

Submission to the Review of the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act

The Consultation Paper on the Review of the FFG Act is impressive and encouraging. If I was reading the paper as a member of the community who has not been directly affected by the rampant destruction of wildlife habitat throughout the Central Highlands, supported by successive governments for decades, I would be confident that the review would result in cessation of deliberate habitat destruction.

However, as a long time witness to the destruction, although it is impossible to be confident, I still refuse to give up hope that common sense will prevail — and politicians will place preservation of our life-supporting ecosystems above destruction of them that is unnecessary and reckless — both economically and environmentally.

The Forest Industry Task Force has revealed that those entrusted to ensure our native forests could be logged sustainably indefinitely have failed miserably to do so — something that has been apparent for many years, despite continual industry denial.

Over 80 percent of the entire timber industry in Victoria, including wood products and both direct and indirect employment and businesses, is already within the Plantation Timber Industry — and there is enough plantation timber available to supply the entire timber industry.

The question that must be answered is: "Why do governments continue to support native forest logging at huge cost to the taxpayer?"

This review offers a last ditch opportunity to turn the tide on the inexorable downhill slide towards extinction for threatened species of fauna and flora throughout the Central Highlands. The entire area has been turned into a flammable landscape because of disastrous overlogging for decades. Once rain generating, climate modulating old growth Ash forests have been systematically converted into young forests that suck up most of the available water to enable them to continue growing.

I implore this government to bite the bullet and pluck up the courage to legislate to protect the landscape from further deliberate destruction — and allow what's left of our native forests to begin the journey towards recovery.

Your children, grandchildren and their children will thank you.