

**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:

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vminquiry@parliament.qld.gov.au

**Post:** **Fax:** 07 3553 6699

Research Director  
Agriculture and Environment  
Committee  
Parliament House  
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**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 17<sup>th</sup> 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 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.

THIS BILL IS DECREASING THE VALUE OF MY PROPERTY AND SEVERELY INHIBITS THE OPPORTUNITY TO DIVERSIFY INTO OTHER PROJECTS.

### 1. Removing High Value Agriculture and Irrigated High Value Agriculture from the Vegetation Management Framework

#### Background

HVA and IHVA permits provide farmers in northern Queensland with the opportunity to grow fodder and grain for supplementing in the dry season and finishing off stock for market.

The removal of HVA and IHVA is in direct conflict with the Australian Government White Paper on the Development of Northern Australia. The Changes to the Vegetation Management Framework will prevent indigenous and non-indigenous land holders from developing agriculture projects.

\*B. THIS BILL IS SEVERELY RESTRICTING THE FUTURE GENERATIONS OF CAPE YORK<sup>IS</sup> AND OTHER QLDERS FROM DEVELOPING FUTURE SUSTAINABLE INDUSTRIES. WHY SEAL THE P.D.R. AND HAVE NO PRODUCE TO CARRY ON IT?

## 2. Re-introducing Reverse Onus-of-Proof

### Background

The inclusion of Reverse Onus of Proof in Queensland Government's Vegetation Management Framework is a direct affront to the rights and liberties of farmers. Reverse Onus relegates farmers clearing vegetation to a level below that of criminals, where they are denied common justice under Section 24 of the Criminal Code: Mistake of fact. In Queensland farmers will be presumed guilty until they are proven innocent. They are also refused the defence in making a mistake, despite known faults with the mapping layers.

\*C.

HOW CAN THE GOVERNMENT TAKE AWAY OUR RIGHTS. THERE HAS BEEN LITTLE INFORMATION ABOUT THIS TO THE PRIMARY PRODUCERS OF AUSTRALIA. OUR GOVERNMENT SEEMS TO WANT TO MAKE IT HARDER AND HARDER TO SURVIVE. WHEN AUSTRALIA HAS NO MORE FARMERS WHERE WILL THE FOOD COME FROM.

## 4. Including High Value Regrowth as an additional layer of regulation under the Vegetation Management Framework on leasehold, freehold and indigenous land

### Background

The re-inclusion of High Value Regrowth (HVR) as an additional layer of regulation on leasehold, freehold and indigenous land is an overt grab by Queensland Government in search of targets for meeting international treaties such as the Kyoto Protocol and more recently the 2015 Paris Climate Deal.

\*E. WHY HAS THERE BEEN NO INFORMATION ABOUT GLOBE. THERE IS A LOT OF COUNTRY IN MY AREA THAT HAS BEEN CLEARED IN THE PAST AND THE REGROWTH IS ~~THE~~ ~~STILL~~ STILL NEEDED TO BE MANAGED. FEW THINGS STILL NEED TO BE KEPT CLEAN.

5. Increasing Category R vegetation to include the Burdekin, Mackay, Whitsunday and Wet Tropics Great Barrier Reef catchments and additional catchments Burnett Mary, Eastern Cape York and Fitzroy.

**Background**

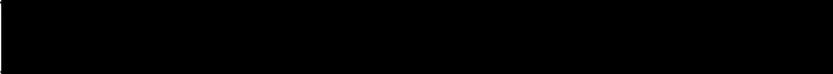
This increase in Category R provisions is a further restriction on development in Northern Queensland, which is in stark contrast to the development imperatives contained with the White Paper on Developing Northern Australia.

The science is completely unproven on the necessity to include  $\geq 50$  metre buffers along streamlines. In fact, a study conducted in Queensland and published in 2016 shows that grass is a far better assimilator for nitrogen to prevent leaching into waterways. The current bleaching of the Great Barrier Reef is not caused by high nutrient runoff from agricultural lands.

\*F. THERE SEEMS TO BE A LOT OF MISINFORMATION PUT AROUND BY MINORITY GROUPS THAT IS NOT BACKED BY SCIENTIFIC FACT. NORTHERN QUEENSLANDERS HAVE BEEN CUSTODIANS OF THE LAND FOR GENERATIONS, THEY ARE GOING TO MANAGE THE LAND WITH FUTURE GENERATIONS IN MIND.

6. Other matters relevant to the Vegetation Management (Reinstatement) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016 that the review committee should consider appropriate and worth some consideration

\*G. MOST FARMERS ARE NOT WANTING TO CLEAR EVERYTHING, BUT TO BE ABLE CREATE A SECURE, AGRICULTURAL FUTURE WITH THE RESOURCES ON THEIR LAND.

Signed:	
Address:	
Date:	LAKELAND 15.4.16