

I am writing to you the EPBC Inquiry Committee today to ask you to oppose changes to the EPBC Act that would strip Australians of their legal rights to stand up for bad decisions about the environment or weaken our national environmental law. These laws were put in place to protect Australia's most threatened species and most iconic places. They are critical to ensuring our birdlife and biodiversity are protected into the future.

As a geoscientist, teacher, parent and nature lover I appreciate our unique and fragile Australian environment. I am always amazed at our unique species of flora and fauna that have evolved here over millions of years whilst isolated from other land masses. Due to the endemic nature of most Australian natural flora and fauna, if threatened and endangered species are wiped out, that's it; like the thylacine (Tasmanian tiger) we don't see it again. This is not ok. The current rate of extinctions is not natural; the current rate is thousands of times greater than the normal extinction rate. This is due to human impacts such as habitat loss and modification, the spread of invasive species and climate change.

In a democratic society the legal rights of citizens and communities to challenge bad decisions should be supported; not eroded or removed by an ill thought through political agenda. In the short term, mid and long term we are also hurting ourselves whilst we continue on our path of environmental destruction.

If I was a politician, I would say "Not on my watch" and oppose the government's proposed changes to the EPBC Act currently being rushed through parliament.