



Monday, 15 May 2006

Submission on the

**Matters of National Environmental Significance for the
Proposed Replacement of the Kareeya to Innisfail High Voltage
Transmission Line**

Prepared by

Cairns and Far North Environment Centre

CAFNEC supports the de-commissioning of the existing Kareeya to Innisfail high voltage transmission line, which passes through the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area and the subsequent rehabilitation of the corridor. It is essential the corridor have existing infrastructure removed and be fully rehabilitated in its entirety immediately after the existing line is decommissioned.

However, CAFNEC is unable to support any of the options presented in the Draft Report on the Findings of Targeted Surveys for National Environmental Significance Matters and Draft Environmental Management Plan due to the reasons outlined in this and previous submission and calls for the following:

- That a significant number of towers are to be located in areas of intact rainforest, where large areas of cleared land are available.
- That new road works are to be undertaken in these areas is also of concern. Also that plans for airlifting construction needs into these areas is not canvassed.

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- That new road works are to be undertaken adjacent to, and across watercourses that contain/ or have been reported to contain threatened frog species is also of concern. Furthermore, we have received complaints from local residents that road works have already occurred in some of these areas (in the region of proposed pylon locations 124-136) and that these works are located well within the 100metre stream buffer required in the ministers approval.

This work would seem to be in contravention of point 4, Annexure 1 of the EPBC Approval granted on March 8, 2005, which states *"Implementation of an 100m vegetation exclusion zone around streams that may provide potential habitat for listed threatened species and ecological communities."*(Final EPBC consultation strategy pp.13)

- Frog surveys were carried out late in the dry season and therefore provide an unreliable basis for determination of presence/absence for endangered frogs in the streams studied.
- Mahogany Glider surveys were carried out along the proposed route and thus CAFNEC does believe the potential for impacts in Mahogany Glider populations are taken into adequate consideration in this process.

To rectify these concerns CAFNEC asks you to accept the following recommendations:

- That the route be altered to avoid intact forests and rainforests
- Methods such as airlifting of materials and personnel should be given precedence over the construction of new roads.
- Further work be carried to identify and avoid habitat of listed species, in particular endangered frog species and Mahogany Glider.
- That where intact forests are to be disturbed, that construction is carried out utilising methods that cause the least impact to surround areas and do not degrade the integrity of the forest through further fragmentation, erosion and the introduction of invasive weed species.

Yours Sincerely,



Steve Ryan
Campaigner