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Environmental Consultants

The Research Director
Agriculture and Environment Committee
Parliament House
Brisbane Qld 4000

Vegetation Management (Reinstatement) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016

Dear Research Director

I make this brief submission on your proposal to reinstate the previous provisions of the Vegetation Management Act. I believe that those provisions provided reasonable protection of vegetation across Queensland and should be reinstated urgently, and retrospectively to prevent panic clearing.

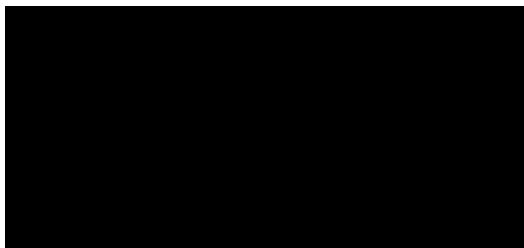
My submission is based on four decades of working as a professional environmental scientist across northern Australia, and in other parts of Australia. I have worked on many large, medium and small projects, including with pastoral landholders, and have first-hand experience in many situations where land has been cleared without appropriate controls in place. These clearing events have resulted frequently in poor outcomes, including loss of habitat, increased carbon emissions, large-scale erosion and infestations of weeds.

In my experience, there is little justification for any more clearing of native vegetation. In a few places, where thorough assessments have been conducted, and there is a strong argument for limited clearing of native vegetation, it may be appropriate to clear some native vegetation. But in most cases, from very recent events in the Cape York, Gulf of Carpentaria, and Wet Tropics regions, to clearing going back decades, there is very little evidence of any positive result from clearing native vegetation, and much evidence for detrimental outcomes.

I strongly urge you to reinstate the previous controls, and perhaps even strengthen them with tighter environmental assessment requirements. I also urge you to provide adequate resources for the authorities to investigate and prosecute.

Unfortunately, I had little time to prepare a stronger case, but am prepared to elaborate on the issue, if requested.

Yours sincerely



Dr Noel Preece
Principal Environmental Scientist & Director

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