

Briefly

The Native Veg Act currently devalues native veg land. In the Moree area farmed country is worth approx \$1500/acre. If this same land were covered in native veg it would be worth perhaps \$500/acre. Until the laws put a value on native veg it will be diminished, ie it has a price on its head. I suggest landholders be required to keep perhaps 10 per cent of their land and if they have less their rates (council) could include a penalty for overuse of their resource. If they have a lot more than the required percentage they could sell the right to claim to say an irrigator who may have developed 100percent.

This would mean policing claims could be done from aerial photos, The vegetation would have a value to farmers who are not interested in conservation for its own sake.

These suggestions need fleshing out for different areas of the state. The current system is unworkable. While bureaucrats/ environmentalists tell farmers how to farm no one is going to be happy, it is hugely expensive for the government , unfair to farmers, and unworkable. A new approach is needed.

Yours faithfully

Jane Manchee