

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.

This legislation will have a major impact on investment and growth in Rural and Regional Communities. We are based in NSW and have been involved in agricultural production all our lives, we are third generation farmers.

We are now in the process of expanding our enterprise by purchasing property in central Queensland (where we are at the point of no return). We had made this purchase on the basis of the then 'current' legislation giving us the ability to improve the sustainability of long term production and the viability of our business. This has now been taken away from us. The uncertainty and constant changing of laws does not allow for sustainable production and businesses to survive let alone the ability to thrive and create employment for regional areas. In our situation it is grossly unfair as now with the stroke of a pen by the Government we have been left with a huge amount of Category B country that cannot be economically treated for maintenance and improvement. So not only have YOU left us with a parcel of land that will become useless over time but up to 3 full time jobs will NOT be coming to Queensland. We are also left wondering if this legislation could have an impact on the equity levels of our business due to land values nose diving!

We believe the inability to thin and treat regrowth is not only destroying the biodiversity of the land by becoming overgrown, it is then choking out natural grasses and other plant species that feed not only livestock but many native animals.

Furthermore the restrictions on the use of machinery ie bulldozers/loaders etc makes the whole exercise of any new thinning laws uneconomical.

We can also see a massive problem with bush/wild fires in the future as the ability to control the 'fire load' has been taken away from the Land Managers - US.

Last and definitely not least the impact these regulations will have on the mental health of Farmers/Land Managers, families and communities is immeasurable.

Signed:

Address:

Date:

22ND MARCH 2018