

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.
- The purpose for High Value Agriculture and Irrigated High Value Agriculture will be removed.

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

Retaining Self-Assessable Codes

We had a Self-Assessable code approved for thinning, we have had the approval for this for 7 months, due to the dry weather conditions we have been experiencing the thinning had not been done. Now with the changes to the Vegetation Management this no longer allowed. This now reduces the value and future productivity of this land. The changes to the Vegetation Maps has made this area Of Concern, where it was previously Not of Concern.

It is extremely difficult to manage your business when changes like these Vegetation Management changes can be made by Government at such short notice and have such far reaching effects, without proper consultation and no compensation payable to landholders for the changes.

We do not want to clear all the trees in any area, we want to be able to thin the vegetation to allow grass to grow. Managing the regrowth of suckers is essential in this area, if it is not managed the regrowth will take over the land and render it useless for grazing cattle.

The changes to Vegetation Management will make the land less viable and reduce the productivity, this will reduce the value of the land. Any future Vegetation Management will cost the land holder extra money in fees and charges applied by the Government.

Land values will be reduced because of the inability to manage regrowth, vermin and weeds will be harder to control as the regrowth thickens and accessibility is reduced.

Due to the radical changes the Government is proposing to make, they have not been passed in the Parliament and they have already had an enormous effect as they are to be backdated to the Satellite maps taken on 08/03/2018.

These changes will cause more hardship for rural landholders and the communities they live in. Many landholders have been suffering from drought for several years and have been using mulga to feed their stock, this will no longer be allowed rendering the mulga lands valueless.

The mental health of Rural Landholders is being pushed to the limit by the lengthy drought and the changes to the Vegetation Management will only increase the pressure on them, suicide is a real issue that will become more evident as the realisation of the impact of this legislation takes effect.

The 2 week timeframe to allow for submissions is ridiculously inadequate; there is a lot of other information which could be included. Many people affected will not have realised the full extent of the changes and how they will be disadvantaged by them.

Signed:	<i>S. J. Cornish</i> Sandra Cornish
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Date:	22/03/2018.