

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2008

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: BRS 01

Division/Agency: Bureau of Rural Sciences

Topic: Eucalyptus Rust

Hansard Page: Written question

Senator Bushby asked:

Australian forests at a glance

The Bureau, together with others, has for a number of years produced a publication titled *Australian forests at a glance*.

Can the Bureau confirm that this publication will continue to be produced annually and, if so, whether there are any plans to alter it in any substantial manner (whether physically, its name, or in terms of content)?

If not, what is the intended future of this publication? Will it be replaced with anything similar?

Answer:

The Bureau of Rural Sciences (BRS) has annually published three booklets in the 'At a glance' series: *Australian Forests*; *Australia - Our Natural Resources*; and *Australian Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry*. This year the three booklets have been combined into a single publication for all agricultural industries, the *Australian Agricultural Industries 2008, At a Glance*.

This publication remains a pocket size reference book containing statistics relevant to agriculture, fisheries, forestry and the people within these industries. It was released on 2 July 2008 at the Regional Outlook Conference at Orange, NSW.

The Bureau of Rural Sciences has also published two detailed forestry reports in 2008: *Australia's State of Forests Report 2008* and *The Changing Face of Australia's Forests*.

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Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: BRS 02

Division/Agency: Bureau of Rural Sciences

Topic: Arable Land Surveys

Hansard Page: Written question

Senator I.Macdonald asked:

- (a) Have there been any surveys done of arable land (ie land suitable for agriculture) across northern Australia?
- (b) Are details available?
- (c) If so, could I have the reference on where they may be found?

Answer:

The Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry has not undertaken any specific surveys of arable land or surveys of land suitability for agriculture in northern Australia. A number of studies have been completed for parts of northern Australia by relevant State and Territory jurisdictions and research groups including the CSIRO.

The Office of Northern Australia in the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government has responsibility for providing advice on sustainable economic development opportunities across northern Australia, including agriculture.