



Caring for Our Country and Landcare Scrutinised

The House of Representatives Agriculture Committee today tabled a report focusing on the Caring for Our Country and Landcare programs.

The \$2 billion Caring for Our Country initiative supports projects that improve biodiversity and sustainable farm practices around Australia. Landcare supports farmers, landholders and community groups to undertake action contributing to sustainable agricultural and environmental outcomes.

The Committee's report was the result of their inquiry into the 2011–12 annual reports of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities.

The Committee investigated:

- the 2012 Review of the Caring for Our Country initiative
- joint land acquisition arrangements of the National Reserve Scheme – Australia's network of protected areas
- community engagement in the natural resource management decision making
- ways to improve information sharing to ensure that future natural resource management projects can be better assessed and managed

Committee Chair Dick Adams MP said: "Caring for Our Country and Landcare play important roles in Australia's natural resource management approach. Reviewing the operation of these programs, ensuring communities are properly engaged, and that best practices are widely shared improves outcomes for the country."

The Committee made one recommendation, calling on both Departments to inform the Committee once the new Monitoring, Evaluation, Review and Improvement Strategy relating to the Caring for Our Country initiative has been published.

Further information about the inquiry and the Committee's report is available on the committee's website at: www.aph.gov.au/arff

For media comment: please contact the Committee Chair, the Hon Dick Adams MP, on (03) 6398 1115 or 0418 132 828 or email D.Adams.MP@aph.gov.au

Further information: contact the Committee Secretariat on (02) 6277 4500, email arff.reps@aph.gov.au or visit the Committee's webpage at <http://www.aph.gov.au/arff>