

Allan & Lyndall Reardon

The Secretary
Senate Standing Committee on Rural
and Regional Affairs and Transport
P.O. Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra, ACT 2600

Dear Sir,

This proposed legislation raises a number of major concerns.
In our area of the Clarence Valley we have been witnessing the disastrous consequences of forest plantations.

The knocking down of large numbers of older trees, the digging of large mounds, the weeds, the damage to runoff into the creek are one thing, but the overwhelming, continuous spraying of chemicals from the air and on the ground is another. The pesticides and herbicides being used are drifting onto adjoining properties, the people farming them and their families, onto roofs being used to collect drinking water, into the creeks and dams being used by livestock and wildlife. This actually happened to us and to neighbours on separate occasions. The EPA investigated and proved these incidents and told us that all they have the power to do is fine the helicopter pilot \$400. Many of the chemicals being used are banned in the European Union and many parts of the United States. Insecticides being used will also kill bees which are of course necessary for food production.

The companies responsible for this say they are operating within the letter of the law.

We are concerned that the proposed legislation will only result in MORE of the activity which is doing more harm to the environment than good.

If forests are to be planted for carbon sinks or for plantation a number of very important considerations need to be made and acted on.

Food producing land is being lost at a time when there is a world shortage of food. Australia is importing a lot of its food now.

We will put ourselves at the very real risk of food shortages in this country in the future if we are not careful, remember that pasture acts as a carbon sink also.

Forest Plantations that have been planted in our area in the last couple of years have been species not necessarily native to our area and have been monocultures. Even with the

constant chemical spraying and the best season that one could remember , large areas of these trees have died.

Any forests that are planted need to be mixed and with only natives to that area, thereby avoiding the environmental vandalism of constantly poisoning the air that we breathe, the water that we drink and the soil that future generations will need.

We still find it hard to believe when the big cry is how precious our water is in this country that these big companies are getting away with polluting our creeks and waterways, which by and large on this North Coast area have been up till now unpolluted and their flows uninterrupted.

This legislation must see to it that we don't have a repeat of all the mistakes that we are witnessing with Forest Plantation

Sincerely,
Allan & Lyndall Reardon