

**MUDGEES DISTRICT ENVIRONMENT GROUP INC**  
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**MUDGEES NSW 2850**

25<sup>th</sup> October 2006

The Secretary  
Senate Environment Communications Information Technology  
and the Arts Legislation Committee  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

**SAY NO TO ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND BIODIVERSITY AMENDMENT BILL**

We, the members of Mudgee District Environment Group Inc, wish to protest very strongly against the amendments to the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act which the Federal Government introduced in the House on Thursday, 12<sup>th</sup> October, 2006.

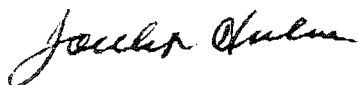
- It has been pointed out to us that these make it possible to wipe out five hundred (500) threatened species from the current waiting list for protection under the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act.
- It removes any mandatory requirements to develop a Recovery Plan for a listed threatened species or ecological community. This is an urgent matter for us in this district where there is a third major coal mine awaiting approval. This coal mine will threaten heritage landscape (The Great Dripping Wall in the Goulburn River Gorge) and will destroy many hectares of land in which there are identified threatened species.
- It removes any mandatory requirement to identify "critical habitat" for threatened species when recovery plans are developed.
- It allows a new requirement for public nominations to comply with *themes* set by the Minister so that any such nominations can risk being left off the list for consideration.
- It allows the Minister to refuse to assess the situation of threatened species previously rejected for protection even if its conservation status has worsened.

- It gives the Minister arbitrary discretion to remove a publicly nominated species or ecological community from the annual list of species to be assessed for listing.
- It does not provide a trigger for greenhouse intensive activities and contains no provisions for addressing climate change.

It is imperative that this Amendment Bill does not pass. There are applications all over the continent for new coal mines which have the potential to destroy river and underground water systems and will be placed on land which has many threatened species. There is insufficient and flawed assessment taking place now and this Bill will be the death knock as far as many threatened species are concerned.

The integrity of the flora of Australia is critical in this era of climate change.

No single individual should have the power to make the decisions which this Bill would leave in the hands of the current Minister particularly as some Ministers for the Environment have no care at all for such.



Jocelyn Hulme  
Honorary Secretary