

SUBMISSION TO THE EPBC ACT REVIEW

ANON-K57V-XQTM-Q

Name

Zoe Watson

State or Territory

New South Wales

Areas of Interest

The objects of the Act; Threatened species; International obligations; Indigenous Australians; Matters of National Environmental Significance; Environmental Impact Assessments; Great Barrier Reef; Climate change; Compliance and enforcement; Public participation in 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.

Thursday 16 April 2020

To whom it may concern,

I am a resident of Sydney and have always held a deep concern for the environment.

However, the recent bushfires have intensified this concern to a dark fear that is hard to avoid. Every morning for three months, I woke up to the smell of fire and smoke and did not see a blue sky the entire summer. The nearest fire was 170 kilometres away, in Nowra. This distance from Sydney, two and a half hours by car, is shocking. I am sure New Zealanders felt the same way, as they could see the haze 2,200 kilometres away. I hope the global embarrassment of these fires hangs heavy on our leader's hearts. Australia's proclaimed image of land abounded 'in nature's gifts of beauty, rich and rare' now tarnished and deceitful.

Even before these fires, I have always tried to reduce my carbon footprint. I barely drive, I avoid single use products, I pick up litter and watch my water use. After these fires, I tried harder. I wrote to my MP, Dave Sharma. I signed petitions. I attended rallies. And as I did this, a feeling inside of me grew. A feeling of anger. At only 23 years old, I should be living my life looking forward to the future. To having a job, a family, a long life. Instead, I feel dread. And anger. Towards the government, and the industries it supports in the search of short-term profits. Towards Scott Morrison and the Coalition's utter complacency with our environmental laws.

Just two days ago, I watched the story of an oyster farmer who may not be able to pass this family tradition onto his kids as water temperatures soar. I thought, life will be so different in one hundred years. I am not sure I want to raise kids to see it. Some politicians are probably sleeping soundly, knowing they can sail through the next few decades and not live to feel the extent of the effect of their lacklustre, money-grabbing, short-sighted policies.

They should stop this for three reasons. The recent bushfires, extended drought, issues in the Murray and rising water temperatures indicate climate change is already happening and it is happening rapidly. The pressure on them to do something is mounting. Secondly, politicians may die but their reputation won't escape them. Australians remember. Personally, I would want to die knowing I have done my best for the country I was *chosen* to run. And its population, my voters, my electorate, my family can live peacefully and in longevity. But, maybe that's just me.

This leads to the final reason. The above facts and feelings, known and felt by me and so many others, insinuates our leaders have failed. They are unsuccessfully doing their job. That is embarrassing and not how I would want to lead my career.

So, dear politicians, wake up.

Wake up and realise the industries you funnel money into are unsustainable. The mining boom is over. Returns are drying. If you want to keep this country strong, and money in your own pockets, you need to think broadly.

Use the COVID-19 subsidiaries and stimulus packages to fund the industries of the future. They need money to start up and you are dishing it out now anyway. Think clean energy, waste systems, public transport services, green technology, bushfire prevention mechanisms.

Independent review of
the **EPBC Act**

You never know, Australia might see itself at the forefront of innovation, if you just give them a little boost. These are the jobs that will reduce our growing unemployment rate *and* save our environment. A win-win, you just need to be selfless and creative enough to see.

My actions are small-scale. You have the capacity, to act on a national and global scale. Please, use your life to make a difference.

Zoe Watson