

My wife and I have owned and operated a farm for the last 60 years, and we have found this native vegetation act to be the most difficult act to understand and to work under

- Firstly we are land owners, not land holders. It devalues our rights of ownership.
- Environmental outcomes should not be the first outcomes considered, when viewing biodiversity, the viability of the land owner should be. We are the owners of the land and we have a duty of care to it.
- It seems biased that developers, the National park, forestry and mining companies can clear fell and burn off with no regard to native vegetation with little accountability for the destruction, while farmers are held accountable for every blade of grass we touch and to supply the offsets for everyone else's activities.
- The clearing of boundaries, internal fences and roads should all be to the "minimal extent" common sense needs to prevail.
- Timber is a renewable resource and should be counted as one. It is there to be used, not wasted. We need to have access to this under our RAMA's. as this is a part of our farming practice, cutting poles, fence posts and rails for selling off farm.
- Threatened species and koala habitats are being destroyed by development, but not to the extent that is being claimed. Landowners will not volunteer information on whether they have or haven't got koalas or any threatened species on their properties, for fear of being penalised for actually maintaining a healthy environment for them.
- Organisations, groups and individuals who trespass onto your property illegally should be fined for trespass, they should also be made pay compensation for false or misleading information given or any destruction of property, If these people break the law they should be held accountable for all losses including time and money wasted by landowners trying to defend themselves in court.
- There is a lack of service support for land owners. Each and every land owner should be sent information in regards to laws and acts that will impact on them. We live in an area where tv and wireless reception is not good, and only hear about information through the grape vine, often when it is too late.
- There is way too much over regulations, red tape and doubling up of laws, with the council trying to control what is happening on the land as well as state and federal agencies. The LEP's have devalued our land by changing the zoning from RU1 to RU2 and now the councils want to put a blanket green overlay on most of the farm land out our way. While the state government is still trying to push the native vegetation act on us, even when they promised before the election to abolish it.
- Die back is now a major issue in our area, government over regulations of burning off has caused the destruction of many of the iron barks and gum trees in our area.

- There is also no accurate native vegetation data of Northern rivers trees and plants. Nor any definitive date or definition of old growth forest.
- We should have the right to run our properties the way we see fit, the flexibility to change what we farm when we find something more viable, without going to numerous government departments who all think they have the right to tell us what we can or can't do on our place. They are not there when we have droughts, they are not there when we have floods, they are not there when we have fires and they are not stakeholders in our property.
- It feels like we are always fighting. We fight with governments on issues such as the native veg act, water rights, lack of voting rights on MLA, deregulation, drought assistance, property rights, flood assistance, banning live trade, importation of meat and vegetable that put our farmers out of business etc etc we fight with the council on LEP's, Ezones, green overlays, garbage service payments, (even when you have no garbage service) bad roads, closed bridges etc etc. We are always on the defensive, trying to guard our farms and our fee simple rights, the pressure has intensified from environmentalist and animal activists. We are constantly under attack . We are harassed and bullied and treated like second class citizens, no other occupation puts up with as much as we do. It is time that we recognized that farmers are the best conservationists and custodians of this land.

The pressure has mounted and many farmers are cracking under it.

Regards

Gordon and Gwen Moore

