

Senate Inquiry Submission

This legislation is yet another vitriolic attack on farmers by the most anti-farming Govt in history who succumbed to the erroneous lies of their greenie overlords. This legislation is not designed to address any issue. It is nothing other than Orwellian legislation that feeds a bloated bureaucracy, with the appalling consequence of demonising and criminalising farmers. It does not recognise the wide adoption of environmentally sensitive farming practices over the last forty years. And today, there are myriad cutting-edge programs being undertaken by canefarmers in conjunction with organisations such as Terrain Natural Resource Management, Wet Tropics, etc. The farmers are not being listened to; yet any diatribe propagated by green fools is treated with reverence.

Not content with imposing the most restrictive practices on farmers anywhere in the world, they are now having another crack at driving the farmers off the land. This same Govt first attempted to introduce this rubbish ten years ago when they introduced legislation around farming environmental risk management plans which contained the following features:

- any farm exceeding 70 ha was deemed an environmentally relevant activity, which places them in the same category as sewerage plants and mines (that's right: a canefarmer is evidently as big a risk to the environment as a mine or sewerage plant)
- it was a 64-page booklet of questions;
- a set of guidelines was attached on how to complete the booklet – it was 51 pages long;
- the combined paperwork weighed almost 1 kg

This latest legislation, again predicated upon selective, made-to-order reports from partisan scientists is merely the latest act of crawling to the Greens for electoral preferences, and shoring up ALP seats in South-east Qld. The Govt consistently refuses to consider the opinions of many eminent scientists (for instance, Professors Walter Stark PhD, and Peter Ridd) who emphatically refute the lies and distortions propagated by this Govt.

Professor Walter Stark, PhD, - who has been studying the Great Barrier Reef for over 40 years - opined (Nth Qld Register, 26/3/09, p. 5) that:

"sediment has accumulated over thousands of years...turbidity in coastal waters is overwhelmingly governed by re-suspension of these sediments through wind and was actions, and not by modern run-off from land"

"there is less sediment leaving farms than national parks"

in relation to the chemical Diuron: traces of Diuron "were restricted to small areas around a few river mouths and were well removed from any reef. In such places, the freshwater is far more toxic to reef organisms than any minute traces of herbicide"

"human-induced nutrients on the GBR are trivial, undetectable, and to the extent that enhanced levels may possibly occur, they are more likely to be beneficial":

"The GBR is situated in one of the least polluted and sparsely populated parts of our planet. Chemical pollution there is not an observable fact or even a reasonable suspicion, but only another hypothetical possibility tossed into the water quality list for added impact"

"clear impacts of enhanced run-off of sediments, nutrients and contaminants (as a result of land use) on coral reefs of the GBR eco-system have proven difficult to detect...in short, no water quality problems were detectable"

I saw a WIN television interview around the same time in which Professor Ridd also stated that the water quality of the GBR is as pristine now as when Captain Cook sailed here.

This latest absurd piece of legislation is ridiculously long and complex, to the extent that many farmers will need assistance to complete same – especially the many farmers for whom English is a second language. And apparently, born and bred South-east Qld city kids who have never been near a farm, and are now employed as bureaucrats in the relevant Dept, can now make dictatorial

decisions on how farmers manage their properties. This is another draconian layer of bureaucracy designed to cause intolerable stress and concern, and which the govt hopes will force farmers to leave the land.