

Review of NT *Pastoral Land Act 1992*

Supplementary Submission

to

**NT Department of Infrastructure, Planning
and Environment**

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Independent Member for Nelson**

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Introduction

This submission supplements an earlier version from Gerry Wood, Independent Member of the NT electorate of Nelson. It focuses on the extra issues raised in other submissions which are provided in the *Key Issues Paper Part I* (December 2004).

Issue 15: Aboriginal access to pastoral land / Indigenous rights and interests.

I agree that Indigenous rights of access to pastoral land need to be protected.

Issue 16: Annual stock returns.

No comment.

Issue 17: Biodiversity conservation.

I agree that areas of significance need to be incorporated into the *Pastoral Land Act* and all decision-making processes.

Issue 18: Compliance with national agreements and best practice.

No comment.

Issue 19: Definitions.

No comment.

Issue 20: Duration / Term of Pastoral Leases.

No comment.

Issue 21: Duty of care.

No comment.

Issue 22: Effectiveness of the existing *Pastoral Land Act*.

No comment.

Issue 23: Environmental Management Plans.

I agree with the principle of having such plans. They can be valuable tools by which to ensure the protection of the environment whilst promoting safe pastoral practices. However, there would need to be mechanisms to ensure the plans do not burden or disadvantage the pastoralist with impractical or unreasonable requirements.

Issue 24: Feral animals.

No comment.

Issue 25: Fire

No comment.

Issue 26: Incentives and conservation agreements.

Incentives to protect land can have advantages in economic and environmental senses. I support the suggestion of various incentives such as rent variation, tax exemptions, environmental performance credits, etc (as provided in the seventh dot point in the *Key Issues Paper*).

Issue 27: Intensification of pastoral use.

No comment.

Issue 28: Introduced pastures.

To the lists of banned exotic pasture species, I would add buffel grass. Prior to any moves to ban or gain approval for introducing certain species, an thorough evaluation of the impact of such introduction should be completed.

Issue 29: Local Government rates.

I agree that pastoral properties should be rated, and that rates should be paid by the Northern Territory Government as owner.

Issue 30: Mining and petroleum.

No comment.

Issue 31: Monitoring of pastoral land.

I agree that some form of pastoral land monitoring should be introduced.

Issue 32: Objects of the *Pastoral Land Act*.

As part of this review of the Act, the objectives may need to be altered so these should be thoroughly re-examined as a specific task. Also, the economic viability of pastoral lands should be a consideration.

Issue 33: Powers of forfeiture (for perpetual Pastoral Leases).

A lease should be cancelled if there has been a major breach of lease conditions.

Issue 34: Property and regional planning.

No comment.

Issue 35: Public benefit of Pastoral Lease arrangements / public interest.

Any arrangements to consider public benefit or public interest of pastoral land should not hamper the interests or aims of the pastoralist.

Issue 36. Public notification / Transparency and reporting.

Certainly there should be transparency and reporting mechanisms. I agree with the comment that applications for developing pastoral leases should be advertised to allow for public comment.

Issue 37. Protection of areas of high conservation value.

There is a need for some form of protection over areas requiring conservation, such as rivers and creeks. Government assistance (landcare funding) may be necessary in assisting the pastoralist, for example, when fencing off areas.

Issue 38: Rents.

No comment.

Issue 39: Safe carrying capacities.

My original submission mentioned practices in Western Australia where there is a set stock-carrying capacity for each pastoral lease to avoid over-stocking. I recommend this policy should be assessed for its suitability to the Northern Territory.

Issue 40: Suitability of land for pastoral purposes.

This could be part of considerations for the stock-carrying capacity of a lease.

Issue 41: Sustainability of the pastoral industry.

No comment.

Issue 42: Watering points and management of natural waters.

There should be limited access to natural waterways or alternate methods of watering should be utilised.

Issue 43: Weeds.

No comment.