

**Protect NT Inc's Submission for  
Water Further Amendment Bill 2019**

Dear Economic Policy Scrutiny Committee and Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, Eva Lawler,

Protect NT Incorporated is a community group with over 600 members determined to protect our water, land, climate and lifestyles for future generations of Territorians. We are passionate about protecting and conserving water for future generations and are gravely concerned by water over-allocation and its impacts on the environment and future Territorians.

Protect NT Inc applauds the Water Further Amendment Bill's Explanatory Statement's General Outline which states that, "Aboriginal water reserves remain an enduring requirement of water allocation plans made under the Water Act 1992".

We do have some concerns however, namely:

**4 Section 4 amended (Interpretation)**

- (1) Section 4(1) "Aboriginal economic development means economic development by or for the benefit of eligible Aboriginal people."

We have concerns regarding the words, "or for the benefit of", being included in this interpretation for the following reasons:

1. It allows a third party to be allocated Aboriginal reserved water.
2. Who decides what is beneficial for the "eligible Aboriginal people"?
3. If an action is economically beneficial but socially detrimental, will it still be eligible under this Bill?

We acknowledge that Section 71BA (1) does give some protection to the Aboriginal water reserves but feel that the entire community must be considered to prevent projects which economically benefit one family at the social/cultural expense of another.

**6 Section 22A amended (Beneficial uses within water control district)**

We agree that "Environment" and "Aboriginal economic development" are beneficial uses of water, though we believe a clause should be inserted, stating, "Beneficial uses" and "Aboriginal economic development" do not include on-selling of Aboriginal water reserve allocations for third party financial gain.

Protect NT Inc thanks you for this opportunity to comment on the Water Further Amendment Bill 2019.

Yours Sincerely,

Pauline Cass

for Protect NT Incorporated

3 September 2019