

Research Director  
Agriculture and Environment Committee  
Parliament House  
BRISBANE QLD 4000

26<sup>th</sup> April 2016

*Dear Committee Members,*

*As a proud North Queensland farmer I am very concerned about the Veg. Management Bill the current Qld. Government is trying to pass. Below is a list of points I hope you will consider when voting on the constraints to be imposed by the Bill.*

*I implore you to stand up for North Queensland and farmers in general and allow us to manage our land and produce the foods needed by the world.*

*This Bill should not be passed because:-*

- 1. The greatest effect (detrimental) will be on North Qld. as we have a lot of good agricultural land and water that has not yet been developed.*
- 2. South East Qld. has had about a 100 year head start on us when it comes to developing the agricultural potential of farm land.*
- 3. Vast tracts of North Qld are now under Aboriginal ownership and any future agricultural development potential will be taken from their control. There is huge agricultural potential for the Gulf and Peninsular and this could bring these people employment and the associated social amenities and wealth if encouraged.*
- 4. The world needs increased food production and all previous state leaders have espoused to the world that North Qld. has the potential to help provide - how can farmers do that if we cannot access the land to cultivate.*
- 5. Miners such as Rio Tinto (Weipa) and the big coal miners can clear vegetation for a once off extraction of resources but farmers trying to clear for long term sustainable food production are to be stopped. This makes no sense bar government only look for the short term royalty and sentimental vote grab.*
- 6. Farmers normally won't go to the expense of clearing land unless it is going to be productive.*
- 7. Freehold land used to mean that you owned the land and everything on it except the oil and minerals. Farmers that still own trees have shown they are environmentally responsible and should not be treated as the villain, as such they should be allowed to continue to manage their assets.*
- 8. Orchards and agricultural cropping also produce oxygen and store carbon just like native vegetation.*
- 9. Any farmer who can sustainably increase production should be encouraged to do so, not persecuted.*
- 10. As any farmer near a national park or locked up area will attest, areas such as these are the greatest harbourers of feral animals, pest and noxious plants.*

11. *The previous Labor government's Veg. Management laws were so confusing farmers weren't game to mechanically clear noxious plants such as lantana for fear of prosecution. Enforcement Officers were advising farmers that they would prosecute if a single sapling was damaged. The only alternative left to control such plants is to use poison. No responsible farmer wants to use poisons if a non-toxic alternative is available.*
12. *Look at Google Earth and zoom in on the narrow cleared strip along the coast, it goes north to the Daintree. Slowly zoom out and look at the Gulf and Peninsular areas, there is a small cleared pocket at Lakeland and the rest is native vegetation to the Tip and the Northern Territory border.*

*Once again it's Brisbane dictating to North Qld. aimed at winning votes based on a "feel good" for the South East Qld. suburban voter. If they think this legislation is needed in the South East corner, by all means impose it on them but not North Qld. Please oppose the Bill and let farmers get on with their job.*

Regards

  
Robert Bass

  
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