

From: [REDACTED]
To: yminquiry
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Research Director
Agriculture and Environment Committee
Parliament House
BRISBANE QLD 4000
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Dear Chair and Committee Members

Submission to Committee on Vegetation Management (Reinstatement) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016

I encourage you to support this bill to reinstate protection of native regrowth on freehold and indigenous land in Queensland.

I have worked in the private land conservation sector for over 14 years, primarily in Queensland. I have travelled extensively across this State meeting landholders who are managing their properties sustainably for both grazing, agriculture and conservation. The legacy of government endorsed &/or funded clearing, which started in the mid-1800s and intensified in the late 1940s, remains across this State. For example, 5 million hectares of Brigalow was cleared in the 1950s and 60s. Now only small isolated patches remain. These patches now face ongoing threats of inappropriate fire, regrowth clearing and loss of genetic integrity due to fragmentation / isolation. Regrowth must be protected.

The time of land clearing is in the past. We now know the impacts of land clearing – topsoil loss, fauna and flora extinctions, biodiversity declines, soil erosion, loss of farming potential, increased sediment and nutrient flows into freshwater, marine and reef ecosystems, loss of carbon stores, loss of carbon sequestration opportunities, degradation of waterways, and the list goes on. Every region in Queensland can demonstrate examples of poor historical land management practices that current and future generations have to mop up, and the ecosystem services, on we depend, that have been compromised.

We may not have known all these impacts 70 years ago, but we do now, and it is unconscionable that modern governments support land degradation activities such as the clearing of high value regrowth.

The Queensland Government should direct their efforts to support sustainable enterprises that will provide the backbone for the future service economies of Queensland – health, education, tourism and sustainable farming. Clearing native regrowth and remnant native vegetation is a backwards step.

I am also interested to know if the current State Government has removed cattle from all Queensland National Parks? I visited Lake Bindegolly National Park in mid-2014, only to find hundreds of cattle trampling over it. Ironically, they had trampled the vegetation around interpretive signs explaining the fragility of desert ecosystems and desert native plants.

I would welcome the opportunity to appear before the Committee regarding this inquiry.

Yours sincerely

Deborah Metters