

Barry Stubbs



15<sup>th</sup> March 2018

Acting Committee Secretary Innovation,  
Tourism Development and Environment Committee

Dear Sir/Madam,

My brother and I grow sugar cane on a family farm which is 194 hectares in area and is situated in the Russell Mulgrave catchment. The land is flat with minimum fall and consists of predominately black peat soil. There are quite a number of different soils types in the catchment and all have different characteristics and need to be farmed accordingly.

To this end there is a number of trials and infrastructure installed on this farm with ongoing monitoring.

1. SRA EEF60 (trailing slow release fertilisers and monitoring runoff and leaching) in 2 year
2. DAF (trailing different rates of nitrogen) been going 5years
3. JCU & Jaragun (Denitrification Bioreactor Trial) 1<sup>st</sup> year
4. Installed a sediment trap where water leaves the property. Cleaned out annually or when necessary. (Installed 2 years ago)

As well as the above the Russell Mulgrave catchment has Project 25 which is the 25 fifth project in the National Environmental Science Programme Tropical Water Quality Hub. It is the first science-based monitoring of water in streams and has the confidence of farmers as it is not modelling. Project 25 has found the two rivers have minimum sediment discharge due to the nature of the soils and good land management by farmers. It also found minimum phosphorus discharge which usually goes hand in hand with sediment discharge. However, it has found at different times of the year high levels coming from the shire council sewerage plant.

This is a serious concern as the farmers are being blamed for this and the draft bill allows sewerage plants offsets which will un-rightly still put the blame on farmers.

If the State Government is genuine in its commitment to water quality, then no offsets should be allowed.

Canegrowers have commitment to Best Management Practices which farmers are working towards and in my view is being hampered by erroneous paperwork which could

be helped by developing a phone app which growers could record their work on the spot. Most growers if not fully BMP accredited are adhering to the principles.

Canegrowers also instigated CANE CHANGER which involves all parties working together for the common good.

The State Government made a commitment to this and if this bill is enforced will see all John Pickering's good work come to no avail. More can be achieved by voluntary working together then by regulation which will see the industry working from the top down instead of the bottom up.

To sum up, I ask the committee to understand growers are taking water quality seriously, each catchment is different and has different needs and if this bill is passed it will severally impact on the welfare of the state in more ways than one.

I ask for the reasons above but not limited to that the bill be rejected.

Looking forward to expanding on this submission at the hearing.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Stubbs', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Barry Stubbs