



Addressing: Senator Scott Ryan, Senator Helen Polley, Senator Cameron, Senator Rachel Siewert, Senator Helen Kroger and Senator Steve Parry, being members of the Senate Finance and Public Administration References Committee examining native vegetation laws, greenhouse gas abatement and climate change matters.

I do not wish to make this submission public on the internet or any other media. I only make it because I cannot believe that the governments of the day could possibly think that we as farmers can afford to give up the use of our only means of making a living - our land - because if we cannot utilise fully our right to use the top 6 inches of topsoil which includes the vegetation on it then what point is there in even trying to survive and just maybe prosper. My second worry is a definite fear of retribution following this submission.

(1).

(a) We purchased current property with the view of restoring and reviving a very run down block with large areas of old regrowth scrub - original scrub no doubt removed when it was compulsory to make improvements on leasehold land back in the olden days (possibly 20 or 30 years ago). To be told that one must leave these desert-like regrowth forests of black pine, ironbark, apple and oak stands with sefton woody weeds and NO grasses or groundcovers present is stupidity as it devalues the land both from a productivity and environmental point of view. Native animals find no habitat there, it is only a haven for feral pigs, foxes, rabbits (all of which encroach on our improved country) and a bushfire risk, not to mention the erosion problems that also manifest in these areas. The imposition of time and money constraints of working through catchment management authorities results in Australia having far too much of this agriculturally deprived farmlands. The consequent loss of potential value of the land is going to severely devalue our superannuation portfolio as our future is all tied into this property.

(b) When Sepp 46 and the subsequent native vegetation legislation was passed as law we were not made aware that compensation arrangements were available for the imposition of such laws.. is it being offered? or do we again have to allow bureaucrats with political and industrial agendas (ie looking after their own interests and self serving industries) to sit in judgement on us.

(c) I have no idea how asset values are calculated so I cannot comment other than to say - keep it simple.

(d) It's as obvious as the nose on your collective faces: If you continue to punish farmers for trying to maintain, renovate and improve their valuable farming country they are going to go broke and our farming country is going to be ruined by regrowth with woody weeds suppressing valuable grasses and ground covers until you are left with a weed infested, feral animal haven which is a huge bushfire risk with severe erosion problems. Mother Nature does not stand still for anyone and in a thousand years time all our plans and aspirations will be overcome by the most successful competitors for water and life if we are not allowed to tend our farming land effectively and, this being a "democratic, capitalist" country, independently. When are you and "they" going to realise that you can achieve much more by rewarding good behaviour than by imposing draconian legislation which has the population forever looking over their shoulders. Instead I would recommend that you trust that common sense dictates that good farming practices goes hand in hand with productive financially viable property which will then in turn become environmentally secure with continued scientific advancements into improved farming techniques which should be investigated, encouraged and rewarded by governments! Its not rocket science - keep it simple! And surely that means that Federal and State governments should both be on the same page with this policy, not blaming each other. I cannot understand how our constitution apparently guarantees our property rights but then it lets the NSW State government (aren't they part of the Commonwealth, governed by the same constitution?) take these self same property rights away without a by your leave, or even a "thank you".

Another point to make here is that untold numbers of people are not going to raise their hands and make a submission for fear of reprisals or drawing of attention to their particular situations. Farming is a hands-on profession and if you neglect your farm duties, no matter how noble the cause, your business will suffer.

(2).

As for the proposed Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme, it is much too convoluted and complicated to solve a problem that science can't agree even exists to the detriment of the planet. If you in the government were really serious you would stop the **hypocrisy** of selling prime farming lands to be mined for coal to be exported overseas where the carbon stored in it will be released into the atmosphere as the greenhouse gasses "they" claim are contributing to the so called global warming. How can you justify shutting down normal farming practices in the name of saving the planet for future generations, and then allow energy, mining and transport industries to double and triple their outputs/inputs to greenhouse emissions. Far better to put your energies into changing our dependence upon the petroleum, coal and other stored carbon deposits into renewable energy supplies, and if that means looking outside the square then surely that must be done too. Instead of maintaining the problem let's find the solutions! I tell my grandchildren every day that I am with them, "there are no problems, only solutions", and "can't means won't". I should not have to tell my government the same.

In closing I would like to request that the native vegetation laws be repealed. Start again, use incentives to protect native vegetation instead of a big punitive stick approach. The laws as they stand are a big impost on farming today and affect our bottom line as do all the other overgovernance industries that have been forced upon us in the last 20 years, starting with gun laws (and here they are today - Australia's children - stabbing each other when it has never been the weapon that is the problem, it is the person that is holding it); LHPA (nothing but a state government tax collection agency); MLA and accompanying NLIS; OH&S with self perpetuating chemical accreditation courses, insulting chain saw accreditation courses, etc, etc. As you can see, one of the greatest impacts has been to our attitudes; as farmers we are so disheartened and can very well understand how many of our mates have taken the easy way out and killed themselves.

I sign sincerely but with trepidation,