

**For the Submission to the Senate Inquiry into the federal Government's Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Amendment Bill 2013 [Provisions]**

I would like to support the following Submission points:

1. The Bill is strongly supported and we would like to see it passed quickly through the Senate.
2. We are very pleased that the bilateral approval provisions of the EPBC Act cannot apply to coal and coal seam gas developments that impact on water resources, and that there have been some improvements to the exemptions.
3. We want to ensure that the exemptions contained in the Bill are minimised, and that key projects, such as the Arrow Coal Seam Gas project in Qld and Camden in western Sydney, are not exempt from it. Therefore, we would still like to see minor amendments to remove s22 2 b) and d) if possible.
4. We recognise that there are other amendments that would substantially improve the Bill, that may be required in the future, such as:
  - Amending the Bill to cover all unconventional gas mining, including shale gas and tight gas, and unconventional coal mining
  - Strengthening the role of the Independent Expert Scientific Committee
  - Defining significant impacts on water resources
  - Introducing a set of requirements for the Minister to consider when making decisions on water resource impacts
  - Including a requirement for bioregional assessments prior to approval.

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Thank you for your consideration and please see attached document regarding the importance of protecting the world acclaimed and exalted Gondwana Biodiversity of the Northern Rivers Region, and its surrounding natural lands and agricultural farmland, intersected by corridors that support not only a unique range of fauna and flora, from the mountains to the sea- but a population of peoples that hold these lands, wetlands, interconnecting creeks and riverways – to our beaches:- as priceless and a precious part of Australia.

World Heritage and Conservation of our unique and threatened Environment Biodiversity is a privilege to live near and must be protected as our duty – Protect these and promote World Heritage Tourism values.