



North Queensland Conservation Council
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Committee Secretary
State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000
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31/01/19

Dear Madam/Sir,

North Queensland Conservation Council (NQCC) welcomes the Mineral Resources (Galilee Basin) Amendment Bill 2018 and the opportunity to provide our perspective on this matter.

Who we are

NQCC is a peak organisation for the region and is part of a network of statewide conservation councils. Established in 1974, NQCC is a not-for-profit incorporated association with a broad mandate to protect the “land, waters and atmosphere of the region” and since then has worked continuously on a number of environmental issues of significance to North Queensland and beyond. NQCC covers an area along the coast from Bowen in the South, North to Cardwell and inland to Mt Isa, through to the border of Northern Territory. We are the voice for the environment and represent over 1500 members and supporters.

Mineral Resources (Galilee Basin) Amendment Bill 2018

The intent of this Bill is to terminate existing coal mining leases and the granting of new mining leases within the Galilee Basin. It is an opportunity for Queensland to make a significant contribution to international efforts to reduce greenhouse emissions. Countries of the world know that it is essential to limit global warming to below 1.5 degrees above pre-industrial levels by 2100. Our planet’s terrestrial ecosystems will experience huge change under this scenario however the area affected is reduced by 50% compared to a 2 degree warming scenario.

NQCC is concerned for terrestrial environments as well as the marine environments, with the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area being a major feature of the coastline within our region. This World Heritage area already under huge pressures resulting from reductions water quality resulting from coastal land-use changes however the greatest risk by far is a

warming climate as seen by recent bleaching events. The Great Barrier Reef would not survive under a 2 degree warming scenario and it is essential that our Governments take every opportunity to prevent this from happening.

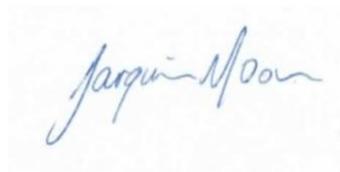
In North Queensland, climate change is already contributing to more frequent and greater-intensity of flooding, droughts, heatwaves and bushfires. This has implications for our natural systems, thus affecting our economy and our communities. We need our decision-makers to support any initiative like this Bill that seeks to reduce greenhouse emissions and reduce our climate risk as a whole.

This Bill is about shifting how Queensland does business by maintaining sites that offer carbon storage as part of an ecological service to stabilise the world's climate. The Galilee Basin acts as a natural carbon storage facility while it remains an untapped deposit of coal. This Bill is the opportunity to shift from reactive to pro-active policy and supporting it would demonstrate that our decision-makers are appropriately responding to the latest revelations of climate science. Reactive-policy approaches lock us into resourcing very expensive, untested, unreliable and artificial carbon-capture storage schemes that seek to reabsorb carbon emissions caused by past activities.

In conclusion, it is important that the wellbeing of communities and environments of North Queensland are being considered in relation to the Mineral Resources (Galilee Basin) Amendment Bill 2018. Our region has already experienced severe reef bleaching and extreme weather events that have devastating impacts on our community. Climate change is the greatest challenge of this generation and all efforts need to be taken to reduce greenhouse emissions. The Galilee Basin holds significant coal deposits that contribute to climate stabilisation while they remain in the ground.

Please contact our organisation if you would like any further information by emailing campaigns@nqcc.org.au or calling 0428 987 535.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tarquin Moon". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tarquin Moon
Campaigns Manager