

# **Agricultural Competitiveness Green Paper Submission**

## **Date submitted**

12/12/2014

## **Name of Organisation/Individual**

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## **What are the top policies from the Green Paper that the Government should focus on in the White Paper and why?**

The paper notes the excellent work being done in improving environmentally sustainable practices by many Australian farmers. This should be supported beyond even the Landcare programme because of the positive implications it has for all aspects of agricultural competitiveness, such as increased production, access to niche markets, increased resilience to drought and so on.

## **What policies from the Green Paper don't you support and why?**

I do not support "moving water from northern catchments to southern and from eastern to western". The cost and risks of such projects do not seem justified when looked at from a holistic viewpoint of other ways agriculture could become competitive. Water management has been done very poorly in the past in the agricultural sector, with vast improvements in recent years by some - in particular those who have been successful in increasing soil water holding capacity on their property. Learning from our successful innovators in water management should be the priority, rather than piping it long distances. I would also want to see very stringent environmental assessments completed to ensure that no ecosystems in either the extraction or receiving environments were adversely affected.

I do not support the suggested amendments to the EPBC Act 1999. Intact environmental areas and biodiversity have much greater value than a road or a farm, and the Act should be retained to ensure that these values are protected and that due rigor is undertaken in new developments.

## **General Comment**

Customers are increasingly demanding a transparent food system. Both Australian and overseas consumers want nutrient dense, high quality, sustainably produced food. If we can provide this as a nation, and have the Australian 'brand' represent this, then our farming industry will surely have secured its competitiveness.

Environment and sustainability should be listed amongst the nine 'Australian Government agriculture policy principles'. It is discussed in the green paper and it will be impossible to be competitive without these. I would like to point out also that the most productive use of natural resources is sometimes to let them stay undisturbed and providing their multitude of 'ecosystem services'.