



Australian Government
Department of Agriculture
and Water Resources

SECRETARY

[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

The Department of Agriculture and Water Resources welcomes the opportunity to identify issues requiring consideration as part of the review of the National Gene Technology Scheme (the scheme).

Gene Technologies have the potential to offer a vast array of benefits to the environment, farmers, industry and consumers. Adopting the best available technology is a cornerstone of Australian agriculture becoming more sustainable, competitive and profitable.

Significant technological advances have occurred since the 2011 review of the scheme. This provides a timely opportunity to consider the following issues, relevant to the national agricultural interest, during the review. These include how we might effectively and efficiently:

1. Drive Australia's international competitiveness for agricultural products
2. Support and grow market access for genetically modified, conventional and organic products
3. Support national biosecurity management
4. Accommodate further technological advances.

We also welcome consideration of reducing red tape, establishing national consistency, clarifying the roles of responsible agencies in any future state, reducing legislative overlap and identifying gaps.

We recognise that stakeholders will want the future scheme to provide both clarity and flexibility. This is important to send a signal to drive investment in innovative technologies. To this end we welcome the review providing sufficient detail and assurances on future processes for release of genetically modified organisms.

I also welcome the review's consideration of the issues raised by two recent relevant inquiries. The Productivity Commission's Inquiry into the Regulation of Agriculture (2017) and the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Agriculture and Industry's Inquiry into Agricultural Innovation (2016) both identified removal of state moratoria on genetically modified crops as a matter for government consideration.

I look forward to providing further input to support your review of the scheme.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Daryl Quinlivan', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Daryl Quinlivan

14 September 2017