

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [yminquiry](mailto:yminquiry)  
**Subject:** Submission on land clearing legislation  
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To the members of the Agricultural and Environment Committee of Queensland Parliament

I wish to add my strong support for the *Vegetation Management (Reinstatement) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016*.

This bill is a very sensible reversion to the situation that existed prior to the election of the Newman LNP government in 2012. Up to that time all parties and stakeholders, including AgForce, had accepted the provisions of the *Vegetation Management Act*.

In merely two years following the LNP government's abrogation of this Act – contrary to what it had promised – more than 200,000 hectares of threatened species habitat was destroyed.

The destruction of native vegetation not only destroys species habitat, but it also releases CO<sub>2</sub>. The threat of climate change is accelerating, it seems – one only has to observe the unusually hot weather we are currently experiencing in Queensland.

We have the ridiculous situation whereby the federal government is proposing to pay farmers to keep carbon in the soil and in vegetation, while others are recklessly clearing vegetation and releasing carbon. There is most certainly a need to develop a more rational suite of policies which all work towards the same goal.

I do not begrudge the need for farmers to make a living from the land. But there are times when we all have to make sacrifices and we have to respect limits, in the interests of the greater good and indeed the good of our planet. Moreover, there are benefits for farmers too in the protection of vegetation – vegetation helps control erosion through protecting soils and riverbanks, reduces land degradation and salinity, and improves water quality and availability.

There are obvious flow-on benefits for the Great Barrier Reef if vegetation is protected in surrounding areas.

I urge MPs from all sides to recognize that this issue is bigger than protecting the self-interest of a few. I sincerely hope that there will be multi-party support for this Bill.

Sincerely

Peter Cook, PhD

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