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My name is ██████████ and I am a 38 year old female who for my whole life has had a huge passion and love for our Wildlife. Australian wildlife is important to me, to see it thrive, be respected and protected and ensure species don't become endangered or extinct. I pay attention to what is happening to our wildlife around our country and volunteer with Wildlife Victoria. I have learnt about our wildlife from my time volunteering and also with my time assisting along side wildlife carers/shelters. I want to make a submission to ensure our outdated act can meet the standards it should to protect our wildlife and do so with transparency, clear objectives and compliance.

I would like to see clearer laws on what wildlife protection looks like. Yes the deliberate destroying or removing of wildlife is illegal but it is more than that. To ensure our wildlife are protected goes beyond humans physically removing and goes to the greater issue which is habitat destruction. I see too common these days, the removal of vegetation without any thought to the wildlife that call it home or food. People and organisations can request a permit to remove trees, shrubs, all sorts of vegetation and the concern for the wildlife is a last thought, if at all. I would like to see the wildlife be considered first as it is their home and the more they lose their home, they more they are likely to flock to other ideas to find safety which then causes issues to farmers and other individuals who then think there are too many of a species or that they are taking over their property. It also sets up our wildlife for failure to survive as some species can not simply just 'move on' to another hom due to their territorial nature. Our wildlife are being displaced and they are an afterthought or not even a thought at all. We need habitat protection for the survival of species.

I also believe there needs to be an independent regulator to oversee the issues and enforce the regulations and policies and the regulators need to show transparency of their findings, the offences and the penalties. The penalties for offences are also too lenient and not up to community standards. Our native wildlife deserve much more respect than a slap on the wrist. I also believe, whie on this topic, that when the community have issues and want to report about possible wildlife mistreatment or not following the current regulations, that these complaints are not always followed up and the community is left disappointed I personally know of complaints made to the department about wildlife carers and shelters not following the rules that protect the wildlife and give them the best possible change for survival, and these complaints are met with very little follow up or action. Complaints need to be followed up and taking seriously and proper penalties, warnings or even licence removals need to be dealt with.

The Wildlife Act as we currently know it includes all wild animals. While I believe all animals deserve protection, I believe this act needs updating to focus on Native wildlife. It is no secret that our native wildlife is extremely special and unique and not only are Austrlians proud of it but internationally we are recognised for our amazing wildlife. Our Native Wildlife deserves our respect and high standards of protection first and foremost. I believe that to give our native wildlife better protection that an act should be separate for natve wildlife. As there are some non native wildlife that can cause issues, I don't think it is helpful nor

responsible to lump our native wildlife in with an act that also includes what some people consider as 'pest' species.

I believe Australians are constantly disappointed to hear on the news and see in social media where a project, whether it's a new building, farming or clearing for big business, has resulted in the culling of our native wildlife as it appears they were an afterthought or not thought at all. It appears to me and many other Australians that our native wildlife is not worth much and can be bought off (culled) for a few dollars and that money and greed overrides any protection. I speak to many people on this issue and people are feeling more and more let down and disgusted over the lack of care and protection for our native wildlife. Our act does not seem to enforce any protection or it can easily be bought and reasons hiddens or people quietened. The act needs to show that it will do everything it can for the protection of our wildlife. It saddens me and a lot of the community to see how little our wildlife are regarded these days.

I also wish to add that I would like to see marine life protection included in this act and overfishing being a concern to be considered.

I have had a read through the panel members and believe they have the knowledge, expertise and passion for the review and I really look forward to seeing the positive changes they will advise to make.

Our connection, care and respect of our native wildlife has come a long way in 45 years and I truly hope to see an updated Act that reflects this and puts wildlife and their habitats protection first.