

I write to request that soil carbon sequestration be given the Commissions support rather than dismissal.

In this draft report while increasing soil carbon is acknowledged as a significant avenue for carbon sequestration - (see box 10.3 p244)

"a theoretical potential for increasing soil carbon under New Zealand pastures ranging from an extra 10 to 42 tonnes a hectare – enough to offset the increase in agricultural GHG emissions between 1990 and 2014."

It appears, overall, to be dismissed because of

" The difficulties in understanding the complex interactions of different management practices and their effects on soil carbon; and of measuring changes in soil carbon at the farm level, pose challenges for recognising soil carbon sequestration through the NZ ETS."

If for example a sheep and beef farmer takes a farm with an inert soil, devoid of microbiome due to input dependant, toxic practices, and without changing land use, converts the soil into something teeming with (carbon base) life the only variable that has changed is the amount of carbon based life in the soil. This life feed in complex cycles from plant matter, and ultimately the atmosphere.

To quote from the carbon farming group – Nicole Masters, of Integrity Soils said at a recent soil carbon conference that she finds, " the principles of carbon farming incredibly exciting, this really is farming for the future! I would like to see farmers be rewarded for their practices as opposed to being taxed on emissions. There are many good examples around the world of farmers being rewarded credits through improving their soil management techniques."

You raised the expense of soil analysis, but these beneficial farming practices depend on good analysis, the more accurate the better.

Once satisfied of a measure for carbon sequestration a simple fee/rebate scheme where farmers improving soil carbon sequestration are supported by non-participating or soil depleting farmers would provide a clear guidance to the farming community. Such a levy could be introduced at a very low level and raised until farming practices responded adequately.

These beneficial farming practices have other significant and timely effects. They improve water quality due decreased run off and nutrient loss. They reduce chemical use. They add value to our NZ protein brand, which faces international resistance on climate change - due to food miles, and the emergence of industrially produced methaneless, protein.

Please advocate for further research into a highly beneficial method which could "offset the increase in agricultural GHG emissions between 1990 and 2014" rather than dismissing a farming practice that has such important and widespread benefits.

Regards

Derek Parkes