



Queensland Government Removes Environmental Protection

Environmentally concerned citizens and landholders are disgusted with the cavalier attitude of the Queensland Government which has chopped the funding for Environmental Defenders Office (EDO), an independent community environmental legal service. EDO has a great reputation for the quality and relevance of its casework, law reform and educational work and fills a much needed gap in providing essential community support with environmental law matters

Capricorn Conservation Council Coordinator, Michael McCabe said today, “EDO assists with the community’s critical need for legal advice and assistance in the face of the gas and coal rush and other inappropriate or environmentally harmful ‘development’.

“Without the support of the EDO, landholders and individuals will be locked into a David and Goliath struggle with developers, mining and gas companies to understand and assert their rights to defend our landscape, rivers, wetlands and coasts from harmful effects of the accelerating resources boom. Individuals and family property owners do not have the financial resources to legally challenge the excesses of mining magnates and international corporations.”

“Coming to a Central Queensland paddock or backyard near you are coal mines, coal seam gas fields and pipelines, coal stockpiles and ports and dredging for marinas in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.” (For example, 7000 CSG wells are proposed from just from one company between Duaringa and Moranbah, along with the industrialisation of Keppel Bay on top of the ecologically overstretched Gladstone Harbour-Curtis Island LNG and coal port expansions).

“EDO is providing assistance to CCC with a Right To Information (RTI) request for data on Gladstone Harbour dredging, which the government been reluctant to release, despite the legal requirements of environmental approvals. EDO is currently examining a potentially critical flaw in the issuing of the temporary environmental permit to allow increased turbidity limits while they try to patch the Fisherman’s Landing bund wall which has been leaking dredge spoil since September 2011.”

“With the increasing threats to fast track approvals and slash environmental safety nets, offensively labelled as ‘green tape’, CCC urges the community to demand their legal rights are protected by on-going government financial support for EDO.”

“EDO have conducted several well attended environmental law workshops in Central Queensland covering federal and state environmental and planning laws. Topical issues focussed on community rights and mining, coal seam gas, pipelines, coastal development, water, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and World Heritage Acts.

“CCC urges everyone who is concerned about this attempt to silence our rights to understand or challenge decisions affecting the environment write to the Premier Campbell Newman, Attorney-General and Minister for Justice Jarrod Bleijie and their local Member to express your outrage at the withdrawal of EDO funding.”

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