

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
<p>My land is not high quality agricultural land. It is land that runs 1 head to about 10 acres in a high rainfall area. It is hilly country covered with established ironbark, poplar and blue gum trees and regrowth saplings. There are areas of gravelly soil and rock. There are patches of monsoonal rainforest invaded with lantana. It is a haven for wild pigs because of the opportunity to hid.</p> <p>For this, it has potential to provide reasonable grazing country to cattle or horses with limited clearing and establishing introduced species of grasses. The impact on not clearing this land is it, in its present state is worthless maybe running 5 head while harbouring feral animals and weeds. It has been undeveloped for many years and has sapling regrowth. Carefully cleared and managed it has financial worth. It would have the capacity to run 20 head of cattle. Although this does not sound like much of a return, it would give it financial worth to me and the land. By selectively clearing considering plant and animal species, land gradient, watercourses and run off, I believe I will be improving the country without causing further harm. Presently it is a huge fire risk.</p> <p>By limiting clearing, the construction of dams and areas of wetlands has also been removed. A thicket of lantana over half the property prevents any potential for planned water catchment or management. It is a great hiding place for wild dogs and pigs. The ways to control the lantana are dozer the bushes away (not permitted at present), burn or poison (not permitted at present). Burning without other methods is at best limited method of success.</p>
2. Retaining Self-Assessable Codes
<p>I have applied for a self-assessable code. I found the process reasonably clear process though it could do with some improvement. I believe this method works with the farm manager/land owner to allow them to make decisions on how the land is used. The day-to-day caretaker of the land should understand the country better than a map. Instead of scrapping the self-assessable code I suggest improving the process. I am a little dismayed that the Government has assumed that because I own a large block of land I must have no regard for the careful management of the land. I would like to state I am not planning to remove every tree from my property. In fact the opposite is the case. I am considering the environment by doing development. I consider the land and how much clearing is appropriate.</p>
3. Including High Value Regrowth as an additional layer of regulation under the Vegetation Management Framework on leasehold, freehold and indigenous land
4. Increasing Category R regrowth watercourse vegetation to include additional

catchments in the Burnett Mary, Eastern Cape York and Fitzroy Great Barrier Reef Catchments.
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
I am concerned that this decision will financially impact me and my future plans for expanding my property. It will make its resale price poor. I doubt compensation will be given for removing my opportunity to clear my own land. I purchased this block in August 2017 with the intention of slowly clearing and improving the land with better grass species. Now the only option that allows that is burning. To apply for a permit to burn you need 3 people present and a fire fighter truck. As I am a sole farmer n a low budget I do not have access to fire as a method to clear my land. I was using dozer work as a method to clear the land rather than fire.
6. Increasing compliance measures and penalties under vegetation management laws.
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
<p>I am concerned that with these constant changes I will not be able to make long term farm plans , budget for them or even be approved for bank loans. Banks like a sure bet which when the rules keep changing make funding development hard. Without bank funding, most farmers will not expand or improve their country as it is simply unviable.</p> <p>AS well is the impact of allowing thicket growth of regrowth to occur. Sugar gliders need space to glide. They cannot do this in country that is heavily thicketed from regrowth or lantana. This lack of falling space causes the gliders to come down the trees and cross the forest floor. Here they are vulnerable to attack from feral animals like cats and dogs. By allowing managed clearing these species are given a more open forest situation to fly in.</p> <p>At the moment, the Dept is suggesting fire as a method of clearing the land. Using fire is also not the best solution for the ozone layer or the environment. Clearing the land but leaving the stacks of timber provides a habitat for small marsupials as well as levy banks or swales to catch run off. I suggest this is something that has been overlooked as serving an environmental benefit.</p>

Signed:	Debra Roberts
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Date:	15.03.18