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## **Evergreen Farming Inc Soil Carbon Policy**

### **Evergreen Farming Inc. supports the inclusion of soil carbon (Kyoto Protocol Article 3.4 sinks) in an Australian Emissions Trading Scheme**

#### *About Evergreen*

Evergreen Farming Inc is a farmer group with over five hundred members that develops and promotes sustainable farming systems based on perennial pastures and shrubs.

Evergreen Farming members are concerned about global warming and climate change. The agricultural sector is predicted to be affected the most by climate change. Agriculture also has major potential to reduce greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

Evergreen Farming believes that perennial pastures and fodder shrubs can assist agriculture in adapting to climate change as well as sequestering carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

#### *Carbon Sinks and the ETS*

It is likely that Agriculture will become a 'covered sector' under the Australian Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS). (Being a 'covered sector' means that all businesses in that sector will be required to have 'permits' and 'offsets' to cover all their emissions)

Emissions can be offset by storing carbon in sinks. Kyoto Protocol Article 3.3 sinks are defined as woody vegetation more than 2 meters tall, more than 20% crown cover and greater than 0.2 ha in area (they include tree plantations and oil mallees). Kyoto Protocol Article 3.4 sinks include carbon in soil and vegetation, both above and below ground on crop and grazing land.

A key issue for agriculture is which sinks will be recognized under the ETS. Sequestration in 3.3 sinks will almost certainly be recognized under the ETS. It is undecided whether sequestration in article 3.4 sinks will be recognized.

For article 3.4 sinks to be included there needs to be substantial investment in research and development of both emissions and sequestration on agricultural land. Early investigations suggest that soil has potential to store significant quantities of carbon.

If the ETS only allows article 3.3 but not article 3.4 sinks then large areas of agricultural land will be taken out of food production and replaced by "carbon sink forests". However if article 3.4 is included we can have both food produced and carbon sequestered on the same land.