



Yarra Climate Action Now
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Re Inquiry into Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Amendment (Standing) Bill 2015

Yarra Climate Action Now (YCAN) would like to make the following submission.

YCAN is a community climate action group based in inner-city Melbourne, with a membership of more than 1000 people concerned about climate change and sustainability.

We are extremely concerned about the federal government's attempts to change Australia's environmental protection laws, so that community groups like ours would no longer have the ability to voice their opposition to developments that put at risk our natural environment – our forests, our atmosphere, our unique and precious natural World Heritage sites.

We oppose the notion that only those who live near to developments such as coal mines have a right to protest against them. Often neighbouring communities are small and they need support from other concerned citizens to make their voices heard. In any case, where we live on the continent is irrelevant. Australians all have pride in our shared national assets. Greenhouse gas emissions do not respect regional, state or national borders. Polluting industries anywhere in the country, and indeed the world, affect us all. We believe it is our fundamental right to be able to voice concerns about developments that threaten our environment, our biodiversity, our atmosphere and our climate.

We strongly urge that the government does not go ahead with this dictatorial plan to take away our democratic rights. Changes to Australia's environmental laws should be aiming to strengthen protection for all elements of our environment, not weakening them. All Australians should be able to have a say in developments and projects that put our shared future at risk.

Thank you for this opportunity to make a submission.

Yours sincerely

Carole Wilkinson
On behalf of YCAN