

**From:** KACHANA [kachana@bigpond.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, 27 May 2002 2:33 PM  
**To:** ari.gorring@klc.org.au  
**Cc:** 2 satlink  
**Subject:** "Is our country healthy enough for the job?"  
PLEASE COMMENT VERSION TWO



Dear Ari,

please accept my apologies for not being able to attend the meeting on Friday, but I will be otherwise tied up. Danny who is also a director of Kachana Pastoral Company will represent us.

I lived in the African bush. I lived in the mountains in Europe and my family and I live in a camp out bush now. I always like to hear what other people who have lived on the land have to say about it.

If we have to go to town for tucker, is our country healthy enough for the job?

If our fishing holes are filling up with sand, is our country healthy enough for the job?

If our buildings get flooded, is not the country telling us: "somebody got something wrong"?

If our young people hang around towns and do not wish to learn to look after the country, how can we get the country to call them back?

Many of us are parents some of us are custodians of the land. We need to look at the job ahead of us: we all want happy laughing kids to learn how to track, to hunt, to fish and to be able to look after the country for their kids. We want young people who have a respect for older people. We want older people to trust us and to share their wisdom. We want young people to learn and find wisdom. We all want country healthy enough for the job. The Government cannot tell us what the country is telling us. Our job as custodians of the country is to listen to the land and to tell the government what the country needs.

My question to the people at this meeting is: "Is our country healthy enough for the job?"

Kachana Pastoral Company has a pastoral lease. The job for this bit of country is to make money from selling cattle. At the moment our country is not healthy enough for the job. We get enough rain, we get enough sunshine but we are losing more soil than we build. At least each year we carry more cattle and more grass some of the country we manage is already healthy enough for the job, but much country is not yet ready for the job.

We believe if the job of country is to run cattle: soil should be built and not lost. But what happens to the country on pastoral leases where we do not run cattle? What is the job there?

What are the expectations of our country from different perspectives?

People living in communities out of town:

People living in towns:

Tourists who come a long way and pay a lot of money:

National Park managers:

Aboriginal people managing land in a traditional way:

Grazing lease managers:

Irrigation farmers:

Is the country healthy enough for the job?

When people talk about the Kimberley we hear terms like: "Last frontier", "rugged beauty", "pristine country", "spectacular fires", "traditional burning", "wildfire", "remnant rainforests", "endangered species", "limitless water", "abundant fishing", "bush tucker",

How does this fit in with healthy country?

I found the report of the last meeting very encouraging. We cannot own country, if we are good custodians we belong to the country. We need more people to care about country and we will not find those to do the job in Canberra, Darwin or Perth. Therefore these people cannot know if the country is healthy enough for the job. Meetings like this are good.

I am sorry that I cannot be there to hear what those who know have to say, but I hope it will be recorded. Danny and invite you to consider to use Kachana as a venue for a future meeting. It is also good also to have a meeting when you can hear, smell, feel, taste and touch the country we are talking about.

I wish you a successful meeting,

Best regards,

Chris (Henggeler)