

ONLINE SUBMISSION DETAILS

Date Received	28/03/2017
Organisation	Individual
Postcode	
How do you think we should improve the FFG Act?	<p>I believe the Act should include provisions that local councils should be accountable to DELWP for all decisions which have significant environmental impact. This is particularly important when councils disregard State Government policy and the professional recommendations of statutory and strategic planners, as has recently occurred in the Shire of Nillumbik.</p> <p>This shire has publicly stated that would-be developers are 'disadvantaged' because they purchased large tracts of land in a Rural Conservation Zone and now claim 'the rules have changed'. It is not the responsibility of DELWP to compensate people who bought land for the principal purpose of making a profit by subdividing. Nor is it the responsibility of DELWP to consult with these people. Any suggestion that the FFG Act needs to reflect this is not helpful. I believe this is council's responsibility and they should get on with it.</p> <p>The Act has been in place since 1988 with Governments of both persuasions. The amount of threatened species which the Act aims to list and protect are numerous and growing, however, action plans to conserve them are, according to the Auditor General's report in 2010, some 15 years behind, because of lack of money and resources.</p> <p>Critical habitat determinations are a part of the Act and the main lever to help. Since 1988 not one critical habitat determination has been made by the department. NOT ONE.</p> <p>The Act is embarrassing to read and an indictment on the failure of both Governments, Liberal and Labor, who have not adequately funded this area. In last year's Victorian State budget, the government continued to fund the environment at the same levels as previous years. Our unique species are dying and the existing Act is not preventing it.</p> <p>The FFG Act needs to mandate councils to adhere to State environmental legislation and set realistic targets and environment plans and not be distracted by political or other motivations. A poignant example of this is the recent scare campaign in the Nillumbik shire. This was driven by developers and other vested interests overstating bushfire risks thereby preventing the introduction of revised Environment Significance Overlays, and destabilizing existing Planning regulations, in particular, the Green Wedge Management Plan, and other legislation designed to protect the habitat and the unique biodiversity of the shire.</p>