

This submission has been prepared by Andrew & Carmel Walsh,

As per the inquiry terms of reference this submission deals with the impact of the NSW native vegetation laws on our property:

(a) Any diminution of land asset value and productivity as a result of such laws;

When the NSW Native Vegetation laws came into effect we had the management and improvement of 1/3 of our property taken away from us. This area of land is primarily invasive scrub which we had intended to remove in order to plant native grasses for ground cover and/or stock feed to be able to run some livestock.

Since the introduction of these laws the scrubby areas have increased and any ground cover that was there has been denuded; a major decrease in native animal population has also been evident due to no natural grasses and herbage. Erosion is at a peak with the formation of large gullies resulting in some of the bigger trees (gums etc) that should remain will in actual fact fall over due to the erosion of the soil from around the base of them, also large amounts of top soil being washed away resulting in large amounts of sedimentation being deposited into natural waterways.

If we cannot reverse this process in the very near future vast tracks of not only our land but land over the whole western area will further become scrub infested, barren, uninhabitable, and worthless for all life forms including native animals.

Once in seven years have we been able to run livestock on this area of land. It has become worthless to us and places extended pressure on the balance of the property in order to maintain viability.

(b) Compensation arrangements to landholders resulting from imposition of such laws;

As these laws have realistically stopped us from developing and protecting the delicate ecosystems of our asset. We now have over 30% of our land which we continue to pay council & rural rates, interest, and insurance; further we have the legal obligations to control noxious weeds, feral animals and fires on this land which has now become worthless as it is unsaleable. No form of compensation has been forthcoming from any level of Government for the imposition that has been placed upon us, as individuals and legal landholders of this 'freehold' titled land.

(c) The appropriateness of the method of calculation of asset value in the determination of compensation arrangements

N/A – as there has been no compensation

(d) Any other related matter

In closing, we are devastated that in a so called free and democratic country that our freehold land can be locked up with no compensation – it sounds more like communism!! More so we are horrified as responsible land managers to see this same land that we use to be able to muster livestock in vehicles not more than twenty years ago, now so thick with invasive scrub that we are unable to walk through; there is little evidence of wildlife left, with grass cover and the native trees being choked out by this invasive scrub.

We very much look forward to a fairer result. Thank you.