

Queensland State Forest User Alliance

My name is Rhys Bosley, I run the Queensland State Forest User Alliance campaign, which is dedicated to keeping and improving access to Queensland state forests, for recreational and commercial use. I also run the State Forest Hunting for Queensland campaign, which is aimed at obtaining access for hunting in Queensland state forests.

During my campaigning for forest use reform, I have become aware that some Australian environmental organisations, are heavily supported by an American not-for profit organisation, known as the Pew Charitable Trusts. Pew was established with the legacy of American oil baron, J. Howard Pew and its board includes members of Pew's family and others with a background in fossil fuel industries.

Pew's Queensland associates include the Queensland Conservation Council and it's associated organisations. My campaigning has mainly opposed Pew and the QCC's state based anti-Forestry campaigns in Queensland, including the lockup of 54,000 hectares of state forest into the Greater Glider Park. These organisations are also running the "Protect Beautiful Queensland" campaign, which promotes the lockup of more of Queensland into protected areas.

However, I am aware that Pew's Australian associates, including the QCC, have been at the front of campaigns to lock up land and ocean around Australia and impose other environmental obligations. This has included playing a key role in campaigning for Queensland's vegetation management laws and reef regulations.

Specific to the terms of reference for this inquiry, that being the impact of the Australian Government's 2025 amendments to the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Act, the QCC was involved in the lobbying for the introduction of more onerous regulation impacting the use of Queensland's state forests¹².

[REDACTED] I have both raised these matters in the media and have provided Pew with the opportunity to response, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I have not had a response from Pew on this matter.

I am concerned that given Pew's links to the US fossil fuel industry and lack of transparency about its funding and investments, that it may have commercial motives for its lobbying for more onerous environmental regulation in Australia. The US fossil fuel industry is a competitor for Australia in fossil fuels, especially natural gas. Burying Australian gas reserves under green tape would be an effective way of preventing new Australian gas projects from competing with American gas. The same concern exists for ethanol fuel, also a competitor for US transport fuel production and affected by the reef regulations.

Furthermore any new protected areas announced may impact on the supply and demand and therefore the price of carbon permits. Areas of land already subject to legal protections, cannot be used in a carbon trading scheme. This raises the prospect of green tape being advocated, for a better commercial outcome on carbon markets for foreign entities.

I do not believe that foreign entities over which these sorts of questions hang, should be allowed to operate and influence decision making about land management in Queensland or in Australia more broadly. The EPBC is a powerful mechanism by which the commercial use of Queensland land,

¹ https://www.queenslandconservation.org.au/ebpc_amendments_fail_close_deforestation_loophole

² https://www.queenslandconservation.org.au/landmark_nature_law_deal_protects_queensland_forests

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oceans and minerals can be stifled. If commercial use of our public land is wound back, so too will be recreational use, which in the experience of recreational forest users is better supported on public land such as state forests than national parks.

Specifically on forests, both commercial and recreational activities are economically productive uses, which can be conducted in an environmentally sustainable manner. The alternative of locking up our forests in national parks and denying these revenue generation opportunities, is to turn out forests into a liability to taxpayers, who have to pay to look after them when the forestry services would otherwise have done so.

Therefore, I advocate that the Queensland Government should press the Australian Government to investigate the extent to which foreign commercial interests such as Pew, have impacted the development of the EPBC Act. If as I believe it is found to be substantial, I suggest that strengthens the case to reconsider those aspects of the act which unduly impact on Queensland's ability to productively use our forests and other natural resources.

I also suggest that the Queensland Government should press the Australian Government to ban foreign donations to Australian environmental organisations. There is too much risk of foreign entities abusing the goodwill of Australians for their own commercial ends, for these donations to be appropriate.

Regards,

Rhys Bosley

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