

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

I am opposed to the extension of sand mining on North Stradbroke Island for a number of reasons. They include:

1. Since I moved to the island permanently in 1991 I have seen the tourism industry grow at a great rate and the number of shops and cafes that have opened reflects this growth. Many businesses and sole traders like me work from the island using the Internet to sell goods and services and to represent clients worldwide. The island is close enough to Brisbane national and international airports to meet clients face to face when necessary. A sample of such skills now working on the island include scientists, world renowned wildlife, underwater and documentary and feature film makers, photographers, travel writers, copy editors, publishers, advertising creatives, graphic artists, health practitioners and more. There is a rapidly expanding conference business developing and the island is a favoured place for many, many weddings.
2. The last decade has seen a huge growth in the University of Queensland's Marine Research station on the island. Its location at Dunwich attracts scientists and students from all over the world.
3. Traditional owners now play a leading role now in running tourism ventures and their culture is unique to the island. Their artwork on local buildings has led to international commissions and is also another attraction for visitors through local indigenous galleries.
4. Laboratory tests have found that the organic jelly bush honey produced commercially on the island has a greater level of medical efficacy than even New Zealand manuka honey. Disruption to remaining leptospermum stands on the island as a result of mining and groundwater will kill this business, as it has along much of the east coast of subtropical Australia.
5. Several scientific studies have shown that the island's freshwater lakes, springs and aquifers are rare and sensitive to disturbance. The health of Moreton Bay Marine Park is adversely affected by disruption to North Stradbroke Island's groundwater. It is beyond argument that mining has damaged lakes and springs and therefore the all-important groundwater that is highly susceptible to disturbance. Its protection is vital in providing drinking water to the surrounding region and supporting a number of habitats. For more on the importance of Stradbroke's groundwater to Moreton Bay and the region follow this link to [Integrating Groundwater Science and Human Well-Being](#); given past actions by the miner Sibelco it is difficult to trust assurances from the government that mining will not adversely affect adjoining areas of great environmental sensitivity. Any remedial action demanded by the government will be ineffective once damage is done.
6. There is now a thriving autumn and winter festival season that ranges from chamber music to ephemeral art to world music events. Year round events include writers retreats, an international tai chi conference, yoga

retreats and more. These bring a lot of international and interstate artists and visitors to the island, building on the steady growth of tourism as an important part of the economy. None of these existed ten years ago and all are likely to become of increasing economic value to the economy if the island can only retain its natural environment.

7. The island's inland behind the beaches, with its lakes and forests, has been locked away from visitors for decades under mining lease. Yet this is another resource that can be used to attract tourists without requiring any major investment in infrastructure. Indigenous guides could lead walking and camping tours while sharing their local knowledge and Dreamtime stories. Many traditional owners are university educated high achievers, but their traditional culture is still strong within them and part of their lives each and every day.
8. At the same time as these different economic activities have burgeoned on the island I have seen the mine withdraw from the township of Dunwich by selling its staff houses. I have seen more and more mineworkers commuting to and from the island by ferry, whereas once local people were employed. I have several local friends who have lost their long-term jobs with Sibelco, given the choice of a redundancy payment or contract work at much reduced rates of pay. This does not reflect a company concerned with the best interests of its local employees or the local economy.
9. Mining trucks on the main road are large and they speed, despite assurances from Sibelco that this is not the case. This has a terrible effect on wildlife and is dangerous to cyclists who are coming in greater numbers than ever to visit, buying everything they require on the island and becoming an important tourism growth sector.
10. Sibelco has selectively provided funding for businesses and organisations prepared to participate in their campaign to have the current government elected in order to have the Bligh government's laws changed. But that support is actively withheld from businesses or community organisations they believe do not toe the company line. Therefore the extensive support Sibelco claims to have has been bought and then exploited by a very expensive public relations and lobbying campaign. This means opponents to mining find it hard to be heard above the all the pro-mining clamour that the miners' money has bought.
11. Opponents to mining on Stradbroke extend far beyond the island community and include thousands of people in Brisbane who use the island as a weekend and holiday escape from the city.

For all of the above reasons, and I'm sure they have been supported by well-founded scientific and economic research from others addressing the Inquiry, I believe the Bill should be opposed.

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission.

Yours sincerely,

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