

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Legislation Committee
Answers to questions on notice
Environment portfolio

Question No: 70

Hearing: Supplementary Budget Estimates

Outcome: Outcome 7

Programme: Land Division

Topic: Carbon Farming Initiative – Environmental Integrity

Hansard Page: N/A

Question Date: 27 November 2013

Question Type: Written

Senator Urquhart asked:

Why is environmental integrity important for the CFI? Why does the CFI use a 100 year permanence rule? Is this consistent with international practice? Is it consistent with the amount of time carbon dioxide remains in the atmosphere?

Answer:

Environmental integrity is an important part of any offset scheme to ensure against unintended adverse environmental outcomes. The Carbon Farming Initiative legislation currently prescribes a permanence period of 100 years.

In the Emissions Reduction Fund Green Paper, the Government noted that the 100-year permanence rule is appropriate for conservation or environmental planting projects that are designed to be permanent. However, the 100-year rule, particularly for soil carbon and replanting projects, can be a significant barrier for other types of sequestration projects. Farmers and foresters have expressed concern about permanence obligations that restrict future land use and could have serious consequences for future generations. The Government is consulting on a 25-year permanence option for sequestration projects in the Emissions Reduction Fund Green Paper.