

25 October 2013

The Research Director
Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee
Queensland Parliament
BRISBANE QLD 4001

By e.mail: arec@parliament.qld.gov.au

Dear Mr Hansen

RE: SUBMISSION IN SUPPORT of the NORTH STRADBROKE ISLAND PROTECTION AND SUSTAINABILITY AND ANOTHER ACT AMENDMENT BILL 2013

QRC welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission to the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee regarding the *North Stradbroke Island Protection and Sustainability and Another Act Amendment Bill 2013*.

PART A – INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

About the Queensland Resources Council

The Queensland Resources Council (QRC) is the peak representative organisation of the Queensland minerals and energy sector. The QRC's membership encompasses exploration, production, and processing companies, energy production and associated service companies. The QRC works on behalf of members to ensure Queensland's resources are developed profitably and competitively, in a socially and environmentally sustainable way.

The holder of the mining tenements at North Stradbroke Island which are referred to in the Bill, Sibelco Australia Limited, is a member of the QRC.

The Queensland Resources Council **supports** the introduction of this Bill into Parliament and congratulates the Queensland Government's commitment to both the future of the community of North Stradbroke Island and its mineral sands economy.

Background – Previous QRC submission against the North Stradbroke Island Protection and Sustainability Act 2011

When the Bligh Government introduced the *North Stradbroke Island Protection and Sustainability Bill* in 2011, QRC lodged a submission with the Scrutiny Committee at the time, explaining that the 2011 Bill had created a sovereign risk problem for Queensland resources investment at that time, as well as being in breach of fundamental legislative principles, subject to inadequate consultation and without

undergoing the applicable regulatory assessment process. For ease of reference, we have attached a copy of our 2011 submission.

In more detail, the key provisions of the 2011 Act which were of most concern to QRC were:

- Provisions retrospectively shortening the terms of existing mining tenements, after the mining tenements had previously been granted, without compensation;
- Statutory amendments to Sibelco's environmental authority, with no right of review, which restricted mining to a 'mine path', with only a 5% leeway for variation, without taking into account mine health and safety requirements, operational workability, infrastructure requirements, access issues or the practicalities of progressive rehabilitation.

QRC warned at that time that the Bligh Government's series of legislation targeting individual resource companies had led to a perception of sovereign risk, in turn causing a dramatic tumble in resource sector investment confidence, reported in reputable surveys. This warning turned out to have been correct, as was subsequently demonstrated by the further dramatic downturn of investor confidence after the legislation had taken effect.

General support for the Newman Government's recognition of the problems with the 2011 Act and attempt to find a solution

QRC welcomes the recognition in the Explanatory Notes for this Bill that the 2011 Act had serious problems including the creation of sovereign risk for the State of Queensland, unnecessary red tape and legislative duplication; and numerous unintended consequences such as preventing access by the mining lease holder to carry out necessary rehabilitation. We believe that the current Bill goes a long way towards 'restoring Queensland's reputation for minimal sovereign risk' as noted on p5 of the Explanatory Notes.

We also welcome the long overdue recognition of the significance of the sand mining industry's underpinning of the economy of North Stradbroke Island, outlined on pp2-3 of the Explanatory Notes. As noted in the speech by the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, the Hon AP Cripps, when introducing the current Bill, it was simply 'naïve' of the Bligh Government to assume that the North Stradbroke Island economy, which has been underpinned by the resources industry since 1949, would suddenly and automatically transition to some other type of economy, with no support and in circumstances where the Bligh Government's stated goal was ultimately to close 80% of the island to business activity.

Over more than fifty years, sand miners have contributed to the growth and development of the Island's and Queensland's economy. This has been afforded both directly and indirectly, including through employment opportunities, infrastructure construction, support for community groups and royalty payments. By allowing the mining lease holder to continue mining and access for rehabilitation, the island will be in a realistic position to transition to other industries, as rehabilitation is completed. We hope and trust that a similar naïve mistake will not be made again.

PART B – SPECIFIC COMMENTS ON THE BILL

While QRC supports and welcomes the intent of the current Bill, we have a few specific comments.

First, while we understand that the simplest approach to addressing the problems with the 2011 Act was to amend that Act, QRC does have a concern in principle with stand-alone legislation targeting a particular company. The significant improvements that the Bill makes to the North Stradbroke Island Protection and Sustainability Act does not exactly restore Sibelco to the position it was in prior to the introduction of that Act. QRC strongly suggests that the use of legislation to constrain any individual operation, ie this Act is the only piece of legislation in Queensland that calls out specific end dates for specific mining operations, is unacceptable to the resources sector. Once the specific historic problems of the 2011 Act have been solved, in the longer term we would still like to see the mining lease holder's operations on North Stradbroke Island ultimately restored to a level playing field in common with the rest of Queensland's mining industry in terms of processes.

Second, there is a clerical error in the environmental authority that is included in the Bill, in that it mistakenly includes reference to mining leases which are no longer in existence. Obviously, it is incorrect for the company to appear to have ongoing environmental operational responsibility in respect of mining lease areas which it does not hold as a result of the 2011 Act. As the peak industry body for the resources industry, we are not only concerned about the implications for the particular mining lease holder in this instance, but also that this could set an undesirable and somewhat ridiculous precedent.

While it is noted that the environmental authority is to be administered in the future under the *Environmental Protection Act 1994*, which impliedly was intended to include the ability to apply for amendments from time to time (eg. when the department publishes updates to model conditions), QRC would prefer to see this specific point expressly noted either in the Bill or the explanatory notes. As a peak industry body, QRC has particular concerns about the targeted appearance of an individual environmental authority being embedded in legislation and this is a situation that we would like to see normalised in the longer term (while recognising the unusual circumstances that the government is trying to address in the short term).

Finally, QRC would like to place on the record our strong concerns with the extremely short timeframe given for submissions to the Committee.

The work by Sibelco, and its contribution to the North Stradbroke Island community, is a fine example of how important the resources sector is, and its pivotal role in underpinning the Queensland economy as one of the government 'four pillars'.

Subject to the relatively minor issues noted above, QRC welcomes and supports the *North Stradbroke Island Protection and Sustainability and Another Act Amendment Bill 2013* and commends the Bill to the Committee.

Yours sincerely



Greg Lane
Acting Chief Executive



30 March 2011

Ms Julie Copley
The Research Director
Scrutiny of Legislation Committee
Parliament House
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BRISBANE QLD 4000

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Dear Ms Copley

North Stradbroke Island Protection and Sustainability Bill 2011

The Queensland Resources Council (**QRC**) is a not-for-profit peak industry association representing commercial developers of Queensland's minerals and energy resources, and it works to secure an environment conducive to the long-term sustainability of minerals and energy sector industries in Queensland. The holder of the mining tenements at North Stradbroke Island which are referred to in the *North Stradbroke Island Protection and Sustainability Bill 2011* (the Bill), Sibelco Australia Limited, is a member of the QRC.

1. Context

The context for this submission is that the QRC has become increasingly concerned about sovereign risk trends in various examples of recent Queensland legislation affecting the minerals and energy sector, and the direct implications for investor confidence in exploration and minerals development in Queensland, which have become clear from recent international reporting.

The Fraser Institute, an independent Canadian public policy research and educational organization undertakes an annual ranking of the world's most attractive jurisdictions for mineral exploration and development. This is based on the opinions of mining executives representing 494 mineral exploration and development companies on the investment climate of 79 jurisdictions around the world.

The recently released 2010-2011 Fraser Institute survey shows that Queensland is now ranked 38 out of 79 jurisdictions for resources investment – a dramatic tumble from last year's 24th position and the lowest ranking of all Australian states and territories. Queensland was ranked 8th as recently as 2006-07. The full report can be found at:

<http://www.fraserinstitute.org/uploadedFiles/fraser-ca/Content/research-news/research/publications/mining-survey-2010-2011.pdf>

The sovereign risk message from the Bill which shuts down mineral sands mining on North Stradbroke Island by 2019 will have inevitable negative consequences for future investment in Queensland resource projects. This is exacerbated by ongoing Wild Rivers declarations and the proposed strategic cropping land legislation.

2. The fundamental legislative principles

The QRC is concerned that the Bill does not have sufficient regard to rights and liberties, in particular, based on the following fundamental legislative principles under the *Legislative Standards Act 1992* (Qld), set out in Section 4(3):

- (i) 'compulsory acquisition of property only with fair compensation';
- (g) 'does not adversely affect rights and liberties, or impose obligations, retrospectively';
- (b) 'consistent with principles of natural justice'.

3. Not supported by RAS

In addition, it is noted that the Bill was not supported by a Regulatory Assessment Statement, notwithstanding that it will necessarily have significant economic and social impacts not only for direct mining jobs, but also indirectly (which is not addressed in the explanatory notes) on support service providers such as haulage contractors and providers of various North Stradbroke Island facilities.

4. Consultation

QRC is also seriously concerned about the poor consultation process. It is suggested that the description of consultation with the company in the explanatory notes at p8 is something of an overstatement:

'The company which owns and operates all three mines on NSI has been consulted during 2010 and 2011 on the proposal to end mining.'

It would perhaps be more accurate to say that the company was informed of the proposal to end mining within the timeframe nominated in the Bill, as opposed to being 'consulted'. The company was not in any way consulted about the proposed mine path provisions.

5. Key provisions of concern

a. Early termination of mining tenements without compensation

The key types of provisions which most directly and obviously breach fundamental legislative principles are:

- (a) The series of provisions which retrospectively shorten the terms of existing mining tenements, after the mining tenements have previously been granted, primarily in Part 2 Division 2, together with Schedules 1 and 2.
- (b) Section 6 (No compensation) which provides that: *'No amount, whether as compensation, reimbursement or otherwise, is payable by the State to any person for or in connection with the enactment or operation of this part'*.

b. Statutory imposition of mine path

Perhaps less obviously, but just as seriously, the series of provisions which create statutory amendments to Sibelco's environmental authority, with no right of review, restricting mining to a 'mine path', with only a 5% leeway for variation,¹ are also in breach of fundamental legislative principles, because this Government's mine path has not properly taken into account mine health and safety requirements, operational workability, infrastructure requirements, access issues or the practicalities of progressive rehabilitation. QRC is advised by Sibelco that this is not a mine path which was at any time proposed by the company, or that the company was consulted about for its input, but rather it has simply been imposed. In this regard, the explanatory notes could give a misleading impression where they state at p7:

'The current leaseholder's own projected mine path was used to estimate the area of land and resource that might be required until 2019'.

Although it appears that an historic dredging mine path prepared by the company some years ago may possibly have been used to calculate the current rate of mining, the legislative mine path is not otherwise related to the leaseholder's own mine path. In particular, although Sibelco advises that it had previously provided recent mine path information to the Department of Environment and Resource Management for both dredging and dry mining, the mine path imposed under this Bill has failed altogether to take into consideration the mine's information or planning in relation to dry mining resources. Accordingly, the above statement from the explanatory notes would appear to be quite misleading.

It would also be fair to say that, in circumstances where a Bill purports to permit mining for a term (and the explanatory notes seek to justify this as a 'balanced' approach),² but in fact the mine path imposed is so restrictive that the relevant mining could not reasonably be carried out safely and practicably at current rates for that period, that the legislation and explanatory notes are giving a misleading impression of the extent and period of mining allowed by the legislation. The mine path also includes areas which have already been mined, as expressly acknowledged by the explanatory notes at p7:

'Further, restricting the Enterprise mine path is justified by the outcome that it will increase environmental protection and minimise potential environmental harm by containing mining activities as much as possible to areas already disturbed by mining.'

However, it is not clear why it is seen as a 'balanced' approach to double-count areas which have been previously mined.

The explanatory notes also argue at p11: *'All rehabilitation requirements under the relevant environmental authority issued under the Environmental Protection Act 1994 will continue until discharged, regardless of the end date of each mining lease.'* It is unclear how the Government has come to this novel legal opinion, given that the company will not be entitled to remain on the land to carry out rehabilitation (which is an element of carrying on a mining operation under the *Mineral Resources Act 1989*) following the early termination of the mining leases. According to a statement from the Premier quoted in the Courier-Mail (p18) 'Straddie decision 'a sham', "By 2021, after a two-year decommissioning and rehabilitation period, 75 per cent of the island will be declared national park." If there is indeed intended to be a two year decommissioning and rehabilitation period following the early termination of the mining leases, which is proposed to remain the responsibility of the company, it is unclear how the Bill intends to facilitate rights of access for this purpose.

¹ This series of provisions is primarily set out in Part 2 Division 3.

² For example, at p6: 'This is considered to be a reasonable balance...'

Alternatively, if the explanatory notes and the Courier-Mail are wrong and the rehabilitation period is intended to occur prior to 2019, the other statements in the explanatory notes about the same rate of mining continuing until 2019 would seem to be incorrect.

6. Failure of the explanatory notes even to acknowledge the breach of FLPs

The explanatory notes do not go quite so far as to concede that there is a breach of FLPs by imposing provisions which impose early termination of existing mining tenements and a mine path which has not been the subject of consultation with the company as to its safety and workability, both without any right to compensation. Instead, the explanatory notes only see this as 'arguable' (p6) or 'it could be argued' (p7). Presumably, this would be because the term 'property' in Section 4(3)(i) is undefined in the *Legislative Standards Act 2007*. A mining tenement is not a land titles interest, but it is undeniably a valuable proprietary right and it is highly disturbing to the minerals and energy sector that the Queensland government apparently has difficulty recognising this. In Section 36 of the *Acts Interpretation Act 1954*, the term 'property' is defined broadly as follows:

'property means any legal or equitable estate or interest (whether present or future, vested or contingent, or tangible or intangible) in real or personal property of any description (including money), and includes things in action.'

Queensland's minerals and energy sector and our international investors have difficulty imagining more blatant breaches of FLPs. The message sent to the international market about Queensland's sovereign risk problems is worsened because apparently the Queensland Government cannot even understand that there are valuable and compensable rights and liberties involved in holding mining tenements, as opposed to acknowledging the existence of those rights and liberties in the first place and then setting out to explain why there might be special circumstances in this instance which the government believes might justify the breach.

7. Inadequate justification of breach of FLPs

In relation to the **Yarraman** Mine, the government's suggested justification for early statutory termination of mining leases in 2015 is, essentially:

'The current position is that Yarraman is scheduled by the company to end in 2015 due to resource depletion...' (p5)

Of course, given that the company was planning to close this mine by 2015 anyway, the statutory early termination for Yarraman is not as significant a practical issue as for the Enterprise mine. However, QRC would like to make the point, on behalf of its members (and their investors) generally, that just because a company announces a plan to close a mine earlier than its mining leases would otherwise normally have terminated, it would be a concern if this is seen as a justification for imposing that early termination by statute. Again, this does tend to send an unfortunate signal to the wider market.

In relation to the **Enterprise** mine, part of the government's justification for statutory imposition of an early termination date, which has never been accepted by the company, was that:

'...the holder of a mining lease does not have a right to renewal and the Bill also renews a key lease at Enterprise Mine, which expired over three years ago, prior to the current leaseholder acquiring the mine and without which the mine would not be able to operate.'

Throughout Queensland, most large mines are subject to numerous mining tenements, which have been granted progressively, as the staging of the mine has developed. If an interested purchaser or

investor is considering acquiring a mine, then at any given time, there are likely to be mining tenements which are due for renewal and for which renewal applications have been duly lodged. It is not unusual to experience significant delays in the normal processing of renewal applications, with those delays being beyond the control of the company and instead the responsibility of the relevant State government agencies. QRC has raised this particular point with the State Government and there does not appear to be any recognition of the role the government has played in leaving Sibelco with an un-renewed lease for almost four years.

Historically, where a company has complied with its obligations, lodged its renewal applications properly and in a timely way, there was a reasonable expectation that the relevant State agencies would eventually get around to processing the applications, rather than using their own delays opportunistically to impose early termination on other existing mining tenements, without compensation. However, it is apparent from the explanatory notes to this Bill that the Queensland Government's intention is to send the opposite message to the minerals and energy sector and its international investors.

The explanatory notes also attempt to justify the approach on the following basis: '*The Bill terminates leases **not needed for mining** at the end of 2019, if they have not expired beforehand.*' (p2). The QRC is advised by Sibelco that they are not aware of any reason why the State should have been under the impression that the mining leases are 'not needed for mining' in terms of the resource. Accordingly, this attempted justification could be misleading.

Another part of the suggested justification for breach of FLPs is 'the environmental and biodiversity impacts of each mine'. In fact, the company has been acknowledged by government itself as a leader in environmental management. **Appendix A** has copies of a 2008 joint government-company press release announcing that Sibelco (then Consolidated Rutile) had been awarded for leading rehabilitation works the 'prestigious' Resource Industries Sustainability Award for outstanding performance in environmental best practice under the auspices of DERM's (then the Environmental Protection Agency) Sustainable Industries Awards. There is also a ministerial only release about the awards.

If a company which has been acknowledged as at the top of the industry in terms of its environmental performance can have its mining tenements subject to statutory early termination without compensation, and on the basis that part of the suggested justification for this is on environmental grounds, this sends a particularly unfortunate message in terms of Queensland's sovereign risk issues. It also tends to send a message that it is futile to be such a strong environmental performer, if operating in Queensland.

Yours faithfully



Michael Roche
Chief Executive

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Appendix A – Details of 2008 environmental award for North Stradbroke Island – joint press release by the former EPA and the former Consolidated Rutile Limited

‘CONSOLIDATED RUTILE LIMITED TAKES OUT TOP HONOURS FOR PROGRESSIVE REHABILITATION

Consolidated Rutile Limited (CRL) took out top honours in the annual Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Sustainable Industries Awards held at the Gold Coast on Friday 31 October 2008.

CRL, who beat a field of high-caliber entrants, was awarded the prestigious Resource Industries Sustainability Award for outstanding performance in environmental best practice.

Sustainability, Climate Change and Innovation Minister, The Hon. Andrew McNamara, who attended the awards, said he was delighted to take part in an event that showcased Queensland companies and business leaders that have set new benchmarks in environmental performance.

“The awards recognise those companies that are incorporating environmental sustainability into their everyday business operations and proving that sustainable practices can deliver enhanced profits and market advantages,” Mr McNamara said.

In accepting the award from Mr McNamara and Frances Hayter, Director of Social Policy and Environment at Queensland Resources Council, CRL Environment and Community Relations Manager, Paul Smith, said sustainability is becoming increasingly important in today's operating environment and complacency is no longer an option.

“Everything we do is supported by responsible and sustainable environmental management practices,” Mr Smith said.

Having been in operation since 1966, CRL is the first mining company in Queensland to have successfully developed approved rehabilitation criteria and is renowned internationally for its progressive rehabilitation of native vegetation and ecosystems.

The world-class rehabilitation criteria ensure all levels of the organisation use rigorous, well-tested processes and procedures to minimise environmental risk and ensure a self-sustaining ecosystem that is similar to pre-mining conditions.

“We restore 75 hectares of North Stradbroke Island on average each year and have progressively rehabilitated more than 4,000 hectares of land since 1966,” Mr Smith said.

“This rehabilitation work involves restoring dunes up to 130 metres above sea level and revegetating them to pre-mine conditions using seed collected from local native plant species, such as Eucalyptus, Banksia and Melaleuca.”

“This land will gradually become National Park, and we are committed to working collaboratively with the Queensland Government through the EPA and Department of Sustainability, Climate Change and Innovation to accomplish this.”

“Our dedicated team is passionate about restoring our mined sites and is proud to be setting new, world-class benchmarks in progressive rehabilitation,” Mr Smith said.

The annual EPA Sustainable Industries Awards were introduced to showcase Queensland's best and most innovative sustainability practices in business and industry. The Awards recognise those business leaders who are not only considering sustainable development options, but also taking the crucial next step of building their businesses around sustainability principles.’

1 November 2008

**Minister for Sustainability, Climate Change and Innovation
The Honourable Andrew McNamara**

Saturday, November 01, 2008

Top gong for environmental achievement

The importance of the Bligh Government's Toward Q2 vision was highlighted during the 2008 EPA Sustainable Industries Awards held on the Gold Coast.

Sustainability, Climate Change and Innovation Minister Andrew McNamara said the awards supported the Q2 aims of promoting a strong, smart and green Queensland.

"The awards showcase Queensland business leaders, companies and technologies that have set new benchmarks in environmental performance," Mr McNamara said.

Leading Australian engineer and prominent Queensland businessman, Mr Martin Albrecht AC, has won the Premier's Award for Leadership in Business Sustainability, part of the 2008 Environmental Protection Agency's Sustainable Industries Awards.

Mr McNamara presented Mr Albrecht, Chairman of Thiess and geothermal energy pioneers, Geodynamics, with the award on behalf of the Premier at the 2008 EPA Sustainable Industries Awards gala dinner on the Gold Coast.

"I am delighted to recognise Martin Albrecht for his personal initiative and leadership in promoting sustainable development, environmental innovation, and partnerships between industry, government, and the community.

"His belief in the capacity of individuals to make a positive difference, combined with a passion for protecting and restoring the waterways of the world, has resulted in the outstanding work of the International River Foundation and its internationally renowned events, the annual River Symposium and Thiess Prize," Mr McNamara said.

Mr Albrecht has been a key founder, supporter, and promoter of these vehicles for international collaboration in environmental management.

Over a decade, The River Foundation, Symposium and Thiess Prize have brought together many thousands of people from dozens of nations to recognise achievement and share information, technologies and experience in best practice waterways management. In the process, new visions have been set for some of the world's major catchments and their communities.

Under the River Foundation's 'twinning program', Australia has partnered with Kenya and in March 2007 installed a self-powered, sustainable water purification system in a rural community in Kenya, which provides safe and clean drinking water to more than 3,000 people.

A pioneer and advocate of geothermal energy, Mr Albrecht is chairman of Geodynamics Limited, a company seeking to develop hot fractured rock geothermal energy projects to produce sustainable, zero-emissions energy.

With recent investment in new drilling technologies, in January this year, Geodynamics successfully drilled a well to a depth of 4,221m. Results from this and other wells have shown the potential to generate more than 10,000 Megawatts of baseload power, roughly equal to the current generating capacity of all of Queensland's power stations combined.

The trailblazing work of companies like Geodynamics heralds a new technology with the potential to generate one-fifth of Australia's total electricity needs over the next 25 years, without producing any carbon dioxide emissions.

Mr Albrecht is considered one of Australia's most influential engineers. As CEO from 1985 to 2000 of construction, mining and environmental services giant, Thiess, he steered the company through a major expansion during which its annual turnover increased from \$190 million to \$1.8 billion.

Mr Albrecht commissioned Thiess's Southbank headquarters, which, at the time, set new sustainable design benchmarks for commercial building in Brisbane.

In 2002, Mr Albrecht was made a Companion of the Order of Australia (AC) for service to the construction industry, the engineering profession, and the community in education, corporate social responsibility and industrial safety.

Recently honoured with a Gold Medal by the Australian Institute of Company Directors, Mr Albrecht has made a major contribution to the governance and leadership of many organisations, including Leighton Holdings Ltd, Queensland Gas Company, the Siemens Australia, the Australian Prospectors and Miners Hall of Fame and the Wesley Medical Research Institute.

"These are the third annual awards which recognise nine outstanding Queensland environmental business projects," Mr McNamara said.

More information about the awards can be obtained at <http://www.epa.qld.gov.au/> or through the EPA Communication and Events unit on 3225 1524.

Media contact: Wendy Nye on 3336 8004

The Premier's Award for Leadership in Business Sustainability was one of nine awards presented at the third annual EPA Sustainable Industries Awards, attended by more than 300 people.

Eight category winners were also announced at the Awards.

Minister's Award for ClimateSmart Leadership – News Limited – Murarrie, Brisbane and Cairns

News Limited, publisher of Queensland's largest circulating newspaper, is committed to addressing its impact on climate change by lowering energy use and becoming carbon neutral by 2010. A major local component of Rupert Murdoch's worldwide climate change initiative, 1 degree, it has won this year's Minister's Award for ClimateSmart Leadership, sponsored by Bendigo Bank.

Corporate Sustainability Award – ALDI Australia – Loganholme

Environmental innovation and logistical efficiency is evident in almost every aspect of ALDI's business, from store design through to transportation and supply chain management. For business eco-innovation that delivers benefits to the business and customers Aldi has won the Westpac Bank Corporate Sustainability Award.

Industrial Eco-efficiency Award – Buderim Ginger Limited – Yandina

This Sunshine Coast ginger producer won the Foster's Industrial Eco-efficiency award for its development of an innovative automated process to significantly reduce its water usage, wastewater, and gas consumption during the ginger cleansing process.

Innovation in Sustainable Technologies Award – RedFlow Pty Ltd – Seventeen Mile Rocks

Brisbane-based RedFlow Pty Ltd won the Hatch Innovation in Sustainable Technologies Award for its creation of an environmentally friendly zinc-bromine battery that, when combined with photovoltaic solar panels, creates a source of renewable energy that is available on demand.

Rural Sustainability Award – Groves Grown Tropical Fruit - Yeppoon

The Groves family orchard, on the northern outskirts of Yeppoon has been selected as the winner of the Rural Sustainability Award sponsored by Australian Country Choice. Ian and Sandi Groves are managing and expanding production of their mangoes, lychees and caranbola (star fruit) in an environmentally friendly way.

Sustainability Partnerships Award – Wide Bay Water and Dhugamin CDEP Pty Ltd – Hervey Bay

This project to produce eucalyptus oils from native trees in Hervey Bay has earned the Sustainability Partnerships Award, sponsored by Natural Solutions Environmental Consultants and Conics. The project is a partnership between the Dhugamin Community Developments Employment Project (CDEP) Corporation Pty Ltd, the Department of Primary Industries (DPI), and the Wide Bay Water Corporation (WBW).

Sustainability in the Built Environment Award – Leighton Contractors Pty Ltd and Leighton Properties Pty Ltd – Brisbane

Brisbane's first commercial building to be awarded a 5 Green Star rating for office design from the Australian Green Building Council of Australia, Leighton's Green Square project in Fortitude Valley has won the Ergon Energy Sustainability in the Built Environment Award. The project includes 17,000 square metres of A-grade commercial offices, high-technology

utilities, community facilities, a childcare centre, basement car parking and a residential precinct, surrounding a retail plaza.

Resource Industries Sustainability Award – Consolidated Rutile Limited – Dunwich

Consolidated Rutile Limited's (CRL) continuous rehabilitation of land at its North Stradbroke Island sand mining operation has achieved a self-sustaining ecosystem similar to pre-mine conditions, winning the company this year's inaugural Resource Industries Sustainability Award, sponsored by Queensland Resources Council.