

Draft Biodiversity Bill for South Australia: Consultation Submission

February 17, 2025

To whom it may concern,

I am writing today to express my support for the creation of a Biodiversity Act specific to South Australia.

The recognition of biodiversity as an essential element of well being, the rights of the community to participate in environmental decision-making, and that decisions should be based on the best evidence are fundamental to the future of South Australia. I also agree with the need for an adequately resourced scientific committee to help implement and oversee the Act.

This being said, there are some fundamental flaws written into or omitted from this draft.

1. Currently the definition of 'plant' -“a plant of a species that is indigenous to Australia” is much too broad. This definition negates the purpose of the Act and shows little to no understanding of biodiversity. We must protect the locally native diversity as it represents years of local evolution. The introduction of indigenous Australian plants which are native to other regions can lead to genetic swamping as well as the introduction of pathogens and pests. The definition of a 'plant' in the context of a Biodiversity Act should be along the lines of 'endemic' or 'local native to the area'.
2. There is a lack of protection for all plants. While threatened species are of urgent importance, we shouldn't have to wait until they are threatened to

recognise their role in the overall biodiversity of a landscape.

3. Fire hazard reduction needs to be informed by science and potentially case by case. Some areas where they adhere to the total amount of vegetation clearance required, essentially wipes out an entire area of remnant vegetation.
4. Forests grown for commercial use must have stricter regulation (ie. Type of plant) and time frames of harvest. It has been proven over and over that wildlife will reside inside of these forests and due diligence must be given to ANY indigenous species when it is time to harvest. Perhaps even before the forest is planted.
5. Permits to keep native animals should be in place and regulated. Domestication should be discouraged
6. I wonder if this Act will support the Australian government's national target to protect and conserve 30% of Australia's land mass and 30% of our oceans by 2030?

This is a very exciting time for our environment and there is much to consider. This is a great starting point and I look forward to hearing/reading the progress and intend to continue to participate in the process.

Sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the sender.

