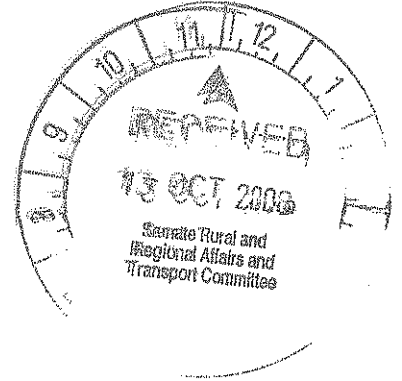


Department of Primary Industries and Water
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT & CONSERVATION DIVISION



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8 October 2008

Ms Jeanette Radcliffe
Committee Secretary
Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Ms Radcliffe

Thank you for the invitation to provide a submission on the Senate Inquiry into natural resource management. Please accept the following as my Department's submission. Please note that this is not a whole of government submission, as it is my understanding that the invitation was provided separately to the relevant State agencies.

The Department of Primary Industries and Water (DPIW) supports a regional approach to natural resource management, and has developed legislative and policy frameworks that underpin this model. In 2007 I, as Secretary, undertook a review of the Natural Resource Management (NRM) Framework and the *Natural Resource Management Act 2002* at the direction of the Minister for Primary Industries and Water, David Llewellyn.

The Final Report was produced following significant stakeholder and public consultation about the performance of the NRM Framework and legislation over the previous five years and how it might be improved. The Final Report contains 18 recommendations to improve and refine the NRM framework. The State Government is committed to implementing these recommendations. DPIW believes that a long-term strategic approach to NRM at the national level is essential for priority setting, adaption to changing environmental, social and economic conditions, and ensuring that investment results in significant outcomes.

DPIW also believes that it is too early to measure the extent to which the Caring for our Country program represents a comprehensive approach to meeting Australia's NRM needs, but looks forward to a further articulation of the Australian Government's priorities and proposed methods of program delivery in the business plan which is currently being prepared.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kim Evans', with a long, sweeping underline.

Kim Evans
SECRETARY