

Submission on the Victorian Government's Review of the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988

To:-

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We commend The Victorian Government for initiating this review of the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988.

We also thank the Environment Justice Australia (EJA) for writing its submission which we fully endorse as in our opinion, such changes to the Act as are recommended in it are urgently needed if the aim of this review is to fulfill its stated aim of ensuring that

“the Act provides a modern overarching framework for biodiversity protection and management in Victoria and effective protection for our native species and important habitat”.

That the implementation of these changes to the Act is urgently needed is clearly evident from the fact that in spite of the lapse of twenty eight odd years since the enactment of the Act and adaptation of the State's Biodiversity Strategy, the biodiversity crisis about which the Australia State of the Environment 1996 Report alerted the Government, continues to deepen (ATBA, 20002 and all of the subsequent ASE reports including ASE 2016).

Also since:-

- our society is part of the natural environment and dependent on the healthy functioning of its ecosystems for its livability (ASE 1996, p. 15; Lowe, I. 2016, p. 230; Saunders, D. A. et al 1993; Washington, H. 2013) and as biodiversity is a measure of the ecological health of the ecosystems;
- loss of biodiversity and global warming exacerbate each other (Coyne & Hoekstra 2007; Sale P.F. 2012 pp. 261, 276-278);

not implementing these changes will pose a serious threat to the future wellbeing, if not existence, of our society.

We therefore submit that all of the EJA's proposed changes to the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1998 be accepted and implemented into its amendments.

Finally we welcome the news that "this review is part of the government's broader long-term agenda to ensure stronger protection for Victoria's native plants and animals" as, although amending the Act is a necessary prerogative to strengthening the protection of the natural environment, it is by itself non-sufficient to achieve that aim (Recher, H.F. 1999, Tepper, J.G.O. 1893, Sale P.F, 2012, Saunders, A. A. et al, 1993, Tagaza, E. 1996/97, Washington, H. 2013, Wright, Ch. & Nyberg, D. 2015)

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