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23 March 2014

Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning
c/ Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning
PO Box 15009
CITY EAST BRISBANE QLD 4002
Email: CYRegionalPlan@dssip.qld.gov.au

Dear Deputy Premier,

Draft Cape York Regional Plan Feedback

Please accept this letter as a formal submission in response to the draft Cape York Regional Plan.

Cape York Peninsula is a region containing extensive natural and cultural values of World Heritage standard. Indigenous cultural heritage and stories overlay the extraordinary mix of ecosystems and landscapes on Cape York including intact tropical rainforests, savannah grasslands and woodlands, wild rivers and wetlands, white sand dunes, and a largely pristine coastline. Some of the last free flowing, most pristine rivers left on the planet are found on Cape York, and these help support abundant wildlife and species, many unique in Australia.

Protect the Bush Alliance (PTBA) is very concerned that the Cape York Regional Plan will substantially weaken existing environmental protections and regulatory processes throughout the Cape, especially around the current declared Wild River areas of the Lockhart, Archer, Stewart and Wenlock River basins. We are also very disappointed that the Queensland Government is not taking the opportunity to properly and permanently protect the extensive natural and cultural values of the Cape York Region. We do not believe that destructive activities and environmental protection can co-exist in these areas. We believe a number of changes are required to the draft Regional Plan for Cape York, specifically that:

- The areas identified as Strategic Environmental Areas (SEAs) be **significantly expanded** beyond the current proposed boundaries to include all areas where World Heritage-standard values can be identified including the Laura Rock Art area and the Stewart River Basin;
- SEAs be substantially strengthened to provide **guaranteed** and **permanent** statutory protection from mining and other destructive development;
- SEAs be substantially strengthened to provide **guaranteed** and **permanent** statutory protection from native forest logging, other types of extractive industries, intensive agriculture, and other damaging industrial and commercial developments;
- The World Heritage values of Cape York be **properly recognised** by the Queensland and Federal Governments, and a nomination for World Heritage listing with Traditional Owner consent be **actively pursued and supported**; and
- Environmentally sustainable economic opportunities for Cape York be **prioritised** and **fully invested in** by governments and the private sector, over destructive practices.

We urge you to redesign the draft Regional Plan for Cape York and associated planning laws to ensure that the natural and cultural values of Cape York are fully protected from destructive development.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Lee K. Curtis'.

Coordinator, Protect the Bush Alliance