

Submission

We are landowners not landholders, which seems to be the underlying problem throughout the EPBC act.

We actually bought and paid for the land, and should be able to use it (within reason) to make a profit – or what's the point?

There must be a viable balance between ag production and the environment.

Most farmers want to pass their properties on to their kids, so they look after it to the best of their ability and money supply – the more money, the more they spend on their property.

Farmers are the true stewards and the only stakeholders in their properties.

There cannot be a one rule approach, as every block of land is unique in its soil structure, vegetation and use.

The vulnerable land 18° rule is ridiculous. We should have the same 30° ruling as state forests and PNFs. We should be able to clear it of weeds and use it in our allowable activities. As most weeds were introduced legally into this country – the government officials who allowed the importation as well as the importees, should be held accountable personally, no hiding behind the tax payer's money to fix the problem! We spend a fortune on weed management, due to ineffectual border controls and lack of forethought – we need to tighten our laws and strengthen our borders.

There is a great deal of animosity and mistrust between farmers and the government. When the government treats their farmers like criminals and their criminals like heroes, we have a problem.

Bullying, intimidation and harassment has become the accepted culture within the government. It is always a threat, you do it our way or you will be fined or imprisoned. The guilty until proven innocent and self-incrimination laws should be abolished. The green protestors can block your property entrance, trespass on your land, intimidate you and prohibit you from performing your everyday activities, and nothing is done about it. But if us as farmers are accused of running over a native grass, breaking a branch from a native tree, or one that is on vulnerable land, we are the criminals, and we have to go to court at our expense to prove we didn't do it – our time – our expense – and no compensation. Through vexatious complaints, we could lose our property fighting the claims, when we have done nothing wrong. But if we are found "guilty" we could lose our farm, as the fines and charges are equal to or sometimes greater than the value of the farm.

We are in crisis! The politicians ignore the issues that face farmers, and don't seem to equate more rules and regulations with impacting on food production and they ignore the benefits of regenerative agriculture. They take no responsibility for the fact that they could help but don't. Farmers are twice as likely to commit suicide. Government ignorance is not a defence.

The offset schemes in perpetuity, makes the land of no value – If it doesn't turn a profit, it is a cost. It devalues the property.

The EPBC is supposed to give us "more choices", but instead it is choking the life out of us.

If the Government really wants to break down the barriers, and build solid relationships with us, then they will need to treat us with respect, let us make a fair living, and appreciate our efforts.

As Discussed Name and address not supplied for publication as concerned about Green retribution