



Queensland

# **Environmental Protection (Water) Amendment Policy (No. 1) 2011**

## **Explanatory Notes for SL 2011 No. 194**

made under the

*Environmental Protection Act 1994*

---

## **General outline**

### **Short title**

*Environmental Protection (Water) Amendment Policy (No. 1) 2011.*

### **Authorising law**

Sections 26 and 33 of the *Environmental Protection Act 1994*

### **Policy objectives and the reasons for them**

The objectives of the amendment policy are to amend the *Environmental Protection (Water) Policy 2009* (Environmental Protection Water Policy) to establish environmental values and water quality objectives for the waters of the Fitzroy Basin.

### **Achievement of policy objectives**

The Environmental Protection Water Policy provides a framework for identifying environmental values and water quality objectives for specific waters through the development of documents which are listed in schedule

1 of the Policy. Such documents have been prepared for the specific waters of the Fitzroy Basin, including the following waters:

- Callide Creek
- Comet River
- Dawson River
- Fitzroy River
- Isaac and Connors Rivers
- Mackenzie River
- Nogoia River

The amendment policy achieves the objective of establishing environmental values and water quality objectives for waters of the Fitzroy Basin by listing these documents in schedule 1 of the Environmental Protection Water Policy.

### **Consistency with policy objectives of authorising law**

The amendment policy is consistent with the objectives of the *Environmental Protection Act 1994*. The amendment policy helps to achieve the objectives of this Act by establishing environmental values and water quality objectives to enhance or protect the environmental values for waters in Queensland.

### **Inconsistency with policy objectives of other legislation**

The amendment policy is consistent with the policy objectives of other legislation.

### **Benefits and costs of implementation**

The Environmental Protection Water Policy sets goals and objectives but does not include any regulatory provisions for not meeting the objectives. However, management of water quality with a goal of achieving the water quality objectives would provide numerous ecosystem health and socio-economic benefits, for example, ensuring human health through reducing risks to water supplies, protection of biodiversity and ecosystem function, protection of water quality for primary industries and fisheries, preventing increased costs for potable water treatment, and protecting visual and aesthetic amenity of the waterway.

## **Consistency with fundamental legislative principles**

The amendment policy is consistent with fundamental legislative principles.

## **Consultation**

The environmental values and water quality objectives were developed in consultation with the Fitzroy Basin Association and a wide range of Fitzroy Basin stakeholders. Government, industry and community representatives were extensively consulted over 21 months. This process included a series of stakeholder and community workshops across the Fitzroy Basin. The draft values and objectives were also released for public review and submissions, along with a community consultation report and socio-economic assessment report.

All local governments in the Fitzroy Basin and the Central Queensland Local Government Association were consulted.

Representative bodies consulted included Agforce, Capricorn Conservation Council, Queensland Resources Council, Commerce Queensland, Fitzroy Basin Association, Growcom, Fitzroy Basin Elders Committee, Fitzroy Food and Fibre, and Fitzroy River Fish Stocking Association. Several major mining companies and other bodies operating in the basin were also consulted. Other bodies consulted were Anglo American Metallurgical Coal, Billiton Mitsubishi Alliance, Rio Tinto Australia Coal, Central Queensland University and Fitzroy River Water.

Public consultation was undertaken in seven centres across the basin and included separate discussions with local groups (conservation, grazing, irrigation, mining and traditional owners).

There was general support across the Fitzroy Basin for the development of environmental values and water quality objectives to inform the future management of the waters. On some matters, conflicting views were expressed, for example by peak mining industry and peak conservation groups. All issues raised in consultation were considered and addressed where relevant.

ENDNOTES

- 1 Laid before the Legislative Assembly on . . .
- 2 The administering agency is the Department of Environment and Resource Management.

© State of Queensland 2011