

**Submission for biodiversity legislation review  
from Kalang Land Environment Action Network**

**5th Sep 2014**



Dear Sir / Madam, and Panel

I am a land holder and farmer in the Kalang Valley and spokes person for the Kalang Land Environment Action Network.

I have had experience in rural issues all my life, having lived on farms in rural and country regions, and have been on many boards and committees. I have been brought up with a sense of commitment to community and the environment as my father was a Mayor and Councilor for over 20 years and instilled these values in me.

I welcome the opportunity to comment on the need to retain, enhance and strengthen the Native Vegetation Act the Threatened species conservation act, Native conservation act, National Parks and wildlife act to ensure NO hunting, logging thinning horse ride trails no inappropriate infrastructure, no mining,

It is imperative that the Native Vegetation Regulations and Act, be kept, strengthened and enhanced and heavily regulated with no more land clearing unless it is of evasive species and even then with strict regulations and no chemicals ever to be used in this process and also in any to eradicate weeds in any shape or form.

It is critical now we have so much scientific data that proves man has obliterated and modified the bush and forests since white settlement that we protect and not destroy what very little is left.

NSW has been left in such a diabolical state and cannot recover and recoup from the damage man has done in our life time and generations to come.

. What we are looking at now is the virtual destruction of the State's forest estate. We are currently losing 30% of forestry because the methodology is no longer adequate.

It is virtually impossible to restore an Eco system once it's been destroyed.

So destroying a tree or vegetation with the idea you can get away with planting in another place does not work [off sets or net gain]

**All Penalty notices must be increased.. With all and every "Breach" heavily prosecuted with no exemptions. The punishments too flexible at the moment.**

**Also Caveats on Crown Land must not be removed [because caveats were originally made to protect biodiversity. ]**

**It is very important that the environment must be made a public health issue, and its benefits recognized.**

. Aboriginal values must be included in all evaluations. At the moment no surveys are required for cultural heritage and threatened species, so they are not protected.

There are no requirements to register threatened species sightings on the Wild life Atlas so how is this important data being retained from private land and logging. Most forest contractors and land owners can't identify them and are not trained to.

**. Compensation must be made for the 8,000 hectares of rainforest and old growth that were wrongly rezoned.**

We have destroyed most of our natural living ecosystems, and what is left is only hanging on by a thread. A tragic example is our iconic Koala and Emu.

Our worldwide celebrity the "Koala" HAS CRASHED in numbers in such a short spaces of time.

We are constantly being reminded in the media, TV print and radio and social networks of this

"4 Corners TV program this week did a damning report into their survival rate of our Koalas due to human intervention and activity by land clearing.

The draft does not address major koala problems in the SEPP 44 Koala Management Plans. 60 Private Native Forest PVP's were issued in a huge area covering 1,890 hectares of known mapped core koala habitat in our area.

When will we learn as humans we must protect wild life, nurture and keep our natural environment?

It is not just there as a human resource to be trashed and diminished.

Now we have human induced climate change upon us- making it all the more critical to preserve the environment that we have now.

Australia is the driest continent with the poorest soils in the world even before white settlement. This makes it even more pertinent to be very careful with our footprint.

Ignorance, greed, lack of education and POLITICAL WILL has exasperated NSW environments demise.

The management and regulations of PNF in NSW has been a failure despite over \$10 million in funds from the NSW Environmental Trust, and no scientific evidence that PNF is improving environmental values as required under the 2003 Native Vegetation Act.

In relation to the RAMA you are the "Responsible Authority" it is your responsibility to stop native forest logging and change the regulation to do with "regrowth trees" so regrowth trees cannot be logged and thinned are counted as important habitat, and value for the survival of native wildlife and carbon sinks.

Also selective logging and regrowth can be cleared without permission and is often abused.

Corridors must also be protected and Endangered Ecological and Venerable Communities must be protected as they can in some cases be logged at the moment.

There must be a stronger limitation on the trees that be cut down and used within a property or farms, and for fencing.

The Biodiversity Certification awarded to logging under the PNF code of practice is an abuse of the legal system.

The destructive practices of "hazard reduction burns" must stop.

SO MANY HAZARD REDUCTION BURNS GET OUT OF CONTROL IN NSW

This is so dangerous, to lives, human and animal and infrastructures and costs a fortune and wastes valuable time and energy

Farmers and animal lovers beware- I have witnessed a horse having to be treated for smoke inhalation. Apart from costing over \$1000 it has not, and probably never will fully recover.

Just imagine the detrimental effect that this smoke from burn offs has on all animals insects and humans, let alone the very dangerous 2.5

particulate and greenhouse and volatile Gases it produces over a large area

The fuel reduction regime that is being imposed is ecologically harsh, with many of the individual burns producing serious environmental damage that would only be repaired naturally if given time. This will not of course happen as the damage will be exasperated by the intention to repeat fires with intervals that are short, too short for recovery.

Bushfire management on public land never talks about the loss of the concomitant functionality, or services.

I would like to quote "J. C. Z. Woinarski and H. F. Recher in their paper

**"Impacts and response: a review of the effects of fire on the Australian avifauna"** write that, "The effects of fire, including repeated low intensity control burns, are compounded by the extent to which native vegetation throughout Australia has been fragmented by clearing. Vegetation remnants are more prone to homogenizing fires than are extensive habitats (Menkhurst and Bennett 1990), support relatively small populations and are less likely to be recolonized post-fire (Brooker and Brooker 1994; Recher, in press). As a result, they are less likely to retain environmental diversity (Williams et al. 1994)."

Too frequent fires deplete soil organic material and nutrients adversely affecting vegetation structure and species richness (e. g., Floyd 1976; Lamb et al. 1981; Tolhurst et al. 1992), and ecosystem functions such as nutrient and hydrological cycles (e. g., Raison et al. 1983; Lamb 1986; Hamilton et al. 1991)."

Bush fire burn offs also effect businesses such as tourism. As well as it modifies and dries out our Rain forests and opens them up so they burn more easily.

Climate change fires are not going to stop from this bad practice.

Another issue is that there are Government departments within the EPA CMA and OEH that are grossly understaffed and that are not able to do their job properly because there is not enough full time staff to implement inspect and go round and reinforce regulations and find the huge amount of breaches going undetected.

Bad regulations are responsible for huge amounts of Old Growth and Rainforest being logged. This is a travesty and must be stopped.

It is outrageous the quantity of land clearing being done legally and unlawfully on private land and public State Forests. This is affecting the rivers, streams, and water quality and quantity, food production, soils and rainfall, wildlife corridors and economy.

Logging on 18 degree slopes is up for grabs and can be logged without a site inspection and monitoring. Is there no wonder why we lose so much of our precious soil and our water ways are being choked?

. This was once "Protected Lands "under the "Soil Conservation Act"

It is disastrous that High Conservation areas can be logged with a 5 mt logging exclusion on most streams

Also it's the reason our wildlife is crashing and we have the deplorable reputation in Australia as having one of the biggest extinction rates in the world.

Remnant Native Vegetation because of its nature must never be cleared and buffers planted to enhance its integrity

SHAME on the Governments and regulators for letting this happen.

Third party rights of appeal to prosecute [breaches and bad laws] must be reinstated.

Along with no voluntary complying and cutting of so called red tape.

You, have the power to make amends and put in provisions to stop this ecosystem collapse now.

It is up to govt to save our bio regions enforce and strengthen Native Vegetation Regulations and keep the Act with much more stringent laws. I look forward to you implementing all this into the Acts to insure we NSW step up to the plate and help to create a healthy prosperous State we can proudly live on and in.

### **Old trees in big trouble**

**Published: 11 December 2012** <http://www.ecosmagazine.com/?paper=EC12507>

**The largest living organisms on the planet, the big, old trees that harbour and sustain countless birds and other wildlife, are dying according to a report by three of the world's leading ecologists in a recent issue of the journal *Science*.**



The last of its kind? A large mountain ash tree being measured in the wet ash forests of Victoria.

Credit: David Blair

**The report warns of an alarming increase in death rates among trees 100-300 years old in many of the world's forests, woodlands, savannahs, farming areas and even in cities.**

**'It's a worldwide problem and appears to be happening in most types of forest,' says lead author, Professor David Lindenmayer of the ARC Centre of Excellence for Environmental Decisions (CEED) and Australian National University.**

**'Large old trees are critical in many natural and human-dominated environments. Studies of ecosystems around the world suggest populations of these trees are declining rapidly,' he and colleagues Professor Bill Laurance of James Cook University, Australia, and Professor Jerry Franklin of Washington University, USA, write in the *Science* report.**

**'Research is urgently needed to identify the causes of rapid losses of large old trees and strategies for improved management. Without... policy changes, large old trees will diminish or disappear in many ecosystems, leading to losses of their associated biota and ecosystem functions.'**

**Prof. Lindenmayer says they were first tipped off to the loss of big old trees while examining Swedish forestry records going back to the 1860s. More recently, a 30-year study of mountain ash (*Eucalyptus regnans*) forest in Australia confirmed not only that big old trees were dying en masse in forest fires, but also perishing at ten times the normal rate in non-fire years – apparently due to drought, high temperatures, logging and other causes.**

**Looking round the world, the scientists found similar trends at all latitudes – in California's Yosemite National Park, on the African savannahs, in the rainforests of Brazil, the temperate forests of Europe and the boreal forests of the far north. Losses of large trees were also pronounced in agricultural landscapes and even cities, where people make efforts to preserve them.**

**‘It is a very, very disturbing trend. We are talking about the loss of the biggest living organisms on the planet, of the largest flowering plants on the planet, of organisms that play a key role in regulating and enriching our world,’ says Professor Bill Laurance of James Cook University.**

**‘Large old trees play critical ecological roles. They provide nesting or sheltering cavities for up to 30 per cent of all birds and animals in some ecosystems. They store huge amounts of carbon. They recycle soil nutrients, create rich patches for other life to thrive in, and influence the flow of water within landscapes and the local climate.**

**‘Big trees supply abundant food for numerous animals in the form of fruits, flowers, foliage and nectar. Their hollows offer nests and shelter for birds and animals like Australia’s endangered Leadbeater’s possum (*Gymnobelideus leadbeateri*) – and their loss could mean extinction for such creatures.**

**‘In agricultural landscapes, large old trees can be focal points for vegetation restoration; they help connect the landscape by acting as stepping stones for many animals that disperse seeds and pollen,’ he says.**

**The alarming decline in old trees in so many types of forest appears to be driven by a combination of forces, including land clearing, agricultural practices, man-made changes in fire regimes, logging and timber gathering, insect attack and rapid climatic changes, says Prof. Jerry Franklin.**

**‘For example, populations of large old pines in the dry forests of western North America declined dramatically over the last century because of selective logging, uncharacteristically severe wildfires, and other causes,’ he adds.**

**The researchers liken the global loss of big trees to the tragedy that has already befallen the world’s largest mammals, such as elephants, rhinos, tigers and whales, cautioning that almost nowhere do conservation programs have the time-frames lasting centuries, which are needed to assure the survival of old trees.**

**Source: CEED**

**David B. Lindenmayer, William F. Laurance and Jerry F. Franklin (2012) Rapid worldwide declines of large old trees, [Science, doi: 10.1126/science.1231070](https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1231070)**

**Thankyou for reading this and taking notice**

Yours Sincerely  
Catherine Jones  
KLEAN