

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Agriculture Resources and Environment Committee](#)
Subject: Submission to the Inquiry into the North Stradbroke Island Protection and Sustainability and Another Act Amendment Bill 2013 by R Jackson
Date: Sunday, 27 October 2013 9:39:40 PM

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For the attention of the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee
Parliament House,
Brisbane QLD 4000

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

My name is Ronald Jackson. I am an Australian citizen and a New Zealand resident. My wife and I have had a unit at 11 Prosperity Street, Point Lookout for the past 25 years and in most years we spend the winters at Point Lookout and the rest of the year in New Zealand. We have other property in Queensland and pay tax and rates. We have a long association with Stradbroke Island dating back to our childhood. I am a veterinarian and am registered in New Zealand as a specialist in veterinary epidemiology.

I strongly oppose the introduction of the North Stradbroke Island Protection and Sustainability and Another Act Amendment Bill 2013 on the following grounds.

The explanatory notes for this Bill do not provide any real analysis of the effects of extending the time frame and extensions to the lease areas on the economy of the island and its natural features. Most of the arguments put forward for the Bill simply reflect the aspirations of Sibelco and could have been obtained from the company's publicity statements.

There are no maps which show the boundaries and extent of the current mining leases, the proposed extended mining leases, indigenous joint management areas and the proposed national park. Their absence makes it impossible for Parliament and the public to understand the extent of the damage which inevitably follows present sand mining methods or indeed the intent of the Bill.

Decisions have been made after private consultation with Sibelco without involving the community. The process was certainly not transparent and it is particularly galling to hear comments from parliamentarians to the effect that the party in power was given a mandate, based on the last election results, to change the NSIPS Act. That interpretation is seriously flawed, it reflects badly on those who make it and it is not acceptable in a democratic society. Statements such as "the early cessation of mining on NSI will have a severe effect on NSI and regional economies" are just unsubstantiated statements with no explanation as to what "severe" means or its quantification.

There seems to have been minimal research done in the preparation of this Bill and there is no evidence of checking the validity of some of the supporting statements such as the total number of people employed by Sibelco. There is no information about the makeup of the workforce – full and part-time and how many are resident on the island. Nor is there any information about other industries and economies on the island or any analysis about changes that have occurred over time.

There is no economic or cultural evaluation of the value of the island's natural resources and the effects of extensions to the present mining leases. The arguments in the supporting statement to the Bill are general in nature and one-sided with little consideration of alternatives or modifications which would be acceptable to the island communities.

There is a distinct impression that this Bill is the result of strong lobbying by Sibelco and its financial support to Mark Robertson's election campaign. Sibelco is portrayed a responsible company that brings benefits to the island and the economy but its record includes selling sand from the island without a permit (court case not yet resolved) and possible disregard of the provisions of the EBPC Act which is under Commonwealth review. The government's objective of reducing approval waiting times and red tape are commendable but may not be appropriate for industries that have a poor record of compliance with regulations and terms of contracts.

There are already large areas of mining lease from which the public is excluded. It may be argued that Sibelco's sole access to large areas of the island is hindering the development of alternative activities.

The non-winning five year period allowed for rehabilitation after mining has ceased is risky. History shows there are many instances of rehabilitation not being done after mining operations cease. Rehabilitation is far from perfect and has many shortcomings with regard to survival of native animals after displacement and subsequent regeneration of vegetation. It falls far short of sustainability of natural resources.

If there are concerns about the current legislation then there should be opportunities to consider them with active community involvement with an objective of reaching a general consensus and soundly based judgements. I would support that approach but I cannot support hastily prepared legislation which is obviously biased in favour of Sibelco.

Yours faithfully,
Ron Jackson.

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