

Farmers still waiting for a sensible approach to vegetation management

Queensland farmers are again frustrated that vegetation management has been used for political gain rather than to demonstrate solutions-focused policy, with Labor's Saving Habitat Policy falling short of a holistic framework capable of providing long term certainty.

Queensland Farmers' Federation (QFF) President Stuart Armitage said that without first conducting an inclusive, objective and evidence-based consultation process, Queensland farmers will not consider supporting changing the current vegetation management legislation. "Labor's latest position on vegetation management is an improvement on the poor legislation it introduced into the Parliament last year, but it still falls short of what is needed in several areas," Mr Armitage said.

"Before considering making changes to the current laws, a proper consultation process with all relevant parties must be undertaken and observed. Without this, we will not realise a sensible, long-term solution for Queensland – something QFF firmly believes our farmers, the environment, the Reef, and the regional and rural communities that these decisions impact deserve.

"It is disappointing that there doesn't appear to be the leadership and commitment that our sector has sought, and that vegetation management continues to be driven by politics, not policy. This is not good enough and the people of this state, regardless of their position on the issue, deserve better.

"A vegetation management framework that provides long term certainty by addressing environmental, social and economic sustainability is in everyone's interest."

This election, QFF is advocating for the following sensible and practical actions on vegetation management to realise our vision for a vibrant and thriving agricultural sector providing food, fibre and amenity to all Queenslanders:

- Conduct an independent review of Queensland's vegetation management framework, with recommendations observed by government, to deliver a sensible, long-term vegetation management system.
- Enable responsible growth and shifts in the agricultural footprint to realise better environmental outcomes through workable provisions for high value and irrigated high value agricultural land.
- Determine appropriate not arbitrary riparian zones for regrowth vegetation in watercourse areas in Great Barrier Reef catchments.
- Recognise and remunerate the ecosystem services provided by landholders.
- Ensure greater mapping accuracy.

The full QFF Policy Platform and its Summary are available online: <https://www.qff.org.au/queensland-election/>.