

Native Vegetation Inquiry,  
Productivity Commission,  
LB2 Collins Street East,  
MELBOURNE Vic. 8003.

### IMPACTS OF NATIVE VEGETATION AND BIODIVERSITY REGULATIONS.

Pacific Palms Community Association and its membership have taken a great deal of interest in this legislation and have watched in despair that it is not achieving the aims that we believe were intended. We cannot speak for impacts outside of our locality and so we wish to submit our views of the effects as they are seen on the ground in Pacific Palms.

Pacific Palms is a collection of villages south of Forster, New South Wales and is part of Great Lakes Council local Government area. These villages are completely surrounded by Booti Booti, Wallingat, and Myall Lakes National Parks. These Parks have in excess of 66000 hectares of diverse vegetation and represent the greatest area of National Parks that combine Lakes, Ocean Beaches and Forests that exists in Australia. Further to this Pacific Palms is within 3 hours of Sydney via an ever-expanding Freeway system.

These advantages and the area of native vegetation involved are the only assets our Community holds and represents an opportunity to secure our financial future as Australia's premier passive recreation zone.

The local environment of Pacific Palms and the lifestyle it offers has encouraged controlled development that is compatible with our vision of passive recreation. Whilst the National Parks around us form the background and recreation facilities, there are areas of private lands that are not being managed in a manner that enhances these recreation opportunities. Native Vegetation legislation is being manipulated by these landowners who are only interested in degradation in order to satisfy requirements for re-zoning and exploiting their asset. There exist sufficient available lands for urban expansion within the Pacific Palms villages without putting our dreams of a sustainable future at risk.

It is our view that there are genuine farming reasons for land clearing but this should be governed in such a way that the 2-cow tax dodger is not able to damage the aims of the wider community of Australia. There is no point in establishing our passive recreation zone when it is peppered with urban development. These private landowners of Pacific Palms can join in the vision by protecting their assets and reaping the benefits without resorting to wholesale subdivision. It may take longer but it is sustainable through lifestyle demand.

Our Association would like to see the Legislation stiffened when it comes to non-agricultural lands. History in Australia has shown that there is no advantage in forcing unsuitable lands to comply for farming, and it is quite wrong to spoil other advantages by doing so. Landowners should have to apply for ANY clearing or other use of non-agricultural lands and that this process be handled by a National body to avoid local conflict. It is not useful to rely on Local Government Plans in the valuable coastal regions of Australia as the development pressures are too much for Local Government to cope within NSW the Coastal Council is a well-respected organization but without legislative teeth it can only advise. Such a National body with legislative powers to sanction or deny is urgently required. We do not believe that Pacific Palms is the only area that suffers from the type of vegetation abuse that we have seen. It may be the job of local government or even state government, but it simply is being ignored or manipulated.

Thank you for the opportunity of making this submission.

Yours sincerely,  
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