

SUBMISSION

In providing this submission I refer directly to the key provisions of the legislation which may be amended.

1. Removing High Value Agriculture and Irrigated High Value Agriculture from the Vegetation Management Framework

Background

- High value agriculture and irrigated high value agriculture refers to cropping.
- This change will take away the ability of land holders to clear small areas of land to develop farms.

For our family personally removing High Value Agriculture will mean

1. that we can no longer sustainably develop our properties. Resulting in a decrease in carrying capacity. This will decrease individual income, and decrease Decreased overall QLD beef production, and tax revenue for the QLD government (we won't be making any money)!
2. It will also ultimately lead to a decrease land values as no one will see value in blocks that can't be developed for agricultural purpose.

2. Retaining Self-Assessable Codes

All farmers want to do what is best for their land to ensure long term viability. I fully believe that the years of experience held by the farmer on the land along with their personal responsibility to their land and family's future makes the farmer the best person to evaluate their vegetation management practices.

The self-assessable codes help farmers ensure trees and grass stay in balance, avoid soil erosion and feed animals in drought.

We used self-assessable codes on our property and they were clear, easy to follow and timely to carry out. This enabled us to manage invasive regrowth and maintain an adequate level of beef production.

If these codes were taken away the process would be timely, have extra cost to the government in employing staff to do the assessments and result in cases where people are not able to do what needs to be done in the best time frames i.e before or after rain, between buying and selling stock etc.

3. Including High Value Regrowth as an additional layer of regulation under the Vegetation Management Framework on leasehold, freehold and indigenous land

When we purchased our property, we paid to have to freehold, as this gave us more scope to better manage the vegetation. We are now being told that it won't matter if it is freehold or lease hold the same restrictions will apply. This essentially means we have spent money to freehold our block for nothing!

4. Increasing Category R regrowth watercourse vegetation to include additional catchments in the Burnett Mary, Eastern Cape York and Fitzroy Great Barrier Reef Catchments.

So far we have not even been made aware of this by the government, this will spring on us overnight and result in added costs to our business as well as impact any future productive value of our business?

QLD government should be fighting to protect and uphold its agricultural industry no wrapping us in red tape and restricting us until we collapse.

5. That no compensation will be payable to landholders subject to added layers of regulation – high value regrowth, regrowth watercourses and essential habitat during transitional arrangements

When we purchased our property it ran 200 head backgrounding steers. On average the profit made per head is about \$300. We turn the cattle over twice in a year. This means an income of \$120,000. Now minus the costs of operating a grazing property (diesel, contractors, stock feeds, stock husbandry products, repairs and maintenance to machinery and infrastructure, fencing equipment, fodder harvesting, vegetation management etc) estimated at about \$75,000. **That leaves a taxable income of \$45,000.**

Through proper sustainable vegetation management, we were able to increase our carrying capacity to 400 head of cattle. This takes our income \$240,000. Minus the expenses, that are a little more due to increased stock numbers (increased fodder, stock husbandry products, fodder harvesting, contractors etc.) estimated at about \$110,000. **That leaves a taxable income of \$130,000** that is a massive difference!

We need to be compensated for these losses.

Why should the farmer, who is already suffering losses due to harsh drought, be the only one to pay!

6. Increasing compliance measures and penalties under vegetation management laws.

Farmers have been on a see-saw of changing laws for many years, and often "panic clearing is done" for fear that the laws will be changed again and they will be restricted. If fair, reasonable laws were set in place and not subject to constant changes farmers would be able to better manage their clearing practices. This would be not only more environmentally sustainable but far more cost effective to the individual.

Vegetation management is not cheap! No one want to be using borrowed money to do mass clearing but it's a do or die way of thinking; do it now or you will miss out and not be able to do anything! If we could be assured that the current laws would be left as they are, this would resolve the issues of compliance.



7. Other matters relevant to the Vegetation Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 that the review committee should consider appropriate and worth some consideration

We are a young family, (my husband and I are both under 30 with two young kids). We have a small cattle block near Augathella QLD. When we purchased this block it was covered with regrowth and could only run 200 head of cattle. With the current laws we were able to improve

the land, this decreased erosion, increased production of grasses and overall increased our carrying capacity to 400 head of cattle.

Consequently, we were able to increase the overall value of the land, as it is now a viable, environmentally sustainable cattle block. We are now looking to sell this little block and buy something that is perhaps a bit bigger or of a better soil type. We don't have a lot of money to sow in, so we would be looking for something that is unimproved, perhaps covered in regrowth, in need of love and the implementation of sustainable land management practices. However with these new laws we will not be able to develop this new block, therefore it would be a pointless venture as the land will be worthless. This would mean that we would have to be looking for a block that is already tidy and these blocks we can not afford. This is devastating for our little family, as the dream of one day living on and making our income from a grazing property becomes more and more impossible. It's no wonder we cannot get young people to stay on the land!

- We need legislation not to change every 5 seconds so we cannot plan for the future,
- We want the opportunity to drought proof our business for a sustainable future
- We need assurance that our land values are not going to suddenly fall out from under us (higher production; or ability to improve and therefore generate higher production from the land = higher land value.)
- Self-Assessable Codes have been very useful and more cost effective and timely than lodging applications and wading through red tape!

Signed:	
Address:	
Date:	15-3-18