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SENATE INQUIRE INTO THE IMPACTOF GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION AND NATIVE VEGETATION
SUBMISSION NATIVE VEGETATION LAWS, GREENHOUSE ABATMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

The collusion between the Federal Government and State Governments over the previous years to enact legislation to make landowners, who still have native vegetation on their properties responsible and liable to protect and maintain this vegetation with out providing any compensation or annual financial assistance to manage the native vegetation for the nations benefit, is a national disgrace.

Governments must either be prepared to compensate and, or reward landowners to maintain native vegetation or repeal native vegetation preservation acts and allow land owners to manage their properties as they wish. It is pay up time for governments.

In the Tarcutta Creek Catchment on the South West Slopes of New South Wales which covers 170,000 hectares, the average difference between lands that is under pasture, to that which is covered by native vegetation is a minium of $1700 per hectare.

The income lost by not been able to clear land and develop into pasture is currently $184 per hectare, per year based on an average stocking rate, of one cow and calf to1.6 hectares that can be developed into productive farm land. As a landowner we fore go any future price increase in this land.

No other industry is forced to forego any increase in productivity and increased income for the common good.

We still have the potential to develop 100hectares into prime agriculture land, the cost to us is $170,000 in lost value and a minium income loss of $30,000 per year. This would still leave us with a large enough area of native vegetation and biodiversity on our property. We are slowly planting tree lots on some of our other properties to build up wind breaks and habitat for birds who control our insect pests. At our cost, no subsidies. The question is, are these tree lots now under the control of native vegetation laws?

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The NSW taxpayer contributes $40 a hectare to administer the States Parks, why not private land owners receive simular payment for management of the Governments now controlled private native vegetation.

Farmers are being asked to manage and meet the protection costs of Native Vegetation for the Governments, Federal, State and Local Governments for the community good at the same time are accused as been environmental rapists.
At the same time we pay levies and local government taxes, $900-00 per annum on this land, locked up by governments.

Freehold Property Rights
I believe the landowner who owns the land owns the vegetation and owns the rain fall that falls on land under his free hold property rights. They also should have land rights over any mineral or energy resources.

State and Local Governments planning laws have been drafted to use the native vegetation preservation acts to stop farmers freely trading their land or building multiple residential units on their land.

These laws combined together are the biggest single cause of rural Australia's population decline and the lack of development.
The other big problem over the last two decades is all political parties want to eliminate and or control farmers.

There is a problem, every thing that a city person uses or needs, comes from the land.

If the State Federal Governments believe native vegetation is more valuable than productive grazing land or farming land they should prove it and place a value on native vegetation and an annual earning yield. The commercial market says native vegetation has no value. Government should pay a yearly rental of 10% of the average land value to the property owner to manage the protection of the native vegetation.

Land values used to determine local government rates should be used for reference value.

Land clearing should be permitted to allow farmers to clear back so that they maintain and retain 5% of their landmass under native vegetation. Landowners should have the flexibility and encouraged to maintain 50% of this retained vegetation as natural vegetation the other 50% as open grass land .

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Public Roads that are maintained as native vegetation protected areas by local government.

These tree lines are a major cost to farm management, in the form of repairs fencing and the fear of livestock escaping on to roadways when trees fall on roadway fences. Stock owners have to cover the cost of public liability insurance and 100% of the fencing costs, in the event of an animal escaping onto a road way and the landowner risks being sued by the road users who incurs damage to their vehicles.
This demonstrates how a government policy forces the costs and liability on to a landowner.

Trees are a crop and a saleable resource to farmers, they supply fencing material, building material and firewood for heating and cooking. No restrictions should be place on these activities.
In fact the more trees you cut down and use as a building material and you replant those trees, the more cellulose (carbon dioxide) you store at a faster rate.

Tree preservation act

This act be should be removed from applying to all Rural and Rural Residential land. To protect an old tree that is dying, or full of white ants, or one that endangers property or the act is used to stop a development application to proceed thus forcing the depopulation of local rural areas to larger rural centres is incomprehensible to me. The answer is to not have a tree preservation act at all.

Local governments should purchase land and establish tree offset areas through out the community and funded by placing a fee for each tree removed to cover costs of replanting in offset areas when a development application for housing or industry requires trees to be removed. (Farming and grazing areas to be exempt) it costs approximately $5-00 a tree to purchase land, and plant a tree. It can cost thousands of dollars in time and effort to obtain approval to remove a tree.

The biggest cost to landowners, there are to many government departments, and very little practical research being carried out. The word agriculture has been dropped from most government departments. Do governments care what happens to farmers and there families?

Agriculture needs Carbon Dioxide

Carbon Dioxide (CO_2) is not a pollutant in our atmosphere. CO_2 is one of the earths building blocks along with water and sunlight. These three building blocks are combined together by the process of photosynthesis. Photosynthesis is a process that converts carbon dioxide into Cellulose, without Carbon Dioxide plant life would not exist.

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No food would be produced. The amount of Cellulose that can be produced (Carbon Dioxide stored) from green plants is directly related to the availability of water and sun light.

The combustion of fossil fuels creates Nitric oxide and sulphur dioxide that escape into our atmosphere and is converted into sulphuric acid and nitric acid in our atmosphere which can combine with water vapour, which falls back to earth as acid rain.

The federal government is not carrying out broad based ph testing of our rainfall across Australia to determine if there is any acidification of our rainfall. This is the only testing method that will truly indicate the impact of the burning of fossil fuels. The Bureau of Meteorology should be given the task of testing rainfalls PH levels, and publishing these results.

Rainfall provides our plant life and crops with most of their nitrogen, if our rainfall becomes acidic, our plants and crops growth will decline.

There is also no scientific evidence that the planet is in fact warming up from increased levels of CO2 in the atmosphere. It is still only a theory. The government is only using this because of its commitment to the Kyoto Protocol agreement.

Agriculture may in fact benefit from a warmer moister atmosphere.

The Kyoto protocol excludes Agricultural Carbon sinks such as crops, and existing native vegetation. The only available carbon sink allowable to agriculturists will be a new tree plantation, this could lead to a significant loss in food production and water availability, run off, as tree lots can extract more water than the environment can provide. (10 mega litres per hectare)

Management investment scheme has seen approximately 35 farms in our catchment planted under pine trees with the loss of 35 families and $3.5 million to the local economy, which has turned a vibrant community into one of decline.

Water run off into our creeks has also declined. Expanded tree planting in a prime agriculture area as carbon sinks will have a negative economical impact to that area. Pastures and crops can convert just as much carbon dioxide into Cellulose as trees can. When trees reach maturity they reduce their capacity to convert carbon dioxide into Cellulose.

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Agriculture production in Australia is close to zero growth, any new tax or impost increasing operating costs will not be able to be passed on by the farmer due to competition from countries that do not have a ETS trading scheme or subsidise agriculture production through generous carbon credits.

The cattle Industry is one of our single biggest industries in Australia with thousands of people employed in the process and distribution and export chain.

Place any sort of emissions tax on this industry and it would collapse along with whole communities, as there are no other agricultural industries to replace it.

Under the Kyoto Protocol agreement not only does it want to reduce methane gas emissions from livestock, but eliminate all red meat production around the world. Livestock actually has a positive affect on carbon emissions as they digest the cellulous they convert that to protein and organic material for the microbes in the soil to use for further plant growth. I rely heavily on livestock droppings to fertilize my land.

The Australian Federal Labour government under its ETS legislation plan has ensured that speculators will be required and able to operate and manipulate the price of carbon permits. While no physical carbon reduction or storage is actually taking place. This carbon permit trading system is nothing more than a ponzi scheme.

Conclusion.

Over the last 100 years the world has become hooked on fossil fuels for transport and energy. Australia will be totally dependent on fossil fuels for its survival for the next 50 years.

Australia needs to develop engineering solutions to enable mankind to continue to use fossil fuels as an energy source without polluting the country.

Governments may have to close down existing coal fired power stations and build gasification power stations. These power stations would capture the sulphates and nitrates, which can be converted to agriculture fertilizer, this would replace imported fertilizer.

No one has been able to obtain development approval to build one yet.

In the long term Australian Governments will have to build nuclear power stations, we need to start planning now.

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Transport fuels and energy, Governments are hooked on the taxes raised from Hydrocarbon fuels. Until governments legislate the phasing out of hydrocarbon fuels to drive transport, clean energy alternatives will not survive in the market place.

The world economies are driven solely on unsustainable consumerism. When you go to a city you see the entire area covered in buildings and concrete, The temperature is five degrees warmer from the radiant heat and the cars are bumper to bumper and you stand on a street corner and choke on the fumes.

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