

Submission from Alan Yuille, [REDACTED], ph. [REDACTED]

Concerning the **Parliamentary Inquiry into the Register of Environmental Organizations**, and the tax deductibility of donations to these organizations, I would like to express my opposition to the proposals that such organizations must spend a significant portion of their funds on physical remediation of lands (This should also include waterways).

Land and water degradation is a major problem across Australia, and the globe. This degradation can include habitat loss, species loss, atmospheric pollution, water pollution, topsoil loss and depletion, increased soil salinity, desertification of productive lands, destruction of fisheries, marine ecosystems, and in Australia, the death and destruction of the Great Barrier Reef.

Environmental Organizations alert the community, as well as politicians, to these problems, and advise on ways to reduce or solve these problems caused by human behaviour, sometimes combined with as well as some natural processes.

Most present environmental problems are largely caused by human actions and the scale of destruction has increased as population has increased and the technology to exploit resources has exponentially increased.

Identification of the problems and their causes must take place prior to any successful remediation. Independent, non-governmental Environmental Groups lead in the identification of these problems.

The vast majority of scientist, world wide, claim humanity, society and the planet's ecosystems are seriously threatened by Global Warming. A small minority will dispute the human responsibility for this Global Warming, but there was a small minority of scientists, often the same ones, who disputed the health impacts of smoking on people.

Environmental organizations such as Greenpeace, The Wilderness Society, Australian Conservation Foundation, Environmental Defenders Office, Total Environment Centre, act to identify problems, work out strategies to overcome these problems, then attempt to convince governments and community that the problem exists and may be solved. They cannot be expected to go tree planting, digging erosion control ditches, poisoning Crown of Thorns Starfish. The role of these organizations is to alert and educate the community and decision makers.

When Treasury is reviewing tax deductible donations to Conservation Groups, I would argue for the continuation of tax deductions to groups whose main purpose is lobbying governments and educating the community, as well as those organizations which do on site work.

I am a passionate Bush regenerator, belong to several organizations which work in the field,. This field work means nothing if we don't manage the whole world's ecosystem, and the whole nation' systems

The alerts and actions by Environmental Groups and solutions they suggest, may not please people and businesses with vested interest in exploiting resources leading to environmental problems, so vested interests will lobby governments to dis-regard the advice of the Environmental Groups, and act to disempower or destroy these Environmental Groups.

Environmental Groups are not set up to make monetary profit, they rely on donations and significant volunteer labour. People are more willing to make donations when donations are tax deductible. People will make larger donations when there is a taxation advantage. The ATO is also able to advise governments of the areas where people are most passionate.

The inquiry claims that deductions in 2016/17 will cost the ATO \$1.31 Billion, and in 2019/20 estimate this to rise to \$1.46 Billion

The 2016/17 estimate represents donations of \$524.00 per person with a present population of 25 million Australians.

While this sum may seem large, it is minor considering the amount of tax that the international fossil fuel companies, some international media companies, logging and wood chip exporting companies, manage to avoid paying.

I believe that these organizations which lobby to cripple the Environmental Groups, will also claim a tax deduction for the monies spent on lobbying politicians to this end.

Democracy needs debate and discussion to solve problems. Most Australians acknowledge that the environment is in trouble.

We rely on information from the Environmental Groups, as well as from Governmental departments, to help us make sensible decisions, and to inform our politicians of our views .

It is essential that the Environmental Groups continue to enjoy their tax deductible status to keep our democracy healthy, and our environment healthy .

Regards

Alan Yuille.

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