

**From:** [Valerie Tepper](#)  
**To:** [DGR Inbox](#)  
**Subject:** Tax Deductible Gift Recipient Reform Opportunities Discussion Paper  
**Date:** Wednesday, 26 July 2017 11:36:12 PM

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Senior Advisor,

Dear Sir,

In response to the 'Inquiry into the Register of Environmental Organisations', please accept my submission to support environmental charities to keep their independence in the decision making process as to the distribution of their funds. I vehemently oppose enforcing a requirement that all environmental charities have to allocate a nominated percentage of funds to be spent on 'on-ground environmental remediation'.

I donate to these charities because they do good work in their diverse fields of expertise. Fair and honest reporting, research, advocacy, organising public events and education are as important to me as remediation and I, along with my community, trust and benefit by their good work. Having been involved with the land care movement, I know what a terrific job we do improving degraded lands and waterways with the help of volunteers and I'm sure they easily put at least 50% of their funds into remediation. That is their field of expertise. But it doesn't make sense to undermine the contributions of the other areas of need where organisations specialize in their areas of expertise. To impose these restrictive tax conditions sounds burdensome, unfair and smacks of interference from and favouritism for the mining and resources lobby. This government, has shown wholehearted biased support for the coal and gas industries (as Scott Morrison so famously demonstrated when he bizarrely entered parliament brandishing a lump of coal) in preference to renewable energy resour

ces much to the disappointment of the wider community. As community disapproval for this stance has grown, the coffers of the charities that support environmental health have swollen. Thus it is not surprising the treasury is wanting to shackle the growing voice of dissent by diverting money into public works under the guise of political will to improve the environment when it is blatantly obvious that it is more appropriate for the oil, coal and gas industries to undertake greater responsibility for remediation. The degradation to the environment mining companies leave in their wake is indeed dismal and shocking. But the problems we face are far more complex than you are giving us credit for understanding. That is why we need these groups to study, research, educate, advocate and provide legal advice where necessary. They are receiving public donations because they do what they do well when government fails us. It is wrong for you to undermine the integrity of the work they do by imposing unfair restrictions that inevitably wastes resources, talent and money.

My questions are:-

1. Why would you ask environmental groups to whom people have donated money because they value their specific contributions in their diverse fields of expertise to funnel those donations into remediation when there are conservation groups who fundraise specifically to focus on remediation? Please understand the public want and need advocacy, research and education as well as remediation to balance the dismissive attitudes of politicians and big business to people with environmental concerns.
2. In some instances, remediation has been left by the mining companies to land care groups and other volunteer community services due to insolvency, neglect, mismanagement or disaster. Shouldn't the government be looking more closely at

this and require funding to be set aside during earthworks via taxes to offset these inevitable risks. It is grossly unfair that these private companies lobby the government to ask charitable organisations to pay for their pitfalls. Even worse that some of the M.P.'s on the committee endorsed their request. Oddly, there was no representation from the Greens on the committee? Can you tell me why?

3. I ask you to read; Susan Murphy's "Minding the Earth, Mending the World." After extensive research she acknowledges that:

'The rate of release of carbon into the atmosphere is not slowing but sharply accelerating. And despite increasing trenchant warnings from climate scientists, political reluctance to commit to the inevitable change of course of action has mainly only deepened. (The Australian) Governments are pointedly ignoring the warning signs while caving in to the insistent demands of Big Oil, Big Coal and Big Gas, in what is now being called a 'bought democracy.'

We want and need Environmental Organisations to keep on doing the work they do unconstrained by government interference on behalf of business interests. Please allow them to do what the community is asking from them.

Yours faithfully,

Valerie Tepper.

Yours sincerely, [REDACTED]

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