

**From:** [Carmel Kerwick](#)  
**To:** [Health and Community Services Committee](#)  
**Subject:** Private individual submission - Nature Conservation and other legislation Bill No 2 2013  
**Date:** Monday, 9 September 2013 7:42:42 PM

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The Chairman,  
Health and Community Services,  
Parliament House  
George Street, Brisbane QLD 4000

- The Object of the Act in Section 4 should only be the conservation of nature – it should not be changed. It is not necessary for National Parks to turn a profit for them to be contributing to Qld's economy. Tourists who visit a National Park also undertake other tourism activities. Camping retailers and small towns also benefit from domestic visitors. Attempts to increase direct economic gain from National Parks should only be done in a way that retains safe access for all and maintains conservation principles. Instead of developing national parks, why not simply charge entrance fees as most other states do? Many poorer countries (eg in Africa and Asia) have very high entrance fees for tourists and low fees for locals. Queensland has the smallest percentage of protected area, it cannot afford to have protected area lost to development in parks.
- The proposed abolition of 8 classes of protected area is a step too far with minimal gain and some potentially substantial losses. It is fair comment that no areas had been declared as wilderness areas, World Heritage management areas and international agreement areas. So nothing changes by abolishing them. However, nothing is gained either. WHMAs and IGAs could have a place in the future and, in fact, were considered for declaration in the past. Why remove that flexibility when its presence has absolutely no effect, financially or in terms of so-called green tape, on the management of protected areas?
- The loss of national park (scientific) and national park (recovery) does need to be reconsidered. The loss of these two classes of protected area achieves virtually nothing and substantially undermines the level of protection that is afforded to national parks.
- National parks (scientific) satisfies the IUCN category of protected area generally known as a nature reserve (the term used in NSW). These areas involve strict protection and management for a particular conservation purpose. Public access is strongly controlled. This class of national park is used for parks that protect, bridled nailtail wallabies (Taunton) and northern hairy-nosed wombats (Epping Forest). They sometimes require strong manipulation of the environment (including other native species) in order to ensure the survival of an endangered species. To simply absorb them into national parks and provide for a special management area (scientific) is unacceptable and unnecessary. Many species have become extinct over the last thirty years and many are perilously close to extinction, it is necessary to ensure that the mechanisms are in place to allow protection of these species.
- Similarly, national park (recovery), which was designed to allow for restoration of land that was destined to become national park, has been absorbed into national parks. This also makes a mockery of national parks status as the restoration requirements could take many years to achieve. Once again, there is little to be gained and much to be lost by abolishing this class of protected area. A special management area (controlled action) has been created to cater for a national park on which this work is being carried out. National park (recovery) should be retained.
- Forest reserve has been abolished as a tenure. It was established to act as a holding tenure in the SEQ Forest Agreement process. Many State forests that were being transferred to national park status contained a number of encumbrances (eg grazing, occupation licences etc) that had to be determined and negotiated before the land could be dedicated as national park. It has been an extremely useful holding tenure and there would appear to be no strong reason why it should no longer be available. Why wipe out that flexibility when it has served a very useful purpose in the past? The demise of forest reserve status would seem to reflect the governments desire not to transfer any State forests to protected area. In fact there is a move to return many forest reserves

to State forest status. It is appropriate to argue that forest reserve tenure should be retained. As with other abolitions, there is nothing gained by its loss, but future opportunities have been lost if it no longer exists.

- Revocation of a forest reserve can also take place under the Forestry Act if the forest reserve is to become a State forest. The strong requirements making it difficult to revoke a forest reserve under the NC Act are effectively sidestepped in another Act. A resolution of Parliament would no longer be involved. Smoothing the process of preventing forest reserves becoming protected areas has been facilitated by using another Act.
- Any tourist developments in national parks should be subject to a public consultation process therefore the management plan process should be retained not replaced with a management statement.
- Less than 1% of 20,000 national parks worldwide have any significant tourism infrastructure within them. And most of these developments pre-date park establishment or are on pre-existing enclaves of private land. In the USA, there are now efforts to remove infrastructure from National Parks. Why is Queensland half a century behind?

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