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Dear Productivity Commission,

Below is my submission on the inquiry 'Investing in cheaper, cleaner energy and the net zero transformation'

Climate change is a huge threat to people and nature. It is critical that Australia adopts net zero and clean energy. However, habitat loss is the most important immediate threat to Australia's biodiversity, substantially outside protected areas (see <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0006320725002320>). It is misleading to imply that there is a trade-off between favouring net zero energy technology and protecting threatened species and nationally significant environments. I disagree strongly with this statement 'The Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 should be amended to require the minister to consider the needs of the energy transition when deciding whether to approve an energy project that will have a significant impact on a matter of national environmental significance'.

The productivity Commission is incorrectly implying that biodiversity protection is to blame for inhibiting renewable energy transition, and Australia's threatened species should therefore be sacrificed for the interests of power company profits. The EPBC Act must not be watered down like this. We must retain and increase legal protection for threatened species and ecosystems. Environmental protection cannot be abandoned in favour of for-profit energy projects, whether they are renewable or not. Legal responsibility to avoid environmental harm applies to both renewable energy companies and coal and gas companies.

We are in a crisis of accelerating biodiversity loss, and it is not acceptable to weaken current legislation and further increase the risk of extinction for Australia's threatened species.

Yours Sincerely, Thank you.

Diana Fisher