From:
To: SDNRAIDC
Subject: Submission on the Vegetation Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018
Date: Monday, 19 March 2018 7:35:27 PM

Here's a few good reasons for the Qld government to reinforce these laws. If Qld was a country, we would have one of the worst records for land clearing in the world. Where this fits into the world picture is that each year worldwide, approximately 29, 200,000 acres or 118,168 square kilometres of forest are cleared. Which is equivalent to cutting down every tree in an area roughly the size of Nicaragua, every year. The burning of this cleared timber then releases billions of tonnes of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, thus contributing to global warming. The FAO estimated in 2006 that between 25 and 30% of all greenhouse gases released into the atmosphere were caused by deforestation. That figure would be higher by now. The first annual global report on the state of the world's flora was carried out in 2016. It found that one in five of all plant species are currently in danger of extinction Stopping the destruction of our forests would lead to fewer extinctions of rare plant species, some of which we depend on for medicines. (https://www.kew.org/science/who-we-are-and-what-we-do/strategic-outputs-2020/state-of-the-worlds-plants). Australia has many species of totally unique flora and fauna, which are found nowhere else in the world. The question is, will this government do something to protect it through these laws and thus also stop contributing to climate change, a problem which is almost universally recognised by the world wide science community as threatening the entire planet? Or will they continue the short sighted legacy of previous governments who have allowed us to get to this point?

To: Queensland Parliamentary Committee Members

Dear Committee members,

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on the Vegetation Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018.

Queensland is in the midst of an escalating deforestation and land clearing crisis, with a Gabba-sized area of forests and bushlands destroyed every three minutes. It is critically important that this new law ends this crisis and protects our beautiful forests and bushland, as well as our native wildlife.

I welcome the improvements that are in this law: the end of permits for so-called High Value Agriculture, the removal of the main self-assessable code for thinning, the modification of the fodder self-assessable code, and the redefinition of High Value Regrowth to include regrowing forest and bushland that is 15 years of age and within 50 metres of watercourses in Great Barrier Reef catchments.

However, the test for these laws is: will they bring down the out-of-control rate of bulldozing in Queensland? Will they protect the state's wildlife?

These laws must end broadscale clearing and protect all remnant and High Conservation Value regrowth forest and bushland in Queensland, as outlined in the election commitment. I call on the government to make publicly available data that shows that these laws will achieve those commitments.

In addition, the following improvements to the law must be made:

• Ensure that no threatened species habitat is able to be bulldozed, and no "of concern" regional ecosystems are able to be bulldozed.
• End all bulldozing of mature forest and bushland for 'thinning' (which will still be allowed under a Development Approval, existing Area Management Plans and self-assessable regrowth codes).
• End bulldozing of mature forest and bushland for so-called 'fodder harvesting' unless it is lopping individual branches. At the very least, it should be proven to be necessary due to being a drought, and proven to be 'low ecological impact.'
• Protect all regrowing forest and bushland that is threatened species habitat and that surrounds watercourses (riparian areas)—as was promised in the election commitment.
• Protect the regrown remnant and High Conservation Value Regrowth that is currently marked 'exempt' and is not protected in Category X on PMAVs.

Regards,

– Shaun Brown