

Acting Committee Secretary

Innovation, Tourism Development and Environment Committee

Parliament House, George Street, Brisbane Qld 4000

16/03/19

I am writing to object to the REEF REGULATION BILL. Once again rural people are to wear all the blame for polluting and destroying the Great Barrier Reef. For sure a very small percentage may do the wrong thing from lack of knowledge of correct methods of application of fertilizer, the value of good ground cover or ignorance of the effects on the bottom line of their balance sheet from not getting maximum results from costly farm inputs. Agronomists are partly to blame because they did not attend business school and make their money from selling products such as fertilizer. Sometimes you will make more money from lower input costs, producing lower yields but with more nett profit at the end.

Most people living in towns or cities have no training at all in chemical or fertilizer use so the pollution from these areas would be very high. I am sure you would have taken this into account as Bunnings is one of Australia's biggest suppliers of fertilizer.

Poor communication from the Government, or where they just trying to push this Legislation through quietly to catch people out. What are the minimum practice standards, how much more work will be required for our business to comply with Legislation, what will it cost us to comply, will the Government have their own Experienced people on the ground running workshops and visiting properties giving advice on how to proceed?

Will Droughts and the effects which serious lack of rain cause be considered when looking at ground cover. Best Management Practices are useful when you have medium rainfall but not so good in very dry times. No drought is ever the same.

Penalties for contravening the Regulations are excessive, under our PMAV (Property Map of Assessable Vegetation) rules, some areas which require ground cover were caused by fire baking the ground hard as a clay pot and it now sheds every drop of water that lands on it. The only fix is by mechanical means like blade ploughing but I am not allowed onto this area. The fires were in 1970s. This is a good example of Government getting it wrong, Regulations are affecting other Regulations tying our hands.

Self-Regulation would have seen these areas repaired a long time ago, most people on the land are very responsible managers and custodians for future generations. Resources should be put more into making the bad land managers responsible for their actions individually, not bringing the good managers down to their level. With technology to monitor water and satellites to monitor land it is not hard to see where to start.

The Great Barrier Reef must be protected, and everyone needs to play their part, Farmers, Graziers, Fishermen, Miners and of course City folk. One section of society should not have to shoulder all the blame and hard work, if they do the rest of the society will need to pay.

I hope you take into consideration my thoughts and opinions on the Reef Regulations Bill and we can make Queensland stronger environmentally without impacting many rural businesses negatively.

Regards

Tim Kirkwood

*Tim Kirkwood* 16/3/19