

LETO_bamboo

43 Karnak Road, Ashburton, Victoria, 3147
t. 03 9885 6522 f. 03 9885 6367 m. 0433 43 9919
e. letobamboo@live.com.au

Thursday, 15 May 2008

Dear Mr Joe Helper,

Re: 'A New Timber Industry Strategy for Victoria'

Firstly, I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to offer my thoughts to this very important subject.

Regarding the scope covered – I would like to respond to the following 4 items:

1. *Industry Investment and Development*

I have conducted a degree of research into the viable (or other) plantation of a particular species of Bamboo which is grown plentifully in 3 provinces of China. This particular species is harvested within a 5 – 6 year period for building materials, and the regrowth is perpetual – each year a new crop emerges from the root system with little to no intervention from mankind. I believe (according to a nurseryman in Gembrook) that Victoria could grow this species with no trouble.

I am personally setting about establishing a plantation on land in the Bright region, to test the growth viability. I also have interest from 2 other parties in how to go about this in association with me. If we can grow the raw materials here, then we can establish manufacturing, and also export industries.

2. *Emerging Markets Including the Renewable Energy Production and an Emissions Trading Scheme*

The beauty of the species I am referring to, is that it has twofold economical values. One, the 'timber' (Bamboo is classed as a grass) can be converted

into manufactured items such as strip flooring (we import 1000's of meters of this product from China now); and two, the immature shoots can be harvested and exported after being canned. I have read figures that 1 hectare alone in Australia, can produce 10,000 kg. of Bamboo shoot per annum!!! At the restaurant door, this can fetch as much as \$15.00 per kilo fresh. Our seasons being the opposite to China and Japan, has the benefit of being able to supply fresh shoots to meet their demand in their 'off' season.

New development is also underway in the weaving of Bamboo fibre for the clothing and soft furnishings markets. In fact the end uses are too many to number here.

Carbon trading. Bamboo has an uptake of no less than 6 times that of a regular pine tree. One Pine tree – 30 years of growth. One Bamboo pole (culm) – 5.5 years of growth. Many thousands of culms can grow on the single hectare. A Bamboo culm grows to its' full height in the first 12 months.

Bamboo is naturally pest resistant – no spraying required. With Nitrate, (chook and cow poo) friable soil, and up to 2000mm of rainfall in the winter/spring, you have success. Less rainfall, irrigation required. Oh yes, Bamboo is happy with grey water to drink. In fact it loves any waste water. It could grow in any marginal land (freeway median strips etc.), alongside train lines as beautiful barriers – sound absorbing too. Werribee sewerage could also be utilized.

3. *Government Procurement policies and Procedures including Building Codes*

Documented research is already available regarding the strength of Bamboo. There are many building programs underway around the world currently, espousing the numerous virtues of building quality Bamboo.

4. *Research and Development*

I have just completed a tour with the international organisation known as INBAR (International Network of Bamboo and Rattan) around parts of China. I also incorporated a week of meeting a number of factory owners and operators specialising in the manufacture of Bamboo products; jointly organised with Sino Access (affiliated with VECCI). I have many photos and short videos of production of a number of items.

I also have a comprehensive booklet provided by Dr. Fu Jinhe for presentation to our government by myself. I would value the opportunity of meeting and presenting this book to you at your earliest convenience.

If Australia becomes a member country, it would have access to the most amazing wealth of knowledge and experience, already developed.

Thank you again for giving me this opportunity to forward my thoughts.

Please refer to the website:

<http://www.inbar.int/>

Kindest Regards,

Anne Astorino.