



7 June 2023

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

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

Dear Secretariat,

RE: Senate Inquiry into Greenwashing

The National Farmers' Federation (NFF) welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission to the Senate Standing Committee on greenwashing.

The NFF was established in 1979 as the national peak body representing farmers and more broadly, agriculture across Australia. The NFF's membership comprises all of Australia's major agricultural commodities across the length and breadth of the supply chain. Operating under a federated structure, individual farmers join their respective state farm organisation and/or national commodity council. These organisations form the NFF.

NFF Position

The NFF welcomes and recognises the importance of the Senate Standing Committee's inquiry into greenwashing and its impact on consumers.

As companies begin to adopt green practices and bring new innovations to the marketplace to build a sustainable brand image and capture rising consumer demand for green products, the NFF recognises that advancements in this space are often accompanied by an increase in greenwashing claims. This is a major concern for:

1. The NFF and its membership;
2. Consumers willing to purchase green-branded goods and services at an additional cost; and,
3. Businesses, as such claims distort consumer purchasing patterns and over-value products to the disadvantage of existing competition (i.e., creating a market distortion), penalising legitimate operating eco-friendly businesses.



It is the view of the NFF that actions are taken to ensure companies and industry more broadly refrain from misrepresenting their actions and making false statements as it pertains to activities related to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions abatement or the labelling of products as “environmentally friendly”.

Schemes such as Climate Active or the Emissions Reduction Fund (ERF) must operate with a high degree of integrity and efficiency. However, the NFF would like to stress that achievement of this view demands careful assessment and balancing of existing legislative options. New stringent legislative processes (i.e., additional reporting requirements) should not be introduced as this would create unnecessary regulatory obligations and burdens detrimental to existing compliant businesses.

With regards to regulatory examples to curb greenwashing claims as it relates to the Australian Carbon Credit Units (ACCUs) and the ERF, the NFF would like to direct the attention of the Committee towards implementing recommendations proposed by the independent Chubb Review panel and detailed in the relevant report. We understand that this is currently a process under government review.

Conclusion

The NFF thanks the Senate Standing Committee for the opportunity to provide a submission. We look forward to further engagement on this important subject.

Yours sincerely,

TONY MAHAR

Chief Executive Officer