

From: [REDACTED]  
To: [vminquiry](#)  
Subject: Submission on Veg Management Bill  
Date: Sunday, 10 April 2016 11:21:52 AM

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I wish to make a brief submission on the Veg Management Bill, please.

We live out in the Desert Uplands bio-region so I wish to speak mainly for this area which is largely grazing country. We are still very badly droughted. We have noticed, particularly in the drought as so much of the grass is eaten, that where trees have been knocked down or “pulled”, there is a noticeable **environmental benefit**.

**1**: Wherever there is a tree lying on the ground it catches the falling leaves, it catches some of the blowing soil, it catches the soil washed away by a sudden and hard downpour of rain, and best of all it catches seeds that are either washed or blown along. As we walk around in these droughted times we are finding that some of the only places where there are plants and grasses growing and looking healthy are around the trees and branches lying on the ground.

A metre or so away where there is no tree lying on the ground, the ground is often totally bare, and a lot of the top soil is blown away. The important thing is to knock the trees down and then leave them lying on the ground, not to remove them. However, occasional burning can be beneficial to the soil fertility and hence plant growth.

**2**: At least 90% of our property is timber country where trees have never been “pulled” (knocked down). We now wish that we had been able to afford to “pull” more. After 3 years of this current drought we have noticed that where there have been no trees knocked down, up to 90% of trees in many areas have died. We have masses of areas of dead trees due to the drought. Yet, alongside some of these areas of dead trees (in the same paddock), where previous “pulling” has taken place, there is **not one dead tree** amongst the young regrowing trees.

And there is also more grass. Knocking trees down disturbs the soil and releases nitrogen, stimulates soil fertility and hence grass and tree growth. The disturbed soil also takes in more water when it does rain. Where the soil hasn't been disturbed it can be bare and hard from top soil

loss, and the water tends to run off rather than soak in.

Soil tests done several years ago on a nearby property actually showed that there was greater soil carbon where tree pulling had been done, due to the more vigorously growing regrowth trees and much more grass growth.

**3** : In a lot of our country there is massive “tree thickening” occurring. This means that there are lots more trees now growing where once, before white man’s time, there were a lot fewer trees. We have done some surveys that have shown that there are over 100 young trees growing where there was only one large tree previously. When these young trees get to a certain height the big parent tree often dies as it cannot compete for moisture, soil nutrients etc. There is much less grass because of the increased competition from the greatly increased tree numbers. This alters the landscape and pushes out those native animals which normally live in less dense scrub country.

Less grass and less ground cover can lead to soil erosion after a sudden downpour of rain. It is most important that we be allowed to thin the trees out in order to retain a scattered tree landscape, as it used to be in bygone times, and hence more grass and a much more healthy landscape.

We ask that the knocking down of trees, especially tree “thinning”, not be banned please for these environmental reasons.

We are only too happy to take members of your committee out to show them the on-ground results.

Thank you,

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Aramac, 4726.

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