



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Agriculture Should Be On The Commonwealth Climate Change Taskforce

Member for New England Tony Windsor will call on the Prime Minister, John Howard to include the farm sector in the Taskforce announced recently to develop a carbon trading scheme for Australia.

Mr Windsor said he intended to raise the issue in Question Time when Parliament resumes next week.

“The fact that the farm sector had not been included in the taskforce was brought to my attention at the “Managing the Carbon Cycle” National Forum held in Canberra Nov 22-23 2006”.

“It was pointed out at the conference that even though carbon could be sequestered in soils by way of healthy crop, pasture and soil management the agricultural sector was not going to be part of the Taskforce”.

“The potential to use carbon credits to reward agricultural practices that not only improved Australia’s soils but also stored carbon in the soil rather than the atmosphere could be one of the solutions that the Federal Government is looking for”.

“Emissions trading will become a reality in the future if climate policy moves towards pricing signals to deter carbon emissions”.

“The concept of trading soil carbon credits is still in its infancy and a reliable measuring methodology still has to be agreed upon. Currently soil carbon credits are only being traded in two pilot schemes in Kansas and Montana”.

“With appropriate changes to land management, agricultural soils have the capacity to sequester and store large volumes of carbon, thus improving microbial contact, biological activity, fertility, structure, stability, resistance to erosion and ultimately biodiversity, productivity and profitability. Increasing soil carbon can significantly reduce the impact of dryland salinity, reduce sedimentation rates in rivers and streams, improve water quality, improve air quality and decrease the impact of the Greenhouse Effect, global warming and climate change”.

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