

Environmental Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022

Submission No: 3
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Submitter Comments:

I am a retired environmental scientist who has worked both here and overseas. I was the expert witness on the Environmental Impact Assessment process for Hong Kong Government in a High Court test case of their Legislation. I welcome upgrades of such legislation. I recognise the delicate balance between protection of the environment and the costs incurred by project proponents. However, I am concerned that the Queensland Act is not triggered by Renewable Energy projects. The EBPC Act was never designed to cover all aspects of potential environmental harm. Neither Act deals adequately with cumulative impacts which will be considerable as the area required for both energy production and all the mining for associated minerals is huge. Current offsets are abysmal in many instances. The natural environment plays a major role in mitigating the release of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere. MIT has estimated that 56% of the carbon dioxide we produce is absorbed by natural systems, forest doing much of the work. Loss of forest is not easily replaced in a timely fashion. We also need our good agricultural soils to provide us with food and sequester carbon. In order to manage climate change and decarbonize our world, we need to walk a careful path, or is it a tightrope? Please Queensland Government tread carefully.

Submitter Recommendations:

Energy projects should trigger the Act. Cumulative impact should be assessed. Natural systems should be valued for the important role they play in the mitigation of climate change. Offsets must be adequate in response to harm caused.