

SUBMISSION TO THE EPBC ACT REVIEW

ANON-K57V-XY4J-V

Name

Andre Joanisse

State or Territory

New South Wales

Areas of Interest

Threatened species; Matters of National Environmental Significance; Environmental Impact Assessments; Climate change; Conservation;

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 8: Should the EPBC Act regulate environmental and heritage outcomes instead of managing prescriptive processes?

Yes it should

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 am making this submission into the 2019-2020 Independent Review of the EPBC Act which will cover the following:

- areas in which the current EPBC Act fails to protect the environment and in particular the wildlife that it is meant to safeguard from extinction
- The diluted and virtually absent community consultation process under the current Act
- Proposals for changes to the Act to ensure it actually works as intended

I am a 60 year old photographer living in the Lake Macquarie area of New South Wales. I live close to the Awabakal reserve and when I first moved here 30 years ago we could see lots of native wildlife in the reserve, these days, it is extremely difficult to find any native mammals. Over the years, I have noticed the decline in the health of natural places that I observe and this shows that the Australian environmental laws have failed in protecting these special and unique environments.

What I care about profoundly is preservation of old growth forests. These have an enormous impact on helping us towards carbon capture but they also provide the habitat for so many species.

Currently logging is exempt from the EPBC and this should be changed as old growth forests are such an important sector of nature. The ever growing list of threatened forest species being impacted by logging just keeps getting longer and longer. I have seen myself the impact of habitat loss for the threatened Regent Honeyeater. Over the last 30 years that I have been living in the area, it has become increasingly difficult to sight these beautiful birds. Researchers have to keep their locations "secret" out of their concern that with so few of them, even watching them can be detrimental to their survival. The koala habitat also relies of a vibrant network of forests and their habitat keeps being reduced by land clearing and logging.

It is also important to note that the EPBC has no mention of climate change in its entirety and therefore does not have legislation that addresses it.

Australia is currently the world leader in wildlife extinction and are in the top 10 for the rate of deforestation in the world. Seeing the recent devastation experienced with the massive bushfires and destruction of forests and Australian wildlife, the Environmental laws need to be reworked in order to offer our nature protection into the future.

Community input needs to be an integral part of the EPBC otherwise the focus of decision making is narrowed and not having community input would curtail bringing in creative and co-operative solutions.

I propose the following solutions to be incorporated in the review process of the EPBC Act:

- Write new laws and regulations that will ensure protection of Australian old growth forests, iconic wildlife that lives in these and nature. This would require the creation of a new National Environment Act. This Act would safeguard against wildlife extinction, by protecting endangered species habitat.
- Incorporate in the new National Environmental Act the scientifically proven fact of Climate change and to develop new policies currently not addressed in the act that will bring in specific mitigation measures against climate change impacts on the Australian Environment.
- For these new laws and regulations to be enforced I propose that an independent Body/enforcer is appointed and acts over government to ensure these laws are enforced.
- I propose that logging is no longer exempt from the Act.

- I propose that an independent National Environment Commission is established. This commission would have jurisdiction nationally, crossing state borders as state jurisdiction varies greatly and can be counterproductive.
- I propose that we implement a process for recovery of endangered species and a process to ensure there are adequate funds, resources and manpower to implement these processes.
- I propose that we include community in the planning and decision-making process which hears the balanced voices in protection of the environment and brings to the table a voice that is not just representative of a narrow segment of the population and society.

Thank you for your consideration of my submission. I can be contacted at



Kind Regards,

Andre Joanisse