



Gecko - Gold Coast and Hinterland Environment Council Assn Inc.

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Research Director
Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000

Per email to: ipnrc@parliament.qld.gov.au

Dear Sir or Madam

SUBMISSION ON THE WATER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2015

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on the Water Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. Gecko- Gold Coast and Hinterland Environment Council Assoc. Inc. is a not-for-profit environment association founded in 1989 and has been active for the past 26 years in protecting the environmental values and ecological sustainability of the Gold Coast, Queensland and, when appropriate, nationally.

Gecko would like to commend the return ecologically sustainable development principles to the WROLA Act and the removal of water development options in their entirety. However, we do not believe the amendment goes far enough to enable the WROLA Act to deliver on these principals.

Under Clause 12 Amendment of Section 59, inserted section 2- Purposes of Act and their achievement, the amendment states that 1) The main purposes of this Act are to provide a framework for (a) the sustainable management of Queensland's water resources and quarry material, where for subsection (1)(a), sustainable management is management that- (a) incorporates the principles of ecologically sustainable development; and (b) allows for the allocation and use of water resources and quarry material for the economic, physical and social wellbeing of the people of Queensland, within limits that can be sustained indefinitely.

We believe that retaining the proposed groundwater framework that gives miners a statutory right to take water under the WROLA Act is likely to result in the unsustainable removal of groundwater, which may lead to loss of water supplies for other water users, including farmers and graziers. This is in odds with ecologically sustainable development principles, and does not adequately allow for the allocation and use of water resources for the economic, physical and social wellbeing of the people of Queensland. Additionally, allowing for an over-allocation of water out of Great Barrier Reef Catchment systems could result in a concentrated level of run-off which may be detrimental to the Reef.

The Government's election commitments relating to the Water Reform and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2014 include an immediate act to prevent the commencement of the Newman Government's water laws which will have a detrimental effect on the Great Barrier Reef catchment systems and allow for over allocation of Queensland's precious water resources. We do not believe Water Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 delivers on this commitment, for the reasons outlined above.

Gecko also does not believe that 'Make Good' provisions will address all landholder's concerns with bores impacted by mining operations. The destruction of springs and aquifers, a foreseeable occurrence under the proposed groundwater framework, cannot be effectively made good.

In order to deliver on election commitments, we believe the provision allowing miners a statutory right to take underground water should be effectively removed from the WROLA Act through the Water Legislation Amendment Bill 2015.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kellie Lindsay', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Kellie Lindsay
Campaign Coordinator – Gecko

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