in the alpine and state-managed lands. The strategic thinking behind that is to stop at the catchment. If we have got issues at the top of the catchment,

generally it just flows down. So if we do spend public funds in the lower part, chances are we are going to get reinfestation. So let us take a longer term approach here and work up there, and that worked resoundingly well.

Following that program, the peatlands program, the West Gippsland CMA, including the board themselves, have invested — and it will conclude in June 2018 — around \$1 million to \$1.2 million again, part of which is supporting the deer trial work along with a number of other initiatives. There is also obviously a contribution from Parks Victoria towards that program as well. There are a couple of examples of taking the strategic approach within the constraints of the funding that we have and being able to prioritise that and get the most efficient outcomes possible from that investment.

Mr RAMSAY — What is your total budget?

Mr HEYWOOD — Total budget for the peatlands program?

Mr RAMSAY — For managing pests and weeds?

Mr HEYWOOD — It is a bit hard off the top of your head.

Mr GARLICK — Yes, I do not have a figure at hand.

The CHAIR — Are you able to send it to us at a later time?

Mr GARLICK — We can look into it and take it on notice. The challenge in answering that question is that CMAs are project-based funded. We apply for funding to deliver a particular project, and we have got a heap of projects. It would be a matter of going through those and deciphering which elements are specifically related to pest plants and animals.

Mr RAMSAY — I have just one last question. What would be the outcome of removing the protected species status of sambar deer?

Mr HEYWOOD — I did not get that.

Mr GARLICK — Changing the classification of sambar deer.

Mr RAMSAY — I mean, there has been a push by some groups to remove the protected species status, and I am just wondering what that actually means. Is that a free-for-all for every Tom, Dick and Harry to go out and knock over a deer?

Mr GARLICK — We are probably not in the best position to answer the implications of that.

Mr RAMSAY — I will pose that to Parks Victoria.

Mr GARLICK — Yes.

Mr HEYWOOD — Just to come back to your question from a CMA perspective, and more importantly from a stakeholder perspective, a lot of the driving of investment that we receive through our submissions is based upon species and/or communities that are listed under either the FFG Act, the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act, or the EPBC act, which is a federal act. If we have got communities listed under those acts, what we then do strategically again is think about what the threats are against those communities and/or species, and that is what gives the justification to be able to spend money on things such as deer et cetera. It is not so much the deer itself that is driving the investment; it is again about the asset you are trying to protect.

Mr GARLICK — Yes, the ecological value.

The CHAIR — Thanks very much for coming in today and providing us with so much information.

Witnesses withdrew.