

Submission for Native Vegetation Strategy

I attended the NVS workshop at Bruce Rock 21st January 2020, I am also putting in my own submission.

As a Ballardong Elder, I would like to see that my serious concerns re: 'our native vegetation' are listened to and acted upon.

- Stop unnecessary clearing of what little vegetation we have left here in Western Australia, all over Australia for that matter.
- The Issues Paper does not refer to the Aboriginal Heritage Act (WA) so sacred sites are not being addressed or discussed in these workshops unless Aboriginal people are in the room.
- Also, there is no reflection of the proposed Nyungar Native Title and the proposed Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA). The Nyungar people will be co-managers of the State Forests and National Parks but there is no reference to this in any of the four initiatives.
- Compliance to managing the State Policy paper to be developed needs to be in support of the First Nations people across WA but there is no discussion at this workshop or time.
- The business as usual approach by government has seen an opportunity again to partner up with the Traditional Owners of the country is not even being mentioned or developing strategies under the four initiatives.
- Put real action toward rejuvenating our salt lands. I mean by making it compulsory (by law) that all land holders big or small are to plant trees and vegetation along our salt effected lands. This will in turn prevent the salt land from getting worse and will give our native flora and fauna a place to thrive. We have destroyed too much of our ecosystems by too much clearing. (So that the landholders get excited about rejuvenating

their land, carbon credits given to them). Plant trees and vegetation etc along our natural water courses that are not affected by salt yet also.

- Fire Mitigation needs a rethink! Our bushland is being burnt in the wrong time of the year. During these prescribed burns our native flora and fauna are being destroyed. Bush medicine plants also are paying the price.
- Our Nyungar fertility season for our flora and fauna are in the months of late August- late November. (Jilba/Kambarang Nyungar season) This is when our native flora and fauna come into flower and birds/mammals/marsupials etc are nesting. When we burn at this time of year, we destroy all this. Plants do not get to drop seed for next season and baby's and eggs are destroyed preventing the young from growing old to breed on.
- It's a must in this day and age after so much destruction by many people who are living for their own lifetime, that First Nations people are brought into the fray of caring for our land. Start listening to our First Nations people, we are experienced scientists.
- Get rid of the 40 exemptions that allow native vegetation to be cleared and rewrite the Environmental Protection Act 1986. If we are going to have exemptions every time we make rules or new policies we are defeating the purpose for change. Too much of our vegetation has been stripped from our land as it is and there has to be cut off period, and that is now.
- First Nations people have to be at the fore front of everything and all policies relating to our land.

- In finishing, First Nations people are the traditional owners of this land as recognised by government. As traditional owners of this land, we are care takers of this land first and foremost. We have lived with our mother earth not OFF her. By this, I mean, we are one. We do not see what we can take, all the time. If we take, we give back. Our way is looking after our mother and she will provide for us. Just like she has done for millennia.
- My biggest wish would be for all 'white' and non- indigenous people to treat our mother earth as we First Nations people do and continue to do all over this beautiful world. Life isn't about money...you can't eat money!
- The development of Bioregions will be good but if we continue to maintain business as usual it can be expected that the Indigenous community will be excluded again.
- Think of the future generations of everything, not only humans!!

Kind regards

Tracey de Grussa

