

Senate Inquiry into Threatened Species

Unfortunately Victoria and Australia has many threatened species, both animal and plant. Once listed they are protected under the federal EPBC Act and the Victorian FFG Act. However, not all threatened species are listed, and when they are, they may not reflect the current status of the species. For example Leadbeater's Possum, Victoria's faunal emblem is listed as threatened under the FFG and endangered under the EPBC, but surely with only 1000 to 1500 animals left, they should be listed as critically endangered and protected from logging. They are found in the Central Highlands of Victoria and are endemic to that area. They lost 43% of their habitat in the February 2009 Black Saturday fires, and yet logging continues at the same rate as prior to the fires. This is surely unsustainable. So unsustainable in fact, that Professor Lindenmayer resigned from the recovery team, as he did not wish to be a part of it as Leadbeater's possum goes extinct. As he says, it won't go extinct because we don't know the biology of the animal, it will go extinct because we fail to make the right choices. Professor Lindenmayer has studied Leadbeater's possum for almost thirty years. It is unbelievable that the action statement for this special little possum has not been rewritten by the recovery team since the 2009 fires. It will go extinct soon because of the continued unsustainable logging of its habitat.

Many Victorian orchids are threatened and work was being done to breed and plant them back in to their environment in Horsham, Victoria. The Victorian Government retrenched the scientists doing this work in its public servants cut backs, and this work, assisted by many volunteers has only been able to continue because the scientists were hired by the CMA.

Neither the EPBC or the FFG are strong enough as they don't protect threatened species from all kinds of "progress" or development such as logging. Logging can occur in plantations, but threatened species only have one habitat and it is often in a limited range. Please keep environmental laws federal and strengthen the EPBC to protect our threatened species from logging and mining.

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