

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.*

Removing High value agriculture and irrigated High value agriculture impacts our business greatly as we will no longer be able to develop our land to improve our pasture. Future generations will no longer have the ambition to diversify if this legislation is put in place. New innovative ideas for cropping and agriculture are important as the world is in higher demand of protein and fibre with its growing population. Being a primary producer enables you to feed your own family and many others, we want to be able to keep doing this and know that our children's children will have the opportunity to be self sufficient also.

As a young family that has just taken over the property we aim to develop our land to its fullest potential. The location of our property means that we have an almost guaranteed 60 + inches average of rainfall per year. This amount of rainfall is perfect for growing hay and crops for our heard. Sorghum, oats or leucaena are just one of the many sources of fodder that could be grown if we were able to clear selective land. We could have the opportunity to diversify and grow other products such as Cane, rice, or even fruit trees. With a flood irrigation system put in place supported by large dams we could have the opportunity to diversify pastures and create these food sources. This leads to potential income from not only beef production but also produce.

We are extremely lucky as the location of Watson River is near a port in Weipa. This port being one of the deepest in Queensland has enabled us to export live cattle in previous years. Given the opportunity we would also endeavour to export fresh produce and/or fodder as another source of income for our family. Another way to freight crops and/or fodder is by truck. Trucks usually only run through the dry season (April-Dec) but with the government funding for improvements to the Peninsular Development Road (PDR) we will eventually be able to truck all year round. This is a huge opportunity in itself as we could freight hay and/or fodder to businesses who may be drought stricken. That way all this rainfall would never be going to waste.

Drought may not affect us in our location, as we have adequate rainfall every year. However, with the ability to grow our own fodder we will be able to supply feed to other businesses that may be in drought.

Every family needs a famer/ primary producer. Meat, fruit and vegetables are needed in every person's diet. There is a growing demand for protein in the world therefore as the population increases so will the need for food. What better source of protein than red meat.

<p>2. Retaining Self-Assessable Codes</p>
<p>The old system of using Self assessable codes has helped us to ensure the environment we are developing stays in balance. These codes make it easy to manage our land to the best of its capabilities. Each part of northern Australia differentiates from one another. For example, our property is located on the western coast of Cape York. We are not located near any major reefs, we do not have any major wetlands or rainforests on our property. The most habitable areas for native animals are located along the river systems, lagoons and swamps. We do not ever plan on destroying these habitats as we have no need to clear land in those areas. We do not have any Koala population in this area of Queensland nor any other marsupial for that matter. We notice that a lot of our native birds nest around our dams that we have built. This is because there is more area for them to fly and feed where the vegetation has been cleared.</p>
<p>3. Including High Value Regrowth as an additional layer of regulation under the Vegetation Management Framework on leasehold, freehold and indigenous land</p>
<p>What is the definition of High Value Regrowth? because our regrowth here consists of tee tree suckers that have no benefit to any ecosystem whatsoever. The regrowth in this area becomes extremely thick if not managed properly. Causing major losses of highly valuable country. No animals want to inhabit this regrowth due to lack of grass, sunlight and room. It is impractical vegetation and it needs to be removed.</p>
<p>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.</p>
<p>We don't expect or need to be compensated for this, all we want is a fair go. We just want a chance to make decisions that can better our property. The more area that we can't utilise the less potential we have as a family to get ahead.</p>
<p>6. Increasing compliance measures and penalties under vegetation management laws.</p>
<p>My understanding is that the government (lands department) is checking up on graziers/primary producers every 16 days by using satellite technology to overpass and check for illegal clearing. Are they regulating everyone else's business as much as they do agriculture? We officially have no privacy to manage our business. We would understand penalty's for clearing land without the appropriate permits needed. We also understand that there needs to be a process involved when clearing vegetation, however, permits need to be easier and more straight forward to obtain.</p>
<p>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>
<p>Once again I restate that by removing High Value Agriculture it will reduce our chances of growing our own fodder to feed our cattle herd which makes us no longer self-sufficient. It will also stop us from diversifying from not only beef cattle but other industries.</p>

Growing our own feed also enables us to save money not only for feed but for freight costs for lick. We live on a very remote cattle station and we do not have access to a main road during the wet season, the closest supplier of cattle lick is in Mareeba which is approx 700km south of us. So the freight is a very large expense. We also need to bulk buy our wet season lick to stock up as we can go up to 4 months without access into our property. This can cause the feed to go stale as it is sitting in a shed for months on end, resulting in some of it being discarded by the end of the wet. This is a huge reason as to why growing our own feed will be beneficial. We have a 70 acre hay paddock on our property that turns off roughly 250 tonne of hay per year. This saves our business a lot of money and we have plans to develop another paddock for sorghum. This will not happen if this legislation is passed.

What we can believe is that the Australian federal government is wanting to develop the northern regions of Australia, however, the state government is not considering this if this legislation is put in place. On page 5 of the 2016 *'Our North, Our Future'* white paper on developing northern Australia it is stated that 'the Commonwealth Government supports the efforts of northern jurisdictions to accelerate pastoral lease reforms, making it easier for pastoral owners to diversify their businesses'. This is just one of the many agreements that the federal government wishes upon northern Australia. So why can't we embrace this as a nation? Why does the state government have the right to challenge this legislation? Another framework that was created in 1996 called the Cape York Land Use Strategy (CYPLUS) was a study to conjure sustainable land use also focusing on economic and social development in the cape. CYPLUS was created then drafted through numerous stages involving the local community, indigenous/non-indigenous and also state and federal government officials. This strategy was never implemented. Huge amounts of money and time was spent on creating CYPLUS and it was ignored. We are sick of having these rulings put forward in government to be then taken away at the drop of a hat. Things like this crush our aspirations and hopes for the future of our land.

We as a young family have big plans on developing our property, however, this will never happen without the much needed support of both state and federal government.

Please feel free to contact us on [redacted] if you wish to discuss anything at all.

Regards,

Signed:	Luke and Ally Quartermaine
Address:	[redacted]

Date:	21/02/18
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