

ONLINE SUBMISSION DETAILS

Date Received	28/03/2017
Organisation	Individual
Postcode	
How do you think we should improve the FFG Act?	<p>Hello</p> <p>I am concerned that the proposed changes to the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act, that although well intentioned may inadvertently result in a weakening of existing protections afforded to our endangered species in this country.</p> <p>Its my personal belief that people are more able to strongly identify with a single species than with a broader definition of habitat, and that the existing model serves that purpose, and that moving to a habitat based protection measure would be more open to arguments favoring removal of protections for protected species, and other species that by association also gain protection.</p> <p>To me, climate change is only one of many threatening processes that may or may not impact on the survival of our native flora and fauna, others being things like fire management, development, land clearing, cattle grazing, etc, and should not be ignored, but I fail to see why it should be singled out for inclusion into legislation, either something is a threatening process, or it is not, climate change or no climate change should not make a difference in legislation. To make it clear, my belief is that climate change is a threatening process for some species, I just fail to understand why it should be considered different to all the other threatening processes that impact upon our native flora and fauna.</p> <p>The recognition of traditional owners in my opinion is a racially discriminating element, your racial heritage should not be a factor or even warrant mention in any act of law in this country, and definitely should have no bearing on weather a native plant or animal gets protection. We are a multicultural society in this country now, so unless you propose individually recognizing every culture represented by Australian Citizens and for that matter that visiting foreign citizens, in your changes, then you will be turning a non racist and discriminatory act into one. It is my opinion that all citizens of this country should be recognized equally and without favor, no matter of their ethnicity or belief. I also fail to see how recognizing one segment of the community as being more special that the others will result in greater protections for species in need of them, or improve the existing act. If such a statement needs to be included in the act, it should be to recognise all the peoples of the world, not just 'traditional owners', afterall, the world does belong to us all does it not, as do the corresponding responsibilities. Just to reinforce my point here, human race and ethnicity should be irrelevant to this act, this is not an act designed to assist with racial inequity for the Department of Social Services , or the avenue to make any kind of apology issues with race and Australian colonisation, this is an act that is supposed to be protecting our natural history diversity, and not for recognising a particular group of people.</p> <p>I also fail to see what stronger penalties when there are few people to actually enforce them, or in some cases with the will to enforce them, unless the proposed changes are directed more at fund raising than real protection, personally I believe more people being employed to provide enforcement/monitoring/patrolling would be a more practical idea. I personally have never been pulled over and checked to see if was breaking any part of the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act, and I have spent a lot of time in areas where that would have been appropriate and prudent to do so.</p>

My primary concern is however, that if you shift focus from protecting single species, which the current act does, to protecting a habitat, when most people cannot tell the difference between one part of bushland/grassland/heath from another, could result in a reluctance to care, since there is so much bushland etc out there. That does not even account for some species not being fussy about if the habitat they chose to live in is native vegetation and for some reason live in areas that would not be counted as significant otherwise, and if you think you can simply translocate them to protected habitat, well, in practice that is not so simple and sometimes not viable or even possible.

To make it clear, I believe that its in the best interests to retain a focus on protecting a readily identifiable object such a rock wallaby, or a platypus, than a habitat that many people would not be able to discern from the rest of the country surrounding it. It is concerning enough that subspecies are no longer protected in the manner they were several years ago, with isolated pockets in some species populations now being afforded less protection, though I do not recall if this was change in Environment Protection and Biodiversity Act or the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act, or even policy decision.

I strongly fear that the current direction of change will result in lesser active protection for species that need it the most. I do have do have some personal experience and knowledge in this area, but are not employed in it, so are not speaking as city person with no real life experience in this field, these are my views formed with experience from involvement in monitory threatened species in Eastern Victoria, and not sourced from others.

I also apologise for any grammatical type errors in this document, I am not practiced at writing documents, and are short on time.

Yours Sincerely

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