

This is a submission on behalf of Garigal Landcare. Our group has been formed over 10 years ago and we have had plenty of opportunities to witness diminishing biodiversity despite our constant work to reverse this.

Following your Theme guide we address issues.

1) as an objective for conservation it is necessary to have an overall stop of vegetation clearing. As a matter of fact, we not only need to stop diminishing ecosystem functions but we need to increase them as we have depleted several systems to unacceptable levels. To absorb carbon vegetation is a perfect solution, and nothing comes near indigenous native vegetation over a time span that stretches several generations. We need to not only concentrate on threatened species but all remnant indigenous vegetation. Core habitat maintenance and enhancement is required just as much the jewels of biodiversity. As we witnessed so much of our precious bushland disappear in front of our eyes and with the blessing of the Land and Environment Court, we judge existing laws as insufficient and request that much tighter regulation be put in place.

2) Conservation is regularly dismissed and something community needs to regularly fight for. This is deplorable and we expect that our government strengthens its arm and regulates this rather than people having to exhaust themselves over and over again for this basic asset of ours that everyone benefits from. Any planning needs to be done with a holistic overview and just as the department of transport should share at the table for larger developments, environment must be present right at the start. Benefits for conservation either via tax or rate relief and help with restoration of bushland should be given more weight and financial assistance.

The breaking of conservation agreements especially of agreements where land was set aside as an offset for development ( mining) of some other lands leaves the community with zero trust regarding those laws.

The evaluation of a bio banking site with more points given to some lands that require enhancement rather than those that maintain themselves promotes destruction of our most valuable bushland parcels and is not conservation but destruction legislation.

Further destruction has resulted from the requirement of a certain number of points that are not available in the immediate area and are therefore sought and bought far away. The requirement should be to protect equal with equal.( This has resulted in the non protection of last niches of an endangered ecological community ( Duffys Forest Ecological Community at Frenchs Forest).)

3+4) Development should simply have boundaries that are not constantly extended into bushland. Threatened bushland must be protected and the ability for a minister to declare something state significant and sweep all legislative requirements away is obscene. In certain areas development should be pulled back as to regenerate larger core bushland - and habitat parcels and allow natural processes eg flooding.

5) Wildlife management should be done with a view to have natural systems in place that do not require human interference. Wildlife corridors must be as important as our own corridors are and their restoration and protection should be paramount.

The fact that species that are newly detected are not automatically protected until proven that they are abundant is also testament to our poor ethical standard. I refer to a case where evidence of a newly detected insect of astonishing size was dismissed in the court, as a full

species description requires several independent descriptions before it could be declared threatened and protected.



President Garigal Landcare