

SUBMISSION TO THE EPBC ACT REVIEW

ANON-K57V-XYQ6-5

Name

Alice Howlett

State or Territory

New South Wales

Areas of Interest

Threatened species; Indigenous Australians; Heritage; Matters of National Environmental Significance; Environmental Impact Assessments; Great Barrier Reef; Climate change; Biodiversity; Conservation; Commonwealth national parks; 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

QUESTION 1: Some have argued that past changes to the EPBC Act to add new matters of national environmental significance did not go far enough. Others have argued it has extended the regulatory reach of the Commonwealth too far. What do you think?

I believe the new matter of national environmental significance did not go far enough as they did not work with the traditional custodians of the land in the most beneficial way.

QUESTION 2: How could the principle of Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) be better reflected in the EPBC Act? For example, could the consideration of environmental, social and economic factors, which are core components of ESD, be achieved through greater inclusion of cost benefit analysis in decision making?

Covered in attached letter

QUESTION 3: Should the objects of the EPBC Act be more specific?

Yes

QUESTION 4: Should the matters of national environmental significance within the EPBC Act be changed? How?

Covered in attached letter

QUESTION 5: Which elements of the EPBC Act should be priorities for reform? For example, should future reforms focus on assessment and approval processes or on biodiversity conservation? Should the Act have proactive mechanisms to enable landholders to protect matters of national

environmental significance and biodiversity, removing the need for regulation in the right circumstances?

Covered in attached letter

QUESTION 6: What high level concerns should the review focus on? For example, should there be greater focus on better guidance on the EPBC Act, including clear environmental standards? How effective has the EPBC Act been in achieving its statutory objectives to protect the environment and promote ecologically sustainable development and biodiversity conservation? What have been the economic costs associated with the operation and administration of the EPBC Act?

Covered in attached letter

ATTACHMENT

Additional information was provided as an attachment to this submission. The attachment is provided on the following pages of this document.

Dear Professor Samuel and Independent Review Panel,

I would like to make a submission into the 2019-2020 Independent Review of the EPBC Act. This submission will cover the issues I see with how the EPBC Act fails to protect the environment, especially matters of national environmental significance, the lack of community consultation under the current Act and what needs to change to ensure the EPBC Act works as it was intended.

My name is Alice Howlett and I have a strong connection with Nature through my love of the ocean, surfing, gardening, bushwalking and camping. I live on a 30 acre property on the South Coast of NSW surrounded by beautiful national parks and wilderness. Recently the devastating bushfires have had a huge impact on our environment.


I strongly believe that Australia cannot return to business as usual after the catastrophic 2019-2020 summer bushfires. The same laws and policies that have failed wildlife over decades and done little to address the climate crisis can't be relied on to help us recover after the bushfires.

I sincerely hope we can create a new National Environment Act that enshrines Federal Government leadership over nature protections, contains real safeguards against extinction, including ending the destruction of endangered species habitat, and sets out clear rights of appeal and consultation for communities.

We need to establish an independent National Environment Commission to ensure we develop a fit-for-purpose, coordinated national (state and federal) system of environmental protections and policy responses necessary to support restoration of our environment to health and ensure regulatory resilience to future impacts, publicly report every year on the impact of conservation action and funding, and show clearly whether natural values are recovering.

I wish for the new laws to establish an independent Environment Protection Agency to act as watch-dog over government, and ensure our laws are properly enforced.

New changes need to be made to ensure that sufficient money, people and resources are put in place so that nature can recover. Lastly, the revised EPBC Act needs to ensure a central role for community, with guaranteed rights and participation in planning and decision-making.

Thank you for your consideration of my submission, if you wish to contact me about the contents of my submission I can be reached at 

Sincerely,

Alice Howlett

