

Senate Standing Committee on Economics
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education Portfolio
Additional Estimates Hearing 2011-12
15 February 2012

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: COMMONWEALTH SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH ORGANISATION

TOPIC: CarbonKids Program

REFERENCE: Question on Notice (Hansard, 15 February 2012, page 10)

QUESTION No.: AI-8

Senator BERNARDI: ... It won't surprise you that I have some concerns in respect to the program. I can congratulate the CSIRO for coming to this conclusion in their notes for teachers. It says: Climate change is a complicated topic that many find daunting and confusing. It can be controversial and involve a diverse range of disciplines and fields of expertise, leading to many different opinions. And yet, the information that is produced and distributed to school children appears to only present a single opinion about what is driving climate change. How can you explain that, given that the explanatory note for teachers says that it leads 'to many different opinions'?

Mr M Whelan: I have not personally seen the material that is presented. I would envisage the material would be consistent with those comments. I would be happy to examine the material and provide you with a view.

ANSWER

CSIRO plays an important national role in interpreting advances in global science and disseminating this information to the community at large. The CarbonKids Curriculum Resources for Schools are based on the best available science (as assessed by relevant experts of a Scientific Reference Group), and reflects CSIRO's published views on the drivers of climate change.

The curriculum uses inquiry learning as the basis for organisation and investigation of its content. This encourages students to explore options based on the available scientific evidence. All material used in the curriculum was reviewed from an educational perspective by officers of State Departments of Education.