

The Hon. Tanya Plibersek  
Commonwealth Minister for Environment and Water  
Suite M1 48, House of Representatives, Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600  
Email: [Minister.Plibersek@dceew.gov.au](mailto:Minister.Plibersek@dceew.gov.au)

Dear Minister Plibersek,

8 November 2022

**Re: Objection to the proposed raising of Warragamba Dam**

The Australian Plants Society NSW Limited (APS NSW) is a community organisation with over 1500 members across NSW. We strongly advocate for the protection and conservation of our unique natural areas including bushland and waterways, and the incredibly diverse flora and fauna that inhabit these areas.

Our members strongly object to any proposed raising of Warragamba Dam which would result in inundation of the southern areas of Blue Mountains National Park. Over 1300 hectares within the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area would be subject to temporary and, possibly periodic, inundation if the dam wall is raised. A further 4300 hectares of national park and reserve areas would also be impacted. A total of 65 kilometres of river and stream systems would be affected, including the Coxs and Kowmung Rivers and associated creeklines. These areas are well known for their unique botanical, environmental and aesthetic values. They also hold high significance for First Nations People, namely the Gungundurra People.

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), which provides advice to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), has written to the Commonwealth Government, stating that the project “*appears to be inappropriate in relation to the requirements for world heritage convention.*”

This proposal places the World Heritage status of the Greater Blue Mountains at risk. We are extremely concerned about impacts to listed threatened ecological communities, including Grassy Box Woodlands and the threatened fauna they support. The impacts and potential threats of this project include habitat loss, vegetation clearing, soil degradation and adding to the impacts of climate change by degrading vegetation. This proposal does not meet the aims and objectives of the *National Threatened Species Action Plan (2022-2032)*, in which the Blue Mountains area has been declared a priority location. It will not enhance the safety of residents on floodplains.

We advocate that people need plants. The statement made by NSW Premier Perrottet “we put people before plants” is short-sighted and undervalues and disrespects the natural ecosystems and associated processes and functions that we constantly rely on to support our way of life. It is not simply plants that will be affected, but ecosystem processes, habitat values and our unique fauna that inhabit these areas.

We ask you to withhold any approval and funding for this proposal. We encourage you to use any powers and provide any assistance to NSW regarding the following:

- Restrict further development in floodplain areas.
- Review emergency responses in times of flooding and promote “flood plans” for residents, similar to bushfire plans or the “are you bushfire ready?” initiatives.
- Provide increased funding to the State Emergency Services and develop more advanced warning systems for residents living on floodplain areas.
- Do everything possible to protect and enhance biodiversity in NSW, rather than approve projects which have massive impacts and may not even reduce flood risks.

Yours Sincerely,

Dan Clarke (B.Sc – Hons) (Email: [office@austplants.com.au](mailto:office@austplants.com.au))  
Conservation Officer, on behalf of the Board of Australian Plants Society NSW.