

From: gtommy@bigpond.net.au

Subject: Submission 2019/2020 Independent Review of EPBC Act 1999

To: epbcreview@environment.com.au

Dear Independent Review Panel,

I wish to make a submission to the independent review of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC Act) 1999.

I live in Bodalla, New South Wales, alongside the Bodalla State Forest Compartment 3006 (BSF Cpt 3006), which has been logged recently by Forestry Corporation (FC), just one of the forests on the far south coast which have been vigorously logged. The Forest has been our place of retreat, walking its tracks or just sitting and enjoying the peace of nature, and listening to the sounds of the wildlife in the Forest.

I am deeply concerned about the escalating threat to Australia's ecosystems resulting from inadequate environmental regulations to protect wildlife habitat and native vegetation from the depredations of rampant land clearing, logging of native forests and deforestation.

Numerous reports in the media have highlighted the fast-growing decline in numbers of various species - a calamity in which climate is said to be implicated - which has now been heightened by losses caused by the 2019/2020 bushfires.

For example, a report (Sydney Morning Herald, January 11-12, 2020) carried shocking estimates of the bushfires catastrophe, with, amongst others, the total animal death toll put at 1.25 billion (according to Wild Life Fund for Nature), 240 billion insects lost nationally, more than half of 50,000 koalas believed to have died on Kangaroo Island and koalas in NSW losing more than 30% of key habitat. Up to 100 endangered species were stated to be affected, with the long-footed potoroo feared extinct. The report included vegetation at risk such as old growth rainforest, including the Errinundra Plateau in Gippsland, and the Spring Midge orchard (which grows around Batemans Bay).

Yet despite these losses, logging has once again commenced in bushfire affected areas such as Mogo State Forest Compartment 174, thereby allowing no time at all for regeneration of vegetation, and food sources and wildlife habitat to be re-established.

Similarly, in BSF Cpt 3006, while we were fortunate to escape the bushfires, the aftermath of logging has been appalling. Huge dump piles of rejected tree trunks, and branch and leaf debris litter the forest floor (photo example attached), presenting not only a ready tinder box which would turn the smallest spark into a conflagration, but birds and animals have disappeared because large areas of habitat have been destroyed – and more than likely many of the wildlife as well.

I urge the Australian Government to create a new environment act that takes into account climate change, and provides strong regulation of the current logging and land-clearing practices which are destroying habitats and ecosystems. I also urge that an independent Environment Protection Agency and National Environment Commission be established to ensure proper checks and balances.

Thanking you for considering my submission,

Gloria Tommy, 373 Bodalla Park Drive, Bodalla NSW

Attachment: file-8.jpeg (photo example post-logging Bodalla State Forest Compartment 3006)

Personal details form below.

(Copy of email sent on 17 April 2020)