

From:
To: [SDNRAIDC](#)
Subject: Submission on VMOLA Bill
Date: Thursday, 22 March 2018 8:57:42 AM

Committee Secretary State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry
Development Committee Parliament House George Street Brisbane Qld 4000

Submission to Vegetation Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018
('VMOLA Bill') inquiry

Dear Committee

Queensland's long-term interests are not served by wholesale land clearing. The loss of diversity, the changes to ecosystems will ultimately create land unusable for anything and contribute to the already snowballing effects of climate change. This is long-term loss for a very short-term gain (and this gain is not always a given – much clearing is done with no clear goal in mind). Clearing huge swathes of land is outdated and unsustainable and farmers and land-owners should be looking at different and more sustainable ways of working with the land; the risk of their losing the ability to work with their land altogether is extraordinarily high if they continue on this path.

I strongly support the following elements of the VMOLA Bill as they are a step to help reduce excessive tree clearing in Queensland:

1. Removal of the ability to obtain permits for high value agriculture and high value irrigated agriculture.
2. Reintroduction of the requirement to obtain Riverine Protection Permits to better regulate damaging clearing in watercourses.
3. Phasing out existing Area Management Plans which have allowed significant clearing across Queensland.
4. Extended protections of regrowth vegetation near watercourses across Great Barrier Reef catchments, to reduce damaging runoff, including catchments which were not protected under the Vegetation Management Act.

I generally support the following amendments but it is essential that they are strengthened to truly reduce excessive clearing of wildlife habitat, protect the Great Barrier Reef and minimise climate change emissions:

1. I support improved protected of 'high value regrowth vegetation' that hasn't been cleared for 15 years and re-extending regulation to freehold, indigenous land and occupational licences. However it must be extended to protect high conservation value regrowth vegetation especially endangered vegetation species and communities, vegetation in reef catchments, riparian areas, threatened species habitat and areas where landscape integrity is at risk.
2. I support tightening of the definition of 'thinning' but, significant clearing to reduce the significant area allowed for 'thinning', should no longer be an allowable activity by permit or code, particularly not for mature and high value regrowth vegetation and under existing Area Management Plans. 'Thinning' can include clearing up to 75% of a forest under current laws and has been responsible for significant clearing

across Queensland without scientific justification that this is a necessary activity at all.

3. I support that the Bill clarifies that landholders may seek to amend their Property Map of Assessable Vegetation (PMAV) to re-regulate clearing in areas which were locked in across Queensland as not needing assessment under Newman Government laws. This clarification is helpful. However, the Bill needs to be changed to require amendment of maps that lock in unregulated clearing of all high value vegetation. Under the Newman Government, significant areas of Queensland were locked in under property level maps which allowed the clearing of unregulated 'Category X' even though the clearing would impact mature, high value vegetation. Leaving map amendment up to the land owner will leave significant areas of Queensland where clearing is unregulated.
4. The Bill does not tighten excessive clearing allowed under fodder harvesting codes so amendments are needed. Fodder harvesting should be limited to where there is an official drought declaration.

Yours sincerely, Alisa Wortley

This email was sent by Alisa Wortley

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