A Sovereign Fertiliser Proposal

The ask

A 10,000 tonne per year offtake commitment from the Victorian Government. In return, we fund and build the Victorian manufacturing plant with our own capital:

- 20 local jobs
- 10,000 tonnes of glass waste diverted from landfill each year
- 26,000 tonnes of imported urea displaced per plant
- Price locked for 5 years to give farmers absolute certainty
- No boat, no Strait of Hormuz, no sovereign risk

Why this matters now

Australia relies entirely on imports for urea, and around 62 per cent of fertiliser imports arrive through the Strait of Hormuz. The 2026 Middle East conflict froze those cargoes and prices effectively doubled. The Federal Government stood up a Fertiliser Supply Working Group and underwrote emergency purchases, yet every one of those measures buys the same imported tonne from the same sea lane. MaxSil is the only proposal on the table that reduces the import bill instead of financing it.

Proven in Victoria

Tony Donovan runs pasture at Mid Field Meats near Warrnambool. His result is verified and sits in the taskforce's own backyard:

> *"We grew a 12.4 tonne dry matter crop in just 93 days from germination, using only 19 units of NPK. Normally you'd be looking at 120 to 200 units to grow an 8 to 9 tonne crop. There's already plenty in the soil; MaxSil unlocks it."*

Those 19 units equate to roughly 40 kg of urea per hectare against a conventional 300 kg. One tonne of urea covers 3.3 hectares in a conventional program and 24.4 hectares blended with MaxSil, a 7.3 times stretch and a urea saving of more than 80 per cent. Applied through his existing liquid rig with no new equipment.

How it works

MaxSil is made from 100 per cent recycled glass and delivers plant available silicon as silicic acid (H_4SiO_4). Silicon improves nitrogen use efficiency, so less urea is lost to volatilisation and leaching; it competes with phosphate for soil binding sites, unlocking legacy phosphorus; and it toughens plant tissue against pests. MaxSil complements urea rather than replacing NPK. It makes scarce nitrogen go further. This is patented IP: breakthrough technology created and innovated here in Australia.

The economics, on the Donovan numbers

Program	Inputs	Coverage	Cost
Conventional	7.32 t urea	24.4 ha	$10,976
Blended with MaxSil	1 t urea plus 2.44 t MaxSil	24.4 ha	$5,524

Same coverage at roughly half the cost, with reduced MAP and DAP on top. In a shortage, cost is only half the point: MaxSil works when urea simply is not on the wharf.

Why the policy environment favours MaxSil right now

It answers the question the Government is asking. Every 2026 measure, whether underwriting, the taskforce or diplomacy, is about getting more imported tonnes into the country. MaxSil inverts the problem: every kilogram of urea, MAP or DAP a farmer no longer needs is a kilogram removed from import exposure entirely. That demand side sovereignty framing is distinctive; no other current policy lever reduces the import requirement itself.

The window is open now, not in 2027. Domestic urea production is zero until Perdaman commissions in mid 2027. MaxSil is in stock, in distribution, and deployable through equipment farmers already own. It is one of very few domestic responses available for the 2026 and 2027 seasons, including the imminent winter top dressing

decision point ABARES has flagged.

It complements, not competes with, the Government's flagship investment. Perdaman solves urea; MaxSil improves the efficiency of whatever nitrogen and phosphorus is applied, and addresses phosphorus lock up, which no urea plant touches. The value proposition survives, and arguably strengthens, after 2027, avoiding the strategic trap facing any direct urea play. That gives the proposal a durable policy narrative beyond 2027.

The sovereign manufacturing picture

Perdaman Urea Project (Project Ceres), Karratha WA. A $6.5 billion plant producing 2.3 million tonnes of urea per annum, with at least 1 million tonnes earmarked for domestic use. Commonwealth support includes a NAIF loan of up to $220 million, around $95 million for Water Corporation infrastructure, around $160 million for the Port of Dampier wharf, and a $269 million Export Finance Australia loan, with Major Project Status awarded. Commissioning is targeted for March 2027 and full production for June 2027. The Resources Minister has said it will make Australia basically independent in urea.

Strike Energy, Geraldton WA. A government backed proposal for a low emissions green urea facility using green hydrogen, publicly supported by ministers and Grain Producers Australia, with a Hydrogen Headstart Round 2 funding decision expected before Perdaman commissions.

The gap. Australia imports around 2.4 million tonnes of urea a year for agricultural use. Perdaman alone has the capacity to displace most of that volume, but not until 2027, leaving a 12 to 18 month gap with no domestic buffer. MaxSil is the domestic response available inside that gap.

Where Victoria stands

Victoria has made no manufacturing commitments of its own. It explicitly defers to the Commonwealth, noting the Australian Government is responsible for national supply chain resilience including fertilisers, with Victoria in a supporting and coordination role. Agriculture Victoria's activity is information and support for farmers: fuel and fertiliser supply guidance, and drought and energy cost programs.

At the same time, Victoria's Agriculture Sector Emissions Reduction Pledge for 2026 to 2030 targets emissions from livestock, fertiliser use and manure, backed by an initial $6.1 million over two years for research and to fast track commercialisation of practical on farm solutions, framed as an explicit invitation for industry to partner. A MaxSil offtake answers both gaps at once: a practical on farm solution ready to commercialise today, and the manufacturing commitment Victoria currently lacks.

What Victoria gets

A new Victorian manufacturing facility, 20 secure regional jobs, 10,000 tonnes of glass waste diverted from landfill each year, and 26,000 tonnes of imported urea displaced per plant: urea that never has to cross an ocean. Permanent, domestic and price stable. Victoria leads, and carries the proposal up to the federal Working Group where the offtake can be underwritten. Both bodies get a win they can announce.

The offer

We are asking for a 10,000 tonne per year offtake commitment from the Victorian Government. In return, we will fund and build the manufacturing plant with our own capital. No further ask. We also ask the Victorian Government to introduce us to the federal Fertiliser Supply Working Group, as we are requesting that 10,000 tonnes per year from our Brisbane plant be secured as fertiliser.

Highest value use: fertiliser first, concrete last

Fertiliser is the highest value use of this product; concrete sand is the lowest. MaxSil is owned by Sustainable Concrete Group, so if an offtake cannot be secured, the end product will be used in concrete. That path is always open to us, but it is a lower value use of the material and a lower value outcome for Australia compared to fertiliser. Every tonne that goes into concrete is a tonne that could have displaced imported urea, created regional jobs and strengthened sovereign fertiliser supply.

More information

Full proposal, trial data and references: www.maxsil.com.au/ferttaskforce

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Sources: verified Donovan trial collateral (maxsil.com.au); DAFF Fertiliser Supply Working Group; Victorian Drought Response Taskforce; Victorian Agriculture Sector Emissions Reduction Pledge; ABARES; Xu et al. 2020, Nature Scientific Reports. Contact: Bradley Smith, Sustainable Concrete Group, bradley.smith@sustainableconcretegroup.com.au