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The Research Director
State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee
Parliament House
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Parliamentary Inquiry into the Galilee Basin State Development Area

North Queensland Conservation Council is the regional conservation group for north Queensland, covering an area from Cardwell to Bowen and from the Reef to the NT border, and acting as the voice for the environment in matters of environmental protection within the region.

We are pleased to be able to make a submission on the *State Development and Public Works Organisation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2014*, which provides for the declaration of the Galilee Basin State Development Area (GBSDA), and ask that it be given serious consideration.

NQCC's over-riding concern is that the declaration of this area is not in the public interest and thereby is in conflict with the *State Development and Public Works Act 1971*.

It is very clearly apparent that the purpose of the proposal is to secure public and private land for the commercial benefit of a limited number of private (and foreign-owned) companies. It is patently not in the interest of local landholders and arguably not in the interest of the community at large.

The government would appear to be riding roughshod over the wishes of current landholders and the community with little reason other than to support the development of resource developers that make a limited and short-term contribution to the well-being of the state and its people. Indeed there is no evidence provided to suggest that this is not the case.

With a proposal of the size and impact of this, it is essential that decisions are based on the very best information available. At the very minimum this would require a full and detailed cost/benefit analysis (CBA) of the project with, for example, explicit evaluation of all monetary and non-monetary (including but not limited to non-tangible, residual and non-user costs and benefits, including of externalities associated with the development and all direct, indirect and cumulative costs and benefits, and an assessment of the distribution of the costs and benefits.

All assumptions made in the CBA would need to be stated in order to render the analysis fully transparent. The assumptions as to the demand for this proposal would also need to be robust and clear. Sensitivity analysis to test the impact of assumptions would be required.

Reliance on the out-dated and widely condemned (including by government) input-output approach to impact assessment must be rejected.

Furthermore, full and open consultation must be undertaken with landholders and other community members in the region. This proposal has the potential to have major and permanent impacts on the region – and its potential for other industry. To make an ill-informed judgement will have massive ramifications for the people, the region and the future of the state.

NQCC urges the government, in the strongest terms possible, to undertake a more considered analysis of this proposal prior to taking irreversible action.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Wendy Tubman', written in a cursive style.

Wendy Tubman

Coordinator