



Wildlife Queensland

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Agriculture and Environment Committee

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Re Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015

We are very pleased that this Bill goes a long way to reinstating the important provisions which were destroyed by the amendments made in 2011 and 2013.

- Reinstating “the conservation of nature” as the sole object of the Act.
- Reinstating national park (scientific) as a class of protected area.
- Reinstating the management principles of a national park (scientific)
- Removing special management area (scientific) from the management principles of national parks.
- Reinstating conservation parks and resources reserves as separate classes of protected area and reinstating their management principles. This involves removing regional parks and the resource use areas that were required to separate those areas that were previously conservation parks and resources reserves.
- Removing a stupid provision that specified that an amendment to a management plan did not require consultation if the change was consistent with State government policy. The same provision is also to be amended in the *Marine Parks Act 2004* and the *Recreation Areas Management Act 2006*.
- Removing an expired provision relating to grazing stock on national parks for emergency drought relief.
- Amending the *Land Act 1994* to ensure that existing grazing leases on protected areas are no longer rolling term leases.

We are however concerned that this opportunity has not been taken to remove the other special management area provided for in the management principles of national parks in section 17 of the NC Act - special management area (controlled action). That would have gone a long way to reinstating the cardinal principle for the management of national parks, an election commitment of the present government. This could have been done by reinstating national park (recovery), or by redesignating all those areas as conservation parks.

We would also like to see other classes of protected area that were reinstated - namely Wilderness Area, World Heritage Management Area, International Agreement Area, and Coordinated Conservation Area. Regardless of the extent to which these protected areas had been used in the

past, they all have a part to play in maintaining a range of protected areas that are in step with the global categories established by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

We are very concerned that the term “ecotourism facility”, which was inserted into section 35(1)(a) of the Nature Conservation Act in 2013, has not been removed from the legislation. This provision has the capacity to allow the development of tourist resorts inside national parks, and it overrides the cardinal principle. Such development would overturn more than a century of park management on Queensland mainland parks where tourist resorts have been encouraged on private land adjacent to national parks but not inside parks. In our region Ecotourism is a relatively new concept and needs to be developed with the appropriate guidelines or the natural beauty and wilderness areas on which that tourism depends will be compromised. . For example , the deplorable lack of management of the Cape Richards Resort lease on Hinchinbrook Island.

Thankyou for the opportunity to comment . We await with interest the next Bill of amendments .

Yours sincerely ,

Suzanne Smith (Hon.Sec.)