

SUBMISSION TO THE EPBC ACT REVIEW

ANON-K57V-XYDQ-K

Name

Amy Dettmann

State or Territory

Victoria

Areas of Interest

Threatened species; Indigenous Australians; Matters of National Environmental Significance; Great Barrier Reef; Climate change; Decision making; Biodiversity; Conservation; Wildlife trade; Water;

Attachment provided

Yes

Do you give permission for your submission to be published?

Yes - with my name and/or organisation (if included)

SUBMISSION RESPONSES

This submission was provided as an attachment only. The attachment is provided on the following pages of this document.

Dear Review Panel,

I would like to make a submission into the 2019-2020 Independent Review of the EPBC Act. My submission will involve what I think the problems are with the current EPBC act and what I think should be done to better it in the future.

It is undeniable that this act is not strong enough to support our environment, especially in a time when we've known for many years now how much more attention the protection of our environment requires. I don't think I am the only one who feels that an act that is 20 years old is completely outdated. I am 23, this act is nearly as old as me, yet just in the past few years there has been a major increase in the urgency to change the way we manage our environment, but we have seen no careful attention towards preserving and bettering our legislations. We have seen countless number of species added to the threatened and critically endangered lists, forests are being torn down mostly for paper, coal mines are still being built when we can focus on renewables, and people are desperately protesting weekly feeling they are out of options with our current government.

Right now with Covid19 we are in a very testing time for humanity. We have seen how easily our systems have collapsed due to one illness. It terrifies me to imagine what would happen if our environment collapsed. As a society, and humans in general we need to emphasise the necessity to protect the environment as it fundamentally supports every system, person and society in the world. As an example, Melbourne, the most liveable city in the world, accesses its drinking water from the forests just North East of the city. This water is filtered naturally and sent to the city. Yet this region is constantly being logged for resources such as paper when we already know we have the ability to harvest this from plantations, whilst keeping and moving over jobs. There is always another way to do something better, and in this situation the research has been done, we just need an act and a government that will push this. It is now more than ever no longer excusable to put the economy ahead of the environment, as we are seeing currently the economy is fragile and breaks down quickly when nature is ignored.

In the past year I finished my degree in landscape ecosystem management at The University of Melbourne. During my time in this course it was made apparent to us everyday the degradation our environment has suffered, how much work is needed to halt and preserve many of these changes, and also how disturbing the impacts are it will have on our very own future, and even more so on the generation following mine. That is if we do not act now!

I truly believe we still have a chance. A proper EPBC act that really takes into consideration the environment, and truly seeks to protect it can have incredible outcomes on the future of the Australian Environment. Australia has recently been torn apart from some of our worst bushfires in history and a pandemic following. We are seeing our tourism and many other industries suffer immeasurably and people dieing. You yourselves have whitnessed first hand what it feels like to breathe in dangerously poor air quality. Australia is lucky to have the incredible landscape it does, people in this country grow up around beaches and forests, yet now everyone is

frightened for what the next summer will hold. We cannot say goodbye to the days spent out in Australian nature because it becomes too unsafe to purchase homes and properties near the bush or even holiday out of urban zones.

It is time to seriously review this act, take into account all of the science, and put the environment first, because as I've mentioned multiples times everything else will suffer if the environment does. Right now is possibly the most crucial time to put a proper review in place, because it really is our last chance. I am calling on the review pannel to:

- Create a new, effective Act to replace the EPBC. This should secure Federal Government regulation over nature protection, and be directly focused on the climate and extinction crises, allowing for emergency protocols to come into place and create rapid change.
- Create an independent Environmental Protection Authority at the Federal level, ensuring there is a watchdog keeping these new laws strictly enforced, and preventing corruption.
- Develop and implement recovery plans for endangered native species.
- Place a strong focus on community in decision-making and consultation.
- Place a strong focus on the views and rights of Indigenous Australians, as the traditional custodians of this land. There is so much knowledge on environmental management and protection within these Australian communities. It needs to be accessed in a fair and equitable way, producing just outcomes for all involved.

I think my message is fairly clear, I would like to see truthful and serious attention placed on the EPBC act review, ensuring there can be no corruption from governments around the protection of our precious environment. Please consider the urgency the younger generations of this country are feeling currently. You have a lot of power within your group to help ensure our futures are safe and enjoyable. I and millions of other Australians are placing a lot of faith within this review, we understand the decisions are difficult, take a lot of time and careful attention, but this is not a small matter and we ask that you really consider how this will impact everyone.

Thank you kindly for taking the time to read my letter and I hope to see a positive future ahead for all Australians. A sufficient EPBC act would be a truly amazing outcome for Australians to find hope following this current outbreak.

Please feel free to contact me regarding any of this at [REDACTED]

Warm regards,

Amy Dettmann