



VALLEY WATCH Inc.

ABN 68 541 154 062

P.O. Box 351, MACLEAN 2463

Phone & facsimile (02) 66461844

Senate Standing Committee Inquiry into Water Supplies for SE Qld.

8th June 2007

Re: Diversion of water from the Clarence River system

The members of Valley Watch Inc wish to clearly state their objection to any plans to divert water from the Clarence River or its tributaries.

Our membership is particularly concerned that there has been inadequate consultation with residents of the Clarence Valley on this extremely significant proposal and that now by default we have only the slightest window of opportunity to provide submissions to your committee

In view of the short time frame we summarise some of our concerns with the following brief points.

- The size of the Clarence River is being misrepresented as most of its volume is tidal.
- The upper reaches of the Clarence Valley are also in drought.
- Reduced flows on the Clarence River may lead to saltwater incursion upstream having a detrimental affect on the riparian zone.
- The loss of the riparian zone will change the terresrial and aquatic habitat values.
- Lower flows and reduced flooding events will have a detrimental affect on the coastal wetlands where many \$100 thousands have been allocated to landcare projects.
- The drying of the wetlands will lead to a loss of habitat and breeding areas - bilateral migratory bird agreements with Japan (JAMBA) and China (CAMBA) would be compromised.
- The Clarence River is already affected by siltation and reducing the flows will increase the sediment load being deposited within the whole system.
- There is already a huge sand slug moving down the Clarence River (caused by past mining activities in the upper reaches) which may slow and fill in water holes causing loss of habitat.
- To reduce siltation that comes from the tributaries as well as the Clarence River would take \$millions in erosion control works to overcome the detrimental affects of siltation
- Subsidising an unsustainable SE Qld cotton industry will seriously compromise the value of the Clarence fishing industry and plave it under threat.
- Dams are not good way to store water – evaporation. The economic and environmental cost of dams and pipelines do not justify the perceived benefits.
- Effects of climate change and rainfall patterns havre not been adequately assessed.
- Need to address the problem of unsustainable development where it is happening. SE Qld still has to explore meaningful strategies to reduce consumption.
- The importance of the Clarence to the Bundjalung, Gumbaingir and Yaegl peoples must be acknowledged and respected. Sites of cultural significance must not be affected.

Yours sincerely

Helen Tyas Tunggal

On behalf of VALLEY WATCH Inc