

ONLINE SUBMISSION DETAILS

Date Received	27/03/2017
Organisation	Individual
Postcode	
How do you think we should improve the FFG Act?	<p>The FFG Act should protect nature, ensuring all of Victoria's 100,000 native species survive and flourish in the wild. But more habitat in Victoria is being destroyed every year, and there are more species in decline or threatened with extinction. With increasing climate change we need stronger, healthier ecosystems to withstand its impact, not more degraded and fragile habitats. That is, the current Act is failing to measure habitat and species threatened, failing to declare and list such communities and failing to recommend and make actions mandatory that can be shown to protect and preserve them.</p> <p>Having seen luxuriant forests in other countries that protect them, I can't help but regret that here in Victoria we're still clearing, so that of private land 80-90% is cleared and of government land 50-70%. This of course adds to the effects of climate change and drought on our state, as well as removing diverse habitats for native species and degrading waterways. Of the 3820 water courses in Victoria more and more each year are in poor condition.</p> <p>Under an effective FFG Act, it would be necessary to ensure the following:</p> <p>That threatened species have rights too, not just because this would simply be fair, but for the consequences of removing crucial components of ecosystems. There should be no room for exemptions in favour of some industries or certain government departments, or for 'simpler' fire regimes.</p> <p>There should be targets set and adhered to with timelines to protect listed threatened species and assist their recovery.</p> <p>Instead of running down the monitoring and policing bodies, that we need to provide oversight and enforcement, like the rangers in Parks Victoria, regulations need to be backed by inspection, enforcement and application of penalties. (For example, I have seen the depletion of staff in my favourite National Parks over thirty years with the loss of educational programs and expertise to inform and enthuse the visitors about what they're seeing in the parks. It's all very well to open up parks to more people and activities, but if there are more and larger vehicles rushing along the tracks or more speeding boats on the rivers, or more shooters on the lakes, and they're uninformed about the environments they're making use of, the arrangement is unsustainable.)</p> <p>Instead of the above, it has often been left to citizens to draw attention to threats to species. Far from penalising them for initiating legal action or other interventions, a good FFG Act would encourage and support them.</p> <p>The Minister should also have the power to intervene to protect species under threat by stopping detrimental activities.</p> <p>Loss of species and decline of natural environments is a creeping peril in Victoria. Even iconic creatures, like the kookaburra, are being allowed to die out on our watch. While there are plenty of loud voices speaking up for people's rights to housing, safety, jobs, wealth, etc, the natural environment (we all ultimately depend on) is largely silent and needs a properly resourced FFG Act to defend it. What irony if we entice tourists here to see it, yet we are not prepared to cleverly</p>

	resource and preserve it.
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