

## 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

On our 2630ha property we have cleared approximately 17ha to irrigate and produce hay to supplement feed our cattle through weaning times and drought times. Without that area to grow hay we would have to buy the hay from external sources. Currently it costs us approximately \$18/bale to produce on site, compared to \$45-50/bale delivered. It is much more cost effective to produce the hay on-farm.

The impact of the removal of this HVA would substantially increase the cost of feeding our cattle throughout weaning and dry periods.

By removing the HVA it will severely limit our capability to drought proof our business for the future and also for future generations.

By keeping HVA in our business we would be able to offset the effects of drought or poorer seasons and maintain a higher production rate through these periods.

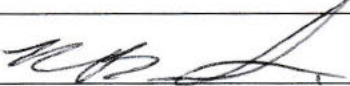
### 2. Retaining Self-Assessable Codes

Science-based self-assessable codes help farmers carry out the routine vegetation management practices necessary to sustainably produce food and fibre. These self-assessable codes help farmers ensure trees and grass stay in balance, avoid soil erosion and feed animals in drought.

Self-Assessable codes have reduced the cost and time taken to make applications for managing vegetation on our property. When we applied for Self-Assessable clearing we took the process down from potentially months to a period of 1 day to apply for a thinning permit. In that 1 day we were able to assess 6 sites over 792ha taking measurements, assessing individual species, density of vegetation and clearing rates allowable. We have used Self-Assessable code on our property but due to financial restrictions we have been unable to carry out any thinning. The thinning was planned to be undertaken over a long period to ensure it was done correctly. For an estimated outlay of \$300,000 we would have been able to thin 972ha. By thinning this country, and increasing our production (based on similar country we have previously cleared) that \$300,000 thinning would have enabled us to run an extra 100 head of cattle per annum. An extra 100 head may not seem a lot, but on a property this size of 2630ha, which we currently run an average of 500 head, it can make the difference of breaking even or making a profit.

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

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| 4. Increasing Category R regrowth watercourse vegetation to include additional catchments in the Burnett Mary, Eastern Cape York and Fitzroy Great Barrier Reef Catchments.   |
| The Queensland State Government Vegetation Management Framework is preventing these farmers from developing agriculture projects.   |
| 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  |
| It is a disgrace that legislation can be implemented without any consideration of the considerable impact on the livelihood of farmers, producers and regional towns. Without a strong agricultural industry there will be less generation of money and growth to support regional towns and centres.   |
| 6. Increasing compliance measures and penalties under vegetation management laws.   |
| As we have been unable to complete the thinning permits which were granted to us under the self-assessable code, which were very easy to interpret and follow, we feel we have been unfairly disadvantaged with the new proposed laws. The time to apply for, be assessed and permits approved/not approved will increase considerably.   |
| 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>The agricultural sector, at farm-gate, contributes 3 percent to Australia's total gross domestic product (GDP). The gross value of Australian farm production in 2016-17 was \$60 billion. Australian farmers export about 77 percent of what they grow and produce.</p> <p>We believe farmers and producers will develop sustainably if given the appropriate frameworks. The constant changing of legislation means we cannot plan for the future. Banks will not approve applications for finance due to the unstable legislation laws, which change every time a new government is voted in. We desperately need the opportunity to drought proof our business for our future and future generations but keeping HVA. Self-Assessable codes have been very useful and have proven to be very cost effective rather than having to lodge applications under the new Vegetation Act.</p> <p>At the time of purchase, our property, was very underdeveloped and ran about 230 head of cattle. Through development and clearing 809ha we have increased our carrying capacity to over 500 head. Under the Self-Assessable code we were planning to thin a further 972ha, which would enable us to run a further 100 head. Since clearing, the volume of ground cover has doubled, decreasing erosion and soil run-off into the river catchments. On areas of highly degraded land, through land-clearing and management, we have been able to generate good ground cover, minimising erosion and increasing biodiversity in these areas.</p> |

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| Signed:  |  |
| Address: |   |
| Date:    | 19/03/18  |