Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the **Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Amendment (Retaining Federal Approval Powers) Bill 2012,** and allowing my voice to be heard.

It is of great concern to me that the Federal Government is considering relinquishing the power to overrule inappropriate and damaging decisions on environmental matters made by State Governments.

The natural environment, including the flora and fauna as part of it, does not stop at political boundaries. It is wholistic and requires the oversight of a national government. What happens in one state of Australia (indeed, the world) can impact on another state. Issues concerning water table quality, such as 'fracking', are an example.

We humans are dependent upon and enmeshed with our natural environment. It seems that this Federal Government has need of a paradigm shift to bring it back to the understanding that the natural environment must be protected above all else and that only a national oversight can ensure that.

I have never been to the Great Barrier Reef but the thought that it may be damaged by tankers and mining chills me to the core. I want it completely protected. I have also never been to the north-western coast, up in the Pilbara area, but am utterly mortified that the Western Australian Government is determined to destroy the whale nursery at James Price Point with a gas hub when alternatives are available. The Federal Government must retain its responsibility to step in to stop this act of vandalism.

I have, however, been on the Gordon and Franklin rivers and was profoundly moved thinking about how that glorious river system was nearly destroyed and how the Federal Government, using its power, overruled the Tasmanian Government and stopped the dam.

I want my grandchildren to live healthy, happy lives and this can only occur if Australia's natural environment is well-managed with the long-term future always in mind. The Federal Government must not cave in to vested interests and must retain its oversight of Australia's natural environment.

Yours sincerely,

Karin Geradts