



# Mackay Conservation Group

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7 March 2018

Committee Secretary  
Economics & Governance Committee  
Parliament House  
By email: [egc@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:egc@parliament.qld.gov.au)

**Re: *Mineral and Energy Resources (Financial Provisioning) Bill 2018***

Dear Secretary

Mackay Conservation Group supports the Queensland Government's moves to reform laws and policies relating to mine site rehabilitation. We have been working to understand the regulatory system regarding mine rehabilitation since 2015 and have found it to be opaque, inconsistent and unenforceable. We have also observed that the current regime puts the taxpayers of Queensland at considerable risk due to systemic failures regarding the calculation of financial assurances. We welcome the introduction of legislation to rectify those failings. We particularly welcome the introduction of rehabilitation milestones to ensure that progressive rehabilitation is undertaken on mine sites.

We are very concerned, however, that the *Mineral and Energy Resources (Financial Provisioning) Bill* will allow mining companies leave residual voids, waste rock dumps and tailings dams behind, continuing the current unsustainable practice. Those "non-use management areas" are permitted to be left unrehabilitated under Section 126D(2) if there is likely to be an increased risk of environmental harm or the harm is constrained to the mine site and the cost is prohibitive given the public interest in having mining occur. We are very concerned that the S126D(2)(b)(i)&(ii) require value judgements on the part of officers of the department responsible for administering mining that could be inconsistent with ecologically sustainable principles.

Mackay Conservation Group understands that there are many examples of rehabilitation of mine sites throughout the world that result in the landscape being restored to the original condition that it was in prior to mining, or as close as possible to it. The United States has had legislation in place since the 1970s that requires mining companies, many of them the same companies that operate in Queensland, to restore the landscape to its approximate original shape and land use. There is ample expertise within mining companies to undertake that type of work.

We encourage the committee to recommend the modification of Section 126D(2) to ensure that no residual voids, waste rock dumps or tailings dams remain on mine sites once the mining process is complete.

Regards

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Peter McCallum', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Peter McCallum  
Coordinator  
Mackay Conservation Group