



12 December 2014

Our Ref: EV-02-0001

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
www.dpmc.gov.au

To whom it may concern,

Re: Agricultural Competitiveness Green Paper

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the Agricultural Competitiveness Green Paper.

Over 80% of the Glenelg Hopkins catchment management region is used for agriculture. As the foundation of productive agriculture, healthy soils are critical to our region's economic prosperity. Generating a gross commodity value of almost \$1.6 billion in 2011-12, the region is ranked 6th of Natural Resource Management regions nationally for agricultural production and 3rd in Victoria.

Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority is supportive of efforts to boost agriculture's productivity and profitability sustainably.

Natural Resource Management (NRM) organisations play an important role in addressing NRM challenges at a regional scale that impact the natural resource base and agricultural production; and are a key delivery partner in implementing the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme. NRM organisations also play an important role in increasing the adoption of sustainable land management practices at a regional level and working with the community and industry to improve knowledge and capacity in this area; and in managing threats to soil health and agricultural production.

The following comments and points are submitted for consideration:

1. The Green Paper should have a stronger focus on sustainable agriculture and its important role in production increases in the future. Maintaining and improving soil health; and addressing soil based threats to agriculture such as salinity, soil acidification and soil erosion are essential for sustainable and productive agriculture. This theme could be expanded on in Policy Idea 5 – Protecting the resource base (p. xix) or developed as a separate policy theme.
2. The importance of the interactions between agriculture and soil needs to be more strongly emphasised.
3. A policy theme around adapting to climate change and increased climate variability in the agricultural sector should be considered; along with policy ideas for managing the impacts of climate change on soils.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Wood
Chief Executive Officer