

Editor "***The Land***"

Dear Sir/Madam

Matthew Cawood's article "***The Soil Carbon Conundrum***" indicates that some CSIRO scientists have reservations about Australian soils being able to hold significant amounts of carbon while independent researchers and farmers have different views.

Let's hope the Commonwealth's \$20M research project does ask the right questions and proves that low input, organic farming methods can both build topsoil and store large amounts of carbon.

We need a cost effective, reliable way of sequestering carbon. We're not going to get it from so called "Clean Coal" research.

While some reforestation is desirable we can't afford to lock up good farming land needed for food production and forest accumulation of carbon in less favourable areas is slow compared to what appears to be possible with soils.

The research needs to take a holistic view of farm management in assessing the potential for carbon sequestration in soils.

The Americans are off and running in this area, see [www.carbonfarmersofamerica.com](http://www.carbonfarmersofamerica.com).

Additionally, there appear to be many side benefits such as improving soil health and productivity.

If grazing is managed with a view to building soil carbon, enough carbon can be stored to offset the negative greenhouse effects of methane produced by cattle.

A large-scale move to actively storing carbon in soils should be a very positive thing for Australian agriculture and for our efforts to combat climate change.

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