

Submission on the

Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme Green Paper

Forests, woodlands and healthy soils are good for carbon (and water)

Plantations are good for wood and fibre products.

Why have Plantations been chosen for inclusion in the Carbon Reduction Scheme?

Perverse outcomes are inevitable if you allow plantations to be included in ETS's under Kyoto rules whilst excluding native forests from any considerations.

Native forests are the best terrestrial carbon banks. Other excellent sequestration banks are woodlands, grasslands and most importantly, soils.

45% of atmospheric carbon has come from clearing 50% of the world forests.

Australia has cleared 50% of forests and 75% of woodlands whilst degrading their carbon stocks by 40%.

That degraded 40% represents the opportunity to sequester 2,000,000,000 tonnes of carbon.

Monoculture crops can reduce soil carbon to figures well below 1%. The loss of carbon is huge.

We can cut our carbon emissions by 24% if we stop land clearing and permanently preserve our self regenerating native forests and woodlands,

Including plantations in an ETS when they are very poor at sequestering carbon, because over time they die, makes no sense. They need pesticides and herbicides- all bad for the soils, birds, animals and insects unlike self-regenerating natural eco systems

Even the Commonwealth's ill drafted taxation scheme for so called 'conservation forests' poses problems: these plantings will largely fail without extraordinary management.

Natural forests are resilient when left in the ground; once they are industrially logged they can lose integrity. Then native species can suffer dieback because the naturally occurring soil fungi is lost after logging; the natural order is also lost as higher order species disappear, such as eagles, gliders and koalas.

And soil carbon is lost, soils cannot retain and filter water, and run off occurs.

Soil Carbon

Why are you not including soil carbon as an option, covered under certification similar to current organic and bio-dynamics certification- in UK this certification

is managed by the Soil Association, a relevant title. Conscientious horticulturalist and pastoralists are already doing this here, for the planet.

All sectors must play their part if we are to achieve the desired 80-90% of green house gas reduction.

Australia is a special case: we have a hybrid economy largely dependent on mining the land for minerals and soils for agricultural and forests products; we are coal dependent rather than less polluting energy options, a high carbon economy.

Our best, cheapest and quickest way to reduce our high per capita emissions is to stop logging native forests and clearing land for agriculture whilst repairing the damage done to the environment and water supplies.

We can take the opportunity that Climate Change brings and increase our reduction target by 24%, whilst increasing oxygen levels, water supplies, reducing radiant heat, and improving the natural resilience of our forests and woodlands and their fire resistance. Win. Win. Win

Forests- natural native forests need to be given recognition in the coming White Paper and on.

We need to count all emissions from all sources and argue this case internationally, and for a REDD scheme for developed Countries not just developing ones.

Native forests need permanent protection and a guaranteed income stream diverted from pooled carbon credits. Land clearing must stop and landowners compensated. Opt in certified soil carbon farmers need a reward system, not just feeling good.

The Green Paper currently guarantees our remaining, already degraded natural systems will be over exploited whilst plantations, great for timber and paper, but bad carbon sink options, are left in the ground –to rot- because of the more profitable carbon market option.

I can only hope that common sense prevails.

Prue Acton

Prue Acton O.B.E. Dr. of Arts honoris causa RMIT University
"Many Swans" 1476 Sapphire Coast Drive
Wallagoot nsw 2550
ph./fax 0264945144
m. 0419393203
prue.acton@bigpond.com