
17 January 2013

**SUBMISSION TO THE SENATE ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE
ENQUIRY**

I am horrified to think the Federal Government would consider divesting its responsibilities under the EPBC Act to the States - particularly those like WA and Qld who are controlled by the big mining magnates!

I'm more horrified that this move has been proposed by BUSINESS - with absolutely no chance for the Australian people to have a say - and we're a democracy?? Thanks to Senator Waters for giving the Australian public the opportunity!

The EPBC Act was hard fought for and won - threatened species and environmental protection issues are a FEDERAL responsibility and should NOT be handed over to States who have clearly shown an inability to run themselves adequately let alone look after areas of national interest.

Queensland has large areas of important natural biodiversity - yet is covered almost entirely by mining leases. It also has a Premier who in a desperate bid to claw the state out of the red wants to reintroduce uranium mining, open National Parks to hunting, and 9 applications are currently pending to build coal ports on the Great Barrier Reef!! As a state that usually focuses on tourism dollars to bring in revenue, this is a clear-cut case of bending over for the mining magnates and big business.

This is WRONG! The Federal Parliament has a DUTY to the Australian people to protect areas of national significance and environmental biodiversity wherever they are located for future generations and for the good of the country as a whole.

Queensland has also just reintroduced damage mitigation permits allowing for the culling of flying foxes - a listed endangered species - despite that there has been NO SOLID PROOF of severe, livelihood-threatening damage by flying foxes to crops. Enough people whinge about the smell and poop and the response is "Fine - let's just shoot 'em". The State Environment Minister failed to adequately respond to a 2-page letter sent to him asking for an explanation - instead saying he was meeting the needs of the agriculture sector ... clearly showing a lack of understanding of his own portfolio!

If this is how the states behave, we NEED a Federal overseer!

Locally an application for material change of use was made to the Cherrabah property at Elbow Valley - an area known to have endangered species issues and to be of environmental significance. Both local AND state governments approved the development application - made by another incredibly wealthy businessman - despite water and environmental issues. The application now rests with the Federal Minister.

In South Australia, figures reveal that in 2011/2012 56,499 native animals including endangered/vulnerable species were killed in that state under the State Government's Environment Department permits!!

New evidence has revealed koala extinctions on the NSW far south coast - <http://bit.ly/WZXww0> - and in Redland Bay south of Brisbane, Queensland Wildlife Preservation Society estimates that of the original 20,000+ strong koala population fewer than 2,000 now remain directly as a result of habit destruction for developments approved by the local and state governments!

It is absolutely imperative that the Federal Minister's office retain powers under the EPBC Act to ensure States desperate for solvency aren't bought left, right and centre by individuals with no regard for anything but their own profits - and before we end up like this at the hands of greedy State premiers and big businesses:



<http://www.cartoonstock.com/newscartoons/cartoonists/mly/lowres/mlyn1638l.jpg>

Please pass this bill into legislation for the sake of future generations of Australians. Allow Australians to have their democratic rights exercised and hear what they have to say - the big businesses have had the ear of government for far too long.

Sincerely

Lyn Prowse-Bishop