

Inquiry into Crocodile Control and Conservation Bill 2025

Submission No: 104
Submitted by: Daniel Bamblett
Publication: Making the submission and your name public
Attachments: No attachment

Submitter Comments:

In regard to the proposed Crocodile control and conservation bill 2025 I have lived in North Queensland for 40 years. During this time I have engaged in various outdoor recreational activities including fishing, hunting, wildlife photography, camping and hiking. Most of these activities have been carried out in or adjacent to known Estuarine Crocodile habitat without incident. Now having young children of my own, we now engage in most of these activities as a family and these outings are more important and meaningful than ever before. Knowing that Estuarine Crocodiles are likely present on these outings has not prevented us from undertaking these activities, but has added an extra level of excitement as we all appreciate and enjoy the occasions that we see these animals in their natural habitat. I have also worked professionally in wildlife conservation with several species of crocodilian for over 25 years. This has included talking to the general public about crocodiles and the important role they play in the environment and the potential risks associated with entering Estuarine Crocodile habitat. This combination of experiences has allowed me to understand all aspects of Estuarine Crocodile management and the implications it can have on crocodiles and people. The bill proposes that a single director has the power to decide when, where and how many crocodiles and eggs may be taken or killed. While the bill also proposes an advisory committee to provide advice and recommendations, it does not stipulate that the advice or recommendations must be taken into consideration allowing the director to ignore all advice and recommendations and act on their own personal beliefs and opinion. Giving one individual this amount of power has great potential to have a profound negative impact on Estuarine Crocodiles as a species and the ecosystems in which this species inhabits. Allowing any waterway to be declared as a "populated waterway" at the whim of the director, will only effectively further shrink the habitat of the Estuarine Crocodile. The desire to engage in recreational pursuits, personally or commercially, should not be sufficient grounds to remove an entire species from its natural environment. The Estuarine Crocodile is a keystone species, meaning they have a significant impact on the entirety of each ecosystem in which they live. Various waterway based recreational activities, such as fishing, scenic tours and wildlife tours are directly linked to the environmental health and beauty of a waterway. Removing Estuarine Crocodiles from these waterways is highly likely to result in the waterway to lose the very qualities that made it attractive for recreation in the first place. This bill has been put forward by a political party that has been advocating the large scale culling of Estuarine Crocodiles for over a decade. This party demonstrates no understanding of the ecological importance of crocodiles. Many of the comments and supporting arguments that this party has provided to push this agenda are inaccurate and misleading. The results of a recent survey compiled by DESI, the most comprehensive population survey in over a decade, shows crocodile numbers are far from out of control. Queensland's Estuarine Crocodile population has recovered from unregulated hunting to a population size estimated to be as high as 30,000 individuals. This is only 1/3 to a 1/4 of the estimated population of crocodiles in the Northern Territory. The Northern Territory has not had to resort to the large scale culling of crocodiles to protect people. The current crocodile management program employed by the Queensland Government is, in my opinion, as close to a perfect balance between crocodile and environmental protection and public safety as can be realistically achieved.