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JOHNS. PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION
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NO. 319

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ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO BE
ADDRESSED TO GENERAL MANAGER

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JOHNSTONE SHIRE COUNCIL

INNISFAIL, QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA

PLEASE QUOTE

YOUR REFERENCE:

OUR REFERENCE: DJJ:MTA0209111341

ENQUIRIES TO: Mr Jones

13 September 2002

~~Section 2D Inquiry~~
Productivity Commission
PO Box 80
Fax No.: (02)6240 3311
BELCONNEN ACT 2616

Dear Sir/Madam

ISSUES PAPER ON 'INDUSTRIES IN THE GREAT BARRIER REEF CATCHMENT AND MEASURES TO ADDRESS DECLINING WATER QUALITY'

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Industries in the Great Barrier Reef Catchment and Measures to Address Declining Water Quality - issues paper. Below are Johnstone Shire Council's responses to the questions in the issues paper:

1. For information on research and monitoring in the catchments in the Johnstone Shire including the Johnstone River contact should be made with the Mr Bob Stewart of the Johnstone River Catchment Management Association, Rankin Street, Innisfail, and the Environmental Protection Agency in Cairns.
2. For information on research and monitoring in the catchments in the Johnstone Shire including the Johnstone River contact should be made with the Mr Bob Stewart of the Johnstone River Catchment Management Association, Rankin Street, Innisfail, and the Environmental Protection Agency in Cairns.
3. No information held by Council.
4. Yes the Johnstone River Catchment is appropriate because of the diverse range of land uses and issues in the catchment. Also the Johnstone River catchment has a wealth of baseline data already available through the pilot study for integrated catchment management for Queensland 10 years ago. Documents relating to this and subsequent studies are available from the Johnstone River Catchment Management Association library
5. An additional indicator of the 'state of the environment' should be added because of its impact on the other indicators.

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6. No information held by Council.
7. No information held by Council.
8. Reference should be made to the individual recreational fishing organisations, Queensland Department Primary Industry (Fisheries) and traditional owners.
9. No information.
10. Johnstone Shire is located in the wettest part of Australia and therefore it should be in a different area from the Gulf and Cape York areas as the issues in one area are very different to the other.
11. Refer to the various industry groups and State Agencies.
12. Refer to the various industry groups and State Agencies.
13. Refer to the various industry groups and State Agencies .
14. Refer to the various industry groups and State Agencies.
15. The Johnstone Shire has integrated management plans and regularly undertakes monitoring and reporting on water quality in the watercourses in the Shire. For more information on the industries refer to the various industry groups and Environmental Protection Agency.
16. Revegetation has been used but there has been limited incentive to use it as a tool to improve water quality. There needs incentives (tax) for all various management approaches. The Sugar Industry has developed a Code of Practice.
17. The Sugar Industry and fruit and vegetable growers have codes of practice that are approved by the Environmental Protection Agency, however they are voluntary only.
18. No response.
19. Catchment and industry based variations need to be taken into consideration. For example what works in the Burnett Catchment may not work in the Johnstone Catchment because of different weather patterns, particularly with respect to rainfall and each industry will have a different impact on the water quality in the catchment.
20. Refer to the various industry groups.
21. More research to accurately determine the causes and locations of unwanted discharges into waterways is required followed by appropriate resourcing to respond to the issues. Too much generalisation occurs now, with agriculture being accused of problems for which it may not be entirely responsible.

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Council also requests that it be kept up to date regarding the progress of the preparation of the final report for Industries in the Great Barrier Reef Catchment and Measures to Address Declining Water Quality.

Yours faithfully



PETER B ROBERTS
GENERAL MANAGER