

To whom it may concern,

I am writing in opposition to the current native vegetation laws and restrictions that have been imposed upon farmers throughout Queensland. My points of view also have implications for any future laws likely to be imposed.

There are a number of reasons why I am opposed to the current laws. Importantly, the laws:

Are taking away our right to improve our property's productivity and have thus cost us significantly in terms of current and potential value of our land;

Have reduced our ability to feed cattle via pulling fodder leaving us open to significant loss of cattle during drought;

Have forced many property owners to agist their land to larger corporations such as ACC which is reducing competitive market behaviour and resulting in less money going to smaller producers;

Have forced us to spend thousands of dollars which we cannot afford on creating property plans, yet these have amounted to nothing. We don't want to destroy our land, we want to improve it and make it better for all animals which inhabit it (cattle, kangaroos, koalas etc). We know our land better than anyone, yet we are being treated as if we are criminals trying to destroy it. We are also being made pay for other peoples past mistakes such as the over development in the urban areas. Our property rights are being taken away and there has been no appropriate compensation;

With lower cattle prices, it is necessary to increase productivity in order to obtain a profit (or break even) – this needs to be done via improving property production but this is restricted;

Have reduced Australia's productivity as an agricultural producer which in turn will result in difficulties feeding the growing population.

I propose the following strategies for overcoming the above issues:

Localised policy making that allows for property specific vegetation management. It is not possible to impose the same laws across the board as these will fail to be effective. For example, in South West Queensland, the mulga tree grows abundantly. Primarily it is used as a fodder for animals, particularly during periods of drought. When we pull the mulga, it grows back even thicker than before which provides a cycle of new fodder for the cattle and ensures we are never without trees. Restricting pulling is actually detrimental to this cycle and results in FEWER trees in the area.

Furthermore, organisations (such as NRM and the DPI) have informed us that particular weeds do not grow in our region, yet they are clearly established on our property (photos are available if required). This suggests a lack of awareness about our land which calls into question these organisations reliability for providing us with direction in land management. I would suggest that employees are better trained and undertake site visits in order to better know the land they are advising us on.

Yours Truly,

Bill McLennan