

Be Like the Beaver – Build More Dams.

Version 2

Another Issue of "Carbon Sense" prepared for The Carbon Sense Coalition by Viv Forbes and volunteer helpers. Please help us to spread the word.

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Tags: Water, dams, irrigation, desalinisation, Ian Plimer, Heaven and Hell, climate industry spending, slush funds.



To view in your browser, with all images intact, click the following link:
<http://carbon-sense.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/build-more-dams.pdf>

Water is essential for all life, and happily it is abundant on our blue watery planet.

However, salty oceans cover 70% of Earth's surface and contain 97% of Earth's water. Salt water is great for ocean dwellers but not directly useful for most life on land.

Another 2% of Earth's water is tied up in ice caps, glaciers and permanent snow, leaving just 1% as land-based fresh water.

To sustain life on land, we need to conserve and make good use of this rare and elusive resource.

Luckily, our sun is a powerful nuclear-powered desalinisation plant. Every day, solar energy evaporates huge quantities of fresh water from the oceans. After a stop-off in the atmosphere, most of this water vapour is soon returned to earth as dew, rain, hail and snow – this is the great water cycle. Unfortunately about 70% of this precipitation falls directly back into the oceans and some is captured in frozen wastelands.

Much of the water that falls on land is collected in gullies, creeks and rivers and driven relentlessly by gravity back to the sea by the shortest possible route. Allowing this loss to happen is poor water management. The oceans are not short of water.

Some animals and plants have evolved techniques to maximise conservation of precious fresh water.

Some Australian frogs, on finding their water holes evaporating, will inflate their stomachs with water then bury themselves in a moist mud-walled cocoon to wait for the drought to break. Water buffalo and wild pigs make mud wallows to retain water in their private mud-baths, camels carry their own water supply and beavers build lots of dams.

Some plants have also evolved water saving techniques – bottle trees and desert cacti are filled with water, thirsty humans can even get a drink from the roots and trunks of some eucalypts and many plants produce drought/fire resistant seeds.

Every such natural water conservation or drought-proofing behaviour brings benefits for all surrounding plants and animals.

People have long recognised the importance of conserving fresh water – early Australian settlers built their homes near the best waterholes on the creek and every homestead and shed had its corrugated iron tanks. Graziers built dams and weirs to retain surface water for stock (and fence-crashing wildlife), used contour ripping and good pasture management to retain moisture in soils, and drilled bores to get underground water. And sensible rules have evolved to protect the water rights of downstream residents.

In some snow-fed rivers like the Nile, floods are generally a reliable and predictable annual event. For millennia the Nile delivered water and silt fertiliser to the farmers on the flood plains in Lower Egypt. The massive High Aswan Dam may have done more harm than good – it certainly did great harm to the farmers and land down-stream by stealing the silt and the water that supported the productivity of farms that have fed millions since Roman times. The value of the electricity generated by the dam probably does not compensate for these losses.

But in Australia, rainfall is usually a boom and bust affair. Much fresh water is delivered to the land surface suddenly in cyclones, storms and rain depressions. But “The Wet” is always followed by “The Dry”, and droughts and floods are normal climatic events. People who fail to store some of the flood must put up with the drought.

Floods bring costs and benefits. Heavy rain, especially after a drought, causes heavy erosion in the higher country, and then spreads lots silt (erosion products) onto the flood plains, causes siltation of river mouths or carries this valuable soil conditioner into the sea. Silt is fertiliser for the plants of the flood plain, but many people forget this and curse the silt and work against nature by trying to control the flood waters with banks and levies.

Dams are used for two purposes – water supply and flood mitigation. However, one dam cannot do both things well – for water supply it need to be kept as full as possible, but for flood control it needs to be empty when the rains start.

The best way to conserve and ration water for the land is to use the Keyline ripping/contouring ideas of PA Yeoman. This process delays water runoff and its associated erosion. It will also conserve water for local pastures and trees and make the flow of water into creeks and rivers cleaner with a steadier supply.

However some people have other ideas:

“We must reclaim the roads and plowed lands, halt dam construction, tear down existing dams, free shackled rivers and return to wilderness tens of millions of acres of presently settled land.”

David Foreman, a founder of “Earth First”.

The “No Dams” crowd should learn from the beavers. Strings of dams can moderate flood risk, as well as creating drought sanctuaries and secure water for graziers, towns, irrigators and wildlife. Modern cities could not survive without large water storages for drinking water, sanitation, gardens and factories.

Fresh water is also necessary to produce fresh food. We can have fresh milk, butter, cheese, meat, vegetables, nuts and fruit; or we can irrigate the oceans and import fresh food from more sensible countries. And without fresh water and fresh food, there will be no local food processing.

Those infected with the green religion believe we should waste our fresh water by allowing it all to return as quickly as possible to the salty seas. They fight to protect beaver dams and natural lakes, but persistently oppose human dams and lakes. Some even want existing dams destroyed, while wasting billions on energy-hungry desalination and sewerage water recycling plants, pumps and pipelines.

They also want to prohibit man's production of two drought-defying atmospheric gases, both released by the burning of hydrocarbons – carbon dioxide which makes plants more drought tolerant, and water vapour which feeds the clouds and the rain.

Green water policies are un-sustainable, even suicidal.

Humans must copy the beavers and “Build more Dams”. And help the biosphere by burning more hydrocarbons.

Further Reading:

“Dung Beetles ate our Climate History” or “Droughts and Extreme Weather are Nothing New.”
by Dr Bill Johnson:

<http://carbon-sense.com/2015/12/12/johnson-climate-history/>

Only one city water supply dam has been built in Australia in the last 30 years:

http://blogs.news.com.au/heraldsun/andrewbolt/index.php/heraldsun/comments/all_this_water_may_wash_away_our_dam_madness/

P.A. Yeomans wrote four books:

The Keyline Plan, The Challenge of Landscape, Water For Every Farm and The City Forest.

All well written and easy to read. People who really care for the rural environment should read them.

Viv Forbes,
28 Jan 2016

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Trickery and Puffery in Climate Spending Claims:

Billions spent on irrelevant climate pledges:

<http://joannenova.com.au/2015/12/billions-of-dollars-on-irrelevant-pledges-that-have-nothing-to-do-with-the-climate/>

Green Climate Fund a slush fund for dictators:

http://fee.org/articles/the-uns-green-climate-program-is-a-slush-fund-for-dictators/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=fee_daily&mkt_tok=3RkMMJWWfF9wsRokuK7JZKXonjHpfX87uokWKSq38431UFwdcjKpmjr1YEBRcZ0aPyQAqobGp5I5FEBS7TYRKtst6cMUw%3D%3D

Professor Ian Plimer in Westminster

Here is an eloquent summary of climate matters by Professor Ian Plimer, addressing a meeting organised by the Global Warming Policy Forum in a committee room in the British Houses of Parliament. (Can't let him loose on the politicians themselves, can we?)

https://www.youtube.com/embed/iEPW_P7GVB8

Also, here is a review of Ian Plimer's latest book, **"HEAVEN AND HELL"** - how the Pope condemns the poor to eternal poverty:

<http://quadrant.org.au/opinion/qed/2015/11/plimer-pope/>

"The entire trillion dollar climate change industry rests on a single hypothetical assumption. The assumption is that emissions of CO₂ by humans drive global warming. To this day there is no scientific evidence to support this assumption."

Ian Plimer

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