



Categories:

Blue category

Dear Biodiversity Legislation Project Team,

I write to make recommendations for changes to the draft South Australian Biodiversity Bill.

- **The draft Biodiversity Bill uses out of date and misleading descriptions of biodiversity to the detriment of proper recognition of South Australia's biodiversity heritage.** It is no longer tenable to lump the fungi with plants, they are not plants. They are a separate kingdom of living organisms, one of the three divisions of the multicellular Eukarya, the higher organisms, that have the most complex cellular structure. The crucial roles fungi play in the workings of the biosphere are now clear. They recycle the majority of plant material and are essential intimate partners of virtually all plants on the planet. Many of them form macroscopic structures of storage tissues and fruiting bodies and are in no way microorganisms. Most Australian forest trees are dependent on fungi for minerals and water, the fungus receiving sugars in return for their services. Most native tree species in South Australia are in reality a composite organism in which the fungus and plant are truly interdependent. Such organisms clearly need appropriate recognition and protection. **Thus, the nomenclature should be Plants, Animals and Fungi with fungi added to all places in the act that list plants to give them appropriate protection.** If Fungi are not specifically listed there is then ambiguity in their protection at the grass roots level.
- **The act should include provision for expanding knowledge of South Australia's biodiversity and for monitoring its health.** Most South Australian macrofungi are undescribed. There is just one person employed as a mycologist in South Australia and few with any knowledge of mycology in the state's universities.
- **There must be appropriate expertise in the committees that are charged with implementing the act.** Thus, given the fungi are one of the three principal divisions of multicellular life forms, a mycologist needs to be incorporated, not just in the scientific committee.

Sincerely,

