

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.

Describe the impacts the changes will make to stall agriculture, discourage investment, and increase costs and time to manage vegetation.


Here we all are with yet another variation to the Vegetation Management framework, which confuses most of us as to what exactly is the law right now. My first concern is for the speed at which this Bill is being rushed through parliament. All this does is make land holders who are trying to make a profitable living from their land, panic. They panic about whether or not they will be able to profitably run their farms in the future and how difficult any new laws will make it for them in the future. We all need to make a profit to stay in this great industry of producing food and fibre for everyone. If introduced laws do not allow for a profitable business then that farming family will disappear from our community to the cities which are already under stress. It strikes me as very strange that it seems to be quite OK for our urban population to tear down our native vegetation and cover over that ground with bricks, mortar and cement. Most of the people who choose to bring in these unworkable Vegetation Management laws live in suburbia where there is no impact on their lives, seemingly (for the time being at least) no change to their food supply or incomes.

On our property we run a farming and cattle enterprise. We have slowly and sustainably cleared our freehold land so it can be farmed (that is grow wheat, chick-peas and barley) to feed others. We rotate this land in and out of improved pasture so that we can profitably run cattle on these acres. From time to time we need to deal with regrowth in these pastured paddocks. Just like everyone else who does not have irrigation we are at the mercy of the weather and try and plan for the inevitable droughts. We do not need to be strangled by extra red tape at any time, but particularly when we are fighting the reduced income situation of a drought. My question to you is why would we make it harder for ourselves to make a living by purposely degrading our land? We are the very best judges of how to manage our properties as we have the long-term view of being here for generations. If we are not allowed to profitably run our businesses you will have

ourselves and our children and their children clogging up your cities and requiring more native vegetation to be lost forever under the bricks, mortar and cement.

Just like everyone else we love trees, however they need to be managed to make our farm profitable. The landholder is the best judge of that as he/she wants to be here for generations to come. We have planted trees in shelter belts where once there were none. As I see it if we cannot grow your food then you will need to procure it from over-seas. At what price and at what quality? You all enjoy the best product money can buy and it is grown right here on your doorstep. Why would we want to destroy that?

Stop bringing in changes that confuse in the first instance and in the second stifle our business going forward. We cannot afford to be standing still in our businesses going forward while our politicians go in and out of favour and change the rules accordingly.

Signed:	
Address:	
Date:	21 March 2018