

**Presentation to the
Parliament of
Victoria's inquiry into
ecosystem decline**

**The devastating impacts
of animal exploitation
activities**

**Paul Mahony
11 May 2021**



THE SUBMISSION



Submission in response to
**Parliament of Victoria's Inquiry
into Ecosystem Decline**

**The devastating impact of
animal exploitation activities**

Paul Mahony

Table of Contents

1. INTRODUCTION	2
2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
3. THE BIG PICTURE	4
3.1 THE CARNIST MINDSET	4
3.2 LINKS BETWEEN THE FARMED ANIMAL SECTOR AND ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS	4
3.3 DIRECT POLITICAL PRESSURE	5
3.4 SOPHISTICATED MARKETING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS	5
3.5 A LOOK AT THE PAST	6
4. ANIMAL FARMING IS GROSSLY AND INHERENTLY INEFFICIENT	8
5. EXTENT OF LAND USE CHANGE	11
6. THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY	16
6.1 ON THE EDGE OF A PRECIPICE	16
6.2 ANIMAL AGRICULTURE'S BROAD CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT	16
6.3 LAND CLEARING'S REGIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS	17
6.4 CLIMATE CHANGE IN VICTORIA	19
6.5 THE MEAT INDUSTRY'S QUESTIONABLE CLIMATE CHANGE CLAIMS	20
7. INTRODUCED ANIMALS AND PLANTS	25
7.1 BROWN TROUT	25
7.2 PASTURE GRASSES	25
8. MARINE ECOSYSTEMS	27
9. OTHER IMPACTS ON ECOSYSTEMS	34
9.1 LOGGING	34
9.2 DUCK SHOOTING	35
10. CONCLUSION	38

KEY TOPICS

Animals - a grossly and inherently inefficient source of nutrition

Animal agriculture - a major contributor to climate change

Marine ecosystems

Invasive species

Deliberately killing ducks (for recreation) and other wild animals

Victorian consumption can adversely affect ecosystems elsewhere¹

Direct political pressure

The farmed animal sector's links to environmental groups

The farmed animal sector's marketing and PR utilising the state's education system

... requiring far more
land and other resources
than would otherwise be
required

Note: The committee has specified that the presentation be limited to five minutes. That will encompass the first item only.

Note 1: This issue was not addressed in the submission but includes: 1. 90% loss of Brigalow Belt bioregion in Queensland and NSW; 2. Decades-long loss of Great Barrier Reef coral due to nutrient and sediment discharge; 3. Introduction of Gamba grass in northern Australia; and 4. Baiting of dingo, a predator of feral cats, to protect farmed animals.

Research
Paper

Energy, Environment
and Resources Programme

February 2021

Food system impacts on biodiversity loss

Three levers for food
system transformation
in support of nature

Tim G. Benton, Carling Bieg, Helen Harwatt,
Roshan Pudasaini and Laura Wellesley



Report published by Chatham House, the
Royal Institute of International Affairs, London
in February 2021

Supported by the United Nations Environment
Programme (UNEP)

“Plant-based diets crucial to saving global
wildlife, says report”

Guardian Australia, 4 Feb 2021

“Humanity must shift towards more
plant-based diets . . .”

Report extract

**ANIMALS: A GROSSLY AND INHERENTLY
INEFFICIENT SOURCE OF NUTRITION**

Share of farmland 83%

Share of protein 37%

18%

Share of calories

Animal farming is a grossly and inherently inefficient source of nutrition, causing us to use far more resources, including land, than would otherwise be required.

AMOUNT OF FARMLAND THAT COULD BE RELEASED IF THE WORLD TRANSITIONED TO AN ANIMAL-FREE DIET

Land area the size of Africa



Equal to four times the contiguous United States



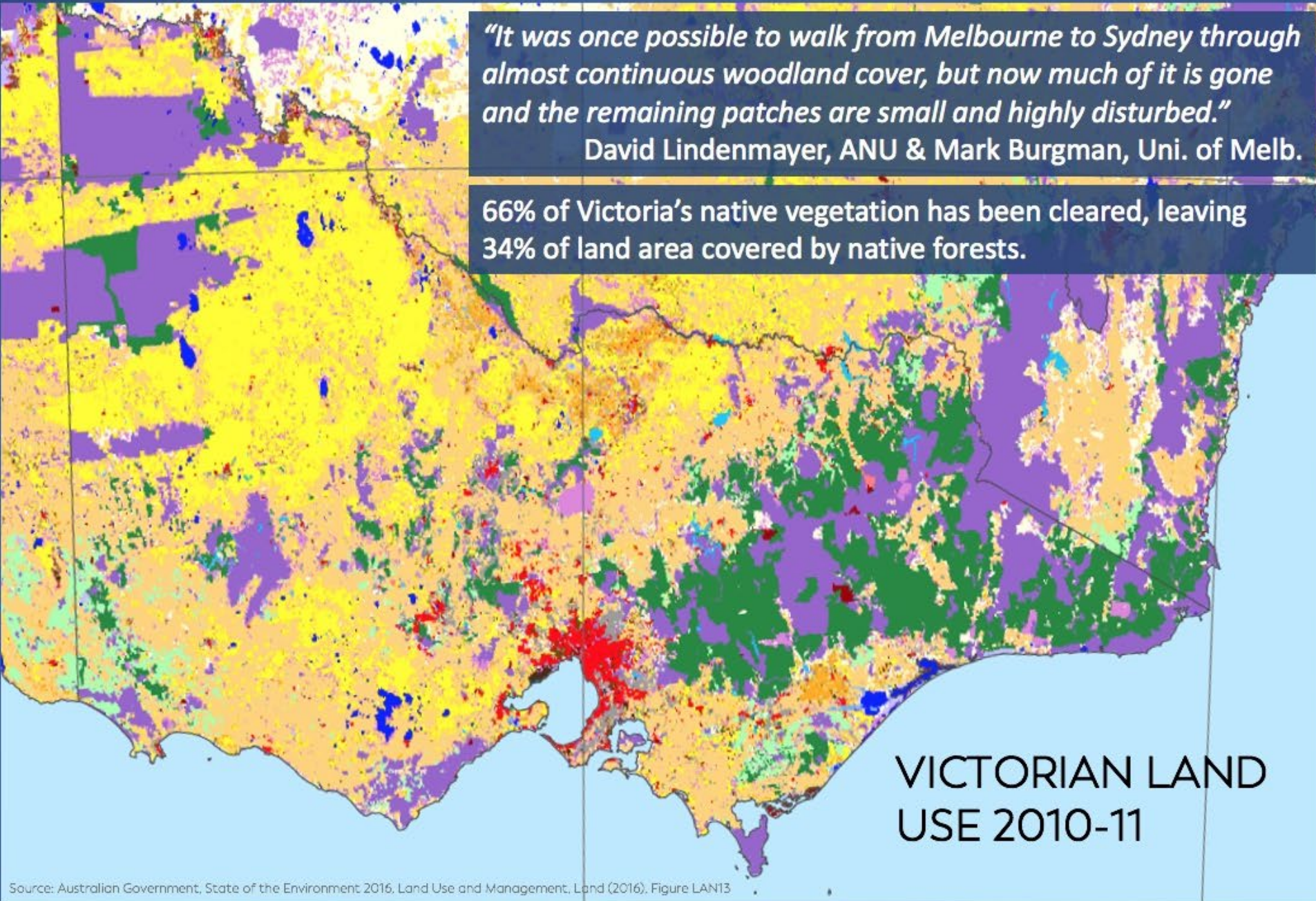
Or four times Australia



"It was once possible to walk from Melbourne to Sydney through almost continuous woodland cover, but now much of it is gone and the remaining patches are small and highly disturbed."

David Lindenmayer, ANU & Mark Burgman, Uni. of Melb.

66% of Victoria's native vegetation has been cleared, leaving 34% of land area covered by native forests.



Grazing modified pastures

Cropping

Nature conservation

Production forestry

Irrigated pastures

Source: Australian Government, State of the Environment 2016. Land Use and Management, Land (2016). Figure LAN13

Additional sources: 1. Lindenmayer, D. and Burgman, M., "Practical Conservation Biology" (2005), CSIRO Publishing, p. 235; 2. Turner, W.R., et al., Little left to lose: deforestation and forest degradation in Australia since European colonization, Journal of Plant Ecology, Volume 5, Issue 1, March 2012, Pages 109–120; 3. Australian Bureau of Rural Sciences, Australia's Forests at a Glance 2010, Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, 2010, Canberra, Australia, cited in Bradshaw, C.J.A., ibid.

END AND REMINDER OF KEY TOPICS

Animals - a grossly and inherently inefficient source of nutrition

Animal agriculture - a major contributor to climate change

Marine ecosystems

Invasive species

Deliberately killing ducks (for recreation) and other wild animals

Victorian consumption can adversely affect ecosystems elsewhere¹

Direct political pressure

The farmed animal sector's links to environmental groups

The farmed animal sector's marketing and PR utilising the state's education system

... requiring far more
land and other resources
than would otherwise be
required

Note: The committee has specified that the presentation be limited to five minutes. That will encompass the first item only.