

Anonymous

Thank you for the opportunity to attend the background information session on the draft Biodiversity Conservation Strategy held in Perth on 20th April. Thank you also for the opportunity to comment on the draft. Generally, I support the consultation draft.

The first National strategy for the conservation of Australia's biological diversity is now over ten years old so this new initiative is very timely. This is particularly so in Western Australia, where the south west has been identified as a biodiversity hotspot and the state legislation to protect biodiversity is nearly 60 years old.

I have a few comments to make concerning biodiversity and education. Teaching primary school children about biodiversity and its benefits to their wellbeing and the world at large is a great idea. But it should be extended to students in secondary school and at TAFE, preferably as a part of education and training in sustainability. Sustainability should be a part of everyday life and work in the same way that Occupational Health and Safety has become embedded as a joint responsibility in all that we do at work.

The consultation draft keeps rather a low profile on sustainability and I think this is misguided. Biodiversity conservation is an important and, for youngsters especially, a motivating strand of sustainability. Just when Australians are beginning to get a handle on sustainability, it makes more sense to strengthen the biodiversity connection with sustainability.

A final comment, if biodiversity and sustainability are to be an important part of education in Australia, it is important to be talking to those responsible for the National Curriculum. Implementation is everything.