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### **Submission to the Inquiry into the Queensland land clearing reform Bill**

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wish to give my support to the *Vegetation Management (Reinstatement) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016*. It is important that this Bill be passed by the parliament to restore protection of woody vegetation to the level prior to changes being made by the previous LNP government; led by Mr Campbell Newman. The greater protection of remaining remnant woody vegetation and high value regrowth is important for multiple reasons. These reasons include sequestering carbon, providing habitat for threatened species, such as the koala, and stabilising stream banks and gullies.

My work background is principally in extension and research activities with the Australian dairy industry. The particular emphasis in my work was on natural resource management (soils, nutrients, vegetation) and as part of this work I undertook on-farm research and extension activities on riparian management (Chataway et al., 2005; Chataway, 2007; Chataway and Kunde, 2007). Most recently I worked for the Department of Natural Resources and Mines as a senior scientist, based in Emerald, evaluating management practices to improve the quality of water leaving sugarcane (Mackay Whitsunday region) and grain cropping (Fitzroy Basin) farms in central Queensland (Carroll et al., 2012).

As a result of what I have learnt through my work, I regard the amendments proposed in the Bill to be critical to:

- better protecting riparian vegetation which has a critical role in stabilizing stream banks and in turn reducing sediment loads entering the Great Barrier Reef lagoon;
- removing the loop hole for allowing broad scale clearing for so-called High Value Agriculture. In my work in agriculture I have conducted extensive trials with forage crops (sorghum, oats, lablab) (Chataway, 2004). Never ever had I heard anyone, or myself, referring to forage sorghum as a High Value Agricultural crop. The inclusion of a crop like this under this definition is wrong. I can only believe it was done because forage crops are often grown for a few years following broad scale clearing prior to permanent pasture being sown. Allowing clearing of remnant woodlands under the pretense that it is for High Value Agriculture needs to cease;

- removing the defense of claimed mistake clearing and restoring the presumption that a landholder is responsible for clearing that takes place on their property;
- restoring important protection for ecologically important woodland regrowth (High Value Regrowth) on freehold land.

Thank you for providing this opportunity for me to make this submission. I do look forward to seeing these amendments passed by the Queensland Parliament.

Yours sincerely,

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## References

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