

SUBMISSION NO. 30

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by:



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Mr Kelvin Thomson MP
Chair
Joint Standing Committee on Treaties
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mr Thomson */ Kelvin*

Thank you for your letter dated 25 June 2008 inviting submissions to the treaties tabled on 25 June 2008:

- *Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and*
- *Headquarters Agreement between the Government of Australia and the Secretariat to the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels.*

In response, the Northern Territory Government wishes to provide a submission against the first of the treaties tabled, the Kyoto Protocol.

The Northern Territory has a unique greenhouse gas emissions profile compared to other Australian jurisdictions, with savanna burning emissions accounting for 36.2% of the Territory's total emissions in 2006. This makes savanna burning the largest contributor per sector. Emissions from savanna burning are currently recognised under international frameworks including the Kyoto Protocol as anthropogenic, and therefore such emissions are in scope to develop abatement incentives.

The Northern Territory has demonstrated success in emissions abatement from savanna burning through the application of strategic fire management practices and associated development of robust emissions accounting protocols, with the commercial-scale greenhouse gas emissions offset project, the West Arnhem Land Fire Abatement (WALFA) project.

The WALFA project involves enhanced fire management over 28,000 km² of Aboriginal-owned Western Arnhem Land. The project has delivered a range of outcomes including emissions abatement, Indigenous economic participation

and business enterprise development, regional development, preservation of traditional cultural knowledge systems, and biodiversity benefits.

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Kyoto Protocol, and the decisions of parties summarised in the Bali Roadmap call for emissions reductions that are equitable, do not deny access to the benefits of sustainable development, and protect the interests of Indigenous people.

Opportunities in the Northern Territory for further emissions abatement through projects such as WALFA are positively aligned to these obligations. The development of such projects, underpinned by commercial imperatives, also provides a strong governance framework and partnerships with the private sector under which to achieve real employment outcomes and real avenues to close the gap of disadvantage for Indigenous Territorians.

Whilst it is acknowledged that savanna burning is not intended to be covered under the proposed Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme, the Northern Territory Government looks forward to working closely with the Australian Government, and other NT experts on savanna fire management practices over the coming year to develop robust standards for savanna offset schemes, with opportunities for international linkages under the post-2012 Kyoto Protocol.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this review. Should you require any further information, the contact for this matter is Jean Rodricks, Senior Policy Officer in the Climate Change Policy and Coordination Unit in the Department of the Chief Minister. Ms Rodricks may be contacted via email on jean.rodricks@nt.gov.au or by telephone on (08) 8999 5439.

Yours sincerely



PAUL HENDERSON

16/9/07