

Ann and Geoffrey Long



Mr Stuart Gold
Team Leader, Landscape Conservation
Office of Environment and Heritage
PO Box A290 Sydney South NSW 1232

Dear Mr Gold

RE: Independent Biodiversity Legislation Review Panel and Private Land Conservation

We have a Native Vegetation Conservation Act 1997 Registered Property Agreement, Number W0 0001RP.

We note the 6 themes of the review, and the panel's interest in facts and evidence for comments made in this submission.

Our experience and comments pertain particularly to Theme 2 Conservation action – all points and possible Theme 5 point 1, and point 4 – threatened species.

- Our property is 22 hectares of Illawarra Rainforest, which we have owned since 1997. The forest is now in practically pristine condition, due to our efforts and the aid of grants. It was previously infested with large areas of lantana and other weeds.
- The grants assisted us to remove weed, monitor weed regrowth and regeneration of indigenous species and revegetate some limited areas with indigenous species. The grants assisted us to conduct an audit of botanical species and develop a species list, which now has approximately 350 species listed.
- By the end of 2002 Jacqueline Holland, the Natural Resource Project Officer with the then Land and Water Conservation Department, was able to write *“The weed control works carried out have been extensive and it is obvious that you have put in a lot of hard work and effort. The results are impressive. Congratulations on the very positive impact you have had on the native vegetation of your property”*.
- By 2010 a large area (approximately a hectare) of solid lantana over 2 metres high had been removed and natural regeneration had provided a forest canopy of indigenous species.
- 2 threatened species are listed on this property *Zieria granulata* (Illawarra Zieria), and a very significant population of *Daphnandra johnsonii*.(Illawarra

Socketwood). By 2010 both species, but especially the Zieria have flourished and extended, in part due to the removal of feral goats.

- Following the documentation of the flora and the development of access paths on this property, increasing awareness of the Illawara Rainforest has grown in the district with interest from other adjoining landowners. Scientific interest, especially from botanic gardens – Wollongong, Mr Annan, and The National Botanic Gardens Canberra, has led to regular seed collection visits.
- Feral animal control, in particular the removal of foxes and goats has been assisted by the grants.

In summary: due to the assistance of the Office with private land conservation, biodiversity in this area has been dramatically enhanced. We strongly support these efforts and consider we have achieved important outcomes.

From our experience the effectiveness of the program was appropriately monitored by the regulatory authorities but we cannot comment on the evaluation of the programs from the regulators point of view.

The law pertaining to threatened species is however curious in not permitting propagation by the actual land holders.

The laws pertaining to land clearing must be enforced. A mechanism for assisting farmers and other land holders to deal with the legislation may need to be found.

Yours sincerely

Ann and Geoffrey Long