

# **SUBMISSION TO LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY STANDING COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (CLIMATE CHANGE)**

## **BY SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL GRIFFITH INC**

Soroptimist International is a worldwide organisation for women in management and professions working through service projects to advance human rights and the status of women. We have a set of position statements entitled "Where We Stand" which states the following under the topic "Climate Change":

"Soroptimist International recognises that climate change can be a natural process for the earth but human interference and pollution, especially from the burning of fossil fuels, has increased the rate of the process alarmingly, endangering thousands of plant and animal species and putting at risk the survival of humanity.

Soroptimist International supports the Convention on Climate Change adopted in Rio in 1992 and the Kyoto Protocol of 1997 and urges governments of all countries to ratify and implement both, working together internationally to realise their aims.

Its members will apply their power as consumers to influence a change in attitudes and will apply in their private and professional lives, all the means possible to reduce the manmade pollution, which contributes to climate change".

("Where We Stand" Executive Summary of Soroptimist International Positions Statements, April 2007)

**Soroptimist International Griffith Inc would like to make the following comments in relation to some of the terms of reference put forward by your Committee.**

### **(b) Options for ensuring ecologically sustainable natural resource use, taking into particular account the impacts of climate change.**

No more water licences, new bores or irrigated farm permits should be allowed. In this area, we rely on water from the Snowy Scheme. It is able to support far more than the original designers could have imagined, but given the lower rainfall in catchment areas we are experiencing and will continue to experience as a result of climate change, government has to stand firm on this, no matter what financial incentives may be offered to keep on letting more and more land be opened for irrigation/new bores be put in/ new water licences applied for. If the government does not stand firm on this, there will be no water for anyone. (This has already happened in the Murray Basin).

All forms of water usage, no matter what their source, (e.g. river water, bore water etc) deplete the overall supply.

As well, water use affects the water table and salinity levels.

All owners of new houses should be given information on waterwise garden planning.

### **(c) Approaches to land and water management practices on farms, water and other natural resource management practices . . . . .**

Water has always been a finite resource. With the effects of climate change it is a dwindling finite resource. Water restrictions should be in force throughout the state (these could be "localised" as far as catchment areas/river valleys is concerned. i.e. what is in

force in the Namoi Valley need not be the same as for the Murrumbidgee or the Murray) as a matter of good water resource management so there is enough for agriculture, stock and human needs along the courses of all rivers. Local councils should not have the right to make their own decisions about water use/water restrictions/easing of water restrictions. As water is a finite, dwindling resource, the NSW government could offer subsidies for irrigation bodies and individual farmers to encourage the piping of water instead of it being carried to farms in open channels and covers for smaller branch canals. If it is not already the case, there should also be subsidies to encourage farmers to change to drip irrigation.

**(e) Likely consequences of national and international policies on climate change on natural resource management in NSW**

All state governments need to work with the new Federal Government to address climate change issues and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. There needs to be a national approach.

In light of the Federal Government's signing of the Kyoto Protocol, it is important that all states in Australia work closely with the Federal Government, put aside in some instances the vested interests of one state, in the interests of all Australians and indeed, all mankind.

This submission was prepared by a sub-committee of SI Griffith Inc. Both the President and Secretary were members of the sub-committee.

Submitted for this sub-committee by      Elizabeth Mead  
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