

QUANDAMOOKA YOOLOOBURRABEE ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

RNTBC

ICN: 7564



Health and Community Services Committee

Sent via email – hcsc@parliament.qld.gov.au

RE: SUBMISSION NATURE CONSERVATION OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

This submission is compiled from views supplied through the QYAC membership.

The proposed amendments to the Nature Conservation Act to allow development in National Parks, is based on a promise of increased revenue to the State. This needs to be backed up with some strong fiscal analysis and comparisons with other forms of revenue raising. Where private development in National Parks is allowed in other states i.e. NSW, there has been little uptake, due in part to the banks not being keen to lend for this type of activity. A cost-benefit analysis of implementing park entry fees should be examined as an alternative revenue raiser.

Facilitating built development in National Parks, constitutes a policy shift for the State Government which runs the risk of transforming the mind-set and/or attitude of the public servants and Traditional Owners responsible for managing parks from one of biodiversity and habitat protection to that of revenue raising and corporate stakeholder management.

Broadly speaking, over the past 30 years or so those interested in ecotourism development have been told to buy the land next door or buy a block with existing eco-features and run a commercial enterprise there. In areas where landholders have changed their management regimes over time from say logging to running cattle to eco-tourism or a combination of farm and nature tourism, a relationship of value-adding and mutual respect has developed.

By allowing development in National Parks, proponents of ecotourism developments will no longer have to find the money to purchase the land component of the development. They can just lease it from the public (or Traditional Owners). Returns on the agreement (i.e. the lease payments or other actions) must result in some broader public and/or operational benefits. National Parks are for the benefit of everyone.

Leases create an interest in property in the park (rather than just an access agreement that a bus tour operator might have). This can result in exclusive use. That is, if you are not a client of the ecotourism facility, the owners can tell you that you are not welcome in that part of the National Park. This goes against the concept that National Parks are for the enjoyment of everyone.

Traditional Owner groups are increasing their operational interest in National Park management in some areas and many have aspirations to develop tourism

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businesses within National Parks. The amendments appear to remove some real and/or perceived impediments.

For Minjerribah (North Stradbroke Island) it may mean there are opportunities to develop low volume/high yield operations in more natural areas as opposed to the high volume/low yield operations in the more developed holiday parks and beach camping areas where most island visitation occurs.

Whatever the intention of the amendments, it must not result in high numbers of people or high impact development in a fragile ecology. National Parks are places where people should tread lightly on the earth and respect all living things.


Strategic planners and land managers need ongoing advice from environmental experts. If development in National Parks is supported, it must be informed by appropriate limits. In association with the amendments in NSW, as alluded to in the supporting papers, policy and sustainability assessments have been developed to guide the entry into agreements for private development in National Park areas. This provides some safeguards. However, how many people can the system sustain? What provisions are made for the supply and use of water, how will waste be managed and what are the risks to habitat protection?

It must be remembered, that areas of high conservation value need to be closed to development to ensure recovery or to protect them from becoming impacted in the first place.

Yours sincerely



Suzie Coulston
CEO QYAC
19 December 2012



From: ceo@qyac.com.au
Sent: Wednesday, 19 December 2012 2:03 PM
To: Health and Community Services Committee
Subject: Addendum to QYAC submission re Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012

Hello

Please also note that any such proposal may trigger the future act provisions of the Native Title Act 1994 and require the authorisation of the Native Title holders.

Any proponent of such activity, including a State Government, would ordinarily be required to fund the authorisation process and the reasonable costs of the prescribed body corporate in responding to such a proposal.

Suzie Coulston
CEO QYAC

