



M.R. & D.S. CLAPHAM
"HAZELBROOK"
ILFORD
N.S.W. 2850
Ph. (02) 63588451
Fax (02) 63588548

The Secretary
House of Representative Standing Committee on Environment and Heritage
Parliament House
Canberra

Dear Sir,

With regard to your inquiry into the impact of conservation controls imposed on landholders, I wish to submit the following points.

Land Clearing and Development ; Putting the onus on the landholder to prove that their land is not a habitat for flora or fauna by way of doing an EIS puts them out the back door before they start. Land may have the potential for development but is stifled by red tape. Someone who has no interest in a development can object and cost the landowner enormous amounts of time and money.

If I have bought land with the intention and the right to develop it and that right is removed and my potential to earn income is consequentially removed , then surely I have the right to be dually compensated. To do otherwise is inequitable. If something is done for the benefit of the wider community, then one would expect that the community as a whole would bear the expense of such action.

Water Reform ; I borrowed sixty thousand dollars and spent one hundred and ten thousand dollars on an irrigation system after obtaining a water licence to extract water from Lawsons Creek at Mudgee to grow lucerne. Two years later, when renewing my licence, a condition was added which restricted my licence. I could only pump while there was a visible flow one kilometre upstream. This on average prevented me from pumping from mid December until an autumn break , even though the creek continued to flow underground and there was a good flow at the point of extraction . The creek is unregulated. The land I irrigate is leased .Mudgee Shire Council is the Lessor and utilize the ground water for town water supply. A condition of my lease is that I may not extract any ground water.

I have had my gross income from this business cut in half on average with no recompense. The conditions for water extraction to come out of the current round of water reform will be interesting for me to say the least. I cannot do capital works to store water. The land is riparian and flood prone.

We expect Governments to act in the interests of the wider community, but their decisions should reconcile with a "code of ethics". The legislation that they bring in should be fair and equitable and represent balanced views. In NSW we as farmers have seen little of that.

Yours Sincerely

M.R. Clapham

Mitchell Clapham