

## 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

The removal of High Value Agriculture and irrigated High Value Agriculture will have a devastating flow on affect from the farmer to the consumer.

Businesses like our own will be dramatically affected as we will be unable to improve ground cover, soil health and land management therefore impacting on the sustainability of production for the supply of beef.

This will make it much harder for us to be sustainable in drought conditions. With lower soil structure and poor soil health, water runoff and erosion is greatly increased.

The environment suffer. The ability to provide for the consumer will decrease. This will come at a great cost. The less fodder we can grow means the less product we can deliver and therefore there will be a price reflection on the availability of food for the consumer – an ever increasing cost to them.

### 2. Retaining Self-Assessable Codes

Retaining Self-Assessable codes is an important tool in carrying out vegetation management. Not only do farmers constantly monitor their land they are aware of the best time of year when vegetation growth occurs and when best it is to make changes. This saves time and money when choosing which type of vegetation management practice would be best to create the best outcome for land condition. Farmers are highly aware of different land types within their farms and how they all respond differently to different management practices. With this sound knowledge base, it makes sense to continue with the Self-Assessable Codes.

### 3. Including High Value Regrowth as an additional layer of regulation under the Vegetation Management Framework on leasehold, freehold and indigenous land

Including this additional layer of regulation under the Vegetation Management Framework at such short notice, has left us with no choice but to sacrifice some of our land to poor productivity. During the last 5 years of drought, our income and productivity has been the lowest we have seen. This leaves us no time or ability to help improve the soil via methods of aeration to allow better water penetration and decrease runoff for those areas that have suffered greatly. There is

no chance given for us to get back on our feet and continue improving our land with this snap decision.

4. Increasing Category R regrowth watercourse vegetation to include additional catchments in the Burnett Mary, Eastern Cape York and Fitzroy Great Barrier Reef Catchments.

This is just another way to limit farmers from developing high value agriculture projects. Essential habitat mapping for all of Queensland is an important tool for land holders to respect, but it leaves me wondering how accurate they are, and how much on ground mapping is done in each area to form the boundaries.

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

This is a very disheartening fact! To take away farmers ability to be sustainable, environmental advocates who can produce a quality product and not compensate them is appalling. The difference between the dollar value of healthy, productive land and that which is thick, overgrown and stagnant in nature is sizable. Over 50% actually. That is a very big price to pay. Healthy, productive land requires a balance of sunlight, water and nutrition. When these factors are out of balance, the land suffers. Farmers are the link between helping the right balance occur with helping the soil receive enough sunlight and water infiltration to allow for photosynthesis and growth of fodder to occur. Careful monitoring and adjustments to management all create a better balance for those areas of need.

Compensation should be a large part of this package if the new changes to the Vegetation Management Act go ahead.

6. Increasing compliance measures and penalties under vegetation management laws.

This is a clear example of another way the Government wants to take from the farmers and not give back. Not only are our abilities to sustainably produce a product is limited, but our personal rights and liberties are affected. Soon there will be no farmers and no food in this country of free speech. How disappointing!

This legislation does not have sufficient regard to the rights and liberties of individuals. This is an unfair imposition of obligations.

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

With constantly changing laws in regards to Vegetation Management, it has made it difficult for us to plan for the future. We cannot plan for drought proofing our property. We cannot plan for

sustainable land conditioning. We cannot plan for better financial investments. We cannot plan for succession.

We need security. We need support and we need sustainability.

These amendments will have a very large impact on our family, management practices and sustainability. I don't believe our children will be able to come back to the land, and I don't think they will want to, after seeing the unviability of its lost potential.

Signed:	Rachel Weston
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