

SUBMISSION

I provide my submission on rejection of the changes proposed in the Vegetation Management (Reinstatement) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 ("the Bill").

This constant change in legislation severely impacts on the ability of farm managers to plan and implement effective long-term property and business management decisions. Ecological processes work in much longer timeframes and can be severely compromised when mismatching regulations are enforced. Farmers have long called for certainty with the vegetation management regulatory framework. I am totally opposed to continued uncertainty and attacks on the viability of myself, the long-term sustainability of my business as well as attacks on fellow farmers.

The impacts of the proposed changes to the Vegetation Management Act include;

- The purpose for High Value Agriculture and Irrigated High Value Agriculture will be removed.
- Extends Category B areas (remnant vegetation) and Category C (regrowth vegetation) to freehold land, and indigenous freehold land. Additional 862 000ha High Value Regrowth and water course buffers to all reef catchment, Burnett Mary, Fitzroy, Eastern Cape York.
- Thinning will require Development Application to be lodged for approval.

Describe the impacts the changes will make to stall agriculture, discourage investment, and increase costs and time to manage vegetation.

In our situation all category X areas are contained within a current PMAV. However, we would like to be able to continue thinning and encroachment control without onerous procedures regarding compliance and notification. A simplified and workable solution involving the previous Self Assessable Codes and Area Management Plans was providing a pathway for sustainable development and rehabilitation to areas that were being overrun with native vegetation that challenges the biodiversity of the areas.

Although it doesn't affect us directly I believe that the changes to some category X areas not covered by a PMAV to category C areas is a blatant land from parties who were slow or unable to understand the necessity of locking their country in under that system. How safe are we going to feel about land that hasn't been cleared for a long period that is under a PMAV? I know that this Bill is not currently challenging the PMAV's, but what next?

I believe that the removal of High Value Agriculture and Irrigated High Value Agriculture is a backwards step for the overall future of agriculture for the state. The uneducated consumer may think graziers/farmers are just clearing trees, but where and how is the increasing demand for quality food and fibre for the nation going to be met?

All clearing of all types should be conducted within a regulatory framework under clear, easy to understand, science-based facts and rules that provide certainty and consistency for producers and consumers alike, whilst retaining or regaining the necessary biodiversity for the regions. For these reasons I believe that the Bill should be rejected.

Signed:

Allen Faggotter



Address:

Date:

22 March 2018