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MEDIA RELEASE

National Parks under threat from private development

The community has overwhelmingly expressed opposition to the proposal to allow private tourism facilities into Queensland National Parks. Seventy five submissions were made to parliamentary committee considering the *Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012* which could allow resorts on public land. Eighty five (85%) of these submissions opposed private tourism facilities being built in National Parks.

Capricorn Conservation Council coordinator Michael McCabe said, “The objectives of the proposed bill are in direct conflict with the cardinal principal for creating National Parks; namely to provide permanent preservation of an area’s natural condition and the protection of cultural resources and values.” “Beautiful areas and threatened plant and animal communities would be at great risk if inappropriate or excessive human activity and associated infrastructure were allowed in National Parks. This is the only land tenure in Queensland that ensures permanent protection of nature”.

“Queensland already lags behind the rest of Australia with less than 5% of the State protected by National Park.”

“If an ‘eco-tourism’ operator has an ecologically sustainable and economically viable proposal, there are large areas outside NP boundaries which could provide facilities, base camps and cabins for guided walks or low impact 4WD tours into the Parks”.

“Some high profile National Parks, e.g. Carnarvon Gorge, Border Ranges, already have tourism facilities outside the park. This with low impact camping should be the model for promoting and providing access our State’s great natural features.”

“CCC supports opportunities to improve human enjoyment and interaction with the nature and has requested the opportunity to present the views of the community at public hearings in early 2013.”