

SUBMISSION

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

<div>1. Removing High Value Agriculture and Irrigated High Value Agriculture from the Vegetation Management Framework</div> <div><p>Removal of the ability to clear native vegetation for High Value Agriculture removes our ability to diversify our beef enterprise, which in turn can help us to prepare for drought, increase production and help with succession.</p><p>The world population growth is causing a greater demand for food & fibre evidenced by overseas interests wanting to buy our farming land. Removal of HVA & IHVA will stop us from being able to help with greater food production</p></div>
<div>2. Retaining Self-Assessable Codes</div> <div><p>Retaining Self Assessable Codes is imperative. Woody vegetation is overwhelming grass pastures and causing massive reduction in production and biodiversity. The change to a non self-assessable code would leave farmers bogged in expensive and time consuming , non productive liasons with Gov staff who many times can be inexperienced and have their own green agenda.</p></div>
<div>3. Including High Value Regrowth as an additional layer of regulation under the Vegetation Management Framework on leasehold, freehold and indigenous land</div> <div><p>High value regrowth is often been allowed to grow as a part of a landholders plan to then later pull to the ground, providing mulch and litter to ground surface to enhance production and reverse degradation.</p><p>Other times , health or economic problems may have been the reasoning for not repulling regrowth.</p><p>I am totally opposed to mandatory acquisition of High Value Regrowth and the legislation amounts to theft.</p></div>

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

I am confident erosion and runoff would be reduced in some land types by increasing Category R regrowth watercourse vegetation , but I am adamant decreasing woody vegetation on some other land types would produce more soil cover by increasing perennial pastures which existed previously in many cases, hence reducing erosion and runoff .

Therefore a prescriptive legislation covering regrowth watercourse vegetation will be detrimental in many land types and should be discarded.

Lost production from areas of Category R regrowth watercourse vegetation in the State will amount to millions of dollars from this legislation if passed.

Category R non clearing along with no HVA & IHVA reduces the possibilities of farmers transitioning to more efficient and sustainable practices, as large centre pivots for more water efficiency and other efficiencies derived from economy of scale.

As world population and economies grow the demand for Australian food and fibre increases which translates into opportunity to expand production, especially in the north where development has largely not taken place. This legislation if passed will stop any further development , leaving the north to become an economic wasteland instead of an economic powerhouse.

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

Our time is already overburdened with necessary management with little time left for family and recreation. We need more red tape like we need another drought. For goodness sake don't pass this legislation.

To think farmers will have to bear the economic burden and the carbon capture burden from this legislation is inconceivable. Government should hang their heads in shame. It would be just about impossible to calculate the economic and social cost if this legislation is passed.

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

In a landscape like ours where trees regenerate to a forest that by the Herbarium standards is good enough that they would like to take it back as remnant after twenty years growth, Government would bring in legislation that provides massive penalties, puts the onus of proof of innocents on us , makes it retrospective, is incredibly unfair and should not be passed.

I can see that despite the challenge of gaining prosecutions of murderers and pedophiles , the presumption of innocence is a necessary part of our legal system, therefore surely the producers of essential foods and fibres to sustain life are entitled to the same, innocent until proven guilty.

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

Our business model and our passion is founded on purchasing cheap overgrazed degraded pastoral properties. We have achieved huge increases in production while returning landscapes back to a healthy state. We have achieved this largely by utilising woody vegetation (trees) to be pulled over to cover bare soils to promote good perennial pastures and new tree cover. Those areas pulled under permit have been pulled twice in 20 years and have now become strong resilient lands abound with biodiversity of flora and fauna.

Our enterprise now normally employs two people and has been returning reasonable profits through very dry times.

Our sons property was purchased after legislation changed to a thinning and encroachment clearing only system. His development costs have quadrupled and his increase in production have been slow and limited. Degradation, if possible to reverse, will be very slow. He is trialing deep ripping and seeding at very large costs. If we are to be further restricted our son is sentenced to a bleak future. In fact a fair government would buy his freehold property if they are going to bring in legislation that so impedes him that his and his young family's future will be of frustration and hardship.

Our properties have been much more resilient to drought and easier to manage than our sons.

In my view the self- assessable codes are already an impediment, and are way too restrictive but to tighten the system further is a pathway to hell.

We will be working hard to help our son repair his property and make it more productive and resilient if legislation allows it. Please don't pass this legislation.

Signed:	MATW
Address:	
Date:	18-3-2018