

Reason for confidentiality:

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	Australians expect and should be entitled to consume home grown, clean and green food and fibre products. As our population continues to increase we need to continue to develop agricultural land and ensure businesses are sustainable and able to grow. As primary producers we are active and passionate about our environment and its management. Trying to place a direct ban on HVA is ludicrous. Peoples livelihoods are at stake if such drastic blanket legislation is passed. Queensland is a huge state. Every area is different and needs to be assessed individually.
2. Retaining Self-Assessable Codes	<p>As a primary producer I have applied and utilised self assessable codes on our sheep and beef grazing property. These codes still require many hours of office and paddock time to ensure all requirements of the code are adhered to. As a primary producer/landholder/business we hold our land and its productivity and sustainability at the upmost top of our priority list. Without this we have nothing. The financial institutions that back us into these business ventures have assessed our business capabilities as well as our land management and know that we are capable of developing and sustaining a long term profitable business.</p> <p>As mentioned above, blanket changes to codes are not suitable across an entire state. Land types vary greatly and this is where the self-assessable codes come into their own. There are still many rules and regulations within these codes and I feel that this has been overlooked. Each code requires detailed assessment of land types and has its own requirements.</p> <p>The step the government could be taking here is to put more DNRM staff on the ground working with land owners to assist with assessment and guidance.</p>
3. Including High Value Regrowth as an additional layer of regulation under the Vegetation Management Framework on leasehold, freehold and indigenous land	We have had issues with the mapping of our property. After many, many phone calls and emails to our local DNRM we finally received a visit to help assess our land type (it was classed a mulgalands on the map and doesn't have one mulga tree on it). During the drive around a few thousand acres of previously untouched eroding country the DNRM staff member changed their assessment of the land about three times. This is how complex land types are. Satellite imagery cannot accurately assess such intricate and varied land types. From here we were able to lodge a notification to 'thin' and begin some development. As the land was, it was not producing anything productive, no grasses and being choked out by woody weeds and becoming eroded.

Of a property purchased less than a year ago we have submitted a PMAV with required changes of the land types also. Our local DNRM were once again not permitted for on property visits. After many emails and phone calls we were recommended to try a private agency to assist us with the assessment of our land and submit the PMAV with changes. We were quoted over \$5,000. My husband and I, once again took photos (many of these have been provided to DNRM requesting assistance) with GPS points and gave detailed grass, shrub and tree species.

If the government wants to utilise satellite imagery for their mapping they need many staff in the field to reassess and validate their accuracy. Because using statistics that are not correct to begin with to assist with ticking some of the bigger environmental boxes is absolutely unfair.

The state government has allowed the payout of leases so property owners can freehold land. This personally cost us \$80,000 to do on one of our properties. If changes are then made to our PMAV then what was the point? Its unfair to revenue raise and then take the benefits from those you made money from.

I'm very concerned about what financial institutions will do if changes such as these are passed. Land values on affected properties will certainly drop. Queensland continues to be gripped by drought, the last thing business owners need is a drop in land value and their equity eroded.

Why is it that any developer or land holder in a suburban area can do what they wish with their land whereas the government wants to rule what business can do? Does the government understand that lots of native wildlife, eg. Koalas, population was more prevalent in the SE corner but can no longer do so as the environment is continuing to have broad scale clearing to allow housing development.

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

None of the above catchment areas apply to our properties. Once again these blanket codes are not suitable for the whole of Queensland.

My primary concern for the northern area of Queensland is the overnight change in land value that such changes will inflict. This will cause some business to be pushed out/forced to sell. The populated east coast needs food and fibre. The government needs our primary production exports but on the other hand isn't considering assisting the businesses that can develop and sustainably grow our state.

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 unfathomable that with one hand everything can be taken and there is no other hand reached for assistance. Individuals have worked hard all their lives (primary production is a love, you wouldn't do it for the money alone) and will have it taken from them with these changes. What will the government do when land values decrease, banks go into recovery mode??

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

For penalties to be tripled it indicates nothing but pure revenue raising. If the government is so concerned about mistakes being made, why don't they put more representatives on the ground? Support fading rural communities by restaffing DNRM offices. Have staff available to visit

properties before and during developmental work to ensure everyone is of the same understanding? This will allow more staff with actual on the ground knowledge and understanding of such varied land types, and not people in offices in capital cities referring to inaccurate satellite imagery.

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 as beef and lamb producers have a vested interest and genuinely care about the long term viability of our land and our business. We need a government implementing long term legislation to support us in this. It feels like we are not being respected, supported or consulted with the proposed changes in legislation, but are the scapegoat to allow environmental goals to be ticked. We are here for the long haul and no primary production businesses are a short turnaround. We need to be able to plan for our future and not be limited by a government that haphazardly imposes changes.

As mentioned above I am terribly concerned about the effect of land values if these changes are imposed. Does the government understand these are real people, their actual livelihoods at stake?

I would like to reiterate that those of us (heavily in debt!) love our land. We love this environment and have generations of knowledge on how to best manage it. We want to be supported by our state government, to allow us to produce clean and green food and fibre for not just Queenslanders, but the world. The state's ecosystems are many and varied. Such proposed changes are not suitable for us all. I am concerned that there is not a full understanding by the government and those parties pushing change, of our ecosystems and how they work.

Signed:	Angela Smith
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Date:	21/03/2018