

This submission relates to Queensland vegetation laws.

Firstly, I believe the validity or otherwise of the Climate Change hypothesis will only be established with the benefit of hindsight. The majority of steps taken or proposed will benefit humanity by delivering a healthier environment irrespective of whether the recent climatic observations are man made or cyclic. Climate change is not the issue here, rather that politicians and beauracrats have arbitrarily imposed the cost of satisfying international greenhouse gas abatement agreements on a section of the community (i.e.: landholders). The proposed benefits of these greenhouse gas agreements will be shared equally by the national community and it is not unreasonable to expect the same community to share equally the costs of achieving the objectives. I wish to note these costs are not only fiscal but have numerous forms including emotional and as such are extremely difficult, if not impossible, to quantify.

It is an incontrovertible fact that vegetation on land has an intrinsic value, irrespective of whether you see habitat for fauna, grazing and shade for livestock or mill logs. The point is that when this land was purchased part of the price was for the vegetation and this is still the case. When you freehold land in Queensland (which is purchasing it from the Crown) the value of timber is assessed and charged to you. When legislation is designed to deny free use of this vegetation without just compensation to the rightful owners there is no other word to describe it but THEFT.

The vegetation laws also impinge on my right to the unimpeded and peaceful enjoyment of the land, the cost of which can't be quantified. I am unable to undertake even the normal maintenance tasks such as maintaining roads and clearings or dealing with trees that pose a public risk without significant personal anguish, studying how the act might affect each situation and at times seeking professional legal advice. The reason for this is that the Queensland DNR/EPA is a gung ho organisation that pays scant regard to the law. To illustrate this opinion I offer the following:

- 1) The majority of appeals against convictions under this Act have been successful. The successful appeal rate should raise the question of justice being denied to those who can't afford to appeal.
- 2) I have been led to believe that the director of DNR has been personally convicted of Contempt of Court in relation to a vegetation case order.
- 3) In the last few days the minister ran several high profile press releases alleging Xstrata committed serious air pollution acts in Mt Isa which has been proven to be false.

Their modus operandi appears to be prosecuting with scant regard to Law or evidence.

If I had one wish that could come from this enquiry it would be granting free legal support to anyone prosecuted under this Act. That would (or should) make DNR/EPA give due consideration to legislation and evidence before embarking on prosecutions of people who simply can't afford to defend themselves.

Thank You