



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Standing Committee on Primary Industries and Resources
Inquiry into Australian farmers and climate change

MEDIA ALERT

Issued: 15 March 2010

Chair: Hon Dick Adams MP
Deputy: Alby Schultz MP

Farming the Future

- Farmers and Climate Change Report tabled today -

The House of Representatives Primary Industries and Resources Committee tabled its report, **Farming the Future: the role of government in assisting Australian farmers to adapt to the impacts of climate change**, today, which addresses the challenges facing Australian farmers in adapting to the impacts of climate variability and climate change. A key report recommendation is the Government **invest research funding in high priority areas such as soil carbon sequestration**. The 216-page report also wants the Government to develop a **strategy to capture, evaluate and disseminate farmer driven innovations** such as the use of perennial grasses, holistic management grazing, engineered woodlands and other options that have a significant capacity to increase the resilience and productivity of farm enterprises.

Committee Chair, Dick Adams (Lyons, Tas), said that: "Our agricultural industries are facing increasing challenges in the face of climate variability and climate change. If our farmers are to maintain their productivity into the future we must start investing in new and better production systems now."

Mr Adams also noted the range of innovations being undertaken by farmers already. "These cutting-edge farmers are proof that adaptation to climate variability and climate change is possible," he said.

The bipartisan report's 15 recommendations include:

- Supporting rural counselling and support groups, and placing funding for such groups on a permanent and regular basis;
- Establishing a national Continuously Operating Reference Station network;
- Increasing investment for research into energy efficiency in the agricultural sector;
- Increasing funding for research into improving weather and climate forecasting at a seasonal and regional level;
- A commitment to funding for climate change research pertaining to Australia's agricultural industries, with attention to regional needs as well as national priorities;
- Effective national coordination of the research effort;
- Better integration of local and regional organisations into the overall response to climate change, including providing additional funding to local and regional organisations;
- The use of targeted, industry and issue specific, incentives, to facilitate adaptation; and
- Placing funding for local and regional organisations supporting adaptation upon a permanent and regular basis.

Copies of the report can be obtained from the committee's website at:

<http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/pir/australianfarmers/report.htm> or by contacting the committee secretariat on (02) 6277 4500 or emailing pir.reps@aph.gov.au

Media Conference – will be webcast live on <http://webcast.aph.gov.au/livebroadcasting/>
Committee members will attend a media conference **tomorrow** in Committee Room **1R1** Parliament House, Canberra at **8.30am**.

For further media comment: please contact the committee chair, Dick Adams MP, on (02) 6277 4293 or email D.Adams.MP@aph.gov.au