



DR RICHARD DI NATALE

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27 June 2016

Sue Ellen Carew
President, Friends of Stradbroke Island Association Inc
By email: [REDACTED]

Minjerribah/North Stradbroke Island

Dear Ms Carew,

We thank you for your correspondence of 22 June 2016 in relation to the enforcement of our national environment laws against sand mining on Minjerribah/North Stradbroke Island.

The Greens want to see the island and its unique ecosystems and landscapes protected for future generations to enjoy. We support your pledge, and we applaud the leadership and hard work from Friends of Stradbroke Island in relation to these issues over many years. We support calls from the Quandamooka people to add Minjerribah to the Fraser Island World Heritage.

The Greens have been calling for an end to sand mining on Minjerribah for many years. In 2010, the Greens called for federal intervention to halt the destruction of this iconic ecological gem and the landscape so precious to the Quandamooka people. In 2013, under the LNP State government, the Greens strongly opposed the appalling unilateral extension of sand mining, especially in the context of very substantial political donations from Sibelco to the LNP. We applaud the current State government for delivering on their election commitment to phase out sand mining by 2019.

We have been appalled at the failure of successive federal Environment Ministers to uphold the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (the **EPBC Act**), our national environment laws. In particular, Minister Greg Hunt has overseen a years-long investigation of alleged failures to obtain an approval under the EPBC Act, which has yielded no tangible outcomes despite continuing for more than 30 months.

The Greens have pursued the issue of mining company Sibelco's apparent failure to secure an approval under the EPBC Act in Senate Estimates, but have met with indifference from the Environment Minister and his representatives. **We pledge to push for a rapid conclusion to the long-running investigation and for the enforcement of our national environment laws in the next Parliament.**

Unfortunately, examples like this one are all too common. Our environmental regulators have been subject to many years of cuts and "efficiency dividends" under both Coalition and Labor governments, and our national environment laws are failing to protect the precious places and wildlife we all cherish.



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For that reason, the Greens have announced our [Protecting Precious Places](#) policy which calls for a new *Environment Act* as a generation of national environment laws as well as an independent watchdog, the National Environment Protection Authority to enforce those laws, with greatly increased funding. The new NEPA would be independent of government and would be responsible for assessment, compliance and enforcement under the new *Environment Act*. This vision for environment laws that work, and a system free from influence by vested interests is what the Greens will strive for in the next Parliament.

Please feel free to contact Senator Waters' office on 07 3367 0566 if we can be of assistance.

Kind regards,

Senator Richard Di Natale
**Leader of the Australian Greens and
Senator for Victoria**

Senator Larissa Waters
**Australian Greens Deputy Leader and
Senator for Queensland**

