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From: Fiona Spier [fiona_spier@hotmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, 1 June 2006 2:39 PM
To: Committees
Subject: Biosphere Inquiry

Thankyou for the opportunity to comment on the proposal for the ACT to be nominated as a biosphere reserve.

In principle I think that the ACT is ideal for a biosphere reserve, and with its 'bush capital' surrounds and over 50% being nature reserves or bushland, I believe that it is in a strong position for listing.

With the news this week that Canberrans' have the largest ecological footprint in the country I think that this proposal is very timely.

In short, the ACT being recognised as a Biosphere would:

- a.. Increase the general understanding and acceptance of sustainability principles with the general public.

- a.. Increase the profile of sustainability and the need for long term protection of our environment.

- a.. Provide an opportunity for the ACT to become a centre of sustainable scientific endeavour and business opportunities.

- a.. Develop a greater sense of social ownership of the environment and a deeper personal responsibility for our own actions.

- a.. Provide a framework that recognises the need for all facets of government and the public to work towards a common goal.

The ACT already has one of the highest levels of volunteerism in Australia, and many of these people are involved with environmental groups. On ground environmental groups are well established and with the organisation of sub catchment groups, this expertise and intimate knowledge of Canberra's environment needs to be consulted at every level of the proposal and implementation of the biosphere if approved.

I look forward to reading the report into the Biosphere Inquiry and would appreciate being kept up to date with the outcome of the proposal.

Regards

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