



Level 5, 131 Clarence Street
Sydney NSW 2000
GPO Box 149
Sydney NSW 2001
Telephone: (02) 9290 3700
Facsimile: (02)9290 2808
Website: www.feedlots.com.au
A.B.N. 16 009 928 018

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Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees on Environment and Communications
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Via email: ec.sen@aph.gov.au

The Australian Lot Feeders' Association (ALFA) welcomes the opportunity to make a submission to the inquiry regarding the implications of Glencore's proposed carbon capture and storage (CCS) project by its subsidiary, Carbon Transport and Storage Corporation (CTSCo), in the Great Artesian Basin (GAB).

ALFA is the Peak Industry Council representing 349 accredited cattle feedlots, with approximately 1.2 million cattle on feed. The feedlot industry makes up to 47% of the cattle slaughtered in Australia and contributes to over 35% of Australia's total beef exports. As a key contributor to a trade-exposed industry, up-stream supply chain operators, such as meat processors, retailers, and exporters, rely on the feedlot industry for the supply and export of high quality, safe, grain-fed beef to feed families in Australia and abroad.

There are 135 accredited feedlots with a combined capacity of 753,000 head located within the GAB. This represents 40% of feedlot businesses nationally and 46% of the feedlot industry's national capacity.

The GAB provides a safe and secure supply of good quality water. This is vital for feedlots and other agricultural industries and communities throughout Queensland, New South Wales, South Australia and the Northern Territory. In particular, the Precipice aquifer provides an invaluable supply of water to numerous towns, agricultural enterprises and other regionally important facilities across southern QLD. This aquifer is currently being used for the production of livestock with a number of businesses having acquired licenses in this deeper but more secure aquifer for future expansion purposes.

Glencore's proposed CCS project presents a significant and unacceptable risk to the integrity, safety, and security of food produced using the GAB and threatens market access for Australian beef products. ALFA, along with other concerned stakeholders, is deeply troubled by the potential risks and impacts of the project on the groundwater quality within the Great Artesian Basin, especially concerning are the findings related to the acidification of groundwater and resulting mobilisation of heavy metals such as lead and arsenic. ALFA raises concerns about the potential socioeconomic impacts that the CCS project would have on agriculture and rural communities relying on water from the Great Artesian Basin.

ALFA is aware that the Queensland Department of Environment, Science, and Innovation (DESI) is still in the process of considering CTS Co's Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) after CTS Co was afforded an extension

late 2023. It is further understood that the Queensland Government will be required to make a decision under s56A of the *Environmental Protection Act 1994* (Qld) in May 2024. ALFA eagerly awaits the outcome of DESI's EIS assessment process and the Queensland government's determination on this proposal and remains confident that the right decision will be made.

ALFA understands the importance of tackling the challenge of climate change and is at the forefront of exploring new technology, such as methane reducing feed additives. I would like to emphasise that ALFA supports Carbon Storage science when deployed in appropriate locations where groundwater is not used or suitable for drinking or food production.

The GAB is a precious resource that transcends state and territory boundaries and is critical for agricultural industries and communities alike. ALFA calls on the state and federal government's leadership to protect the GAB from current and future projects that present environmental, social and economic harm. The state and federal government have a key role in prioritising food production, safety, and security. Preserving this vital water source is imperative for sustaining livestock and agricultural production, not only for all Australians but for global food security.

With your support, Australian lot feeders look forward to continuing to produce high-quality grain-fed beef to feed families here in Australia and abroad.

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on this important matter. Should you have any questions, please contact _____ or _____

Yours sincerely,

Christian Mulders
Chief Executive Officer
Australian Lot Feeders' Association