

Submission to Senate Enquiry into Native Vegetation Laws

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The following have been some of the impacts of the Native Vegetation Laws on my property

- On the farm there has been an area of native stringy bark hardwood timber that came about as regrowth from a fire when my grandfather had the property. This timber is now a virtually a worthless asset as firstly the local Coolah sawmill was effectively shut down by the NSW Carr Government and there is no other sawmill within an economically feasible transportable distance that is interested in the timber. The only value I can gain is from using a transportable mill and cut it up for horse rails but this is such a paltry return when you have to employ a contractor to do the job it is hardly worth the effort. Secondly I am not able to clear any of the country for grazing purposes even though it would make good grazing country as it has 850 mm pa rainfall and on basalt soil. In effect I pay rates and taxes without getting any tangible benefit from the timber. The area is dominated by trees and there is little ground cover such as grasses and herbs.

- To compound my frustration is that there has been considerable interest in wind farming in my area and I currently have a wind testing tower on my farm that is showing economically viable returns are possible for a site to be situated on the farm plus others in the area. The wind development company that I am involved with is restricted in placing wind turbines near timber as it creates turbulence so I will lose out on great wind tower locations for renewable energy as the timber is there.

To summarise the above I have received the triple whammy by government :-

- 1. Effectively close down the local mill so reducing my timbers value considerably
- 2. Native Vegetation laws have meant I cannot clear the area for high value grazing land
- 3. Wind towers will not be able to be situated in a lot of areas due to timber

And for this pleasure I still get to pay rates back to the government on this parcel of land!!!

I would like to see a more thought out native vegetation policy that means we as land managers can manage land effectively and in an environmentally sustainable manner which will allow us to pass on farms to the next generation in a better state than when we arrived whilst also being profitable.

One area I would like some thought put into would be if renewable energy projects (such as wind farms) are put on a farm then there is scope to use the renewable energy gained as an offset to any clearing that is necessary to install the project and have this clearing allowed as part of any future Native Vegetation Act.

Yours Sincerely

Douglas Arnott