



## REVIEW OF THE EMISSIONS REDUCTION FUND 2020: COVER SHEET FOR WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS

### Contact Details

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Date of submission: 20 May 2020

### Submission Instructions

The Authority encourages submissions from organisations and individuals on all issues relevant to this review by **20 May 2020**. We have identified key areas of focus in the consultation paper.

Your contributions are valued greatly by the Authority and will inform the Authority's final review report on the legislation, which is due by 31 December 2020.

The Authority will also talk to stakeholders to complement the written submissions.

Submissions can be made:

**via email**      [submission@climatechangeauthority.gov.au](mailto:submission@climatechangeauthority.gov.au)

**via post**      Submissions  
Climate Change Authority  
GPO Box 787  
Canberra ACT 2600

### Contacts

Should you require further information about making a submission please contact the Authority on freecall 1800 475 869 or via email at [submission@climatechangeauthority.gov.au](mailto:submission@climatechangeauthority.gov.au).

### Confidentiality and publication

#### Your submission may be published.

Submissions not marked as confidential may be published on the Climate Change Authority's website. The Authority welcomes submissions made in a respectful manner and while the Authority values public consultation highly and seeks to be transparent, it is under no obligation to publish submissions it receives and reserves the right not to publish submissions on its website that raise legal or other concerns.

For submissions made by individuals, all personal details other than your name and the state or territory in which you reside will be removed from your submission before it is published.

Please do not include information about third parties of a private nature unless you have permission to do so.

If any part of a submission should be treated as confidential, please provide two versions of the submission, one with the confidential information removed for publication. If you choose not to use this cover sheet and wish your submission to remain confidential then the document should be clearly marked as confidential.

Do you want this submission to be treated as confidential?  Yes  No

Do you understand the information provided about confidentiality and publication?

Yes  No

Signature of submitter: *P. McDonald*

Date: 22 May 2020

## **SUBMITTER'S PROFILE**

SQ Landscapes is a community owned organisation. We attract investment, innovate, trial, and develop approaches to assist people, industries and communities to improve our landscapes. We:

- help farmers find ways to ensure profitable, sustainable and ethical food and fibre production whilst taking care of our waterways, biodiversity and soil
- partner with landholders, First Peoples, governments, industry, academia, Landcare and community groups to learn more about our landscapes and share this knowledge
- connect people who manage our landscapes with each other, governments and experts to improve our community and our climate resilience
- find opportunities for landholders, First People, communities and industries to improve their economic, social and environmental outlooks

Our landscapes cover 314,398 square kilometres of country from the Toowoomba Range in the east to the Grey Range in the west. Our region contains the Condamine, Balonne, Border Rivers, Maranoa, Paroo and Bulloo catchments in Queensland (the Northern Basin of the Murray Darling in Queensland).

Our regional landscapes include the productive cropping and grazing lands of the Darling Downs, Border Rivers and Maranoa and the frontier pastoral lands in our beautiful Rangelands in the south west including the Mulga Lands. Our region contains around 25% of the current carbon projects in Australia.

## **SUBMISSION**

The Board of Southern Queensland Landscapes has directors from across our region and for several years, it has been receiving concerns from local governments, communities and landholders about the unintended consequences of the carbon projects being delivered under the Emissions Reduction Fund (ERF). Notwithstanding these concerns, the company is supportive of the ERF and this submission does not deal with the merits or otherwise of the program. Some of the main concerns raised with our company include:

- The numerous carbon projects particularly in the Mulga Lands have seen properties being retired from traditional agriculture in many cases in order to ensure carbon outcomes are delivered resulting in families moving away from their long-held homes. This results in less people supporting their local communities, school numbers and teacher numbers dropping, business and industry declining, and volunteering and associated activities all but disappearing
- Many locals have noticed an increase in pest management issues and other property management concerns given many properties now have absentee landholders
- Traditional knowledge holders in our Mulga Lands continue to tell us stories (across the five involved Nations) about the need to constantly manage Mulga through fire and each Nation has a similar story around the dangers of letting Mulga come close to settlements or get out of control
- Now that much of the Mulga Lands are increasingly under carbon projects, routine pastoral practices have declined significantly and there has been no adjustment package to assist the pastoral industries transition to this new normal as has occurred with most other industry adjustment packages overseen by governments in the last 25 years.

While much of this feedback from our communities is qualitative, there is no research or other work being done to understand the impacts of the ERF on the pastoral industry or business and communities.

We understand the Australian Government did go to the region several years ago to listen to some of these concerns from some people in one of the towns over a two day period. We also understand that the concerns were simply packaged into a general issue around the general decline of rural communities because of other contributors. We note that no quantitative work or more comprehensive or holistic analysis was carried out to inform this conclusion. Our traditional knowledge holders were not consulted from our understanding.

Our company is keen for work to be carried out to better understanding the unintended consequences of concentrating carbon projects in the way in which the ERF rollout has encouraged in the Mulga Lands. To this end, we are arranging to host a round table in either Charleville or Cunnamulla in July to ground the many concerns and work with all stakeholders to find a way forward. We are keen for the current review to recognise this work and if feasible, account for the round table outcomes prior to finalising the 2020 Review.