

Planning (Social Impact and Community Benefit) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025

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I am deeply concerned that the Planning (Social Impact and Community Benefit) Bill sets a dangerous precedent by allowing Olympic developments to override environment and planning law. Natural areas and native species have an intrinsic value and should be protected because humans are only one of several million species yet humans have modified over 70% of the Earth's land area for their own needs whereas all the remaining species are left with the remainder, which is getting smaller and smaller over the years as humans take more and more land. When the world turns its attention to Queensland, it is necessary to ensure that international visitors can appreciate the precious natural wonders, like the Great Barrier Reef and local koala populations, and the rich cultural heritage by taking strong ecological action while ensuring that all development is properly assessed and located away from ecologically and culturally important areas.. I am particularly concerned about the implications of this Bill on the Aboriginal cultural heritage at Barrambin (Victoria Park) and the potential environmental impacts at Redlands Whitewater Centre. These sensitive sites must be assessed thoroughly, not exempt from planning and environment laws. I support making sure that sustainable energy developers fully articulate the impacts of projects and that benefits flow to the local community. It is necessary to make sure that such projects do not cause more harm than they prevent because wind turbines kill birds and solar and wind farms are often located in areas where they result in the destruction of native forests. I also urge the Government to apply the same requirements on community benefit agreements to resource projects, and maintain community objection rights for resource projects. I am concerned that there is a loophole allowing a coal mine that extracts less than 2 million tonnes per annum to avoid full environmental impact assessment, whereas a 2 hectares solar farm would be impact assessable and have to deliver a community benefit agreement and social impact assessment report. Australia has the worst species extinction record in the world and is as bad as Brazil when it comes to the destruction of forests and other natural ecosystems. Although extinctions have taken place ever since life on Earth began, human activities are causing them to happen hundreds of times more often than they would naturally. I lived in Australia from 1970 to 1992. Since I did not wish to be part of a country in which the large-scale destruction of natural habitats, logging of forests and extermination of native animals continue to take place and which is the result of genocide against indigenous peoples, I returned to my country of origin, Croatia, and encourage others to do the same. To further reduce my ecological impact, I live in high-density housing that is planned around public transport, am vegan and try to avoid and campaign against European imports of products that are made from raw materials that were grown, logged, mined or drilled in Australia, North and South America, Southeast Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. All developments should be rigorously assessed for the environmental and community impact. Olympic venues and the resources sector should not get a free pass by being subject more lenient environmental regulations. Please put the long-term benefit of the environment, native plant, fungi and animal species and Aboriginal cultural heritage before the short-term convenience and benefit.