



5th September 2014

Biodiversity Legislation Review
PO Box A290
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Independent Review of Biodiversity Legislation in NSW

In these days of increasing pressure on the environment and the push to extract more from our land and its resources, I believe it very important to maintain and improve the biodiversity of our country.

Accordingly, I consider that:

- In view of the major biodiversity losses since European settlement and ongoing removal and economic impacts, there must be an overarching objective to protect and conserve biodiversity.
- The principles of ecologically sustainable development, that underpin existing legislation, must be maintained.
- Existing biodiversity and conservation legislation, including the provisions of the *Native Vegetation Act* 2003 and *Threatened Species Conservation Act* 1995, must be maintained and strengthened.
- There must be a clear legislative commitment to end broad-scale land clearing across NSW. The NSW government should commit to 'no net loss' of native vegetation reflecting its diversity and value.
- Land clearing laws should be such that all development (including urban, forestry, agricultural or extractive) should subscribe to the same policy of improving or maintaining environmental outcomes.
- Where development is approved that significantly impacts native flora or fauna, the 'like for like' offsetting principle is fundamental and must not be weakened.
- Cumulative impact must be a key consideration in assessing clearing and development proposals.
- Decisions must be based on objective science-based decision making criteria (e.g. Environment Outcomes Assessment Methodology under the NV Act), and discretionary decision making should be very limited.
- The role of the Independent Scientific Committee under the TSC Act should be retained and listing must continue to be based on the professional advice of the Scientific Committee.
- The government should ensure legislation is enforced and use extensive education resources to communicate its importance and provisions.

I trust that my views will be taken into account in reviewing NSW biodiversity legislation.

Yours sincerely

Graham Lalchere