



17 January 2013

SUBMISSION TO INQUIRY INTO THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION AMENDMENT (RETAINING FEDERAL APPROVAL POWERS) BILL 2012

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the Senate Environment and Communications Legislative Committee inquiry into the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Amendment (Retaining Federal Approval Powers) Bill 2012. In summary, Wellington Shire Council supports the position that the Commonwealth should not hand responsibility to a State or Territory for approving proposed actions that significantly impact on matters protected under the EPBC Act.

Whilst this Bill has little impact from a statutory planning perspective, it does have the potential to ensure that the environmental assets in Wellington Shire are given adequate consideration and protection. Wellington Shire is rich in highly significant environmental assets including the alpine peaks and plains of the Alpine National Park, the Gippsland Lakes and the Corner Inlet Ramsar listed wetlands are of international significance. Wellington Shire also has areas of the nationally listed critically endangered Gippsland Forest Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Associated Native Grassland ecological community.

It is commendable to try to streamline approvals processes by reducing so called "green tape"; however, it is in the best interests of our environmental assets and our community to ensure that adequate checks and balances are in place to give consideration and protection to these assets.

Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

DAVID MORCOM
Chief Executive Officer

Our Ref: JC

Civic Centre: Port of Sale

70 Foster Street (PO Box 506), Sale Victoria 3850
Telephone 1300 366 244 • Facsimile 03 5142 3499 • TTY-PRS 03 5142 3377
enquiries@wellington.vic.gov.au • www.wellington.vic.gov.au • DX 85008

Service Centre: Yarram

156 Grant Street, Yarram Victoria 3971
Telephone 03 5182 5100

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