

The Chair
Agriculture and Environment Committee
Parliament House
Brisbane Qld 4000

25/11/15

To whom it may concern,

I would like to make the following submission regarding the proposed amendments to the *Nature Conservation Act 1992*.

The amendments to the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* that are contained in the Bill are necessary and I support them, in particular:

1. the reinstatement of the sole object of the act (the conservation of nature) and the reinstatement of three abolished classes of protected area – national park (scientific), conservation park, and resources reserve.
2. the removal of special management areas (scientific) from the management principles of national parks and the restoration of national parks (scientific).

I am however very concerned that the 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). This 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. This is a major dilution of the commitment made by this Government to return to scientific management principles.

The Government should also reinstate other classes of protected area that were abolished by the Newman Government; 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).

I am 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 of management for conservation. Such development overturns 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 within parks.

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By definition, development of true 'eco tourism' should add to the conservation estate, not detract from it by reducing its area and putting increased pressure on protected areas. To truly fulfil the principles of eco-tourism, such developments must be on adjacent land which is managed privately for conservation, not within the existing Parks.

Thank you for providing the opportunity to make this submission,

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