

Submission to State Environmental Planning Policy Review 2015

I object to the proposal to repeal the North Coast Regional Environmental Plan (NCREP). The ongoing fiasco of north coast councils (Lismore, Ballina, Tweed, Kyogle & Byron) being stymied from introducing environmental protection zones to their new LEPs based on more up-to-date information than was available when their original LEPs were initially adopted, often as far back as the late 1980s (in Byron's case), gives the community NO CONFIDENCE in the ability or commitment of the government to protect the highly significant biodiversity and cultural heritage values of the area. The current proposal to repeal the NCREP just seems to be a continuation of the fiasco.

Beyond this vote of no confidence in proper land use planning I object because the North Coast REP is part of the justification and argument made by north coast councils for expanding environmental protection zoning and for using these new zones to underpin sound strategic land use planning and development control decisions. Changing the goal posts part way through the process - by repealing the REP before the deferred areas (i.e. new environmental zones) are finalised - is unfair, illogical and unnecessary.

Until the process of creating holistic LEPs that are forward-looking and don't just default to environmental protection zonings of the past, as is currently the case with the significant lands deferred from the new LEPs, the NCREP must remain as one of the matters to be properly considered in plan-making.

Let's see more biodiversity and cultural heritage protected for future generations to aid in supporting ecosystem function and for the intrinsic value of these important areas. North coast council's, as directed by government, have prepared their new LEPs according to a range of planning strategies including a quite prescriptive NCREP. Therefore the REP must remain AT LEAST until the new environmental protection zones proposed for the deferred areas are introduced.

New technology, more recent studies and new information available makes a convincing case for application of environmental protection zones to additional areas within north coast LGAs than could be justified when these LEPs were first introduced. The NCREP forms an important part of the strong planning basis to justify the changes proposed.

I restate the need to retain the NCREP and my objection to the proposal for its repeal. The issues it identifies for land requiring environmental protection zoning in plan-making are as relevant today as they were when it was first introduced and it is an important legal justification for changes currently proposed (and as yet undetermined) to north coast LEPs.

Yours sincerely

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