

**From:** [Ben Lans](#)  
**To:** [DGR Inbox](#)  
**Subject:** Discussion paper on potential reforms to the Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) tax arrangements.  
**Date:** Wednesday, 2 August 2017 11:48:33 PM

---

Senior Adviser  
Individual and Indirect Tax Division  
The Treasury  
Langton Crescent  
PARKES ACT 2600

I am writing in response to the discussion paper on potential reforms to the Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) tax arrangements. I am greatly concerned at the emphasis on environmental DGRs to the extent that I believe there is political motive behind the proposed reforms. It would appear that this is simply a second attempt to introduce legislation, previously attempted in 2015 under the Abbot Government, to restrict the ability for environmental organisations such as the Australian Conservation Foundation, the Wilderness Society and a wide variety of genuine environmental advocacy groups, to represent the view of their members to the government.

There are various organisations that conduct 'on ground' environmental rehabilitation. Organisations such as Land Care etc, and there is a role for those organisations. However there is also a role for environmental groups/bodies/member's organisations, to act in an advisory role to government, ensure that the best interest of the environment are considered, and act as a counter balance to the powerful lobby of the commercial players, such as the mining industry for example.

All voters have a right to be heard. If a voter wishes to donate money to a legal entity that proposes to lobby government on matters of the environment, I believe the government has no right to force the spending of that donation in any particular manner, as long as the donation is spent in a lawful manner. It is the responsibility of the government to ensure we live in a sustainable environment and that all actions that are conducted are done so in the interests of all the constituents.

Free speech is a right and a strong and healthy democracy encourages free speech. It does not try to restrict the access of any element of the electorate, such as those who wish to belong to an environmental DGR.

*Ben Lans*

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]