

PD & SE JOLIFFE

SENATE FINANCE AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Sir

SUBMISSION

We think our case is a classic example of where Government Legislation has taken our asset with no compensation.

This is our story: [redacted] was selected by my (Peter's) mother's father on the 19/7/36. I purchased [redacted] (11 735 ha) in 1971, so there has only been 2 generations to live/work here. It was a Preferential Pastoral Holding tenure when I bought it. I applied to get it to a Freehold tenure in 1972. Because of all the 'red tape' and the Govt Departments deliberate slow undertakings, it took 19 years for it to be finalized. We began to pay to Freehold [redacted] in 1991. The Forestry Dept took 1/3 (3833 ha) as a Forestry Lease. National Parks were also asked if they wanted a 'slice' as well but thankfully they declined. We were allowed to Freehold the rest. We paid the Govt unimproved value of the land plus the value of the commercial timber (Cyprus pine and hardwood) & potential timber.

The reason for Freeholding [redacted] was to develop the property to a sustainable business and asset. Of course, we've left green belts and nature corridors. By developing our country it is not only beneficial to us but also to native flora and fauna and the environment. The improved pastures for all grass eating animals, including native wildlife; the various watering points that is, bores and dams which were non-existent before this country was developed have enhanced the native species population. We understand the BALANCE of nature that is required for sustainable agriculture into the future.

In 1972 when I purchased [redacted] my expectations were that I'd have approximately 18000 acres country to develop with a carrying capacity of 1200 breeders. However, at present we can only run 700 head in a good season. The value of the country has diminished substantially because of the Vegetation Act. In 2006 country in this area was selling for \$300 per acre (18 000 acres x \$300=\$5.4m). With approximately just 10 000 acres not shaded valued at \$300 per acre we've lost \$2.4m off the value of our asset + the productivity of income for our business.

We had just 9 years to sell the timber and to improve our place (on a limited budget) which was very overgrown with vegetation thickening before Peter Beattie brought in the Vegetation Management Act. As a result of that another 1/3 of [redacted] has been shaded in (protected area). The shadings are continuously changing, each time they are encroaching increasingly on our productive and potentially productive land. Therefore our living area has diminished substantially.

All of this has been done without 1cent of compensation and has reduced the value of OUR property considerably. Compensation wasn't obtainable for us because areas already shaded on the vegetation map were classed as 'endangered.'

At present, they (Lodestone Energy) are undertaking coal exploration on . Mining is exempt from the Vegetation Management Act, so if coal is found all the so called 'endangered ecosystems' shadings becomes null and void and all the vegetation can be cleared which makes the whole act hypocritical. Preservation of the environment is not the reason for this law.

With rising costs of production compared to the price we receive for our product (good quality beef cattle) it is becoming harder to make a living no matter how efficient your business is on the land. The prices for cattle sold now are the same as they were 18 years ago and we have more Govt regulations/ costs imposed on us, as well as the uncertainty we've had for the last 10 years. There was absolutely no consultation with landholders who were affected by these draconian laws. Every situation/ property is different and a 'blanket' law should never have been applied. Because of the Vegetation Management Act the land owner no longer has control of his property management. The knowledge and experience that has been acquired by many years of living and working on our land is not valued and not taken into consideration when these decisions/laws are made. For the environment, if Government is going to take people's assets they should be paying them to maintain it or out rightly buy it.

Our three children, who have been raised here and love the land BUT have no future on it. They have all left the land and have jobs in the city. (We have a diesel fitter, vet and electrician.) The loss of these 3 young people and their partners from the land and local community is distressing as they have taken with them the knowledge and understanding of the land. Local schools, shops and communities are all affected with the loss of these families as well as others in the same circumstances because of these laws. They certainly are not thinking of our future generations when they make these laws.

Please find enclosed EPA maps.(3)

Regards

PETER & SUE JOLIFFE

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