

## SUBMISSION

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

I do not in any way support broad scale land clearing or land degradation however I do not support and cannot operate with our industry being heavily regulated and debilitated by new oppressive vegetation management laws.

The new proposed legislation is not based on Science in any way, shape or form and is just a political exercise to satisfy extreme minority groups.

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| 1. Removing High Value Agriculture and Irrigated High Value Agriculture from the Vegetation Management Framework   |
| <p><b>The land we own does not have the soil type to grow crops or irrigate. Historically, we have aerially applied grass seed over Springvale to improve grass cover. We feel any country capable of cropping should be regarded as very valuable and all efforts made to protect it as already many, many residential blocks have been built on valuable cropping country. The world population is growing, requiring more food and housing. The area of cropping land is under pressure to increase production and should be protected at all cost.</b></p>   |
| 2. Retaining Self-Assessable Codes   |
| <p><b>A fact of running an agricultural business is that there is never enough money available every year to cover all the desired improvements along with the necessary maintenance that is required to run the business in the most efficient way. Regrowth on Springvale has only been cleared when the money has been available between managing the land and animals and droughts and floods. Also, regrowth control has only been viable when the weather conditions allowed as during very wet years, machinery cannot move around on the land and during very dry years, the woody weeds don't pull out of the dry crusty ground. Therefore having self-assessable codes in place, allows the management of encroaching weeds to be treated when all conditions are suitable eg. When a particular area needs to be treated, this can be done immediately without waiting for the very busy DNRM staff to reply to applications. If these codes were taken away and we had to do the very time consuming activity of applying and gaining approval for this activity, this would have a big impact on the timing of all activities within our business and we would not be able to carry out the work when all the conditions were most suitable for this required activity to be carried out.</b></p> |
| 3. Including High Value Regrowth as an additional layer of regulation under the Vegetation Management Framework on leasehold, freehold and indigenous land   |
| <p><b>Our property Springvale has recently been freeholded and we have been through the costly process of applying for a new PMAV and at the same time endeavoured to rectify mapping errors from the old PMAV. Only 35% of Springvale has had tree clearing carried out. It is hugely important to our business that we retain that 35%. We have found where we have cleared the</b></p>  |



land, the grass cover increases ten fold, resulting in slowing down the water travelling across the land and also resulting in less erosion and many break-aways silting up and now having grass cover. With the continual management of woody weeds, we are hoping to increase the area and density of grass cover resulting in less sediment run off and therefore less erosion. Having high value regrowth added as an additional layer in place on our property would result in more erosion and sediment run off and impact the bottom line of our business detrimentally.

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

How will any of the 'developing' the North get off the ground if it is not even a possibility in the first place? How can we increase our food production when more rules and regulations are continually being created to impede management. Springvale is situated in the Burdekin catchment and have experienced the impacts of these regulations. Completing many pages of questions for Government Departments doesn't improve the Great Barrier Reef. Different land types require different management and these other catchments all have ways of managing which don't work across all Queensland. We are already regulated and closely monitored by satellites. The existing regulations are being closely monitored and the government processes in place are seen to be working.

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

We have completed our business model on 35% of Springvale being cleared of woody weeds to allow good grass cover. The value of our property would drop considerably and financially become less viable if these other layers of regulation were introduced. We are the 3<sup>rd</sup> generation of Mollers to operate a business on Springvale and have seen many regulations introduced over the last 20 years that have not increased the value of the land and have not increased the production made from the land. We operate a business that we want to hand on to the next generation therefore we are constantly looking at ways to improve the land condition and grass cover for the long term sustainability of both the business and the land. If these additional layers were introduced, we should be compensated financially for the long term detrimental affect these laws would have on our business because we can't see they would have a positive impact on the land. They are not based on Science and we have found with our management of Springvale since tree clearing was undertaken, that the land condition has improved greatly.

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


I have lived on Springvale for 33 years and my husband has lived here for 55 years. In that time we have seen the vegetation thicken considerably. One area on the neighbouring property is called a plain. In the last 33 years, I have seen the woody weeds encroach across the whole approximately 320 hectares area of this plain. Vegetation Laws have come into place that in most instances do not reflect the reality of this woody weed infestation. Much of the mapping has been known to be incorrect but to rectify this mapping is very onerous on the landholder. The Government Department have made the mistake and it should be up to them to get



mapping correct particularly when Legislation is made based around this mapping. Our Vegetation Management Supporting Map has an area mapped as Blackwood scrub when in fact there are no Blackwoods in this area. Penalties under the proposed laws are excessive and rude and show the disregard the Government have for farmers who are caring and managing for the land and growing the food for the Nation and paying for the privilege. Legislation should have sufficient regard to the rights and liberties of individuals and consequently should not adversely affect rights and liberties, or impose obligations, retrospectively.

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 operate a business that we want to hand on to the next generation therefore we are constantly looking at ways to improve the land condition and grass cover for the long term sustainability of both the business and the land - Springvale. Changing the legislation every election brings uncertainty and our 10 year plan is no longer usable. As most agriculture businesses are dependent on the good will of Banks to continue to fund our business operations, this uncertainty creates doubt within the Banks when considering funding further projects such as drought proofing projects eg. new dams. Having sufficient funds to pay for these developments is becoming less and less likely with the further proposed restrictions under the new legislation. We have always lightly stocked Springvale with the intention of maintaining a high level of grass cover all through the year. We have found on the 35% of Springvale that has had trees cleared and regrowth controlled, that grass coverage has increased considerably over the years thereby reducing erosion dramatically as opposed to the areas where there has been no trees cleared. These changes in Vegetation legislation may force us to reassess our stocking rates to remain viable and as a result the grass cover will be impacted in a negative way. At present Springvale provides a living for one family. The impacts of the new legislation on the business would mean that we would have to find off farm income to support and maintain Springvale in its present condition.

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| Signed:  |  |
| Address: |   |
| Date:    | 18.03.2018  |