

From: [REDACTED]
To: [SDNRAIDC](#)
Subject: Submission on VMOLA Bill
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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 The re-introduction of stronger vegetation management laws are essential to combat the loss of habitat and the preservation of essential ecosystem services. Essential ecosystem services that the existing Queensland vegetation provide (which I'm sure you are already aware of) include the removal of contaminants from air and water, maintaining biodiversity and genetic diversity, decomposition of wastes, soil and vegetation generation and renewal, pollination of crops and natural vegetation, groundwater recharge, seed dispersal, greenhouse gas mitigation, and landscapes that are aesthetically pleasing. Strong vegetation management laws have a direct influence on the survival of threatened species, the reduction of transporting of pollutants to waterways (and in turn marine parks and areas such as the Great Barrier Reef and Moreton Bay) and help to reduce other anthropogenic impacts on iconic threatened species such as the koala. Stronger vegetation management laws are also needed to combat climate change and the release of millions of tonnes CO2 from tree clearing.

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' it 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 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.

I live in hope that someone actually reads these and doesn't throw them all into a pile and counts them as a single submission just because some words are the same as someone else's submission. My voice should count! Thanks for your time Kind regards

Yours sincerely, Belinda Thomson

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