
Dear reviewers,

As a Victorian, I am tooooooo well aware of past widespread losses of wetlands. In the 19th and 20th centuries, bogs and swamps were drained with gay abandon to allow the development of agriculture and the building of towns. We didn't listen to the original inhabitants who knew about and relied upon the biodiversity of such habitats. Any dilution in the strength of the Water Act will confirm my fears that we have learned little since those earlier drainings.

Despite the gradual generation of scientific information about the relationships between organisms in various ecosystems, we still have much to learn about (what's left of) our natural ecosystems. Meanwhile, apparently oblivious to their value, we continue to allow their damage and destruction.

Aware of the huge importance of alpine wetlands – bogs and swamps – for the water-supply of the whole of SE Australia, I leave it to ecologists, botanists and geologists to supply you with the actual data about the hydrological and ecological importance of rivers and wetlands. I wish only to emphasise their importance – for water and biodiversity – and the consequent need for a robust Water Act.

PLEEEEEEEEEEEEEZ do not allow any watering down of that act.

Yours sincerely,
Linden Gillbank