

## **DRAFT SUBMISSION TO PACIFIC HIGHWAY UPGRADE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

Date: 11 January 2013

Major Projects Assessments, Department of Planning and Infrastructure,

GPO Box 39

SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Sir/Madam,

### **Submission on Woolgoolga to Ballina Pacific Highway Upgrade**

I wish to comment on the recently released Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the upgrade of the Pacific Highway between Woolgoolga and Ballina. In particular I have serious concerns about the route through the Clarence Valley from Glenugie to Maclean. My concerns are based on the potential impact on threatened species (both state and federally listed) and ecosystems generally along the route. The potential impact on the Coastal Emu is of grave concern. With a greatly reduced population of about 100+ birds any disturbance to its habitat should be avoided. The proposed bridges and other methods to address this issue are all unproven and all monitoring will do is document a further decline in the population. I have grave concerns about the survival of the other 80+ threatened species and all of the non-threatened species that will lose their habitat when the forests are cleared for the highway. The protection of compensatory habitat elsewhere will not assist these habitats and species.

I therefore call on the determining authorities to reject the preferred route throughout the Clarence Valley and to adopt the orange option which is a much less damaging option for the Valley's ecosystems.

At a time of great biodiversity loss we cannot allow such a major impact on the Clarence ecosystems. There is a viable alternative and it needs to be adopted.

Yours faithfully

Dr Cristian H Birzer