

From: Arthur Dye <adye@bio.usyd.edu.au>
To: CHM <chm@ea.gov.au>
CC:
Date: 13/10/2003
Subject: Comments on Biodiversity Consultation Paper

Hi there,

I have just finished going through the consultation paper for the National Biodiversity and Conservation Action Plan. The paper is necessarily general in nature and addresses a wide range of issues. Although I am in general agreement with the issues highlighted and actions suggested in the paper, I feel that one important area of concern, marine biodiversity and conservation, has not been emphasized sufficiently. It is interesting that only two presentations at the workshop in October 2002 dealt specifically with the marine environment and both were on coral reefs. Australia's marine territory is vast and contains, apart from the GBR, some of our most productive environments, including estuaries, mangroves, coastal lagoons and intertidal shores. We know a great deal about the biology and ecology of these areas, but our knowledge of biodiversity, particularly its temporal and spatial variability, is rudimentary. We do not even have a comprehensive description of marine biodiversity, let alone an understanding of how it will be affected by climate change. There is also the possible indirect impact of climate change on biodiversity as it may enhance the ability of exotic species to establish populations in our waters. I suggest that the strategy makes provision for the necessary research to underpin our understanding of, and hence our ability to conserve, marine biodiversity. Perhaps a Marine Biodiversity Working Group could facilitate planning in this regard.

Hope my comments are helpful

Regards,

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