Queensland Government

Queensland Treasury

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Mr Nick Weinert
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Dear Mr Weinert

Consultation Regulatory Impact Statement – Great Sandy Marine Park Draft Zoning Plan

Thank you for your enquiry of 3 June 2022 seeking advice on the adequacy of the 'Great Sandy Marine Park: Draft Zoning Plan' Consultation Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS).

Background

The Department of Environment and Science (the department) notes management of the Great Sandy Marine Park is delivered through the *Marine Parks Act 2004* and associated subordinate legislation – the *Marine Parks Regulation 2017*, *Marine Parks (Declaration) Regulation 2006* and the *Marine Parks (Great Sandy) Zoning Plan 2017* (the GSMP zoning plan).

The GSMP zoning plan has been in place since 2006 and provides a management framework that aims to achieve conservation of the marine environment while seeking to balance the community's requirements for sustainable use of the area.

Since 2017, the department has been reviewing the operation of the plan to identify any problems and potential improvements to address emerging threats, incorporate contemporary research and integrate park management with other legislative changes. The *Great Sandy Marine Park Discussion Paper – Zoning plan opportunities* (released January 2019), sought feedback on suggestions to support the ongoing ability of the zoning plan to balance conservation and use. The third stage of the review includes release of a Consultation RIS and draft revised GSMP zoning plan for public feedback.

Proposal

The department proposes to introduce a new GSMP zoning plan to:

- better protect a world class environment, featuring several iconic species that are at risk nationally and internationally
- better meet the aspirations of First Nations peoples for the protection of cultural and natural values
- enhance the region's enviable nature-based and recreational fishing lifestyle
- support future economic growth of the region based on nature-based tourism, recreational, charter and sport fishing
- enable local government activities to address coastal impacts of climate change
- largely maintain use of the marine park by the commercial fishing sectors of trawl, crab, line (but to a lesser extent net) fishing.

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The RIS identifies seven problems with the current GSMP zoning plan and presents a number of options to address each identified issue. An assessment of the impact of policy options on the environment, the community, business and government is provided where possible.

Assessment

In undertaking its assessment of a RIS, the Office of Best Practice Regulation (OBPR) has regard to the requirements of the Queensland Government Guide to Better Regulation (the guidelines).

Based on these criteria, the OBPR notes the Consultation RIS presents the department's assessment of the issues and identifies those stakeholders likely to be affected and the nature of potential impacts on them. The analysis quantifies some costs, however, due to data limitations a qualitative assessment of the potential benefits has been provided. While for some proposals it is unclear whether the proposed amendments will deliver a net benefit to the Queensland community, the Consultation RIS should allow stakeholders to assess and provide evidence on the regulatory options identified.

On this basis, the OBPR considers the Consultation RIS adequate for the purpose of public consultation.

Consultation with stakeholders should assist in gathering evidence to further assess the regulatory proposal. Consultation should include testing the case for government action, alternative options, the assumptions used to generate costs and benefits and the potential impacts on stakeholders.

To be considered adequate for decision-making purposes, the Decision RIS will need to provide further evidence, informed by stakeholder feedback on the Consultation RIS, that the benefits of the recommended options outweigh the costs and that they deliver the greatest net benefit to Queensland.

Please contact Sean Mackay, Principal Economist, on (07) 3035 3485 should you require any additional information or guidance concerning the above comments or the guidelines in general.

Please note that in accordance with Cabinet Handbook requirements, this letter should be attached to relevant Cabinet submissions.

Yours sincerely



Dr Karen Hooper
Productivity Commissioner

7 June 2022