

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

While I understand that Committee is limited in the scope that it can investigate, my direct interest at this stage is the "Native Vegetation Laws" as legislated in NSW. The other areas are of great interest but to date as an individual who will be affected I have no idea of what impact they are going to impose. This is because no official information has been made available to me. I have attended conferences and read copious flyers and articles but cannot understand what is eventually going to restrict my freehold rights (if freehold land has any rights).

Therefore my submission will concentrate on the impact that the NSW laws in relation to Native Vegetation and all the lead up to the present legislation.

My property is located in the Central Tablelands 24 kilometres from Mudgee. The elevation of my property is 650 metres or 200 metres higher than Mudgee Township. The relevance of this is that we are up in the hills on the north west of Mudgee where because of the hills the tree cover is proportionally higher than the flatter lower country.

When I purchased My country in 1980 in had approximately 20% tree cover of which approximately 10% could be cleared and made productive. Because of the lack of finance to improve the property mainly because of the education costs associated with 3 daughters I intentionally delayed expending any cash on clearing until after these expenses. Then whammy the NSW Government introduced SEP46 and all of my plans where in disarray and have remained so ever since.

Regrowth has extended the tree cover to approximately 30%. Because contrary to popular opinion suckers spring out of the ground in high volumes and before you know it they are 5 to 10 metre trees and so thick that you cannot ride a motor bike through them. What this means is approximately 20% of my property could have been productive but is now covered by trees and regrowth. It also means that instead of the Government stealing what should have been 10% of my property without compensation they are actually stealing 30% which has turned a marginal viable property into an unviable property.

The provisions under the Act in relation to Property Development Plans is not the solution a) because it effectively imposes a caveat on the property. As someone who wishes to sell as part of my superannuation I not prepared to totally give up my freedom to manage my land as is required by the PDD process . b) The process, whereby unknown people from various Government Departments would monitor every decision and continually threaten if non compliance was perceived, in my view make the PDD concept totally impractical.

Therefore my investment in my land is being devalued because of laws that stop improvement and restrict my rights. It would appear to me that compensation should be considered as a just solution to what has been a significant financial impact on my family.

Brian Duffy