



Kimberley Land Council

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Senate Environment and Communications Legislation Committee
Parliament of Australia

Via online submission: https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/OnlineSubmission

Re: Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Amendment (Climate Trigger) Bill 2020

The Kimberley Land Council (KLC) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Amendment (Climate Trigger) Bill 2020*.

The KLC, as the recognised Native Title Representative Body for the Kimberley region, has developed and facilitates the Kimberley Ranger Network as a regional network of Indigenous land managers, majority-funded by the Commonwealth Government. The Network functions as the peak body for Traditional Owner-led Indigenous land and sea management in the Kimberley.

Indigenous people are crucial to effective and sustainable environmental protection and biodiversity conservation, as well as long-term sustainable development. As the largest land holding demographic in the Kimberley region, Aboriginal people are already playing an important and active role in land management and climate change mitigation, such as through the application of traditional management approaches – ‘right-way’ burning – in some cases operating carbon projects registered under the Emissions Reduction Fund (ERF). Furthermore, Aboriginal people have a particular interest in effective environmental protection and climate change adaptation, as they are more likely to be disproportionately affected by the adverse impacts of a changing climate. This disproportionate burden is due to a combination of remote living, dependence on country and interconnected relationship with the natural environment, as well as lower average socio-economic status and greater disease burden constraining the capacity for quick and effective response to climate change impacts.

A changing climate is already having significant effects on Australia’s environment and our population. The environmental impacts of climate change are long-term, of global scale, and difficult-to-reverse to irreversible. A key contributor to climate change are greenhouse gas emissions from industry.

It is crucial that the EPBC Act, as Australia’s key piece of environmental legislation, include provisions to manage and restrict such greenhouse gas emissions now and into the future. A ‘trigger’ should be added to the EPBC Act, requiring review and imposing limits on approvals of emissions-intensive projects. The KLC therefore supports the Climate Trigger Bill, noting also that cumulative impacts (including emissions) should be considered in assessments under the Act.

The KLC also notes its submission to the EPBC Act Review 2020.

Sincerely,

KRISTINA KOENIG

Land and Sea Management Unit
Kimberley Land Council