

## Submission to the Agriculture and Food Policy Reference Group

### Water

The major emphasis in the next century in water utilisation needs to focus on recycling and re-use strategies for all types of wastewater. At present some major cities discharge substantial amounts of wastewater into the sea through ocean outfalls. Much of this water can be recovered for a wide range of uses. Several grades of recovered water can be provided for irrigation, domestic and industrial use. Stormwater/rainwater collection and re-use can be fitted as a standard in new residential and industrial developments. Outside the capital cities wastewater can be re-used for irrigation supply for agriculture and for public parks and sportsfields at relatively low cost. It is likely to be much more cost and energy effective to recover wastewater, stormwater and rainwater than to desalinate seawater, due to the lower osmotic pressure of wastewater. While there is opposition to the direct reuse of wastewater for human consumption, the majority of water used in urban and rural environments is not used for drinking or other clean water uses, but for watering parks and gardens, waste flushing and washing vehicles, all activities that can be done with recovered water.

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