

Research Director  
Agriculture and Environment Committee  
Parliament House  
Brisbane

## **Submission *Supporting* the Vegetation Management Act (Reinstatement) and Other Legislative Amendments Bill 1916**

### **Land, Water and Biodiversity Degradation and Loss**

Having watched the destruction of Australia's native vegetation especially in Queensland and the subsequent degradation of the following to name a few

fragile soils and subsequent desertification with soils blown away in huge dust storms

pollution including salinisation of freshwater resources and marine environments including the Great Barrier Reef

natural biodiversity (animal, vegetable and mineral) which has co evolved over thousands of years with this ancient dry continent. Remnant Woodlands being one of the most threatened types of vegetation supports so much else.

I would refer you to the First National State of Environment Report 1996 which listed Biodiversity loss as one of the biggest environmental threats to Australia.

### **Attitudinal Opposition**

Having observed the recalcitrant attitude of some rural lobby groups in Queensland, threatening to line up big earthmoving equipment across the State if vegetation clearing laws were introduced, I was delighted when the Queensland Government introduced legislation in the 1990's, dealing with the degradation associated with vegetation clearing.

### **Landcare a Solution?**

Over the years I have watched the monies from the sale of Telstra being poured into Landcare where both community and rural landholders undertook reclamation such as planting trees to address problems caused by amongst other things vegetation clearing. The small amount of restoration was at best a paltry response to the magnitude of the destruction that had occurred and at times was continuing to occur.

I have spent many hours over the past 30 years voluntarily trying to educate people, including developers and politicians about the values of remnant vegetation, biodiversity and planting native

species in degraded landscapes. I also tried to draw attention to the destructive consequences of ill considered land and water management.

### **Climate Change**

Deny it or not this country is now subjected to the consequences of climate change including

severe weather events (storms, bushfires, record temperatures)

sea level rise

and so much else we still have not comprehended

Vegetation retention helps cool the planet

### **Ignorance**

Few people have the knowledge or experience to understand the ramifications of the clearing of vegetation in relation to broad scale land clearing, riparian areas, dry land salinity, runoff to marine environments, just to name a few. Most of us are

urban dwellers, strangers to Australia's natural environments and often falsely fearful of their importance and beauty

still caught up in cycles of past poor practice in land and water management

unable to see the consequences of actions taken and the importance of interrelated ecological systems

Unable to understand the concerns of those few who have studied the systems e.g. scientists

Add to this the political wilful self-serving actions of those who blatantly ignore the excesses, destruction and permanent losses related to the practices which destroy the natural systems which support this planet, its life supporting systems and we humans.

The Newman Government in its pursuit of a 'can do' philosophy showed a great arrogance and a very limited understanding in regard to our long term future. We hopefully have moved on from the bulldozing practices of the past, led by the Bjelki Peterson thinking patterns.

### **Politics Aside**

Hopefully this proposed legislation will help ensure the long term future of Queensland and the planet rather than the short term gains of minorities. It's too late when it's extinct and gone forever.

### **To a Better Future**

Unfortunately I do not have the time, pertinent expertise or resources to respond to the specific sections of this legislation. I can only hope that you are able to avail yourself of those who have

studied often over a lifetime, the consequences of broad scale vegetation clearing on the ecological systems which support us and this precious planet we live on.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the restoration of this important legislation.

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