



Australian
Sustainable
Seaweed
Alliance



Friday 5 January 2024

Re. Agriculture, Land and Emissions Discussion Paper

To inform wider Agriculture and Land Sectoral Plan
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF)
Canberra, ACT, 2601

This ASSA submission submitted to DAFF via DAFF “Have your Say” Online Portal by extended Deadline: 5:00pm Friday 5 January 2024

To whom it may concern

1. Background to ASSA

ASSA is the peak body for commercial seaweed industry development in Australia. Our mission is to scale up environmentally responsible commercial farming of seaweed to provide food, feed and bioproducts. We provide a coordinated voice on behalf of our members to represent the Australian seaweed industry and help grow the industry sustainably.

2. Agriculture Emissions Challenge

The Agriculture, Land and Emissions Discussion Paper (Paper) rightly raises agriculture as a sector in the National Greenhouse Account (NGA) that makes up around 16.8% of national greenhouse gas emissions (at 2020–21). As the Paper outlines, this share is significant. Further, the largest source of agricultural emissions is methane from enteric fermentation in ruminant animals, such as cattle and sheep, accounting for around 69.3% of the sector's emissions (at 2020–2021).

3. ASSA support for Feed Supplements section of Paper

ASSA supports the Paper's language that the *[d]eployment of methane-inhibiting feed supplements has the potential to significantly reduce livestock emissions. There has been considerable investment in exploring the abatement potential offered by these supplements globally. **More work is needed to make this option viable for widespread adoption.*** (page 13, paragraph 4).

This work forms a considerable part of ASSA's current funded work plan over the following year or so, however wider ongoing strategic government investment in our sector will be required in order to build on this important initial scientific, information sharing and advocacy foundation.

Aside from the significant potential environmental benefits that this early work will progress, potential economic benefits could include a new and high-tech Australian seaweed industry projected to deliver \$100 million in GVP and 1,200 jobs including in the regions, over the coming years.

More ambitiously and with the right policy supports, the foundations can be put in place right now for a sustainable \$1.5 billion industry set to deliver 9,000 new local Australian jobs by 2040. By way of one example, one industry member is preparing to announce a significant private investment in regional Australia within the next three weeks alone.

4. ASSA improvement to Feed Supplements section of Paper (sentence removal)

ASSA takes issue with the Paper's final language in that same section (page 13, paragraph 4) that *'[A]ustralia's expansive pasture-based production systems present a particular challenge in terms of delivering supplements to grazing livestock.'*

This is not a particular challenge above others, there are a range of opportunities to deliver these supplements, and ASSA will provide further input via a dedicated meeting in the coming weeks as the Sectoral Plan begins to take shape.

In the interim, ASSA politely suggests the removal of that sentence (in yellow above) in this and any further commentary, to ensure that this sentence does not take hold.

5. Wider Commentary

More broadly, ASSA agrees with the Paper's outline of the higher ambition needed to tackle climate change, across all sectors but with this Paper's focus on agriculture, and the global momentum is clearly continuing, with nations at the recent COP28 in Dubai approving a roadmap for *'transitioning away from fossil fuels'* – a first for a UN climate conference.

Moreover, ASSA supports with the Paper's efforts to build on existing efforts and knowledge, other opportunities to reduce emissions outside of the above-mentioned livestock sector, further emissions pathways development, and further innovation and capacity building to support and enable actual emissions reduction.

On behalf of ASSA, I look forward to engaging productively with the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and the Australian Government more broadly including key Offices involved (Minster Watt, Minister Bowen and Minister Plibersek) as well as the Prime Minister's Office, as this important policy work is progressed across this and the other Sectoral Plans.

Kind regards,



Lindsay Hermes

General Manager

Australian Sustainable Seaweed Alliance (ASSA)

