

From: [Genevieve Gall](#)
To: [Health and Community Services Committee](#)
Subject: Submission to the Nature Conservation and other legislation Bill No 2 2013
Date: Friday, 13 September 2013 3:37:52 PM

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

Dear Sir/Madam:

I understand that the *Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No2) 2013* introduced to Parliament by the Minister has been referred to the Health and Community Services Committee for review. Thank you for the opportunity to comment and please accept the following comments in submission:

1. Taking comments from the Chief Scientist of Australia, Prof Ian Chubb AC, Press Conference Canberra August 2103, as a measuring tool -

(a) **"rules and regulations must be in place "**

(b) **"take the people with you"**

then how do the proposed amendments measure up?

2. Before answering this I think one has to look at the purpose of the Act (**Object of the Act**). It seems the proposed amendments to the Object of the Act Section 4 change the primary concern from conservation of nature to a new wide ranging social, cultural and commercial use of protected areas. Once a court of law would look first at the Object of the Act when called on to interpret a provision of the Act and this gave strong protection to natural and cultural resources of national parks. Now this appears to have been watered down through the inclusion of too many purposes.

3. I am very concerned that conservation parks and

resources reserves have been abolished and rolled into a new class of protected area known as **regional parks**. I **strongly object** because I have seen, at local government level, the ramifications of "active parkland" versus "passive parkland". The general public has a different understanding of each and the difference between "protect" and "enjoy". The management of conservation reserves as against regional parks has differing requirements and a higher level of expertise is required for conservation areas. Many land care groups, bush care groups operate in care of conservation for species protection. While the philanthropic groups Bush Heritage and Australian Bush Conservancy, among others, are acquiring , protecting and managing regional and national areas of conservation significance, I do not see them regarding this land as "regional park". Hence there is no advantage in the re-name "regional parks".

4. Some national parks I understand have **scientific status** requiring strict protection and management measures to achieve survival of endangered species , including public access restriction and manipulation of the environment. Absorbing this category into national parks general category seems both non protective and unnecessary.

5. Likewise, restoration of **national park (recovery)** should be left as it was because it takes many seasons to return land to status. Look to Bush Heritage and Australian Wildlife conservancy for their approach on restoring and rehabilitating land that is essential in the whole .

6. **Forest reserve** appears has been abolished as a tenure. This seems to negate the handy flexibility in established holding patterns and overcoming encumbrances in decisions around State forests.

7. Returning to the Chief scientist of Australia's

maxims:

"rules and regulations must be in place"

It seems the proposed amendments to the Act are geared to achieving greater economic return on the national estate (read National Parks).

That widening of purpose in removing the previous rules and regulations that gave guarantee of protection and conservation of our natural landscape and cultural heritage is a backward step in achieving this first maxim.

8. "take the people with you":

Management plans are essential in any changed activities in national parks. **The public must have confidence that these are in place**, as Prof Hobbs says, prior to changed uses. These same management plans must retain **full public comment opportunities**.

In summary, the key values of our national parks must be retained, maintained and achieved.

Yours faithfully
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