

assessable transfers. It ensures that the holder of tenure, and therefore the environmental authority, ~~who has obtained the tenure under a non assessable transfer cannot carry out the activities under the environmental authority until the holder has been assessed and registered as a suitable operator.~~

~~In the context of the review of the environmentally relevant activities, or ERAs, that I announced in my introduction speech on the Greentape Reduction Act, this bill includes a provision to allow some ERAs to be prescribed as non-transitional ERAs in a regulation. This will preserve the existing development conditions as conditions of a development permit in the event that the ERAs are deleted after the commencement of the act.~~

~~Amendments to the Coastal Protection and Management Act will allow for the creation of self-assessable codes for the Integrated Development Assessment System, or IDAS, under the Sustainable Planning Act 2009. This will allow low risk development and I stress low risk development to proceed according to a set of standard criteria without requiring a development approval. Associated amendments are required to allow the right to use and occupy state coastal land where the activities comply with the self-assessable code. Coastal values will still be protected through the standard conditions of the self-assessment code.~~

~~This bill is another step in our pursuit to reduce unnecessary regulatory burden on Queensland while supporting the growth of a four-pillar economy and protect the environment. It will relieve business and industry of any possibility of paying a waste tax by completing the repealing process. It provides operators with the necessary flexibility needed to endure the economic road ahead. Finally, it will free up low risk development while maintaining coastal values. This bill represents strong environmental management supporting sustainable economic development. I commend this bill to the House.~~

First Reading



~~**Hon. AC POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection) (12.41 pm): I move—~~

~~That the bill be now read a first time.~~

~~Question put—That the bill be now read a first time.~~

~~Motion agreed to.~~

~~Bill read a first time.~~

Referral to the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee

~~**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee.~~

NATURE CONSERVATION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction



~~**Hon. SL DICKSON** (Buderim—LNP) (Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing) (12.42 pm): I present a bill for an act to repeal the Brisbane Forest Park Act 1977 and to amend the Forestry Act 1959 and the Nature Conservation Act 1992 for particular purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Health and Community Services Committee to consider the bill.~~

~~*Tabled paper:* Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012.~~

~~*Tabled paper:* Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012, explanatory notes.~~

~~I am very pleased to introduce the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. This bill aims to deliver on the Newman government's election commitments including increased access to national parks for ecotourism and red-tape reduction through a program of streamlining and reducing regulation. Importantly, this bill addresses our DestinationQ commitment to review the Nature Conservation Act 1992, enabling greater access for ecotourism.~~

~~Tourism is a major contributor to the Queensland economy and is one of the government's four economic pillars. Queensland's protected areas and the ecotourism opportunities they provide play a critical role in supporting this industry's growth and sustainability. However, significant economic opportunities are currently being lost due to restricted access to these areas for private investment in ecotourism infrastructure. As identified by industry, one of the key constraints to ecotourism investment is the inability to develop privately funded, permanent ecotourism facilities in our national parks. In response, this bill will deliver a new approach to ecotourism investment that addresses the tourism industry's demands and provides new opportunities to attract both domestic and international visitors to Queensland.~~

~~Under the proposed legislative provisions, the Nature Conservation Act will allow ecotourism facilities to be authorised on a range of national park tenures including national park, national park~~

(recovery), national park (Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal land) and Indigenous joint management areas (North Stradbroke Island). These new provisions will enable the development of ecotourism facilities focused on fostering the presentation, appreciation and conservation of the area's natural and cultural resources but will not involve modifying the national environment for activities which are contrary to its main focus. This means that developments such as golf courses and casinos would not be permitted.

A comprehensive policy framework and associated procedures will be developed to support the implementation of these legislative provisions. Leases of up to 30 years will be used to authorise ecotourism facilities, addressing investor concerns around security of tenure. Lease renewals for a further 30 years will be subject to the lessee meeting relevant performance criteria to ensure a long-term approach to sustainability. This policy framework will also include the development of a robust and transparent process to assess any proposed ecotourism developments.

The legislative provisions within this bill will address key government commitments to provide increased access to national parks including the DestinationQ commitments to improve access for ecotourism. Ultimately, this will be a catalyst for encouraging ecotourism investment and supporting the delivery of world-class ecotourism facilities and experiences in Queensland. This bill also addresses a key priority of this government in reducing regulatory and administrative burdens.

The bill proposes three additional amendments to streamline processes for dealings under the Nature Conservation Act and the Forestry Act 1959 and to remove unnecessary legislation. Firstly, the bill will simplify the approach to the authorisation of pre-existing infrastructure that has been inherited on land now included in national park estates. This includes utilities infrastructure such as powerlines, water pipelines and telecommunication towers. The current process for authorising this pre-existing infrastructure is a time and resource intensive procedure for both the Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing and the infrastructure owner, with little value added through such a comprehensive assessment process.


This bill will enable pre-existing utilities infrastructure approvals on national parks to be streamlined under the Nature Conservation Act. Introducing a simplified process will reflect the lower level of assessment required for pre-existing infrastructure and is expected to result in reduced application processing time by around 16 weeks. Authorisation of these facilities will benefit both the state and the proponents by reducing unnecessary administrative burden. Consultation with key industry representatives has indicated strong support for this initiative.

Secondly, the bill will expand both the time and area for occupation permits on state forests under the Forestry Act. There are currently around 345 existing coal seam gas well sites and 250 kilometres of gas and water pipelines installed in 21 state forests, with proposals for a further 180 wells and 100 kilometres of pipeline being assessed. Under current occupation permit provisions, a separate occupation permit is required for every 10 hectares, with permit renewals required every seven years over the life of the infrastructure. Due to the extent and long lived nature of infrastructure such as coal seam gas pipelines, telecommunications and electricity transmission facilities, current permit restrictions are not suitable, placing increasing administrative burden on both government and business. This bill will remove these limitations on occupation permits for state forests. This amendment will substantially reduce the number of permits and applications that need to be made for the use and occupancy of state forest lands by industry. The change will not alter the company's obligations to address the rights of other users and will not affect current revenue.

Finally, this bill will repeal the Brisbane Forest Park Act 1977, which is no longer required to fulfil the coordinating function for which it was established. The Brisbane Forest Park Act was created as a means to coordinate recreation and conservation across forested land to Brisbane's west. In recent years, as a result of changes in administrative arrangements and land tenure, use of this act has ceased. The land is now predominantly managed under the provisions of the Forestry Act and the Nature Conservation Act. In addition, the Brisbane Forest Park Regulation 1998 and the Brisbane Forest Park Regulation 1999 have now expired and there is no longer a Brisbane Forest Park Advisory Planning Board in place. This bill will repeal the act in order to remove unnecessary legislation to meet the government's program of streamlining and reducing regulation.

This Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012 delivers a range of proposed legislative amendments and provisions that are critical in delivering on key Newman government commitments and priorities. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

 **Hon. SL DICKSON** (Buderim—LNP) (Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing) (12.49 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Referral to the Health and Community Services Committee

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Health and Community Services Committee.

021

~~LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL~~

~~Resumed from 13 September (see p. 1947).~~

Second Reading



~~Hon. DF CRISAFULLI (Mundingburra LNP) (Minister for Local Government) (12.50 pm): I move—~~

~~That the bill be now read a second time.~~

~~As Minister for Local Government, I am proud to stand in the House today to read for the second time the Local Government and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. When I introduced the bill into the House in September I said that it represents the first stage of the government's ongoing work to put the 'local' back in Queensland's 73 local governments. We were elected on a promise to let councils once again have control of their own destinies, and that is what this legislation is destined to achieve.~~

~~The government knows that councils are the elected bodies closest to Queenslanders and we have intimate knowledge of how local government works with the Premier, Deputy Premier, Treasurer and 10 other members of this government having served their communities at the purist level of government. We know that councils are best placed to provide the most practical and appropriate local solutions to local issues. Queenslanders deserve to have the high functioning, high performing councils that can deliver the opportunities and growth that come when governments stop blocking progress. This bill returns to Queenslanders the voice to determine how their communities are managed and gives back to councils the responsibility, the accountability and the power to act.~~

~~My recent tour of all 73 local governments largely informed the improvements that the bill makes for local governments. The bill was informed by listening to the people of Queensland at the local level—something the Bligh government failed to do. As I outlined at the time of its introduction, this bill fulfills the Queensland government's pre-election pledge to empower local government and give them a high level of autonomy, authority and responsibility to plan and solve local problems. The bill will allow councils to get on with delivering the things that matter to ratepayers.~~

~~The bill delivers on a number of other specific election commitments such as putting mayors and councillors clearly in charge of councils; repealing the blatantly unfair requirement of the previous Labor government that forced councillors standing as candidates for state parliament to automatically resign; streamlining the material personal interests and the conflict of interest provisions; and repealing the requirement for a councillor to report another councillor's material personal interest, conflict of interest or misconduct but at the same time increasing penalties for those who wrongly use inside information.~~

~~Mayors and councillors will clearly be in control of their councils through the following amendments: giving mayors, along with committee chairs and deputy mayors, a voice on the appointment of senior executive employees; enabling mayors to direct both CEOs and senior executive employees; improving the ability of mayors and councillors to obtain advice or information from council officers; and providing that all delegations to the CEO must be reviewed annually by the mayors and councillors. Many of the amendments will significantly cut red tape which, in turn, will save councils money and manpower. The savings can then be used to make the community a better place to live.~~

~~There are, however, a number of specific amendments which individually will result in significant savings. Potential savings to council include the repeal of the long term community plan requirements. The cost of a community plan can vary significantly from council to council. Recently, the *Gold Coast Bulletin* reported that the Gold Coast City Council's community plans cost the council approximately \$1.1 million to develop. Additionally, savings will also be recognised when the councils are due to renew their community plans and also by the removal of the need to review and publish these plans annually.~~

~~The removal of the legislative requirement for councillors to automatically vacate office when nominating for state parliament will result in the removal of the need to conduct costly by elections where that councillor is not successful in being elected to state parliament. The cost of conducting a by-election is a significant burden for councils which can run into the hundreds of thousands of dollars.~~

~~Body corporate status was removed from Queensland councils except Brisbane City Council through a legislative amendment in 2008. An unintended consequence of this amendment is that local governments no longer qualify for corporate reconstruction relief from stamp duty under the Duties Act 2001. The restoration of body corporate status to local governments, amongst other things, will ensure~~