

Input to Agricultural Competitiveness White Paper  
Submission from Kachana Pastoral Company PL, Kimberley WA

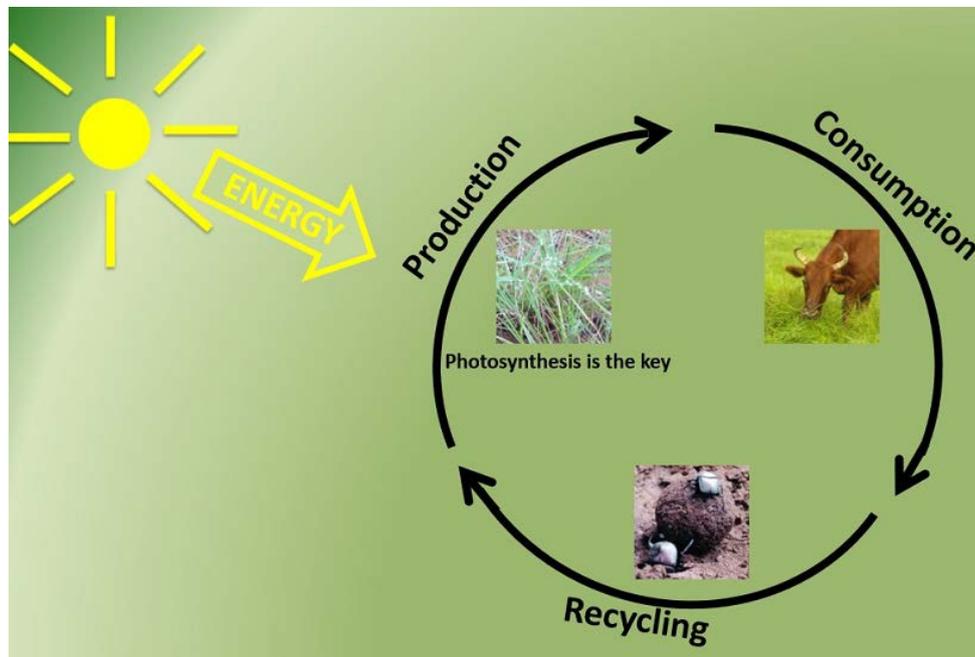
Make a submission by 17 April 2014  
[agricultural.competitiveness@pmc.gov.au](mailto:agricultural.competitiveness@pmc.gov.au)

[www.agriculturalcompetitiveness.dpmc.gov.au](http://www.agriculturalcompetitiveness.dpmc.gov.au)  
Agricultural Competitiveness Taskforce  
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet  
PO Box 6500  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

To the decision-makers.

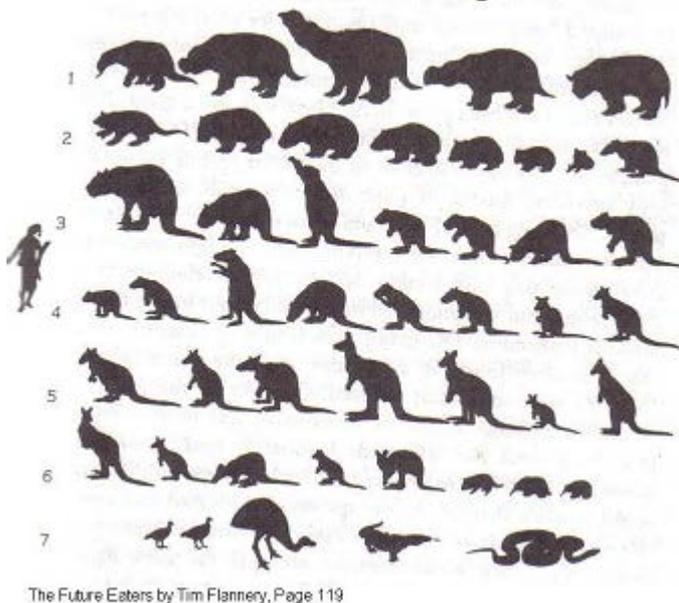
Please let me draw attention to some obvious points which we often ignore. Facts and processes that underpin sustainable agriculture and thus the future of agriculture in general.

1. Nature runs on Sunshine.



2. Modern Agriculture in its broadest sense has become the inter-phase between human societies and our planet
3. Human societies are dominated by human thinking and human-made regulations that will change.
4. Our eco-system, Planet Earth, is dominated by the laws of Nature. These do not change.
5. It has become the challenge of Agriculture to extract nutrients from one area in order to transport them other areas where people cannot or do not sustain themselves.
6. **The bad news** is that in Australia, humans have a history of mining nutrients for a very long time. This comes at the expense of landscape-health and productivity.

### Some of Australia's extinct mega-fauna



7. Arguably initial major landscape-dysfunction on this continent dates back to the disappearance of our mega-fauna many thousands of years ago – most were herbivores. The recycling of annual growth of vegetation could no longer take place at the scale required and human-lit fire helped maintain some sort of a fragile balance.

8. By the time of European settlement, Australia's landscape productivity had become largely a function of human inputs.
9. Remove these human inputs from many of our landscapes, add unmanaged fire, poor pastoral practices and extractive modern Agriculture and the net result over time is:  
**As a continent, we lose more energy each year than our landscapes are capturing.**
10. For the purpose of agriculture, Australia's "fuel tank" is now dangerously low.
11. **The good news:** the sun still shines, rain still drops out of the sky (most places) and we have a whole new lot of introduced mega-fauna to choose from.
12. Sound pastoral practices favour healthy vegetation, rainfall capture and retention, carbon-capture and retention and the re-cycling of nutrients into the soil (away from fire).
13. Healthy vegetation supplies energy to soil-organisms below and to herbivores above.
14. Well managed herds will prove to be the key to:
  - Providing environmental services
  - Rebuilding landscape health and productivity
  - Revitalising much of Australia's agricultural production-potential
15. In order to rebuild and strengthen the foundations for Australia's agriculture, political leaders need to take note; public support needs to be visible; appropriate incentives for pastoralism to step up to the challenge need to be created.

Please find attached a vision for the sort of Pastoralism we need to support Australia's Agriculture.

Chris Henggeler, Kachana, February 2014