



23 March 2012

**The Secretary
Standing Committee on Climate Change, Environment and Water**

Please see submission form Orienteering ACT Inc regarding the Inquiry into Current and Potential Ecotourism in the ACT and Region.

Name of Committee or Enquiry:	Standing Committee on Climate Change, Environment and Water Inquiry into Current and Potential Ecotourism in the ACT and Region
Organisation Making Submission:	Orienteering ACT Inc.
Contract person:	Geoff Wood, Executive Director Orienteering ACT Inc.
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We have addressed the Terms of Reference which are in italics and our response is in Bold. This is on the following pages.

Yours sincerely

Geoff Wood
Executive Director

Next page: Our response to Terms of Reference

Orienteering ACT Incorporated greatly appreciates the support provided by



The Standing Committee on Climate Change, Environment and Water resolves that:
1) The Committee inquire into and report on the current and potential ecotourism of the ACT and region including the following matters:

a) The extent to which organizations currently deliver ecotourism activities in the Region.

Orienteering is a sport whereby participants race a course using map and compass, marked by controls. Orienteering ACT conducts orienteering events in the suburbs, Canberra Nature Park, ACT forest areas, Namadgi National Park and in neighbouring NSW. We conduct national events which attracts many visitors from interstate. As an example, at the 2010 Easter orienteering carnival, 600 competitors were from interstate and stayed in Canberra for the carnival.

b) The extent to which these organizations' ecotourism activities demonstrably contribute to, and detract from, conservation and restoration of ecosystems throughout the Region.

At our 2010 Easter carnival, as part of the condition to have an event in Namadgi, we were required to have an environmental study done by an independent consultant on the environmental effects of that event. This study showed that no environmental damage was done as a result of orienteering.

c) The extent to which these activities contribute to the Region's economy.

Our major orienteering carnivals contribute to the economy because people come to Canberra to participate and stay for the period of the carnival and sometimes longer.

d) The industry self-regulation and government regulation, including, but not limited to, accreditation and licensing, which is most likely to incentivise ecotourism activities that assist in the protection and enhancement of the Region's ecosystems.

Orienteering ACT has its own self regulation as far as the environmental impact of orienteering is concerned, in that we spread our events over a wide range of geographical locations. Of our 85 to 90 events each year (average attendance is about 110) we do not go to any one location more than three times per year and those locations are close to suburban areas. In sensitive areas such as Namadgi, we do not go to a specific location more than once each 2 or 3 years.

Regarding Government regulation, we do find sometimes this is a lot of work. Orienteering ACT hosted the Australian Orienteering championships in October 2011 and this attracted 700 participants of whom nearly 600 were from interstate. We conducted this event on mostly private land east of Cooma, and Cooma benefited from the overnight stays. Trying to host this event in ACT was too hard because of regulation.

e) The industry and government measures that are most likely to promote understanding of the biodiversity and other benefits of ecotourism organizations explicitly basing their processes and outcomes on principles of ecological sustainability.

No comment

f) Any other relevant matter.

Nil