

**Submission to the Queensland Parliamentary Agriculture and Environment Committee on the *Vegetation Management (Reinstatement) and other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016***

**By Fiona Ryan**

This is a very brief submission to your Committee to highlight the importance of reducing land clearing for mitigating greenhouse gas emissions as it relates to the Vegetation Management (Reinstatement) and other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016.

I have been involved in Land Clearing issues in Australia since I wrote a discussion paper for WWF Australia 1997 where I was the first person to calculate the opportunity cost for land clearing for grazing in Australia at \$1.62 per tonne of CO<sub>2</sub>e and therefore a very low cost abatement option. I have been an NGO observer at a number of UNFCCC meetings including the Bali COP 13 in 2007.

Greenhouse gas emissions are predicted to increase due to the change to the regulatory environment in Queensland according to the Commonwealth Government's emissions projections document [Tracking to 2020](#)<sup>1</sup> The Queensland State Land and Tree Survey (SLATS)<sup>2</sup> estimated that emissions from land clearing have been trending upward over the 2012-2014 period from 27.6 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e 35.8 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e. Under the current regulations emissions are likely to increase further than they already have. The 8.2 million tonnes per annum increase that has already occurred is the equivalent to the emissions of about 2 million cars.

The Bill should ensure that in order to limit the release of Carbon into the atmosphere:

- clearing for *High Value Agriculture* must not be permitted.
- It must not permit Restoration of the protection for ecologically important regrowing woodlands ('High Value Regrowth') on freehold and Aboriginal land.
- It must be assumed that a landholder is responsible for clearing that takes place on their property. There should be no defence on the basis of ignorance on the part of the landholder.

Yours sincerely

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1. <https://www.environment.gov.au/system/files/resources/d46b4104-0a04-4efb-9e83-df97e58eb2ff/files/tracking-to-2020-interim-update-emissions-projections.pdf>

2. <https://www.qld.gov.au/environment/land/vegetation/mapping/slats-reports/> SLATS supplementary report 2012-14.