

Supplementary submission no. 080

25 February 2014

11.1.14



The Research Director
State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000
sdiic@parliament.qld.gov.au
25 February, 2014

Dear Sir/Madam

Calls for Supplementary Submissions to the Qld Parliamentary Inquiry into the Regional Planning Interests Bill 2013

The Logan and Albert conservation Association (LACA) makes the following comments in regard to the Regional planning issues Bill 2013:

1. The Bill does not clearly prohibit mining, industrial or large-scale agricultural activity or other destructive development in ecologically sensitive areas, including but not limited to Strategic Environmental Areas under current or intended regional plans.
2. The Bill fails to provide environmental certainty for our most significant natural areas because it does not clearly place the protection of Wild River High Preservation Areas, Special Floodplain Management Areas and World Heritage standard landscapes over the interests of mining and destructive development.
3. LACA believes that the notion of any 'balance' between environment and development has long disappeared and that instead of adopting a principle of 'assumed coexistence' between environment and development, the Precautionary Principle should be applied to ensure risks to ecological values are removed.
4. LACA believes that the Bill provides opportunities through 'loopholes' for small scale mining activity to occur in current Wild River Declarations on Cape York and in Western Queensland.
5. LACA is particularly appalled by the absence in the Bill of provisions allowing for public/third party appeals regarding regional interests assessment and decisions and public/third party appeals regarding changes to an Environmental Authority arising from the granting of a Regional Interests Authority.
6. We believe that the Bill lacks The Bill transparency because significant components of the legislation will only be included in a Regulation which is not available for public scrutiny.
7. LACA is further concerned about provisions in the Bill granting sweeping powers of discretion to the Director-General of the Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning, such that she or he may be directed or pressured to allow mining applications in Strategic Environmental Areas (SEAs) or other sensitive areas.

Given the number and gravity of serious environmental failings in the Bill identified by LACA, we strongly urge you and the Committee to recommend withdrawal of the Bill in order that substantial amendments can be introduced to significantly strengthen its environmental protections.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Barry Fitzpatrick', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is somewhat stylized and overlaps the line.

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