

# LOCKHART RIVER ABORIGINAL SHIRE COUNCIL

ABN 55 631 460 952

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1. We believe that our previous submission as well as comments provided by the members of the Lockhart River Aboriginal Shire Council at recent Committee meetings still stands.
2. We have some difficulty in understanding what is going on. There are already countless reports and submissions made on the subject, including our submissions and appearances at Committee meetings.
3. We believe that enough information has been collected, and that what is now left is to analyse the reports so that an effective decision can be made. There has just been too much paralysis by analysis on the very important issue that affect the lifeline of the Lockhart River Aboriginal people.
4. On our part, we wish to re affirm our previous statements including comments made at various Committee hearings on the subject. We restate that Wild Rivers Legislation is an imposition on the people of Lockhart, and was done without due consideration to its harmful effect on the livelihood and well being of the people of Lockhart River.
5. We restate that the legislation will grossly undermine the cultural values of the people of Lockhart River, a Community that is well respected for its strong cultural values as a enshrined in its vision statement

STRONG PUUYA  
STRONG CULTURE  
STRONG FUTURE

The imposition of the Wild Rivers legislation undermines, devalues and demeans the vision statement of the people of Lockhart River.

6. We restate that the imposition of the legislation will grossly undermine the development of economic opportunities for the people of Lockhart River – Who from time immemorial have depended and continue to depend on the flora, fauna, land and sea for their existence. The legislation will dislocate this strong synergy. There are already a number of barriers to Lockhart Economic Development,, the imposition of the legislation will be another layer of barrier to a Community of people who live in poverty in paradise.
7. We restate that the imposition of Wild Rivers legislation will intentionally undermine the UN resolution on the rights of Indigenous people to own, use develop and control land including rivers to their benefit. Further, we restate that the imposition of the legislation will run contrary to the fundamental principles of constructive engagement and constructive dialogue between the government and the people of Lockhart River. By the government going ahead is tantamount to

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monologue and not dialogue. Monologue is not good for democracy. We therefore reaffirm our support to the position taken by the leader of the opposition on this issue.

8. We restate that the imposition of the Wild Rivers Legislation will diminish, devalue and undermine the decision making authority of the various Clan groups who are Native Title holders over the land on which the Wild Rivers legislation will apply.
9. We restate that the Lockhart River Aboriginal Shire Council has already got a plan for protection of its environmental values in its area. This is being managed through the Caring for Country – Land and Sea project – a Commonwealth government funded project. There is just no need to have yet another legislation. Perhaps what should be considered is to strengthen the activities of the Caring for Country through granting additional resources, NOT another piece of legislation.
10. Finally, we strongly object to the imposition of the Wild Rivers legislation as an intrusion in the rights of the Aboriginal people in Lockhart River. The devaluation of the Native Title holder rights on their land, the devaluation of the rights of the Aboriginal people in general to enjoy what naturally belongs to them, and in the case of Lockhart people as is the case with Cape York people in general, the taking away of rights of people who are the most disadvantaged people in Australia.
11. We are witnessing in a very subtle, savage and disgraceful way how the Aboriginal people and Lockhart people in particular are becoming “observers” on issues where they need to assert their “rights”.