

Declaration for the future of our Rangelands

Brisbane Dialogue, 2019: a conversation on Queensland's rural future and implications across the Australian outback.

In the face of...

- A deep and enduring attachment to Queensland's outback country, its rural communities, and the iconic ecosystems on which they depend;
- Ongoing decline in these communities due to unrelenting economic pressures, a legacy of unfortunate planning and legislation, and the lack of bold, forward-looking policy choices;
- The compounding effects of a highly variable climate that is expected to become hotter and increasingly variable, with more severe episodes of flood and drought, and persistent ecosystem stress; and
- The resulting vulnerability of production systems to frequent disruption, a widespread decline in land condition, and the tragic loss of biodiversity throughout the ecosystems that sustain us; then

We, as Queenslanders, need to...

- Accept there are pressing issues in our Rangelands and an urgency to bring urban and rural communities into serious and constructive conversation;
- Celebrate our common agreement on the biological, cultural, and economic necessity of a flourishing, populous, and life-affirming outback, while minimising attachment to outdated ideologies that only serve to separate people from one another;
- Affirm that landscape management properly rests in the hands of people acting with modern knowledge and Indigenous wisdom, and that they are the trusted custodians of sustainable utilisation, conservation, and regeneration;
- Recognise that more investment is required to build the ecological health of our country, including arrangements that deliver stewardship and natural capital payments; therefore,

We, the undersigned, commit to...

- Cultivating an enduring and respectful rapport between land managers and the public, enabling fulfilment of mutual rights and obligations;
- Supporting a Rangelands reform agenda that includes:
 - ◆ Reviewing and revitalising institutional arrangements to deliver strengthened regional participation in land use planning, regulation, and conflict resolution;
 - ◆ Programs to enable the informed and ethical use of data to ensure all people can participate in shaping the Rangelands future in a constructive manner, particularly in the area of natural capital accounting;
 - ◆ Cooperative ownership of a biennial State of the Rangelands Report presenting social, biophysical, cultural, and economic indicators of condition and trend;
- Establishing a Rangelands Consultative Council, independent of government, but inclusive of it, to improve our institutional capacity for developing and delivering improved governance arrangements and practical management solutions across the Rangelands, for the benefit of the country, its rural communities, and for Australia's current and future generations.

20 August, 2019