



NORTHERN TERRITORY CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Media Release

Every Day is Environment Day for NT Cattle Producers

June 5, 2009

As custodians for more than 45% of the Northern Territory, our producers are improving and protecting the natural environment in which their livestock graze - for future generations.

Every day, our producers manage wildlife, weeds, feral animals and fire as one of our worlds lowest impact, clean and green food production systems. We are renowned for our efficiency, maximising productivity while enhancing soil health. "Every Day is Environment Day. Our future depends on it", said Rohan Sullivan, President of the Northern Territory Cattlemen's Association.

Livestock play an important part in the carbon cycle. The trees, shrubs, grasses and soil act as carbon stores, harvesting and absorbing green house gasses that are released into the atmosphere.

In fact, soil under well managed production systems store about the same total carbon as soil under forests¹.

We are being told from some quarters that we should replace meat in our diet with grain protein. The vast majority of the NT and our Northern Australian rangelands is not suitable for more intensive forms of food production such as grain, and in fact to replace red meat proteins with plant based proteins, Australia would need to find an arable area the size of Victoria and Tasmania combined - on top of the land currently being used for plant based food production. With less than 7% of the Australian landmass suitable for cropping² this is clearly not practical

"We are proud of our record as one of the worlds most efficient and environmentally friendly food producers and look forward to delivering a sustainable and productive future for our children and our Territory" said Rohan.

The NTCA is working with its partner Meat and livestock Australia to improve understanding of the vital role we play in managing our environment and encourages you to visit www.mla.com.au/ourcommitment

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¹ Guo, LB Gifford, RM (2002) Soil carbon stocks and land use change: a meta analysis. Global Change Biology 8 345-360

² Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, FAO Statistical Year Book viewed 30 April 2009 www.fao.org

'Advancing and protecting the interests of the cattle producers in the Northern Territory'