

# MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday 15th May 2012

## **CALL FOR NATIVE VEGETATION LAW SUSPENSION IN NORTH AUSTRALIA**

The Queensland government's decision to suspend investigations and prosecution under the Vegetation Management Act should be repeated around the country, according to John Shipp, Director of the ANDEV/IPA North Australia Project.

Last month, Queensland Minister for Natural Resources and Mines Andrew Cripps announced that investigation and enforcement of these controversial laws would cease pending a review of the Act.

Each state has introduced native vegetation laws which extensively limit the ability for land-owners - particularly farmers - to use their property as they see fit. Land use restrictions place strict limits on how much vegetation land-owners can clear.

“All states should review their native vegetation clearing laws, review the penalties involved, put in place compensation for land-owners who can no longer use their land, and restore legal rights to individuals affected by these laws.

“Native vegetation laws deprive people of their property rights and constrain economic development, particularly in Northern Australia.

For more than two decades the Institute of Public Affairs has been calling for governments to cease prosecutions of farmers under native vegetation laws.

“Both Julia Gillard and Tony Abbott have recently announced that they want North Australia to become the food bowl of Asia. The suspension of native vegetation prosecutions is a good starting point for this to be achieved”, said Mr Shipp.

“Experts and leaders believe North Australia could help feed an extra 200 million people a year in Asia, but that will never happen if land use remains overregulated as it is currently.

The North Australia Project is a joint project of Australians for Northern Development and Economic Vision and the Institute of Public Affairs.

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