

CLARENCE VALLEY CONSERVATION COALITION Inc.

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Submission on Coastal Integrated Forestry Operation Approvals

I am forwarding this brief submission today as I understand that an extension of time was granted for comment until 9 April.

The Clarence Valley Conservation Coalition (CVCC) is extremely concerned about the Government's proposed changes to the Coastal Integrated Forestry Operation Approvals.

The CVCC objects strongly to the changes proposed in the discussion paper which we consider will lead to serious weakening of the protection for vulnerable native flora and fauna. We consider that the current protections are inadequate and are not properly implemented. Indeed, when these protections are disregarded and the breaches are proven (usually revealed by community members who often show more interest in preserving our natural systems than the officers paid to implement the protection), the EPA imposes totally inadequate penalties.

We believe that protection needs to be strengthened rather than weakened.

A few brief comments on some of the proposed changes:

- Removing conditions limiting logging intensity and extent will inevitably lead to much more destructive logging practices including clearfelling.
- Removing constraints on logging on steeply sloping land is a recipe for disaster – which will lead to greater levels of erosion, clogging of creek lines and contamination of town water supplies.
- How can the Government seriously believe that it can continue to have timber harvested from the community's forests at current levels when it is patently obvious that harvest amounts have been grossly over-committed for years?
- The discussion paper ignores some of the serious problems in existence in the forestry estate – matters such as the management of invasive weeds and dieback – problems which have been exacerbated by current forestry management practices.

The CVCC believes the changes proposed in the discussion paper are unsustainable and should be abandoned.

Yours sincerely

Leonie Blain
Hon Secretary
9th April 2014