

Senior Adviser
Individuals and Indirect Tax Division
The Treasury
Langton Crescent
PARKES ACT 2600

2 August 2017

My comments on the proposals outlined in the discussion paper *Tax Deductible Gift Recipient Reform Opportunities*

1. I regularly donate (monthly) to a number of not-for-profit organisations including The Wilderness society, Environment Victoria, VNPA, Animals Australia, Amnesty International and the Salvation Army.
2. As a scientist working as a professor in a university, I know that environmental organisations play a huge role in defending the environment against lobby groups. Lobby groups want to make money out of utilising the environment. A good current example is Adani.
3. Lobby groups often use false information or distort/omit the facts about the real impact of their activities. Thus not-for-profit environmental organisations have a very important role in exposing the truth about the environmental impacts of financial enterprises.
4. Environmental organisations should not be subjected to new restrictions or limitations on what they do.
5. For Item 12 *“Stakeholders’ views are sought on requiring environmental organisations to commit no less than 25 per cent of their annual expenditure from their public fund to environmental remediation, and whether a higher limit, such as 50 per cent, should be considered?”*, it is ridiculous that environmental organisations should have to spend a certain proportion of their funds on environmental remediation.
6. The most important work that environmental organisations do is related to education and advocacy. Especially in the face of false truths perpetrated by interest groups. Remediation strategies are not the key responsibility of environmental groups. Remediation should be carried out by government or the organisations that caused the damage in the first instance.

Leigh Ackland

Professor Leigh Ackland
Director - Centre for Cellular & Molecular Biology
Deputy Director Molecular and Medical Research SRC
School of Life and Environmental Sciences

Deakin University, 221 Burwood Highway, Burwood, Melbourne, Victoria 3125, Australia

