



## TIMBER 2002 INCORPORATED

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### **Focus on the Future: Opportunities for Sustainability in Western Australia**

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#### **PRIVATE FORESTRY – SUSTAINABLE, ACCOUNTABLE AND PROFITABLE in the Great Southern WA**

In order to discuss the role commercial private forestry plays within the ‘sustainable’ debate, we need to focus on the triple bottom line approach with an emphasis on commercial outcomes. Private forestry and re-vegetation development in all rainfall and soil types must have commercial outcomes to make it happen.

The environmental and social benefits to the regions which will occur as a consequence, are what sustainability is all about in this industry.

The challenge is to make it happen at the speed which is required,. The drier regions will be harder to invest in this industry.

‘Sustainability’ tends to be confused with the process of ‘conservation’.

Needs to be pursued with reference to the balance of input and output. There must be commercial outcomes for the process of sustainability to work and be recognised.

## **ISSUES**

- o Market the concept to the wider audience i.e. community at large specifically those in the urban areas.
- o Equity within the marketing process is essential.
- o An educational program to teachers, schools and wider community to gain a better understanding of the issues and benefits of 'sustainability'.
- o The benefits to the wider community would be a better understanding of 'sustainability' and recognising how to live within the bounds of a 'sustainable lifestyle', resulting in it becoming a household concept.

## **Role of Government**

### **Local:**

- o Recognition of sustainable environment within strategic plans.
- o Recognition of rate payers performance by local citizen and business awards
- o Sustainable policies within local gvt jurisdiction.

### **State:**

- o Policy development discussed with community, industry and gvt as a partnership approach.
- o Ensure that the emotive response to 'sustainability' does not jeopardise the important commercial outcomes. The challenge here is to maintain a balance between what is commercial and what is sustainable – they both work together, the strategies in place to make it happen need to be carefully designed with full support from government.
- o Provide a fair and equitable accreditation system.
- o To provide marketing tools for positive promotion of sustainability
- o Assist industry in a well thought out Communication Strategy

## **Role of Business**

- o To ensure that all commercial practice in manufacturing and processing of timber are environmentally sound, accredited to global regulations.
- o Wood waste is disposed of either as fuel for power (electricity) or other products.
- o Use of chemicals operate within the 'Good Neighbour Approach' and in line with an industry protocol and Code of Practice.
- o Promote the Industry Code of Practice to Industry, Government and Community and ensure that sustainability is addressed

**Best practice example:**

- o Integrated tree farming where timber becomes a part of the whole farm plan. The standing timber is integrated within the property as a commercial crop as well as providing shelter, shade and addressing land degradation, carbon sequestration and improving farming productivity.
- o *Community Roundtables* addressing biomass for renewable energy in the Great Southern, South West and Perth discussing how the community wants to see the use of renewable energy production in their regions. An effective way in ascertaining community values.

**Opportunities to pursue sustainability in the Great Southern private forestry industry:**

- o Carbon sequestration investment opportunities
- o Salinity tax or tax incentive schemes to help finance commercial, sustainable tree crops
- o Value-adding

**Some dot points for consideration:**

- o Community art promoting the use of natural products – bush furniture
- o Indigenous opportunities – commercial farm forestry. Particularly with an emphasis on native timbers – assists in reconciliation by indigenous groups and land holders re-vegetating the land in native timbers and the use thereof for commercial options.
- o Sustainability as a focus in schools
- o Renewable energy incentives in schools, homes and businesses. Internal power production for businesses is still a more costly exercise than using power off the grid.
- o Marketing incentives from local government, rate incentives, recycling
- o Community incentives from governments – does not have to be money but incorporated in policy development.
- o Maintain a positive approach – stay away from the emotive debate
- o Businesses work in partnership with government by being included in policy development and have an ownership of the decisions.
- o No need to establish new institutions to establish the sustainability debate. Make it all encompassing within the realms of government, businesses and community.
- o Government promotes good corporate citizenship through incentives
- o There is no need to have a focus on law enforcement/reform in the early stages. If the commercial outcomes are there and the balance is maintained law reform should be supportive not reactive.
- o Governments' purchasing power should be used to promote sustainability
- o Support of the South Coast Regional Information Centre to be used as a one stop shop for GIS, Satellite Imagery, Salinity detection etc and for linkages throughout Australia.

- o A Capability Study for the regions incorporating work completed already to get a grip on what is out there and how we can improve.
- o An outcome of the Community Roundtables was an energy audit for the Great Southern. This could be completed for each region.
- o Keep incentives regional to save on costs and promote a regional focus. Sense of regional pride.
- o Incentives for value-adding and cost effective ways of developing sustainable use of our resources through taxation incentives:  
     Bio-fuels – tax free at the bowser – a good model is the German system  
     Ethanol – tax free  
     Taxation incentives for introducing internal power production in businesses
- o Deregulation of the Energy market allowing more choice for consumers
- o Community owned power production
- o R&D incentives into a sustainable disposable nappy,  
     paper bags in the Supermarkets - not plastic,  
     promotion of rain water tanks,  
     allowance of grey water on gardens

The options are endless and the ideas are numerous. Within this submission Timber 2002 has attempted to highlight the more obvious to avoid a lengthy document with information which is more likely to be discussed at workshops and duplicated in other submissions.

Sustainability must have a commercial base whether the incentives are commercial or the outcomes. The commerciality in sustainability takes on several meanings, from land improvement through sustainable management to direct income. The only way for it to happen is to make it happen.

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