

Senate Inquiry

SUBJECT: \_\_\_\_\_

One of the significant issues that this inquiry must address is stewardship of private landholding as an <sup>important</sup> means & step to conserving farm land, & offsetting carbon & CO<sub>2</sub> gas pollution of the environment.

Currently the Federal Government have commenced a scheme ~~is~~ based on "grassy box <sup>gum</sup> woodlands" whereby farmers are paid to ~~implement~~ implement & care for the designated areas that are set aside ~~to~~ on a long term basis for conservation. Up to this point the scheme appears to be OK.

But the Government's method of reimbursing farmers is <sup>highly</sup> flawed. Currently farmers who are interested in participating must go through a tender system & submit bids to the Government. This means that farmers compete against each other & it lacks equity & fairness, ~~more importantly~~

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because, as soon as you consider that a return based on large areas compared to smaller areas distorts the potentials & involvement, <sup>Also</sup> ~~not to mention~~ this scheme is simply blocking entrants as well as taking up time & energy of those applying ~~but~~ unsuccessfully.

Furthermore this process is a price (tender) system & is not related to conservation values.

From an environmental perspective this scheme needs changing to one based on environmental values as the main means of factoring in the dollars to be paid out to farmers.

With all the scientific information available today the scheme should be reestablished by calculating the conservation value/HA & applying this rate across farms as linked to the <sup>environmental</sup> categories, such as