

Submission From T.J.Hughes to the Senate Select Committee

Native Vegetation Laws, Greenhouse Gas Abatement and Climate Change Measures

At the centre of this issue is the fact that one section of the community is being asked to bear the cost of something that benefits the community as a whole with little or no compensation for the depleted asset values or ability to earn.

There are many grey areas to address when calculating compensation, I will list a few:-

- A) What percentage of the whole is best left native to achieve the optimum sustainable income from ones land;
- B) Should a landowner in a given area be used to balance the loss of native vegetation on other landholders in that area, Bearing in mind type of vegetation, topography etc;
- C) The type of use the land is put to after clearing of native vegetation; and
- D) Is there a bigger or smaller chance of erosion (of and kind) if it is cleared.

There are many more and I will detail 1 that is our situation

We purchased our property in the late 80's and (for better or worse) felt that 15% of the land should be left original, so we went ahead and pulled most of the remainder leaving the riparian. An observation I have made over the years is 'generally' leaving timber on the stream banks will help to stabilise the bank, however in flood out areas where soil deposits are made these tend to be taken again on the next flood in timber country but NOT so in grass country as dense low ground cover quickly grows through the deposit and retains the new soil deposits.

Compensation:-

- A) The first question is 'should we'? I firmly believe yes;
- B) Can we afford to compensate? I believe yes, because if the government (the people) expect the rural industry to contribute further towards lowering our overall carbon output along the way compensation MUST be paid; and
- C) Formula:- I will go back to our situation (just for the sake of putting my point) maybe the equation should go something like this:-
 - i) 100% less 15% (Assuming in this instance that this is the acceptable level of clearing) less 10% for other government reasons;
 - ii) In this instance I suggest that this 10% is compostable. The level of this compensation is best argued by brains better than mine however it must be an annual payment.
 - iii) Now back to the formula, my 10% should be paid at a rate of 1 compensation unit/ha IF FENCED OUT OR ½ of 1 compensation unit IF NOT FENCED OUT.

Further to this I believe a live should be drawn under property that is used to derive an income as somehow we have to try to avoid large amount of compensation being paid to person/groups/consortiums that never intended to develop their land assets e.g. the massive areas of land handed over to wildlife protection and aboriginal groups etc.

Thanking you for your time.

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