

From: [REDACTED]
To: [SDNRAIDC](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Vegetation Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018
Date: Wednesday, 21 March 2018 1:48:12 PM

Your Name: Andrew Marr BSc, B Eng (Civil), M Eng Sc, Dip Natural Resources, M EIANZ

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Dear State Development, Natural Resources & Agricultural Industry Development Committee

I have over 40 years experience as a government officer and then as a Consultant in water resources development and management in Australia and in 14 developing countries, including as Team Leader and/or Water Resources Specialist on World Bank Projects for Basin Integrated Water Resources Planning and Management in India, Tanzania, Lower Mekong countries as well as in Murray Darling Basin. I have also worked on water resources planning for irrigated agriculture (Murray-Darling Basin and Indonesia), town water supplies (Sydney system, Maputo), flood control and management (Klang River Malaysia, Hawkesbury River, Lower Balonne River), hydro-power (Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Nepal) and water supply for thermal power (Hunter Valley).

During my career, I became aware of the high regard in which Australian natural resources management practices were held throughout the world. They are used as the "gold standard" for many developing countries that face many of the same issues as Australia. I highlighted this in my presentation to the International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage in Delhi (2006).

The principles that I have come to regard as paramount in Natural Resources Management are:

- 1. Natural systems are complex and interdependent, so it is difficult to know what the consequences will be of making even minor changes. Therefore, try to leave natural systems intact and, where necessary and sufficiently well-understood, try to restore natural processes.*
- 2. Land management practices directly impact water resources systems, and it is much more cost-effective to address issues at the land management stage, than to try to fix things in the downstream water resources systems.*
- 3. Title to land does not give the land holder absolute right to use the land in any way they choose. They are part of a larger society and have responsibilities to that society, and get benefits from being part of that society. If people choose to live totally self-sufficient lifestyles without adversely impacting anyone else, then I could accept that they "may" have*

a right to operate independently, but if they gain benefits such as transport routes, power supplies, irrigation, education, health etc from society, then they must accept that society has a right to require certain minimal practices in land management.

4. The Great Barrier Reef is being adversely impacted by land management practices in the catchments. Cost-effective means of improving land management practices need to be researched, promoted, implemented and, where necessary, enforced in order to give GBR any chance of survival for future generations.

I was very disappointed when I learned that Queensland's vegetation management controls had been seriously loosened in recent years, and that changes had been blocked in the last parliament.

I wish to endorse the following views of QCC:

I wish to express my support for the passing of Vegetation Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018, although I wish to see some amendments to the Bill first.

I strongly endorse the Bill in seeking to scrap high value agriculture as a relevant clearing purpose, protect high conservation value regrowing woodlands, scrap the thinning code, extend Reef riparian areas, and to terminate current Area Management Plans.

I strongly endorse amendments to the Bill to totally remove 'managing thickened vegetation' provisions, to guarantee no new self-assessable code for thinning or new Area Management Plans were possible in the future.

I am disappointed that government is not proposing to substantially tighten up fodder harvesting provisions, including major restrictions and tying any clearing to official drought declaration.

I respectfully ask that the Committee examine options for recommending changes to the Bill and codes accordingly, and to ensure that the above reforms are fully translated into practice.

Even with these reforms, I believe there will be more work to be done in bringing about an end to remnant clearing in Queensland, to better protect threatened species including koalas and their habitats, and to comprehensively protect native woodlands.

Yours Sincerely,

Andrew Marr