

## **SUBMISSION RE URBAN WATER ENQUIRY**

### **On Behalf of the Save Byrrill Creek Campaign**

Firstly my apologies for this late submission as I was unaware of this Inquiry and I hope this late Submission will still be accepted.

In our involvement over the last 18 months with both Tweed Shire Council, and the former NSW Planning Department and NSW Office of Water many anomalies have been illustrated in regards to guidelines and recommendations (both State and Federal )on water sensitive urban design, sustainable reuse of water and the actual implementation of these policies.

When it actually comes to a decision, of whether sustainable water policies are put into place during Development Applications and Approvals for large scale urban developments, the “buck” is passed from local government to state government departments with neither of them taking responsibility for decisions and saying the other one department is responsible. The end result of this is that there has been NO IMPLEMENTATION of Water Sensitive design principles to 2 large developments in Tweed Shire with populations in both exceeding 10,000 (Cobaki Lakes 10,464 - now mooted at 12,000 and Kings Forest 10,900) Instead a new dam will be built in the highest conservation riparian area in the Tweed Shire for urban growth water supply... A solution of thirty years ago & totally unsustainable.

We see this as a failing within the present system that needs to be urgently addressed by the Federal & State Governments.

Specifically in new large urban growth areas government legislation should unequivocally mandate :

1. Recycled water for toilets and outdoor garden use. ( Dual Reticulation)
2. Storm water harvesting
3. Water Sensitive Urban Design
4. Rain Water Tanks with enough capacity eg (10,000lt)

At present there are NSW State Guidelines within BASIX that include a 3000litre tank for new houses. This requirement is state wide & does not take into account differing topography, climates and rainfall in the many shires. Tweed Council states because State BASIX requirements is only 3000lt that they do not have the power to request a 5000lt tank in new developments. For greater water self sufficiency State & Federal governments need to legislate greater volume tanks within BASIX.

#### Federal Initiatives in Urban Water Planning Principles include:

National Water Initiative (NWI), National Water Security Plan for Cities and Towns, Stormwater Harvesting & Reuse, Green Precincts Program , Water Smart Australia, Water Sensitive Urban design (WSUD) and COAG

*“The COAG National Water Principle 4 requires that water in the urban context be managed on a whole-of-water cycle basis.”*

The QLD Government has been able to achieve many of its goals through specific legislation, where NSW lags behind. The QLD Dept of Environment & Resource Management booklet : “Towards a Water Sensitive Future” is an

excellent publication and highlights a need for a diversity of water supply systems, both on site & off to suit the context. Potable water is not utilised for purposes that don't warrant it (eg recycled water for toilets).

To highlight the inadequacy of implementing Policies & strategies on a State level the NSW Far North Coast Regional Strategy Plan states quite clearly:

*"All future development is to apply water sensitive urban design principles, including the use of dual use reticulation systems, in releases of adequate scale, and meet storm water management targets that support the environmental values of the catchment."*

In reality this NSW Strategy has been ignored by Tweed Shire Council who are facing a doubling of population by 2036

At present there are many State & Federal Water Policies & Initiatives which promote Recycled Water but there is no strong legislation that mandates it for new large urban developments.

We feel that these issues need to be addressed as soon as possible so that developers, local councils & state government actually implement sustainable water efficiency & move forwards to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Federal legislation would achieve this.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. For a background on issues faced by the Save Byrrill Creek Campaign and the new developments in Tweed Shire **please see Attached PDF** of a Power point presentation to the Regional Planning Panel of the NSW Dept of Planning that was presented recently in May.

2. The QLD Dept of Environment & Resource Management : "Towards a Water Sensitive Future"

Yours Sincerely

Joanna Gardner (on behalf of the Save Byrrill Creek Campaign)