

RE: Native Vegetation Laws, Greenhouse Gas Abatement and Climate Change Matters.

Submission.

The total area of our property located at (One and a half hours drive North of Brisbane) is 85.5 Ha. The area affected by the provisions of the V.M. Act is approximately 35...40 Ha.

(A) The land Asset value has been substantially reduced due to V.M. Act regulations which prohibited the removal of Black Wattle trees, which are notorious shelters for Lantana (A pest brought in from overseas) and other weeds. Grazeing becomes non existent due to excessive crown cover and ,on the spraying of Lantana by weedkiller ,ground erosion has taken place. This has resulted in top soil being lost.

The relevant State Government Department claimed that Black Wattle species of trees fixed Nitrogen in the soil, however there is no grass for grazeing under thick plots of Black Wattle trees. The result is a thicker plantation of Black Wattle trees which have a 15-20 year life span, then fall over fences, and other into dams, etc.

The productivity of our property has reduced from 85 Beef cattle to 70 since the V.M Act came into law. This is a loss of almost 20% ,which with increasing costs has made the property virtually income negative.

(b) In QLD there has not been any Compensation for the V.M. Act despite the suggestion that the Federal Government made funds available for the implimentation of the V.M. Act.

In fact when the V.M. Act became Law the QLD Government did not advise landowners directly in a written form. Landowners were threatened with large fines if they removed trees form prohibited property areas.

These areas were clarified only by a visit to a QLD Lands Department office, a vague Map costing \$20.00, with a fee of \$300.00 for a property visit by Department "Experts". The Maps of properties have been changed since the V.M. Act became Law and the Goal posts changed at the whim of people in charge of the relevant Government Department.

(C) The asset value is normally obtained by the sale of similiar properties in a District. A property affected by the V.M. Act is of lower resale valuethe difference between unaffected properties and affected properties would give an accurate assesment of loss.

At this time I am unaware of a decision of the State Land Court which reduces property valuations due to the constraints of the V.M. Act. In any case we have to pay full rates on unproductive land.

Black wattle trees have a short time span of 15-20 years ,they then generally split and collapse. They are subject to white ant attack, have no commercial value and when aged are very hard timber

(2)

Apart from so called nitrogen fixation (No scientific evidence of their efficiency) they have no value. There are numerous plant such as clovers, tropical legumes, which fix Nitrogen and can be grazed and provide Rural Production.

(d) What I found when the V.M. Act became law was that many land owners were profoundly affected mentally and were shocked by the manner of the introduction of this act.

(1) There was no consultation between Government and Landowners in our District and adjacent areas in S/East Qld.

(2) Broadacre areas have been defined as large areas of predominately grazing areas of Western Qld. Clearing in these areas was by large Bulldozers and chain where thousands of Ha were cleared on large properties. This has no relation to small holdings in S. East Qld and how this relates to KYOTO provisions has never been explained. (

(3). The attitude of State Government staff towards landowners could only be described as profoundly un Australian.

I found staff to be abrupt, poorly briefed, and covering up lack of knowledge by an un-cooperative attitude.

The attitude of staff affected many land owners as much as the fact that their property rights were ignored.

There is a very unforgiving anger against the V.M. Act which needs to be aired and changes made.

Our forebears did not go to War to have the present situation in place, where property rights are ignored, we pay full rates, spray weeds and maintain fences on land we have no control over. Naturally, a co operative approach would have produced a less aggressive stance by State Government officers, however the so called State Leader proved to be such a flop that the result was clearly predictable.

The wisdom or otherwise of tying ourselves, in Australia, to International Treaties where only a small section of our Community carry all the load is clearly obvious with KYOTO.

Never the less, we now have a situation in S/East Qld where a large area of National Park and Freehold Farming land is being placed under a "BIOSPHERE" following an application to UNESCO. Again, a small number of people are convinced that they have an excellent plan, however they are not prepared to take any responsibility if the plan causes loss of productivity.

We do need a Federal body to oversee all International Treaties and ensure that there are not side affects. In the case of the proposed "BIOSPHERE" for the Dagular Ranges the Chairman of the Board is a QLD University member of the Classics, Music, etc and the Board are Academics and Councilors from the local Council. None of the Board members have a connection with the land or earn their living from the Land. The board has refused member representation from the Rural areas and it is the V.M. Act replica with nothing learnt from previous situations.

We currently work under the V.M. Act.

The S/East Qld Development Plan.

The proposed BIOSPHERE.

Council Fees and Charges for Dam Construction permits

In the 2001-06 Census 11,500 families left the Rural areas.

30% of these families were in QLD.

IN SUMMARY.

1.

- (a) Land Asset Value has been severely affected.
- (b) The Compensation aspect is the loss of income and decrease in the value of an Asset.
- (c) The value of recent sales of unaffected properties and the current value of like properties affected ,established by experienced Land valuers.
- (d) Refer to Submission re ongoing Rural Advisory Programs.

(1) I believe that a staged approach could be.

- (a) Restore Property Rights.
- (b) Asset Compensation ongoing subject to a through investigation

In relation to the proposed Carbon Reduction Scheme I believe that in Australia we could be carrying out significant improvements without such a scheme. We should be gearing up for Electric Cars for Urban use initially (Because of their limited range,)

This could be by installing Solar Panels on the top of large buildings such as shopping centres , with plug in facilities. We should be utilizing Gas in trucks and machinery and generally exploring the use of any available fuels.

Better planning in Cities where many light industries could be located near housing areas to reduce travel requirements by employees.

Many industries relocate to areas distant from their original location without any consideration for employees.

All such relocations should be supervised by a City Central Board (Perhaps Council) and approved or not on Traffic congestion factors and land for relocation found near the place of residence.

Many sensible improvements in Carbon reduction have not even been considered and we should not wait for other Countries to make a move when we could make improvements ourselves. The argument that other Countries are much larger polluters therefore we do nothing is very poor management.

The bottom line in all this is that less than 4% of the population are Rural Business workers.

They produce food for 100% of the population and export food worth Billions, per year, despite floods, drought, fires, and poor marketing by a multitude of Boards.

These Australians quite rightly feel that they have been badly let down by below average Political decisions.

Personally .I feel that the V.M.Act was enacted in such a manner that to call it an act of bullying was praise .

Kevin Patrick AUSTIN.