

To the Health and Community Services Committee
Re: Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2013

Dear Sir or Madam:

I wish to provide brief comment on the proposed changes to the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2013

To begin, it is obvious that the drafters of this proposed legislation simply do not understand the purpose of World Heritage Areas, national parks, Biosphere Reserves or any other protected area tenure which is set aside to continue to provide biosphere support and intact places of enjoyment for future generations. These places are fast becoming the only remaining habitats to support endangered species as well - and since we as humans do NOT have the right to wipe out other species from this planet, the status of protected tenure is paramount. However, this government myopically sees protected tenure only as unused potential to make money - there is no respect or consideration for priceless value of protected tenures as biosphere support or species sanctuaries!

I therefore object to all proposed changes to the NC Act including the flow-on changes which would result in other legislation. In particular, I find especially objectionable the notion to revise the Objects of the NC Act from the "conservation of nature" to "social, cultural and commercial use of protected areas",. The entire purpose of the 'precautionary principle' and action of protection would be wiped away with the typing of a few words. The government's assertion that parks are "locked up" is not at all true. Recreational activities abound in parks including WHA's and the key to success of these activities is that they are passive and non-destructive to the integrity of the tenure, allowing enjoyment of the resource without 'trashing the place'. This does not need to be changed - especially to wording which opens the door to "commercial uses" which is vague and will encourage not so passive uses such as extraction industries and clearing for private-profit endeavours.

Aside from not supporting any of the proposed changes, I would also like to mention another proposed change where decisions would be made by the Minister instead of Parliament. I strongly object to this, particularly in the current political situation where the "track record" of the incumbent party is more than obvious. Decisions of this nature should NOT be relegated to a single political figure and should remain under the scrutiny and voice of the entire Parliament as well as the public via the consultation process.

While there is more I could offer feedback on, I am short of time and feel that my blanket objection to all proposed changes should be considered as sufficient indication of my opinion and concerns. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,
Deborah Pergolotti
Cairns
winner: Centenary Medal and Cassowary Award

(signature and contact details are in separate document for privacy reasons)

