

ONLINE SUBMISSION DETAILS

Date Received	26/03/2017
Organisation	Individual
Postcode	
How do you think we should improve the FFG Act?	<p>The objectives of this act were always appropriate, and implicit in its title is the notion that there is a guarantee of some type for Victoria's wildlife, either that it is guaranteed a future (that does not include extinction) and/or that the state of Victoria will do it all it can to protect species. On either count, it appears that the Act has failed - or rather that the effort has not gone into making it work. There is probably an element of both , however i do not believe that there is the effort required to save species. For the Act to do its job it has to be resourced appropriately. Without this, and a real willingness to act decisively to save species before the extinction process is underway or fully formed then we will continue to see the state's biodiversity degraded and lost. Which is a tragedy. Canaries in the mine. Implicit in all this is the need to protect habitat where and when possible, and as as much of it is reasonably possible. Protecting habitat, and restoring it as it appropriate is vital in efforts to reverse species decline and loss. And this of course needs to be funded accordingly.</p> <p>As for the Act itself and actions to improve it, i believe that</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Public authorities must be obligated to act consistently with the provisions of the FFG Act.2. Landscape scale conservation and ecological restoration should become a central focus of the Act, including a more robust legislative framework to govern the biodiversity strategy. A new incentives framework for landscape scale restoration activities also needs to be created which centres around the preparation of 'Landscape Action Plans' for regionally nominated landscapes.3. The processes around listing and preparing action statements needs to be streamlined and made easier and more efficient to administer whilst still maintaining a high standard.4. The Ministerial Orders granting exemptions to application of the FFG Act (in relation to forestry for example) need to amended and the tools available to the government to protect species – like the designation of critical habitat – updated and become mandatory.5. There should be a Review of Victoria's conservation and restoration strategy every 5 years (alongside State of Environment Reporting) and report on progress towards meeting targets6 There needs to be strategic listings and audits of listed threatened species7. There needs to be consideration of public nominations for listing and make recommendations to Minister (which then becomes the basis of a 'listing' statement). The fine work of East Gippland environmentalists in recent times has proven the worth of the public and local organizations in working to find and save species.8. There should be the regular review of action statements.9. Environmental justice provisions need to be incorporated into the FFG Act. This includes creating a new entity to monitor compliance and enforce the provisions of the Act, an effective enforcement regime that includes a scale of penalties for non-compliance of it, the incorporation of access to justice mechanisms which enable communities to challenge decisions through the courts and for this not to be financially prohibitive, and environmental information made accessible.10. The foundations of the FFG Act (its purpose, objectives and environmental principles) updated.

I look forward to the next stage of your review.
