

**Submission
No 88**

INQUIRY INTO CROWN LAND IN NEW SOUTH WALES

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Except in very special cases I believe that Crown Land should remain public.

Sell it, and you'll never get it back again.

Importantly, public ownership enables us, through the Government of the day, to ensure that the land in question is being properly managed, whether that be by maintaining public access, ecological sustainability or whatever.

It would be disastrous to commercialise the Crown Lands Division by converting it into a Public Trading Enterprise.

That is not the way to ensure that "it [Crown Land] is preserved and enhanced for future generations" under the terms of this inquiry.

Certainly the Govt should take up opportunities to seek commercial advantage where appropriate, but that should never be at the expense of important environmental values or public access to places of particular interest for recreational or other purposes.

Crown Land in the Western Division is of particular concern, especially in the shadow of the proposed Biodiversity legislation.

It is vital that this remains leasehold, as it may be the only way of maintaining its remaining biodiversity as private interests seek to clear more and more land, often in marginal country.

It is important that TSRs that represent the only remaining bush in an area are not lightly leased out for grazing.

Before making specific decisions, it is important that independent assessment of all the values of Crown Land, environmental, recreational and cultural, be made.

The principles that should govern decisions should be transparency, public benefit and ecological sustainability.