

**Supplementary  
Submission  
No 329a**

**INQUIRY INTO MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC LAND IN  
NEW SOUTH WALES**

**Organisation:** Bourke Shire Council

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SUBMISSION TO INQUIRY INTO THE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC LAND IN NEW SOUTH WALES  
GENERAL PURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE NO. 5



Geoff Wise, General Manager  
Bourke Shire Council  
26<sup>th</sup> September 2012

## **BIODIVERSITY AND CONSERVATION BENEFITS OF GRAZING OF WESTERN DIVISION LAND COMPARED TO DESTOCKING**

A selected group of 11 landholders from across the Western Division of NSW has been cooperating with Government Agency personnel in a project called Enterprise Based Conservation (EBC).

This project originated from the WEST 2000 and WEST 2000 PLUS Programs, \$30 million Regional Partnership Programs involving the Commonwealth and State Governments and Landholders which commenced in 1997.

The EBC project commenced in 2003, and involved landholders voluntarily managing parts of their property for conservation outcomes. Since the commencement of EBC, other properties have become involved through the support from the Western Catchment Management Authority. Different approaches were approved for different properties, with some totally destocking commercial livestock from the approved areas, whereas others were allowed controlled grazing of the approved areas.

An essential element of the EBC project has been to have independent evaluation of the conservation outcomes. These evaluations have been undertaken by expert employees from the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH).

**Recent research findings by the OEH Researchers are that there is a statistically significant greater number of species of native vegetation in the areas where grazing has occurred compared to similar adjacent areas where grazing by domestic animals has been excluded.**

There has been no significant difference in the number of species of fauna between the grazed versus un-grazed areas.

**This statistically significant increase in the number of flora species achieved through allowing grazing rather than destocking of Western Division country warrants strong consideration in reviewing the policies relating to current management of National Parks and Nature Reserves across the Western Division of NSW. These findings have relevance in demonstrating to the Commonwealth Government that conservation outcomes are not compromised by grazing on Western Division properties such as Toorale Station.**

**It is logical to conclude that if controlled grazing of Public Land in the Western Division of NSW is allowed to occur through formal arrangements, then conservation outcomes could be enhanced which satisfy both Commonwealth and State Government objectives. Further, economic outcomes could be achieved, operational costs to the Government for management of Public Lands reduced and the potential for mechanisms to be adopted to allow for Local Government rates to be paid for the land.**

*Regrettably, this valuable project has come to an end due to lack of ongoing commitments by Governments to fund either the EBC project itself, or the practical scientific applied research being incorporated.*

*The team leader for this research study is Terry Mazzer, Environment and Heritage, Dubbo.*

**PRECEDENT MODEL OF MULTIPLE USE OF PROTECTED AREAS IN  
THE AUSTRALIAN RANGELANDS.**

The South Australian Government has an established model of multiple use protected areas through one category of protected area under its National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972 called "Regional Reserves". One example of this reserve type is the Innamincka Regional Reserve.

The Parliamentary Committee undertaking the Inquiry is urged to make direct contact with authorities in South Australia to explore the possibility of this model being used in NSW, particularly in the Western Division.

Appropriate contacts are:

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**BOURKE SHIRE COUNCIL**

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*26th September 2012*