



**Research Director**

Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee

Parliament House

Cnr George and Alice Streets

Brisbane QLD 4000

[arec@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:arec@parliament.qld.gov.au)

17<sup>th</sup> August 2012

Dear Sir/ Madam,

**RE: Reducing regulatory burdens  
for Queensland's agriculture and resource industries**

The Wilderness Society Queensland Inc. appreciates the opportunity to comment on the proposed reduction of regulatory burdens.

The Wilderness Society Queensland does not believe streamlining processes for Queensland's agricultural and resource industries should be at the expense of "reducing" environmental protection standards and assessment processes. Some entities may refer to environmental assessment processes as "burdens", however, these assessment processes are critical for clear and transparent decision-making on determining likely and potential environmental impacts.

The Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee's issues paper (No.1, July 2012) presents a range of issues in dealing with Government processes. We are concerned that there is an underlying bias throughout the document towards the financial "burden of regulation" without adequate consideration of the 'environmental burden of inadequate regulation'.

The views of the Productivity Commission regarding the "greatest net benefit to the community" are likely to be quite different to those of community and not-for-profit organisations. For example, we believe that the well regulated protection of the environment provides sustained healthy country and healthy people, including future generations thereby having the "greatest net benefit to the community".

The COAG principles of best-practice regulation clearly state that "government action should be effective and proportional to the issue being addressed". Issues such as mining which may adversely impact natural ecosystems, protected areas and World Heritage Areas, therefore, require the Queensland Government to have adequate regulations to protect these national and international values.

**The Wilderness Society QLD Inc**  
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For this inquiry to succeed in delivering the “greatest net benefit to the community”, streamlined Government processes must not be implemented in such a way as to diminish environmental protection mechanisms or result in net destruction of environmental values. This balance is absent in the current issues paper and we believe if not addressed, this inquiry will significantly contribute to the enhanced degradation of Queensland’s natural environment and the health and well-being of present and future generations.

We would welcome an opportunity to present our views in any public hearings the Inquiry may hold. For further information on this submission, please contact Dr Tim Seelig 07 3846 1420 or [tim.seelig@wilderness.org.au](mailto:tim.seelig@wilderness.org.au)

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tim Seelig', written over a horizontal line.

Dr Tim Seelig  
Queensland Campaign Manager  
The Wilderness Society