

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Agriculture Resources and Environment Committee](#)  
**Subject:** FW: SUBMISSION to the Inquiry into the North Stradbroke Island Protection and Sustainability and Another Act Amendment Bill 2013  
**Date:** Saturday, 26 October 2013 11:20:11 PM

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[REDACTED]

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**26<sup>th</sup> October 2013**

**Parliamentary Committee  
Queensland Government**

**RE: Submission to the Inquiry into the North Stradbroke Island Protection and Sustainability and Another Act Amendment Bill 2013**

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the The North Stradbroke Island Protection and Sustainability and Another Act Amendment Bill 2013 from proceeding.

I have been visiting the unique and beautiful place that is North Stradbroke Island since the mid- 1970s. Inevitably, much has changed in this time. One thing that has not, and never will change, is that fact that North Stradbroke Island is more valuable to Queenslanders retained forever as a natural resource for tourism and recreation than destroyed for quick profits by a privately owned Belgian mining company. Like Fraser Island, it is not in the long term public interest for sand mining to continue on Nth Stradbroke Island. It is a very short sighted and out dated notion that sees exploitation of an area of such outstanding natural beauty and environmental importance for short term economic gain in State Government coffers and, mostly in profits going offshore to Sibelco, a Belgian mining company.

I implore you not to repeat the mistakes of the past and consider this short excerpt from Wikipedia about the history of mining being stopped on Fraser Island:

Sand mining leases were first granted in 1950, and mining continued until 1977. <sup>[35]</sup> Without public knowledge the Queensland Government granted mining leases to the American mining company Dillingham-Murphyores in the 1960s. In 1971, the Fraser Island Defense Organisation (FIDO)

opposed the granting of more leases to the company. Despite more than 1,300 submissions that were made to the local mining warden objecting to new leases, the submission was granted.<sup>[43]</sup> FIDO took the case to the [High Court of Australia](#) which overruled the decision noting that the public interest was not being upheld. Dillingham-Murphyores continued mining. The [Whitlam Government](#) established Australia's first environmental impact inquiry which recommended that mining cease.<sup>[43]</sup> Eventually [Malcolm Fraser](#) canceled the company's mineral export license which halted mining on the island.

This excerpt highlights the fact that the Queensland Government has corrected past misjudgements and been forced to realise that the value of places such as Fraser Island and North Stradbroke Island lies not in the resources that can be extracted but the unquantifiable value in the beauty of the natural environment if it is protected. It is unthinkable that Mining should be able to continue to damage this fragile environment and to mistakenly think that when it has been thoroughly exploited and degraded that it can be turned into National Park.

Furthermore, it seems highly likely that long term sustainable jobs associated with nature tourism are likely to be sacrificed if damage to Stradbroke's environment continues for the sake of short term jobs in mining. Like other Mining areas in Australia, it needs to be recognised that the resources that the Mining companies seek are finite and, sooner or later, they will need to look further afield and the jobs and revenue from mining royalties will run out. The proposed Bill will lead to loss of employment opportunities in the long term not a gradual transition as claimed.

Finally, I consider it very inappropriate that favours are being granted to Sibelco, a company currently facing criminal charges in the Queensland Magistrates Court. There are serious allegations against the company that are as yet unresolved and I urge the committee to act in the public interest and ensure that the Bill is shelved until the case has concluded. Instead, it would appear, that the Qld Government sees fit to grant special consideration and treatment by way of a law that allows a bypass of the Mineral Resources Act. Again, it leads one to question if the Queensland Government is acting in the best public interest.

I therefore repeat, that I am wholly opposed to the passing of the North Stradbroke Island Protection and Sustainability and Another Act Amendment Bill 2013 and beg the committee to carefully weigh their

decision and stop and consider how they will be judged by future generations if they allow mining to not only continue but expand on Nth Stradbroke Island.

Yours sincerely,  
Robin O'Rourke