

SUBMISSION TO SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATIVE VEGETATION LAWS

BY JAMES L.O.TEDDER

I own and manage a small horticultural farm on the Mid North Coast of NSW. It has an area of 17 ha. My wife and I bought this property in 1981 as a banana plantation and worked it as such with a few cattle until the collapse of the banana prices. Over the next few years we farmed macadamia nuts, cattle, avocados and native plums.

When we first arrived the farm was run down with only some native bush on the southern and western boundaries. It was subject to occasional frosts, drying winds and some soil erosion. One of our first jobs was to double the boundary fences to keep out the cattle and plant windbreaks. Eroding gulleys were planted with native trees and in very steep patches rain forest trees were planted. As a result we do not now experience frosts and are sheltered from winds and grass growth is excellent

Though we are now in our mid eighties we are still planting trees to protect the soil.

The Committee is asked to consider the following

1. Most of the good soils in reasonable climatic zones in Australia have already been cleared.
2. Landholders should understand that they have control over a piece of land only for their life time and are responsible to ensure that it is handed to the next generation in as good if not better condition than when they obtained use of it.
3. If a landholder complains that not being able to clear native vegetation is affecting his income they should be asked to prove such a statement.
4. Being able to use a piece of land to gain income should also bear a responsibility to see that catchment protection is not adversely affected.
5. There are numerous examples of landholders who have planted and protected trees on their land and actually increased production without clearing.
6. CSIRO over the years have shown that windbreaks on farms increase production.
7. If landholders have native vegetation suitable and identified as wildlife corridors then they should receive a rent for such use provided the vegetation is well managed.
8. Applications to clear native vegetation should be made public and people in the catchment should be able to make submissions before a decision is made.
9. There appears to be a good case for landholders with native vegetation to receive a rent for carbon reduction .If a subsidy is being paid to the large polluters then rent to people who are contributing to reducing greenhouse gases should be considered. However it may be a very cumbersome and expensive program to administer.

James L.O.Tedder
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