

Office of Environment & Heritage
PO Box A290
Sydney South. NSW 1232

23.8.2012

Re: Native Vegetation Regulation Review

As a private Landholder (42 Hct) of 20 years, a WIRES member for 18 and member of various local community groups I would like to express my strong support for the strengthening of the Native Vegetation Regulation Act.

After attending a very valuable information session in Coffs Harbour I am also deeply concerned by the seeming lack of overview and consideration of the big picture.

When assessing native vegetation on private land no account of the dwindling biodiversity in state forests due to constant logging and regrowth practices for preferred timber species of the time appears to be considered. It is vital the two are considered together.

It is also vital that landholders have some information to work from. Since the requirements are so complex at least an information sheet, different for each area (ie, coastal, western districts etc) be sent to all landholders setting out what is allowed in their zone and beyond that they must apply to the relevant named body. As a landholder I have never received any information in that regard.

Many landholders do far more than any native vegetation regulations may require and are, no doubt, the ones that adhere to best practice. It would be beneficial for the rural community if these landholders were rewarded in some way for best practice (ie. land set aside for biodiversity, riverbank riparian restoration etc). Many landholders do these things at their own expense.

There must be security for replanting projects that are not government funded.

Due to dwindling biodiversity across state forests and private land it is essential that Catchment Management Authorities are kept informed in a detailed manner regarding private logging and state forest logging. Currently my particular catchment is suffering logging by both private landholders and state forests with the attendant displacement of animals and their habitat and a severe decline in biodiversity overall. Although the plight of koalas is acknowledged by their vulnerable status the requirements for surveys and flouted on a regular basis and then it is too late, the damage is done and the koalas will die.

We must ensure that our biodiversity is safeguarded with real compliance that will require independent surveys and not rely on surveys by the vested interests of the state forests and the timber industry. A misnomer really as state

forests are not true forests anymore.

Colonies of tallow wood must be preserved in state forests and on private land for the attendant biota they support and the importance they have to the koala feeding range. These animals are now so stressed by humans and their attendant pressures on koala habitat that chlamydia once occasional is now rampant.

The rivers and vegetation must be considered together. The water in the river of our catchment, will now be affected by the lack of trees in the system to hold and release water particularly during drought times. As we all know new trees are heavy users of water. Some years back the other side of the valley was logged by state forests and consequently we have heavy user trees on one side and soon very little on the other. There appears to be no consideration for such mismanagement of our water supply.

I understand that this is a vegetation review but the two are intertwined in a life giving system that must be acknowledged by all government departments and legislation. This is a life support system that must be considered above profit outcomes.

Thank you for this opportunity to have some input to the process and I look forward to a strengthening of the Native Vegetation Act for the benefit of future generations of all life on this planet.

Sincerely
Susan

Susan Haworth

[REDACTED]
Bellingham 2454

I acknowledge the Aboriginal custodians of the land in the region where I live and work and Elders past and present.