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The Commissioners

Impacts of Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Regulations.

Dear Sirs,

Firstly I should give you a brief summary of my experience and qualifications. Educated at Milson's Point P.S. and North Sydney Boys High Schools after a years' unemployment I joined the NSW Public Service as a Junior Accounts Clerk with the then Dept. of Labor & Industry.

When I turned 18 I enlisted in the RAAF, gained my pilots wings in Canada and joined my squadron (No. 541)in England.

From 1942-45 I 95 operational sorties with Germany and France (including 8 to Berlin) helping Bombe Command RAF to pulverise Germany – I learned a lot about how to destroy a city but not much of use to me as a civilian.

Having always been interested in the country and the bush (I spent much of my holidays in Broken Hill and some on "Thackaringa" – a sheep station (just West of BH) I hoped to become a Forester!

After 4 years at Uni and Aust. Forestry School Canberra I was employed by the Forestry Commission of N.S.W. incultural Research Forest, Far North Coast (Grafton-Q border) where we know(native) and Pis.... plantations and also did research into the Rain Forests there.

Next appointment was a Management Plains Forester Bateman Bay (Victorian Border) this entailed field survey and assessment of Native Forests and Plains for their future care. Both these jobs were as a Professional Forrester.

I was offered a job as a Field Officer in Division of Wood Technology in their Ent.....

Section and decided to become atoo, so went back to Sydney U (at the Commission's expense) and qualified. Later I was given permission by the University to do a higher degree part time and qualified as a Forest and a Research Scientist.

For nearly twenty years I worked in various parts of NSW and northern Victoria attempting to study investigate and solve problems associated with Insect Pests of Forests, of which there are many, some quite serious.

In the course of my investigations I eventually became aware and was interested in problems affecting the countryside as a whole – not just forests. Particularly how many landholders appeared to regard any native vegetation which seemed to interfere with what they wanted to do as a nuisance – a “pest” and something to be got rid of, unless it could be put to some use in grazing etc.

Grazing properties from which almost all tree cover had been removed for extra grazing so that the sheep in blistering summer, had practically nowhere to shade and by congregating - compacting the soil.

The summer grazing of the high plains at Kosciusko now causing massive erosion until Costin (.....later CSIRO) wrote his paper and my colleagues MrBoyles with some assistances from Sir Garfield B..... & others had this stopped and the Kosciusko National Park Proclaimed.

At the A.F.S. all would be foresters were told unequivocally that it was their duty to care for and manage forests “IN PERPETUITY”, not for a generation or even a hundred years and certainly to protect the forest estate against assaults economic or political to exploit them

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It would be fine if all landholders or carers observed or practiced similar principles?

It is the removal of Native Vegetation which is the cause of many of our present problems which all the proposed engineering and ‘bandaid’ so called solutions may have slightly.....but often merely exacerbate. Salting, erosion siltation fouling the water etc. And to make it worse overstocking and overgrazing in country which should never have been cleared in the first place.

These are not new problems, all have been well known for more than fifty years to my knowledge.

There are plenty of more pressing .and.....problems with exotic weeds - ...weeds Lentana,,.....Crofton’s weedTussock, Thistles, ‘Patterson’s Curse’ or should it be Salvation Jane? And many other which need urgent attention by landholders who instead of attending to these find a scapegoat in regrowth of native vegetation.

One would think that in a land where good fresh water is a governing factor of land use that agricultural pursuits which acquire the clearance of large areas of native vegetation near river banks and consumption of profligate amounts of water should not be approved or permitted?

But the growing of cotton is approved and encouraged, why?

The Russians have ruined thein such a way and we haven’t learnt anything!

It has been said “Australia isto the World” and from all accounts and facts available this is pretty close to the truth.

Every resource we have has been exploited as far as possible as quickly as possible, without any real consideration being given to the future.

Minerals, Oil, Gas, Artesian Water, The Murray River System etc and what is most important our SOILS – ask the CSIRO about it – I’ve read their papers – have you?

Destruction or removal of our Native Vegetation, as before mentioned, in degradation of soils which will be difficult or impossible to remedy, ever at very great cost.

Regrowth of Native Vegetation is very often a good early warning of incorrect practices.

It’s very easy these days to kill native plants whether they be plants or trees. Present tree poisons recognise little physical – as the USA found in Vietnam with Agent Orange etc (Chemical – Bio..... Warfare) -very difficult to reverse the process once degeneration by bad practice following has taken place.

There are so many glaring examples of this in many parts of NSW and Queensland that it is beyond the scope of this brief submission to detail,

Yours faithfully

Keith Campbell (signature)