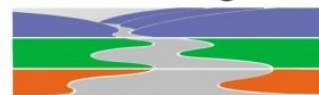


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Noosa Integrated



Catchment Assn. Inc.

Our catchment is in our care...

Submission No. 080

26 June 2014

11.1.22

25 June 2014

State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee
Parliament house
George Street
Brisbane QLD 4000

Email: SDIIC@parliament.qld.gov.au

Dear Sir/Madam

Submission to State Development, Infrastructure and Planning (Red Tape Reduction) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014

Thank you for your invitation to the Noosa Integrated Catchment Association (NICA) to prepare a submission to the above Bill. NICA has reviewed the draft Bill and Explanatory Notes and wishes to bring some points of view to the attention of the SDI&I Committee.

NICA acknowledges the Bill proposes legislative changes that are in alignment with the policy commitments of the Queensland Government. However the two issues of 'clean' coal and wild rivers are being addressed in a direction that NICA considers is likely adverse to the long term interests of the Queensland community.

'Clean' Coal

Quotation marks around the word 'clean' have been applied as the concept of clean coal is a misnomer. The process of mining, transporting and burning of coal will never be clean and it is an obvious detrimental source of fossil fuel. Notwithstanding the detriment it is plain that coal will continue to be used as an energy source into the longer term.

Carbon capture at coal-fired power plants has the potential to significantly reduce CO₂ emissions. Current technology can reduce emissions by over 50% in a new power plant. The Explanatory Note suggests the costs of carbon capture and storage are 'currently prohibitive'. Nonetheless a new power plant dedicated to this concept will commence operations in Mississippi later this year. While not suggesting that means all power plants designed to capture carbon will be economic, it is encouraging to see this technology applied in the market.¹

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Advances in technology and its implementation will progress only slowly if there are limited incentives. Regulating for improvements or placing a price on emissions are acknowledged mechanisms to improve emissions.

Between 2000 and 2011 world coal consumption soared 54% to 8b tons annually with China more than doubling its consumption to 3.8b tons. Australia was the 10th highest consumer at 131m tons. Our per capita use at 15kg per day is one of the world's highest.²

NICA acknowledges the Queensland Government retains the *Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2009* thereby offering facilitation to carbon storage projects, but believes more should be done to progress the technology in Australia.

1. Michelle Nijhuis, *Can Coal Ever Be Clean?*, National Geographic Magazine, April, 2014, Page 40
2. Ibid, Pages 34-35

Wild Rivers

NICA acknowledges the Queensland Government is introducing a different mechanism for protecting the particular interests of the north Queensland wilderness rivers. Our organisation does not profess an intimate understanding of the issues associated with these rivers.

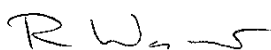
However, rivers are special places within our environment and generally do require more comprehensive, adaptive and integrated approaches compared to the current suite of legislation. The Noosa River Plan was a project NICA had considerable experience with and it highlighted the inadequacies of existing legislation to deal with the complex and integrated issues associated with rivers. The Noosa River Plan was an initiative of the Queensland Government and prepared in close conjunction with Noosa Council. It brought together the four key state agencies involved in regulating issues on waterways, the council and the community. All involved thought this was a successful model, though naturally state agencies were reticent due to resourcing if the approach was broadened to other rivers. There were consequent changes to the transport legislation to broaden the scope of considerations to decisions on river issues and introduced Marine Zones. The Noosa River Plan was almost fully implemented.

This submission asks that the committee members who as legislators, consider what alternate future measures might be introduced to support the future health of rivers more widely.

Concluding Remarks

NICA acknowledges this submission is unlikely to lead to any changes to the current Bill. However, we see the submission as an important opportunity to provide some community messages about the issues raised above. We appreciate your consideration over time to those matters.

Yours sincerely



Raul Weyhardt

Project Officer

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