

## REVIEW OF NATIVE VEGETATION ACT REGULATIONS

This is my second submission on this review.

I am a landholder on the mid North Coast of NSW and have farmed it for some thirty years.

The Act was partly the result of the Howard Government concern over the loss of carbon contained in the forest of this country. But there were other concerns such as the loss of biodiversity, the need to protect water catchments and the effect on the soils with the loss of forest cover.

When the Regulations were drawn up there does not appear to have been any consideration of the cumulative effect of clearing under the RAMA over a number of small land holdings, nor even what the impact of the RAMA would have on the individual block particularly with the introduction of different agricultural methods such as cell grazing.

The Regulations have further undermined the aim and spirit of the Act by making a number of complicated definitions and exemptions. The lack of compliance officers ensures that there are many cases where clearing occurs without permission.

There are ways to improve the Regulations and in my opinion make it easier to understand. One of these ways is to adopt standards that are in force for other issues such as bush fire protection. In the existing Regulations clearing around sheds and dwellings is permitted for up to forty metres. This should be altered and such clearing should be the maximum required under the bush fire regulations. This maximum depends on slope, aspect and vegetation type. There is no need for the Vegetation Regulations to be any different from the bush fire regulations.

RAMA should also be altered to reduce the areas that can be cleared without permission. There should be a more realistic boundary between the coast and the west. There should be acknowledgement that on small holdings the present regulations allow all trees to be removed without permission and the cumulative effect could be a disaster in some areas. There is need to acknowledge the requirement of conserving corridors.

I am not clear as to how a property is defined. Do the Regulations apply to registered titles or to a farm. If so how is the farm defined? There may be several land titles making up one farm.

For every title or deposited plan of forty hectares or less the following RAMA would apply


1. Clearing along boundary fences to be a maximum of eight metres
2. Clearing along internal fences to be a maximum of six metres
3. Clearing around dwellings or sheds to follow the bush fire regulations

For every title or deposited plan of greater than forty hectares the following would apply

1. Clearing along boundary fences to be fifteen metres maximum
2. Clearing along internal fences to be six metres
3. Clearing around dwellings to be as per bush fire regulations

In assessing applications to clear authorities must take into account the following

1. The cumulative effect on the whole area
2. The need to acknowledge and protect corridors as identified by the Park Service.
3. Whether the vegetation is classed as an EEC.
4. Regrowth is justified for clearing

  
James L.O. Tedder  
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