

SUBMISSION TO:

**Vegetation Management (Reinstatement) and Other Legislation
Amendment Bill 2016**

SUBMISSION COVER SHEET

Closing date for submissions is 25 April 2016.

Please complete and submit this form with your submission to:

Email:
vminquiry@parliament.qld.gov.au

Post/Fax: 07 3553 6699

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Committee
Parliament House
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Suburb/City: **State:** **Postcode:**

**Is all or part of your
submission confidential?**

Yes, all ☐ Yes, part ☐ No ☒ ☒ (copy box to indicate answer)

**If part, please identify
which sections are
confidential:**

Reason for confidentiality:

SUBMISSION

I provide my submission in support of the continuation of the Current Vegetation Management Act 1999 and rejection of the changes proposed in the Vegetation Management (Reinstatement) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016 ("the Bill").

My overriding issue with the Bill is that its introduction in the Queensland Parliament on 17th March represents **yet another** variation to the Vegetation Management Framework, which has been amended over 18 times since its introduction in 1999. This constant change in legislation severely impacts on the ability of farm managers to plan and implement effective long-term property and business management decisions. Ecological processes work in much longer timeframes and can be severely compromised when mismatching, constantly changing regulations are enforced. Farmers have long called for certainty with the vegetation management regulatory framework. With the Bill being introduced when farmers are on their knees with over 86% of Queensland in drought conditions, it should come as no surprise that I am totally opposed to continued uncertainty and attacks on the viability of myself, the long-term sustainability of my business as well as attacks on fellow farmers.

On our property the impact of continual change in vegetation management regulation is that within a time and finance framework, plans for our future vegetation management will be severely curtailed, which will negatively impact on our farm's viability. There is no PMAV on our farm and due to the ever decreasing value of the farm, control of woody weeds and regrowth vegetation is not cost effective.

Farmers are good custodians of their land, and attempt to manage and control introduced woody weeds and regrowth vegetation genuinely within the restrictions imposed by governments. Genuine mistakes are made when navigating through pyramids of fact sheets and maps supplied by the department. Maps are often confusing and inaccurate. Farmers should not be subject to "reverse onus of proof" legislation when self assessment etc has led to mistakenly clearing, but should get a reasonable hearing.

To be viable, controlled clearing of High Value Regrowth is essential. This was attained by the self assessed clearing codes. High Value Regrowth restrictions will eventually render properties worthless, ie unsaleable - no one will buy property where vegetation cannot be managed. Compensation should be paid to offset landholder losses due to the removal of their rights to manage regrowth.

Our block was cleared except for about 10% vegetation classified as remnant vegetation. Copies of proposed regulated Vegetation Management Maps indicate that at least 50% of the block will now be remnant, or classified as Category C. Maps are often confusing and include introduced woody weeds with very little or no regrowth. Restrictions in clearing woody weeds in Category C and R areas will render the property unviable and worthless.

Development of parts of north Australia is essential for the prosperity of indigenous and non-indigenous communities as well as the defence of our country. Development of the North will be stemmed by these proposed restrictions in the Category C and R provisions.

The proposed restrictions under the amendments to the Vegetation Management Act 1999 will most certainly impact adversely on the economic viability of our small operation on this block. Without certainty about the future, general maintenance and control of introduced woody weeds is not cost effective. Without maintenance allowable under a self assessable code or something similar the operation is to be wound up on a "walk off" basis

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Signed... [REDACTED]

21.04.2016