

Hello Melissa

Maybe you have heard of me. I write a column in the Geraldton Guardian each Friday. It is loosely based on gardening.

Been doing that for over three years now. I am 75 years old and have just been through open heart surgery in St. John of Gods hospital, Subiaco. And it was reasonably successful. So I have been given another term to live.

Like you, being elected to Parliament, you have been given a term to do something.

From 1958 in the Mid West from Three Springs to Mingenew I was engaged to farming and later clearing land at Eneabba to set that virgin country up for farming.

While watching ABC TV the other day I heard two people from CSIRO speak about what science has reasonably confirmed, that in the past hundred years, in the mid west, the rainfall has declined and land and ocean temperatures have gone up. The Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) has agreed with this science. They have identified the cause as clearing of land of trees and bushland over the last 100 years. I was around in the 1950s and 1960s when the Government of Sir Charles court and others were making headlines in the 'Daily News', saying, we have cleared a million acres last year!

I have attempted to open a debate with people on this issue. Sadly this has not proved easy. People whom I respect and have positions of power in the community have scoffed at this science. People on a different level have become emotionally irrational about this scientific information.

So I am toying with the idea of putting forward a proposal.

This is roughly it; Government intervene and draw a line across the map of the mid west cutting off Northampton, going down just East of Tenindewa, cutting off Morawa, Perenjori and towns further south, also drawing this line just north of Ravensthorpe.

All these farming area and towns will be reverted back to natural bushland. The farmers and townspeople be compensated and re-located. The land will be planted back to native species or whatever species of bushland can best serve this project.

As for benefits; in the early stages a large labour force will be needed to replant the area as well as propagate the huge number of plants needed. A large force of people will be needed to remove wild dogs, foxes and cats and other things like Camels etc. That will have to continue till those species are eradicated.

The rainfall will gradually increase in the areas still left available for broad acre farming. This will increase the value of their land and increase production per hectare. Some reforestation will still be required in those areas.

The down side if this program is not implemented will be that farmers in the marginal areas will all go broke. Their land will be unviable and therefore have no value. Once the mining has finished in these areas the towns will also die. Suicides will increase and a large amount of people who through no fault of their own will become totally dependent on a Government unable to fulfil these obligations.

My opinion is that there is no choice.

What do you think?

Yours faithfully

Stan Maley

