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## **NEW THINKING AND ANALYSIS NEEDED FOR LOW EMISSIONS SOCIETIES**

*Media are welcome to register and attend and press releases are available on request. The [program](#) is online. Please contact [Cathy Reade](#) 0413 575 934 for releases or to arrange attendance or interviews.*

In her Presidential Address to the Australasian Agricultural and Resource Economics Society (AARES), Dr Suzi Kerr will draw on 25 years of working on emissions trading and on mitigation in the land sector to discuss new thinking and analysis needed for solutions to produce low emission societies.

“Economists have, so far, been less effective than anticipated in their contribution to the climate change debate, particularly around emissions pricing, but have much to offer in meeting the biggest environmental challenge of our time,” she will explain to 300 colleagues from around the world attending the 63<sup>rd</sup> Annual AARES Conference at Melbourne’s Convention Centre, 12-15 February.

Dr Kerr will discuss three areas where economists have important contributions to make: transfers of resources across countries to support climate cooperation; effective reforestation within an emissions trading system, and the role of pricing for mitigating biological emissions from agriculture.

“The best local emission mitigation solutions will depend on the land and on the farmer. Emission pricing could play a role in enabling a gradual transition to a climate-friendly land sector,” said Dr Kerr, who has recently taken on the role as the Chief Economist at the Environmental Defense Fund, based in New York. Dr Kerr is the founding Director and now Senior Fellow at Motu Economic and Public Policy Research, a non-profit research institute in New Zealand, and has held visiting positions at MIT, Stanford and the University of the Andes in Colombia.

“Large resource transfers are required for a global transition to net zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and a stable climate. A ‘climate team’ of countries offers one model to enable countries to cooperate to enable the transfer of mitigation results across countries to achieve each country’s GHG emissions target. These could have more environmental integrity, lower transaction costs and greater potential than existing approaches,” she said.

“Reforestation, in which New Zealand has 10 years of positive and negative experiences, is also a key climate mitigation option which brings many other benefits for water quality, soil protection and biodiversity. Pricing for forest sequestration is possible but requires simple credible systems for small landowners. Policy driven uncertainty in long-term prices has been deterring long-term investments, and an option that may have a larger role than anticipated is the development of permanent forests, including natives,” she explained.

“We know that livestock emissions from ruminant animals, such as cows, sheep, deer and goats, are key contributors to climate change. Methane reductions can be achieved through greater efficiency, bringing productivity benefits, and through land-use change to either forests or alternative, non-ruminant production.”

“In each of these areas, economists have an important role to play and should be front-and-centre in policy development and negotiations,” she concluded.

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