



To whom it may concern

Draft Urban Forest Strategy 2020-45

My Office finalised the *2019 ACT State of the Environment Report* on 19 December 2019 (https://www.envcomm.act.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0009/1483569/SOEFull.pdf). Chapter 4 in this report is *Urban Trees in the ACT – Nature in the City*, which includes two relevant recommendations:

Recommendation 10: advance Action 1 of the *Canberra's Living Infrastructure Plan: Cooling the City* (2019) by convening an environmental-economic accounts steering committee with representatives from government, academics and the community.

Recommendation 11: continue to collaborate with other jurisdictions and research institutes to generate the evidence base for appropriate urban forest understory and other plantings, having specific regard to climate change implications.

Recommendation 10 relates directly to *Canberra's Living Infrastructure Plan: Cooling the City* (2019) so is not relevant for the *Draft Urban Forest Strategy*. In relation to Recommendation 11, examples from other jurisdictions, both Australian and international have been referenced, however ongoing plans for collaborative research into appropriate urban forest understory planting is lacking and should be included.

Consideration of climate change within the *Draft Urban Forest Strategy* is commendable, including the focus on diversity of tree species and considering the suitability of traditional tree species under changing climate conditions. These approaches are critical to ensure a sustainable urban forest under future climate changes. A preferred species planting guide was referred to on page 39 under Endnote 15. It is assumed this document is the *Plant Species for Urban Landscape Projects, April 2019*, however this is unclear. This document should be publicly available and reviewed regularly to ensure accuracy.

The other key issue for urban trees which was a focus in the *2019 State of the Environment Report* is ongoing maintenance. This is mentioned in the *Draft Urban Forest Strategy* but I would like to reinforce the importance of this for successful implementation of the strategy.

Thanks for your consideration. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any queries.

Yours Sincerely

Dr Sophie Lewis
Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment

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