

Let the Tank Stream run free

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City folk are going to have to make way for our urban riparian restitution program.

There is no nice way of saying this, so we're going to come right out and say it. You people in cities may have to find some other work while we fix the appalling environmental mess you have made of our rivers and waterways.

The Tank Stream, a disgrace; The Yarra and Brisbane rivers, yuck; the Torrens and Swan rivers defaced by concrete and buildings on their banks; and the Derwent, a yacht-infested drain. And don't get us started about the Todd.

We, the Committee of Rural and Regional Australians and Zealots for the Environment, have decided this degradation, caused in no small part by millions of greedy Australians trying to earn a living each day, has to end.

We have to start somewhere and there can be no better place than the Tank Stream.

We apologise in advance for any inconvenience while we demolish the buildings of central Sydney so that one day the mighty, historic Tank Stream can flow once again.

Of course, you Sydney types will need to find new jobs and, some of you, new homes, but there can be no grounds for complaint because - how to put this politely? - it's not like you guys produce anything we actually need.

And when the next recession hits, we all know you city people are all going to be the first seeking government payouts. Meanwhile, your environments are dying from over-exploitation all because you want to go to work and feed your greedy children.

Frankly, you city workers are not sustainable, you are not bio-diverse and you are not appropriate.

Sorry, people, but you've got the unholy trinity right there.

Have you no shame? Do you not realise your greedy lifestyles are killing our city waterways? Your communities have been protected from reality for too long. You city folk must be held accountable and subject to regulations like other industries. You receive copious tax dollars for roads, hospitals and schools. Sorry, but Australia's greatest urban waterways are worth more than your mundane lifestyles.

You dare to argue against the science? Many of our best and brightest political scientists from Bendigo to Barcaldine have written opinion pieces at ABC Online. Haven't you read them? No, I guess you wouldn't have.

Someone wrote that the shrimp in the Yarra cannot be seen from Southbank. It is this kind of thing that makes us ashamed to be Australian. We need the crustaceans back for our children and our children's children, should they decide to visit.

Only when you are not there can these city waterways return to life with the animals that are way more delightful than you are. Only when you are gone can ABC Online commentators be truly happy about this issue and move on to the next one.

The future we have arranged for you is in tourism, and once our magnificent city waterways are restored, we may even drop by ourselves. That is, if we can get away from our conferences. There are more people's lives to arrange and we are very busy people.

Don't fret. Reskilling, after all, is what people do these days. Upskill enough and you could make the short list for a job as a ranger.

Who knows, we may one day hear the magnificent call of the green and golden bell frog chirruping out in those places formerly known as CBDs, and people like you will be there to record this biodiversity in a way that is sustainable and appropriate. You can only dream.

Better still, why not head out to the bush and grow some food? At least then you'll be contributing.

While some of you may feel alarm at this announcement, you can rest assured that before we demolish your workplaces and abolish your livelihoods, there will be an inquiry. The deadline is very soon. Type up your submissions if you like, and email them to tellsomeonewhocares@govt.com.

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