

Sub No. 69



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Dr Kathy Munro
Research Director
State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee
Vegetation Management Framework Amendment Bill
Parliament House
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Dear Dr Munro

Heart Foundation response to Vegetation Management Framework Amendment Bill 2013

The Heart Foundation welcomes the opportunity to provide comment to the proposed amendments to the vegetation management framework. The Heart Foundation's main interest is in the achievement of policy objectives that influence food sustainability and production of healthy foods and the consideration of health across the Bill.

As an independent peak body, the Heart Foundation represents the interests of the:

- 700,000 Queenslanders who are living with heart disease, stroke and other blood vessel disease (cardiovascular disease)¹
- 114,000 men and women aged 30–74 years who are at high risk of having a heart attack or stroke in the next five years and may need hospitalisation²
- 90% of Queenslanders with at least one risk factor for heart attack or stroke³
- All Queenslanders who want to make healthier lifestyle choices.

Health must be an integral consideration in planning to streamline the *Vegetation Management Framework Amendment Bill 2013*. Our food supply and the types and quality of food on offer to our population, is a significant contributor to our increasing obesity problem. The number of overweight or obese adults has increased by an average of 55,000 each year in Queensland since 1993, in part due to poor land use³.

One in 3 adults in Queensland is overweight, and 1 in 4 obese. Unless addressed, 65% of adults (3.7 million) will be overweight or obese by 2020. The total cost of obesity in Queensland was \$11.6 billion in 2008⁴. This includes health care costs, productivity and other financial losses and cost of lost wellbeing.

The Heart Foundation recognises with all elements of the food system, the relationship between health and environment is bi-directional. We acknowledge that amending the vegetation management framework will support economic growth and the four pillar economy, particularly in the areas of agriculture and construction, while maintaining protection for our important native vegetation.

We urge the Committee to consider the need for providing a safe and healthy food supply for Queenslanders. We strongly recommend that amendments to the Bill embed considerations of the health and financial impact of unhealthy food consumption. We therefore recommend the committee seeks input from the Health and Community Services Committee.

The Heart Foundation recommends the consideration of the following:

- The primary purpose of food production is to provide a safe and healthy food supply for all Queenslanders. For everyone to have access to healthy food in the future we must ensure valuable agricultural land is protected. Priority should be given to addressing health, food security in vulnerable populations, food supply to remote Indigenous communities, and land use planning which protects this good quality agricultural land, so it can provide fresh, nutritious, culturally appropriate and affordable food.
- Protected agricultural land should be managed in collaboration with state and federal environment department policies to ensure long term sustainability of soil, biodiversity and groundwater resources.
- Major risks to Australia's food supply in the future which require attention and action:
 - a) The food system continues to promote poor eating and discourages healthy eating, further compounding the adverse impact of poor nutrition on burden of disease. Chronic disease currently causes 88% of the burden of disease in Queensland⁴.
 - b) We are already experiencing escalating environmental impacts on the food supply.

We recognise the proposed changes to new clearing purposes will assist the growth of the agricultural industry and contribute to the government's goal of doubling the value of Queensland's food production by 2040. The Heart Foundation supports the amendment of the purpose of the *Vegetation Management Act 1999*, to regulate clearing in a way that 'allows for sustainable land use' so it is in line with benefiting and supporting the health, well-being and economic prosperity of all Queenslanders.

The Heart Foundation encourages you to review and consider the practical recommendations in our resource [Food-sensitive planning and urban design](#) (FSPUD)⁵ which was developed to support a sustainable and healthy food system. Access to healthy, sustainable and equitable food can be facilitated by planning that integrates food considerations into urban land use and development.

To ensure the achievement of the *Vegetation Management Framework Amendment Bill 2013* policy objectives, the Heart Foundation urges this committee to consider the impact to the health of Queenslanders. This will support the achievement of a sustainable, safe and healthy food supply for the Queensland population now and into the future.

Yours sincerely



Cathy Donald
Chief Executive Officer

References

¹ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2011). Cardiovascular disease: Australian facts 2011. Cardiovascular disease series. Cat. no. CVD 53. Canberra: AIHW.

² Chen L, Rogers SL, Colagiuri S, Cadilhac DA, Mathew TH et al (2008). How do the Australian guidelines for lipid-lowering drugs perform in practice? Cardiovascular disease risk in the AusDiab Study, 1999-2000. Medical Journal of Australia. Sep 15; 189(6):319-22. Department of Epidemiology and Preventative Medicine, Monash University, Melbourne, VIC, Australia.

³ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2003) *The burden of disease and injury in Australia 2003*

⁴ Queensland Health (2012). The Health of Queenslanders 2012 Fourth report of the Chief Health Officer Queensland.

⁵ Food-sensitive planning and Urban Design (FSPUD) – a conceptual framework for achieving a sustainable and healthy food system (2011) <http://www.heartfoundation.org.au/driving-change/current-campaigns/local-campaigns/Pages/food-sensitive-planning.aspx> Accessed 27 November 2012.