

**Submission
No 317**

INQUIRY INTO CROWN LAND IN NEW SOUTH WALES

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Crown Land are our Inheritance and belong to all now and in the future. They are an important repository of our unique Australian plant and animal inheritance and it is our responsibility to sustainably manage their biodiversity for ALWAYS. Particularly in these uncertain times of Serious and rapid climate change, we must keep these reserves for sustaining biological linkages and the diversity of ecological communities.

In Central and Western NSW tis represents a very significant proportion of the remaining native vegetation. It is priceless and represents an ecological time capsule of all the evolutionary processes that have taken place on that one place. It is our duty as temporary stewards of the land to ensure that there is no further net loss of this. It must no longer be downgraded, or considered just as an economic resource to be plundered or sold off or leased without regard to its ecoligical function.

These crown lands also have great significance in terms of catchment management, which is also elevated in importance now that rapidly changing patterns of rainfall and storm activity are becoming evident.

Where there are Wetlands, these are particularly valuable carbon sinks.

Crown lands encompass two Ramsar listed wetlands, and NSW has international obligations to protect the essential habitat of migratory birds.

Crown lands are important habitat for endangered wildlife. Whether wildlife is endangered or not any wildlife habitat on crown land is vitally important for its 'linkage' of populations. Eg Flying foxes have a very important role in spreading rainforest seeds and in pollinating eucalypts through out the state. they may be considered in the role of beesforsome species. They are already under threat from clearing and cannot travel the intervening distances.

There is great public ignorance generally of the long term value in terms of our iconic landscapes and there ecological roles and in terms of their function in the form of economic returns from keeping them in their natural state.

Many older developed countries do not have the privelege of having 'Crown land' and it behoves us to respect this rare heritage of ours. Crown land estate is already a remnant and must not be squandered for short term greed and the long term impoverishment of our country.

The present and recent practice of 'biobanking' is to be deplored. It is already misused, eg by Kuring-gai Council and others.

Crown land in urban areas is of immense value and there must be no net loss as is already happening in Centennial Park and elsewhere where irresponsible 'trustees' are allowing it to be whittled away to hard surfaces and development. These urban crown lands are important reserves of native and other open space plantings. They are the lungs of the city which must not be sacrificed. There is a great lack in the transparency of the management of Crown lands generally.

There is a dearth of protection afforded both the land and the public knowledge.

In this day and at these uncertain climate change times we need much improved protection of ALL crown land. Its linkage values for wildlife is critical if we are to retain our iconic birdlife.