

REAP WHAT YOU SOW – by Jim Crowe

When are our Australian leaders going to realise that within 100 years, the world wars will not be fought over oil, but on food production. The present theory of cutting back water to farmers and thereby reducing production to enhance our environment is 'a recipe for disaster'. If the leaders think we will always be able to import the shortfall in food production they are sadly mistaken. We in Australia, have the unenviable record of the most wasteful users of water in the world and not one drop of this waste can now be attributed to farmers. Unfortunately, the waste is entirely created by our visionless leaders (thank God there used to be some visionaries or we would not have the Snowy River scheme). Ninety five percent of the rainfall in Australia runs straight back into the ocean. Would you not be amazed that our leaders of today are hell bent on returning even more back into the ocean for the environment and as a consequence reduce food production in one of the most fertile countries in the world.

Do these so called leaders not realise that if the really want to return the river to its natural state, the river would run dry for much of the years as it did 100 years ago. In fact by putting more water down the river they are doing the exact opposite of natural flows! Do these so called leaders think for one minute in 100 years time when the world is desperate for food that Australia is still going to import all the food they need when other countries are not exporting same. Secondly do our leaders think that the rest of the world would be happy to watch Australia waste ninety five percent of their water resource, whilst their people starve! It is time leaders used a little vision, so profoundly lacking and made sure that we harvested more of our rainfall and by doing so give farmers more water instead of less to maintain increased production in the future otherwise you may find that China may step in and fill the void.

It will be rather ironic if our leaders cut water to our farmers and we become the first country to starve because our present day leaders thought it better to run water into the sea for the environment rather than have increased food production. There are many other options for turning back much more of the ninety five percent of water that goes into the ocean. None of them include better measuring devices and de-salination plants. Why are we spending millions of dollars on infrastructure (new meters) as when there is little water, farmers do not use any as they do not get any water allocation. What is the point of having new meters to measure nothing!

Today we have wind turbines to make power if there is wind and we have solar power if there is sunshine, but the one thing we make little use of for power is water power. This usually means large dams which are expensive and power harvesting gets only one go at this water. Bearing in mind that water power is in excess of 800 times more powerful than wind power, this would mean that a comparable water turbine would have to turn once to every 800 times of a wind turbine and constant water flows can be found everywhere such as tidal flows in and out of Port Phillip bay. I have been working on a 1/15 scale water turbine concept which I am sure will successfully work on slow or fast moving streams. Whilst it is still in the concept stage, the potential is quite staggering and would not only generate infinite green power but would allow our leaders to encourage farmers to lift their production by increasing their water allocation. Colin Barnett – WA Premier, some years ago proposed a canal from the Ord river to Perth to supply water which was found to be un-economic at the time. Imagine this canal now being built in conjunction with water turbines, this canal could operate at least 30,000 turbines using the same water for power 30,000 times. Imagine how many wind turbines you would need to compare!

This system could be used down through central Australia to Adelaide and to bring much needed water down through the eastern states. Imagine, if rather than losing ninety five percent of our water it could be cut back to seventy five per cent. This would allow ample water into the future and allow Australia to have the greenest power source in the world.

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