

**Submission to Australian Federal Senate's Finance and Public
Administration References Committee**

**INQUIRY INTO NATIVE VEGETATION LAWS, GREENHOUSE
GAS ABATEMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE MEASURES**

In 1979 we _____ purchased a 1750 ha property,
Cullalla & were informed the "Conditional Purchase" property had not been developed enough to enable
the title deeds to be transferred to us, so we were required to clear large amounts of vegetation that had
been previously cleared by the former owners, but had not been maintained and resulted in the regrowth
of natural bush.

At the time we had limited funds & pleaded with the Government Lands Dept. for a 2 year delay but were
refused, so the clearing commenced, fencing was erected & water pipes & troughs installed in preparation
for stock. A large proportion of that cleared vegetation grew back during the following years, however a
proportion was maintained as cleared & planted with Pinaster pines & Eucalptus trees.

An application was submitted in June 2002 to clear about 600 ha (34% of the total area of the farm) and
passed by the Shire of Gingin & Soil & Land conservation Dept.& there were no other objections except
the EPA who produced a Bulleton 1084 containing mistruths. The EPA were given the opportunity to
correct the mistruths but have not done so. An appeal was drafted but legal advisers said not to present it
because an overwhelming number of other appeals were not achieving satisfactory results & it would be a
waste of time. One of the claims by the EPA is that I had 42% of uncleared land, if that is true then surely
the remainder must be classed as cleared.

It is extremely frustrating owning a farming property and realizing the government has complete control,
for example on the 20 September 2007, I was visited by 2 inspectors who proceeded to read my rights to
me. They claimed some natural vegetation had been degraded or cleared. This was the result of our cattle
walking to water troughs which had been installed more than 20 years ago.

The inspectors strongly advised me to submit an application for the cleared land or to remove all livestock
from our property. We are only utilizing 25% of our Feedlot licence, losing \$750,000 per annual income.
I suggested the Govt. buy the property but they said they don't require it because there are already large
amounts of this type of vegetation & therefore it is not valuable, however they suggested I donate a
section of preserved vegetation. I am quite willing to preserve this area - 350ha (20% of farm)

These appear to be our unlikely options:

1. Illegally clear our farm & face the possibility of prosecution.
2. Receive a permit (I applied 8 years ago) to clear a proportion of our land to enable Development.
*Estimated loss of income due to the refusal of land clearing to plant pine trees:
To establish, maintain and harvest pines: \$2372.00 p/hectare x 550 h = \$1,304,600.00
Divided by 30 years - \$43,486.00 per annum*
3. Appeal to the government to pay compensation for loss of income.
4. Appeal to the Government to purchase all or part of the farm.
5. Close our farming business, resulting in loss of livelihood & unemployment of several people.
6. Attempt to sell the property, this would be difficult for obvious reasons.

In conclusion, we strongly feel the unjustified stealing of property owners land rights & locking up large sections of their land to offset carbon emissions is unconscionable and we also believe there will be severe consequences as a result of this wrongful action.

Thank you for the opportunity to send our submission. Please contact me if you require further information:-