

21 March 2018

Committee Secretary
State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee
Parliament House, George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000

Re: **Submission to the Inquiry in Vegetation Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018**

I make this submission as someone who has travelled throughout Queensland for work and who has spent considerable time in rural areas of Australia.

I strongly support the passing of the Vegetation Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. (the Bill)

I was very disappointed when the Newman government wound back vegetation management legislation. Increased land clearing followed. It's important strong protection for native vegetation is restored in order to ensure our native woodlands and the ecosystem services they provide are maintained. Survival of Queensland's biodiversity depends on persistence of healthy woodland habitat. Curtailing land clearing and the resultant sediment runoff is also important for the health of the Great Barrier Reef. Reduced clearing of native woodland reduces carbon emissions.

With little more than 5% of the State preserved in National Park, native woodlands outside of protected areas, including on private property and leasehold land, are valuable repositories for our biodiversity. The ecosystems that native woodlands support contribute to the healthy soil and water that we all rely on including our farming communities.

I support the Bill as it aims to:

- scrap high value agriculture as a reason to permit woodland clearing and to remove that permit process
- protect high conservation value regrowing woodlands,
- scrap the thinning code
- extend protection of riparian areas to the last three catchments in order to prevent harm to the Great Barrier Reef
- terminate current Area Management Plans.

I support amendments to the Bill to totally remove 'managing thickened vegetation' provisions, to guarantee no new self-assessable code for thinning or new Area Management Plans into the future.

I consider fodder-harvesting provisions should be greatly tightened and not tied to drought declaration. Drought and a changing climate are here to stay. This risk assessment has to be built into farm plans. There is the potential to do real damage to woodlands by pushing over trees in times of drought. The long-term health of the land has to be looked after as a priority for future generations.

I respectfully ask the Committee to consider recommending changes to the Bill and codes in light of my comments and to ensure the above reforms translate into on the ground action.

The Bill is a good start but I consider there is more work to be done to ensure clearing of remnant vegetation in Queensland ends. This will be essential to protect biodiversity and ensure threatened species such as koalas survive into the future. It is crucial to acknowledge and look after the ecosystem services that native woodlands provide and to ensure their long-term survival.

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission.

Yours sincerely,

J.M. Aldenhoven.

Dr Jan Aldenhoven