

Submission
No 48

**INQUIRY INTO WATER NSW AMENDMENT
(WARRAGAMBA DAM) BILL 2018**

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Date Received: 3 October 2018

This Bill is flawed in at least three ways. - There are better ways to reduce flood risk than flooding a national park in a region that is highly diverse ecologically and contains some of the few surviving sacred sites of its first Aboriginal inhabitants. Floods are going to happen, and policymakers should instead invest their efforts in effective flood evacuation plans and training, as well as better understanding how we might mitigate the effects of floods when they do happen (e.g. by doing flood mapping and planning where excess water might go during floods). - Flooding a national park is not merely a "technical barrier". South-west Sydney is one of the most ecologically diverse regions in the Sydney Basin. There are 48 threatened species in the inundation zone, including the Regent honeyeater. The region contains unique Indigenous heritage that is vital to Aboriginal communities, the destruction of which would signal that the continuation of the colonial project in Australia and its injustices. We identify heritage areas because we recognise the especial value of conserving the area for its inhabitants (human and non-human). This is far more than a mere technicality. - Passing the legislation might make tick the "flood-proof" box for developers and real estate agents who want to make a quick buck out of populating outer Western Sydney, but it will not do justice to those new residents when they experience the once or twice a century floods that won't be stopped irrespective of whether the Minister floods a national park. Again, we need better flood evacuation and management policy that does justice to everyone in the region.