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13/09/2123

As a land management professional, I am seriously concerned about the Singleton horticulture proposal, and the EIS terms of reference.

It does not take into account longer term damage, and the interacting forces of climate change.

Any irrigation proposal in a semi-arid area with saline water and soil is inevitably a mining operation.

Build up of salt, however slow, will ultimately destroy the project, and the environment.

The level of protection should not follow the advice from NT government agencies.

Any guideline that allows a 30% loss of anything is appalling.

Semi - arid ecosystems are finely balanced, and a 30% change may be a tipping point that induces an irreversible change.

Semi - arid environments in Australia are already undergoing ecosystem collapse from the impacts of agriculture and climate change. The substantial groundwater extraction associated with this Project, as well as the land clearing it requires, will further threaten these at-risk ecosystems.

The terms of reference for the Environmental Impact Assessment must reflect the concerns and interests of Traditional Owners and the public by protecting all groundwater dependent ecosystems.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this submission.