



Winemakers' Federation of Australia

For the Industry by the Industry

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The Secretary
Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2601

12 March 2008

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: Climate Change and the Australian Agricultural Sector

The Winemakers' Federation of Australia ('the Federation') is the peak industry body representing Australian winemakers.

The Federation applauds the Australian Government's efforts to address greenhouse gas emissions and climate change matters. The Federation has also been proactive in this area, working with other international wine industry bodies to develop a *Greenhouse Gas Accounting Protocol for the International Wine Industry* and calculator tool. In February 2008, the Federation committed to Facilitative Membership of the Australian Government's *Greenhouse Challenge Plus* program.

The Winemakers' Federation has considered the terms of reference of this Inquiry and would like to raise the following points on behalf of the Australian wine industry.

- i. As part of the Garnault review, the University of Adelaide is developing a paper that synthesizes the current body of research on the potential impact of climate change on the Australian wine industry. Until now, this information has been highly dispersed. The paper will be made available in the public forum following the release of the Garnault review in June 2008, and will present a more cohesive picture of the scientific evidence available on the impact of climate change on the wine industry. The Federation is unable to provide further information at this stage, with the exception that we believe that in the absence of definitive regional climate forecast models, industry adaptation strategies will be flawed.
- ii. Extensive industry consultation would be required to assess the need for a national agriculture adaptation strategy. Before a strategy can be developed, there is a need to provide more definitive climate forecast models at an appropriate scale so that agricultural industries have the information needed to identify potential regional impacts and adapt to climate change. Whereas a national adaptation strategy risks being a high level, generic approach that fails to recognise the diversity within

Australia's agricultural sector, changes could be made to existing policy positions to facilitate individual enterprises to implement adaptation strategies appropriate to their operating environment. These include the government's current policies on water and emissions trading.

- iii. The Federation has not had any feedback from members on the adequacy of existing drought assistance and exceptional circumstance programs. However, as some climate change predictions indicate that what is currently considered to be drought and exceptional conditions may be the emergence of new norms, some attention to these programs is needed to ensure that they do not introduce false economies in propping up agricultural enterprises that are decreasing in viability because of climate change.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on these matters. To clarify any of the issues raised above, or to seek further information, please contact Amy Russell 08 8222 9255, amy@wfa.org.au.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S. Strachan', written over a thin red vertical line.

Stephen Strachan
CHIEF EXECUTIVE