

Alexandra Jones
(address removed)

16th July 2007

Hon Louise Pratt
Chair
Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs
Parliament House
PERTH, W.A. 6000

Dear Ms. Pratt,

Petition No 34- Protection of Mature Trees on Public Land in Urban Areas

Thank you for your letter of the 27th June 2007 in which you state that your Committee finalised the petition based on the draft recommendation:

The Committee recommends that the Minister for Local Government with the support of the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure in conjunction with local governments develop a model tree policy for the protection of mature trees in urban areas.

Save Our Trees members and supporters of the petition recognise that the Committee's recommendation is a positive step in " achieving a high standard of urban tree management".

As you would be aware from correspondence submitted to your Committee, the management of public trees has been a vexed issue, with members of the public often in disagreement with the managing authorities. For this reason, myself and other members of Save Our Trees and the Chairperson of the Western Region Environment Network (WREN) would welcome the opportunity to:

1. Participate as stakeholders in the development of a model tree policy for the protection of mature trees in urban areas.
2. Meet with the Minister for the Environment as well as with those Ministers and local governments referred to in the recommendation.
Our members are of the view that much of the evidence submitted to the Committee clearly states the negative environmental impact of tree removal and that input from the Environment Minister is of paramount importance to the development of a model tree policy.

Regrettably,

1. the petition's request for a moratorium has been ignored by the Committee,
2. the recommendation does not provide a time-frame that recognizes the urgency of preventing further damage to the environment through ongoing tree replacement policies and other tree removal activities.
3. the Committee's response ignores the questions of accountability for damage to the environment through tree loss, and the lack of data relating to total numbers of trees removed from urban areas.

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Several individuals from the Western Region Environment Network and Save Our Trees supporters have contributed to the Framework for a Model Tree Policy (Attachment 1.) We hope that this and other attachments will be of assistance to your Committee and the relevant Ministers.

I look forward to the speedy implementation of your Committee's recommendation and hope that we, as stakeholders, will be invited to participate in the process and be kept informed of any progress.

Yours sincerely,

Alexandra Jones
Save Our Trees

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Framework for a Model Tree Policy, 30/07/2007
2. SCFC Benefits of Urban Trees
3. SCFC Urban and Community Forestry
4. Western Region Environment Network, Media Release, 28/07/2007

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