birdlife
SOUTHERN NEW SOUTH WALES

Committee Secretary

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications

Dear Sir/madam,

I am writing in my capacity as Conservation Officer for Birdlife Southern NSW, regarding the Committee's investigation into the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Amendment (Retaining Federal Powers) Bill 2012.

I strongly support the Bill. In the past 30 years we have made important inroads into protecting our environment with the present system working well. The Federal Government needs to oversee issues important to the nation without having to consider state boundaries. Many issues are concerning environmental decisions that transcend a number of states. A strong independent body is needed to make a truly democratic decision.

On environmental issues State Government has not got a good track record. One issue which illustrates this admirably is the decision to allow shooting in the National Parks to gain favour with the Shooters Party. The State Government cannot be relied on to make decisions which are independent of any benefit to the Government. Our sensitive environment needs to be protected by the Federal Government in the national interest.

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The Federal Government is the only agency by which International Agreements can be overseen and complied with. Our international agreements concern threatened species, migratory species, wetlands and world heritage areas. All these concerns transcend state boundaries and as such they need the Federal Government making decisions involving them, not individual states.

I do not believe that the Federal Government should hand over environmental powers to the states as we definitely need a strong independent body overseeing some of our most important issues regarding our most vulnerable forests, wetlands, threatened and migratory species.

I support the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Act amendment (Retaining Federal Approval Powers) Bill 2022. I believe it will give certainty to the involvement of the Federal Government in protecting Australia's special places and our vulnerable flora and fauna.

Yours sincerely,
Lesley Hook