

MEDIA RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Climate advocates across Australia call for environmental protection law to address climate risk

April 2020 – Citizens' Climate Lobby Australia (CCL) is calling for the urgent inclusion of climate risk in Australia's pre-eminent environment law. This was a key plank in their submission, written on behalf of their 3,000 plus members nation-wide, to the 10-year review of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) this month.

“It is hard to comprehend that, in over 1,000 pages of legislation, Australia's key environmental law makes no mention of climate change,” said Jordan Hodgson, Head of the EPBC Act Review Project of Citizens' Climate Lobby Australia. “The overarching threat of climate change effectively dwarfs the scope of the Act and renders it inadequate and powerless in protecting our natural and built environment and biodiversity.”

Members of CCL also made personal submissions to the Review, seeking reform of the Act so that our unique natural environment can recover from climate change and be enjoyed by generations to come.

Legal experts agree that the EPBC Act could be easily amended to address the impacts of climate change while staying well within Constitutional constraints. CCL is asking for the Act to include:

- Clear mechanisms that automatically trigger national and international responses in addressing the root causes of climate change and associated environmental threats.
- The aggregation of ecological concerns with climate issues, requiring the Federal Government to implement all necessary controls on greenhouse gas emissions, land-clearing and other such contributors.
- Provision for policy responses (e.g. carbon pricing) to address the actual cause, as well as the repeal of policies directly or indirectly contributing to climate change and related ecological damage (e.g. fossil fuel subsidies).

“It is vital that our environmental laws are strong enough to protect us from the damage being done by climate change. We will continue to build political will for this and other climate solutions, particularly carbon pricing,” said Rod Mitchell, National Chair of Citizens' Climate Lobby Australia. “Though, right now, the Government is focused on the COVID-19 pandemic, they will need to turn their attention back to climate change soon enough. When that happens, our volunteers will be there with effective solutions and clear policy suggestions.”

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