

Example Text: Editorial

Government Barking up the Wrong Tree

What would you do if one day you were told you couldn't have a haircut? It's your hair; you own it, why not get it cut?

Well this is the situation facing many south western hinterland farmers. They've recently been told by the government that they can't cut down trees that they own that are on their land. It's almost unbelievable!

During the past 25 years, our population has increased by more than 30%. As our population grows, so does our need for basic foods such as fruit, vegetables, meats and grains. Yet the farmers who need to grow the food and herd the cattle need pastureland. They need land that is cleared of trees and that can be irrigated and ploughed, or you and I don't eat.

Why is this happening you may ask? Well it all has to do with climate change. In order to reduce the nation's carbon footprint, the government has decided to create so called 'carbon sinks'. This is where large forested areas are used to absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. A noble idea indeed, but why destroy a farmer's livelihood? As Mal Bruff, a hinterland farmer said last week, "If this continues, I'll be ruined. I will have no choice but to leave my farm and try to get a job somewhere else. It's terrible."

Despite the fact that our farmers can no longer farm their own land, our demand for food is maintained. So we will be forced to import fruit, vegetables and meat from other countries, sending our hard earned money overseas. This does not seem like a very clever idea.

So what should we do? For a start, the government should pay farmers for the use of their land as a carbon sink. Also, encourage all landowners to regenerate poor quality land to be used to help offset climate change, rather than using good quality agricultural land. We need to use our heads!

