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Sent: Friday, 29 November 2019 5:03 PM
To: Climate
Subject: Climate Change Submission - K. Gower

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CONTEXT:

As a long term resident of Western Australia (since 1977), scientist, coordinator of a local friends group and volunteer at my local primary school in the capacity of restoring and conserving two urban bushland areas, I am greatly concerned about the impacts of climate change on the community and the natural and human-altered areas in this state. With significant reductions in rainfall and temperature increases of 1.5 deg C thus far and predictions for even drier, hotter conditions and more extreme weather events the implications for biodiversity, communities and their environment are enormous.

BIODIERSITY

The impacts of climate change have and will result in significant biodiveristy losses through increased catastrophic climatic events (droughts, floods, hail, etc.) catastrophic fire, rainfall decline, changed fire regimes, and these will be magnified as sequential disturbance events interact. This will result in loss of sensitive species and shifts in plant and faunal community composition. As much of WA land is highly fragmented, the effect will be intensified as small populations are more vulnerable and also have no ability to shift their ranges.

Ways to ameliorate these impacts:

- limit all land clearing and take measures to illegal land clearing (monitoring mapping, prosecution),
- plant local native species on public land and encourage private landholders to do the same,
- plant local natives as crops on farmland
- assist not for profit groups and private land holders to plant native vegetation on farmland
- facilitate carbon farming,
- establishing and promoting ecological corridors to facilitate wildlife movement and plant genetic exchange
- control grassy weeds and do so by handweeding where feasible
- review and change the current prescribed burning practices which produce large amounts of emissions and reduce native plant biodiversity, reducing drastically the area burnt each year. Use other methods to reduce threat of fire to communities and when formulating and implementing fire policy, give appropriate priority to the importance and requirements of native fauna and vegetation, rather than the current anthropocentric view. Other methods could include grassy weed control, rapid fire response and introducing litter recyclers such as Quenda and Woylies.

COMMUNITIES

Physical and mental health of communities are/will be negatively impacted by air pollution, extreme temperatures and smoke from fires.

Amelioration measures:

- improve air quality by reducing emissions
- reduce ambient temperature by increasing native vegetation in urban areas and reducing hard surfaces
- planning laws to require energy efficient buildings, solar panels, sufficient real green space on housing blocks
- retain native vegetation on new housing development blocks
- increase natural areas and public green spaces for mental health

Thankyou for this opportunity to comment. As I am worried that my submission needs to be in by 5pm, I am sending this unfinished document and will send complete submission ASAP

Karyn-Sue Gower

