

**COUNTRY WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION OF NEW SOUTH WALES**



**SUBMISSION:**  
**THE INDEPENDENT BIODIVERSITY  
LEGISLATION REVIEW**

**To:**

Biodiversity Legislation Review  
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**From:**

Agricultural and Environmental Committee  
Country Women's Association of NSW

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**3 September 2014**

## **THE INDEPENDENT BIODIVERSITY LEGISLATION REVIEW**

The issues paper is very involved and very specific to Acts and Legislation from four acts: The Native Vegetation Act 2003, the Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995, The Nature Conservation Trust Act 2001 and parts of the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974. I believe one needs to be a lawyer or a government officer to be "aufait" with all this legislation.

I do not believe these four Acts should be merged into one. Each has a focus of its own, there may be sections that have common areas but each has a unique focus and the main areas would be hidden i.e. the issue of land clearing for the farmer would be lost in a mass of unrelated environmental issues.

The merger would encompass a huge environmental Office without the practicality of farmer input. The Native Vegetation Act 2003 should be reviewed but not included in the new Biodiversity Act.

The CWA of NSW has many members with different opinions on these subjects, so this submission will only address some of the issues.

Biodiversity is vital to supporting human life and health landscapes, unless the farmer encourages and improves biodiversity on the farm the future generations will not be able to farm the land.

Page 3 What elements of the current framework are working and not working?

If the farmer prepares a property plan and it has been passed by a Native Vegetation Officer, the farmer should be allowed to carry out his plan without any further interference from government officers.

I am sure drones will be used in the future to check on work done. As part of the legislation of property planning the proponent must advertise their proposed works before carrying them out. If there are no objections then the work can be carried out, with no further objections. An objection cannot come forward many years later and those comments acted on by Government Officers with new restrictions to the distress of the landholder who believed he had permission maybe 20 years ago.

Page 4 Objects and principles for biodiversity conservation.

Question 1. Should there be an aspirational goal for biodiversity conservation?  
Yes

The Australian Government is signatory to the International Convention on Biodiversity, the high-level goals set out in the Issues Paper page 2.

Question 2. Reduce the direct pressures on diversity and promote sustainable use.

Does Mining reduce direct pressure on biodiversity? Mining is important for jobs but needs to promote sustainable use. A short term gain is often seen with mining and a long term repair.

### **CONSERVATION AND LAND USE PLANNING (P8)**

To what extent has the current frame work created inconsistent assessment processes environmental standards, offset practices and duplicate rules?

What is happening to the food growing areas of Sydney? Most of the areas will soon have houses and concrete instead of food. Trees knocked down and beautiful growing soil disregarded. Where is the biodiversity off set here? Do houses take the place of food? Farmers are very regulated yet big business can do what it likes it appears. Where is the land use planning here?

### **NATIONAL PARKS AND WILDLIFE (NPW Act) MANAGEMENT**

This legislation should not be combined with the Native Vegetation Act. Farming is a vastly different enterprise to the biodiversity of a National Park. Planning for National parks use, sometimes, does not take into account the reality of wild life i.e. the managers of the parks plan to push in all the dams on the area of a new National Park. Where do the animals, who are used to drinking at these dams go? Outside the park to the farmers land where the dams are. Farmers also worry about weed infestation and spend much money trying to eradicate these weeds. How do the National Parks manage these weeds? What biodiversity plan has been set up?

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