

Submission to Senate Inquiry re Native Vegetation Law

When land was first selected one of the conditions was that the Selector had to clear, if they didn't they lost the area of land. If land hadn't been cleared before 1990 it is no longer possible to do so and if clearing has been done illegally after 1990 you lose it.

Once land became freehold the state only retained mineral rights and everything else became the land holder's property. Or did it. ???

Economics have dictated whether country was cleared or not. Land with timber is likely to be the result of one of the following

1. Country was not worth clearing
2. Landholder couldn't afford to clear
3. regrowth beat owner.
4. potential land use hadn't been realised

These restrictions have reduced income of landholder because

1. They couldn't sell timber
2. may have to buy steel instead of timber even though timber is available on another property they own.
3. cannot develop property to grow crops or increase animal production

much psychological stress has been caused because of

- a). The initial mismanagement of inception and information sessions

- b) Lack of understanding of Staff and owners and different Interpretations of laws

- c) changes of rules on three occasions

- d) Trying to get information and negotiation of red tape.

- e) Trying to get clear written permission

More stress has been caused with legal clearing because of the threat of being reported and compliance officers issuing large fines and interest bills for unintentional small breaches of the law.

With losses of income streams; Drop in land values and value of superannuation ~~caps~~ of native timber gone much of this locked up timber country has the potential to become fire hazards with results similar to the Canberra and Victoria fires.

Since these laws came in starting with Sept 86 I cannot sell strainers, stays etc because they aren't being used on the property where cut. Lost job as off sider in small private mill and parents cannot sell timbered property which has lost value since the last Value General's Valuation

Anytime I remove regrowth I worry that I'll be reported and compliance officers come visiting I find it in-appropriate that the Federal Government should benefit from these Draconian laws under the Kyoto Protocol when I don't get any benefit.

Yours faithfully,
Andrew Baker .