



**Victorian  
Catchment  
Management  
Council**

RDC Inquiry  
Productivity Commission  
LB2 Collins St East  
Melbourne VIC 8003

7 June 2010

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Re: Productivity Commission Inquiry into the Australian Government Research and Development Corporations Model**

I write on behalf of the Victorian Catchment Management Council to express our views in relation to Research and Development (R&D) in broad natural resources management.

The Victorian Catchment Management Council (VCMC), established under the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994*, is Victoria's peak independent body responsible for providing expert advice to the Minister for Environment and Climate Change on land and water management issues. Members are appointed by the Victorian Government for their skills and experience in land protection, water resource management, primary industry, environment protection, conservation and local government.

The Council's key concern is that the work undertaken by the former Land and Water Australia (LWA), which was directed towards the public goods benefits provided by healthy landscapes, will no longer be done.

The demise of LWA leaves a substantial gap in any national rural R&D program. LWA's programs brought linkages between sustainability and industry in ways which could have been fostered further in 2010 and beyond. It is essential that any future rural R&D model in Australia includes a body which builds on the legacy of excellent work undertaken by LWA, including its activities related to ecosystem services.

Council is not equipped to comment in detail on many of the points in the Inquiry's Terms of Reference. However, our long-term commitment to integrated catchment management, and to the need for a national approach to ecosystem services, development of the market and the metrics required has compelled us to submit this brief response.

Yours sincerely,

  
Mick Murphy, OAM,  
Chair, VCMC