



## Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories

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Submission re:

### **New inquiry into economic development on Norfolk Island.**

The initiatives and requirements of the Roadmap (RM) – such as the opening up of immigration/Land tax and Municipal rates, etc / deregulation of accommodation, etc can have negative affects unless appropriate policies and planning is in place to protect the natural resources.

Now the island is being “opened up” to more development the Government, in relation to the RM needs to give more than “lip service” consideration to the environment.

The “*The National Capital Authority Planning Report (NCA)*” 1997 recommended strategic studies to integrate environment, population (tourism) and economic policies.

We need to have Planning standards to prevent the loss of important values and to make the most of possibilities.

It is important to protect the rural landscape and coastal values

It is recommended that an independent Review of the Norfolk Island Plan in conjunction with the RM and your Inquiry. The obvious planning agent is the NCA who have extensive mapping of the Island and statistical charts, etc., and can build on their previous work and Plan and providing an objective review, not always obvious in a small community.

NCA also recommended strategic studies – Population and Tourism policy – strategic coastal policy – protection & enhancement of native vegetation communities etc.

Professor Butland’s “*Longterm Population Study for NI*” 1974, stated:

*“While there is a need for greater financial resources, it is economically unrealistic to expect a small community with the many disadvantages inherent in its restricted size and isolated location ‘to pay its own way’ completely. Inevitably, therefore, it is necessary to produce a subjective model of thresholds beyond which the advantages of increased population and tourists would be negated by adverse effects on the Island, its people, its attractions and its viability” – in other words, to base it on “the desirable” rather than “the possible”.*

Excessive development without due regard to strategic or environmental constraints and without clear population policy (including tourism) is not very wise economics in the longterm. For a travel and tourism industry, a healthy environment is the core product.

One area that should fit into your terms of reference is the Eco Tourism It could also take into consideration off road pathways to experience the dramatic landscapes and wildlife.

It is hoped your Committee can take into consideration some of these matters when addressing and broadening the economic base.