

Agricultural Competitiveness White Paper – Submission IP03  
Phillip Norman  
Submitted 9 December 2013 via website's contact form

Statutory controls over use of rural land need to be strengthened throughout Australia to buffer against capricious change that would be counterproductive to the long-term need for land to remain in productive agricultural use and to reassure the community that shifts in the structure of agricultural industries which are inevitable consequences of the progress that is required (e.g. increased consolidation, corporatisation, foreign ownership, and technological change) are necessary and appropriate. Without the reassurance that such statutory controls provide, the reactionary forces that inevitably emerge in response to any change, particularly with respect to agriculture and rural land use, will be free to exploit uncertainty within the broad community to confound any progress to grow Australian agriculture to meet the Nations needs and to capitalise on the opportunities that forecast economic growth in Asia will bring. Improving these statutory controls will require major investment to build capacity of Local (and State) Governments in integrated and strategic land use planning (such as the Queensland Farmers Federation Agricultural Planning Project). It will also require major investment in soil and land resource assessment and R&D (e.g. as put forward under the proposed National Soils RD&E program) to create the evidence base required to underpin good decision-making in land use planning.