

Senate Standing Committee on Economics
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Innovation, Industry, Science and Research Portfolio
Budget Estimates Hearing 2009-10
01 June 2009

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: COMMONWEALTH SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH ORGANISATION

TOPIC: Biochar – CSIRO partnership with DAFF

REFERENCE: Question on Notice (Hansard 1 June 2009, E29)

QUESTION No.: BI-43

Senator ABETZ— ...Can I just ask you, if I did not ask you to take on notice, the exact date when the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry indicated to the CSIRO that it was looking into this—do I call it a partnership—in relation to the announcement by Minister Burke on 21 May 2009 when that was sort of finalised?

Dr Keating—We can pull the time line out for you, Senator.

ANSWER

- 28/07/08 The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) calls for proposals to the Australia's Farming Future Climate Change Research Program (advertised in newspapers and posted on the DAFF website).
- 05/09/08 CSIRO submits an expression of interest (EOI) to the Climate Change Research Program, including a project proposal on biochar.
- An expert panel reviews soil carbon projects for DAFF and the project principal investigators are notified.
- 01/12/08 CSIRO alerts DAFF to the fact that a review undertaken in conjunction with Rothamsted Research and funded by CSIRO will be published in early 2009 as *Biochar, climate change and soil: A review to guide future research*.
- 18/02/09 *Biochar, climate change and soil: A review to guide future research* is published.
- 03/03/09 The Hon Tony Burke MP, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, announces the first round of successful projects under the Climate Change Research Program.
- 03/03/09 DAFF sends the CSIRO biochar project leader a letter advising that the project has been unsuccessful and that a gap analysis will be conducted to determine possible future investment: *"The findings of the CSIRO report and other reviews will be analysed as part of a research gaps analysis, and may form the basis for future funding under the Climate Change Research Program."*
- 06/05/09 DAFF officers contact CSIRO to review the schedule from the CSIRO biochar EOI, originally submitted on 5 September 2008.
- 21/05/09 Minister Burke announces funding for a collaborative biochar project, led by CSIRO, as part of the Australia's Farming Future Climate Change Research Program.