



National
Farmers
Federation

Australian
Agricultural
Sustainability
Framework



Australian Government

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Aligning to the Framework to establish recognition and credibility

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The Australian Agricultural Sustainability Framework gratefully acknowledges the contributions AgCare.

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AgCarE is an evaluation of agricultural production and natural capital on farm and is a service provider enabling sustainable agribusiness. AgCarE has mapped and aligned its service offerings to the Framework, to ensure its service offering is robust, relevant and reflective of the recognised whole-of-sector sustainability concerns in Australian agriculture.

Background:

AgCarE is a service provider that aims to measure the relationship between natural capital, production, human and economic systems on farms and improve the health of this interdependent system over time. For example, it helps farmers to identify opportunities in the carbon or environmental offset markets, and/or improve business resilience by reducing climate risk such as drought, fire or flood.

AgCarE established its framework and metrics across their service offering in 2019. When the AASF was released in 2022, AgCarE was proactive to check and validate the AASF by mapping and aligning to the Framework.

Approach to using the Framework:

To ensure credibility and value to AgCarE users, they mapped their service offering to the Framework principles, to enable and support their customers' awareness and impact across 15 of the principles. Air Quality (Principle 2) and Supply Chain Accountability (Principle 17) were not considered directly relevant at farm-level.



AgCarE has validated and strengthened the credibility of their service offering, through conducting a gap analysis and mapping to the Framework. AgCarE considers all Framework principles as equal in importance and encourages users to conduct their own prioritisation. The AASF's current materiality assessment will assist with subsequent topic prioritisation needed by stakeholders or/and AgCarE users.

AgCarE has also leveraged and integrated the AASF throughout the organisation, such as by:

- Using the Framework and Criteria to inform the data collection areas for AgCarE's service.
- Building recognition of the AASF into the AgCarE online platform.

- Increasing awareness of the AASF when communicating with clients as to the whole-of-sector definition of sustainability in Australian agriculture.
- Drawing on alignments with the Framework for credibility of AgCarE service.

Integration with the AASF enables AgCarE to demonstrate their contribution to key sustainability objectives of Australian agriculture.

Collaboration and engagement:

Although landowners are at the centre of what AgCarE does, having a large network of connections across the supply chain is important. AgCarE engages with numerous stakeholders, including:

- Banks
- Carbon, environmental offset, or biodiversity project developers
- Insurers
- Government agencies

AgCarE seeks to link users with these stakeholders with the aim of landowners achieving financial and other benefits. Helping landowners understand their needs enables them to take the actions most likely to achieve these desired benefits. AgCarE is also looking to engage with retailers (such as supermarkets) to help secure market access and pricing for sustainably produced commodities that maintain and build natural capital condition.

Lessons to share:

Aligning AgCarE's service offering to the Framework principles has in some cases been challenging, particularly in relation to:

- Air quality (Principle 2)
- Animal Wellbeing (Principle 12)
- Supply Chain Accountability (Principle 17)

It is currently difficult to collect relevant data in these areas, making it problematic for AgCarE to evaluate landowners' impacts. AgCarE has also faced some challenges understanding the specific purpose of some principles, such as Inclusive Industry (Principle 11) and Societal Benefits (Principle 13). Developing indicators (specific measurements) to guide practical data capture methods against each principle and criteria would help all users and identify what and how stakeholders can report against these more subjective principles and criteria.

Intended use of the Framework in the future:

Tackling these challenges is AgCarE's next priority. To do this, they intend to:

- Further investigate the data sources they might use to ensure that their service offering covers all the Framework principles.
- Periodically re-examine how closely their service offering aligns with the key objectives of Australian agriculture and accepted metrics and indicators as the Framework evolves. AgCarE seeks to ensure assessments are continually improving, backed by science and aligned with sustainability frameworks, thereby ensuring that they are supporting landowners to get the most benefit from their actions towards sustainability.



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