Environment Protection (retain federal approval powers)

I wish to put in a submission to support the Bill that keeps the power of the Federal Government to override the State Governments for the protection of our very delicate native animal environment.

I have spent 50 years enjoying the birdlife in Victoria, as well as enhancing it by planting thousands of trees on my properties over time. It feels like we have stepped back 30 years now in Victoria with the almost total disregard for the environment. Example: The burning of a mandatory area every year in areas of the state that have nothing to do with the safety of people as virtually no one lives there. The Mallee Sunset Country and the Box Ironbark Forest just to name two. In the latter I have watched first hand a 90% reduction in birds and reptiles since the 1982 drought. What will the next 50 years bring if we don't start helping instead of destroying what is left.

As for cattle grazing in the high country. It should not be used as a political pawn for any government of the day. Even a trial with 400 head for fire reduction is absurd as each cow will eat only about 5 tonne of dry matter each year they are up there. As a rough estimate, the area of grass eaten to the ground to make it a non fire hazard would be 5 hectares per cow at the most. How many hundreds of thousand hectares are there? The trouble is cows go everywhere and wreck the many bogs and plants that are native to the area. When I want agistment it costs me $7 per week. I don't think they would be that keen on the pioneering spirit any more if they had to step into the 21st century.

Yours Sincerely
Russell Jones