

Australian Agricultural Sustainability Framework

Themes, Principles and Criteria



Australian
Agricultural
Sustainability
Framework



Australian Government
Department of Agriculture,
Fisheries and Forestry

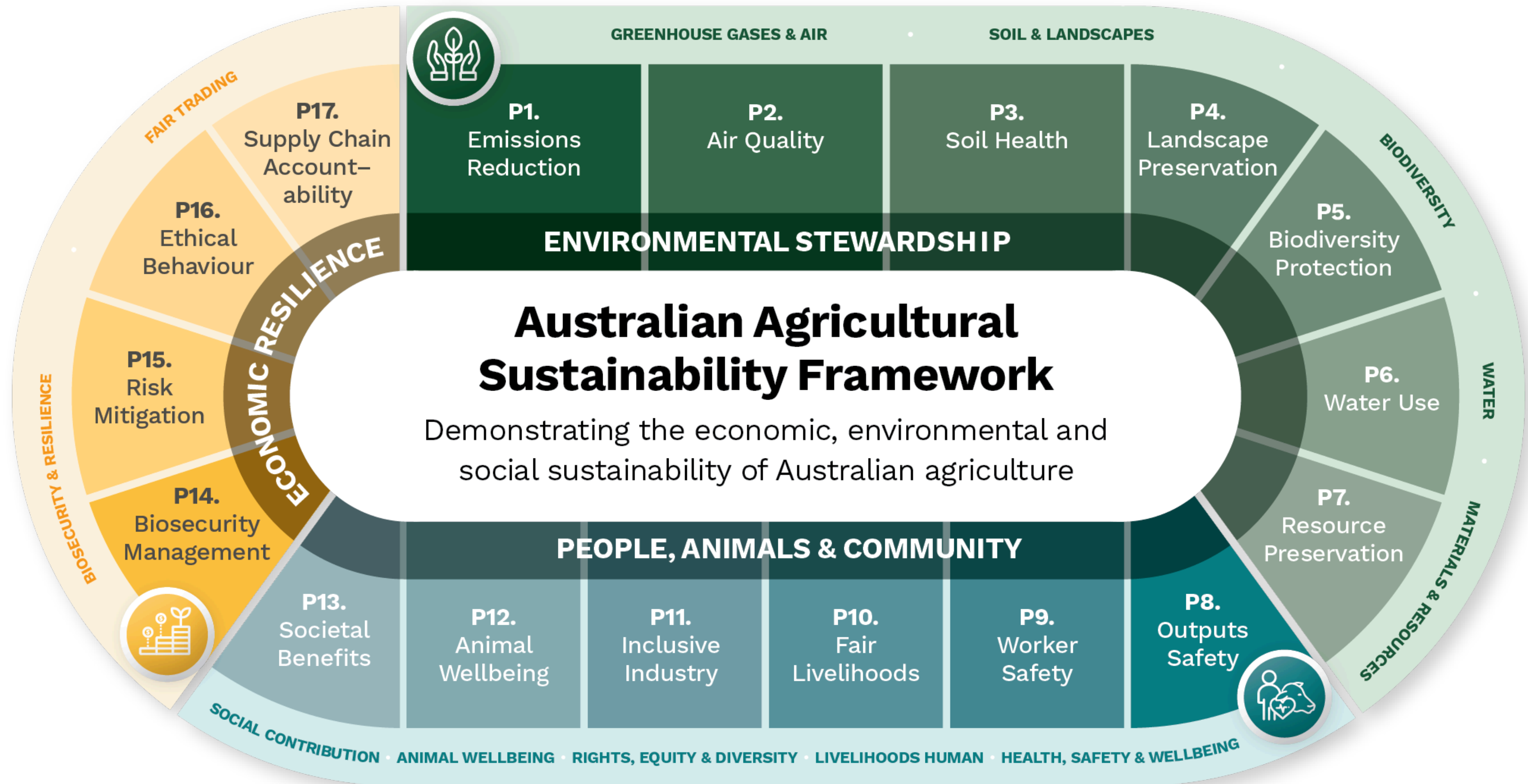
Why these terms? Why this structure?

This framework builds on significant work already underway, reflecting the rapidly maturing sustainability schemes already operating in Australia and globally, and mapping existing industry-level sustainability goals into a catalogue of overarching sustainability principles and criteria for the Australian agricultural industry.

By developing a common set of sustainability principles for the agricultural sector that can be used over time to align sectoral and supply chain language towards a common understanding of sustainability deliverables, the AASF communicates the overall status of Australian agricultural sustainability. This two-way lens helps stakeholders in supply chains, finance and the community to understand the priorities of Australian producers, and helps producers identify where their sustainability focus can be directed.

To reflect the different needs of heterogeneous stakeholders, this framework uses an ESG (Environmental, Social & Governance reporting) structure and sustainability framework language to direct users to material principles and criteria. Just some of the many frameworks, schemes and programs which have been considered are noted here, including the Sustainability Assessment of Food and Agriculture systems (SAFA), Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), Global Farm Metric, Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD), Taskforce on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD), Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) and Sustainable Agriculture Initiative, as well as Australian farm industry sustainability frameworks. The following pages demonstrate how the AASF principles align with many of the existing Australian and international sustainability initiatives.






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THEME	CATEGORY	PRINCIPLE	CRITERIA
<div>  <div>ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP</div> </div>	Greenhouse Gases & Air	P1. Net anthropogenic* GHG emissions are limited to minimise climate change	C1. GHG emissions are reduced throughout production lifecycle
			C2. Carbon emissions are sequestered wherever possible throughout production lifecycle
			C3. Where necessary (if C1 & C2 are impractical), GHG emissions are offset throughout lifecycle by purchasing recognised credits or participating in recognised projects
		P2. Adverse impacts to air quality are avoided or minimised	C4. Plant, equipment and machinery are appropriately maintained and operated to maximise efficiency
			C5. Activities which generate particulate matter are conducted within regulatory guidelines
	Soil & Landscapes	P3. Soil health and functionality are protected and enhanced	C6. Soils are managed to provide ecosystem services, including sustainable agricultural production
		P4. Landscape degradation is avoided or minimised	C7. Land under productive agricultural management delivers beneficial environmental services
			C8. Natural waterways are preserved and improved
	Biodiversity	P5. Biodiverse ecological communities are protected and enhanced	C9. Farms support a diverse range of beneficial flora and fauna species
			C10. Farm-related ecosystems are functioning and thriving
	Water	P6. Water resources are used responsibly and equitably	C11. Water is used efficiently in agricultural systems
			C12. Adverse impacts to surface water and groundwater quality are prevented
	Materials & Resources	P7. Finite resources are safeguarded in circular economic systems	C13. The use of inputs and resources that cannot be reused or recycled is minimised
			C14. Renewable sources of inputs are prioritised
			C15. Residues, by-products and waste are reused or recycled

* ‘Anthropogenic’ meaning that which originates from human activity – e.g., emissions from farmed livestock are under human management

THEME	CATEGORY	PRINCIPLE	CRITERIA
<div>  <div>PEOPLE, ANIMALS & COMMUNITY</div> </div>	Human Health, Safety & Wellbeing	P8. Agricultural outputs are safe and beneficial	C16. Food and fibre is produced, packaged and distributed to world-leading standards of safety
			C17. Food produced by the industry is healthy and nutritional
			C18. Producers practice good antimicrobial stewardship
		P9. Safe working environments are provided for employees	C19. Occupational health and safety are upheld in the working environment
			C20. Labour rights are respected and compliance with relevant legislation is demonstrated
			C21. Physical health and mental wellbeing are valued and actively supported
	Livelihoods	P10. Fair access to a decent livelihood is provided within the industry	C22. Profitability and competitiveness are encouraged
	Rights, Equity & Diversity	P11. Discrimination is not tolerated in an inclusive industry	C23. Participants are provided both a living wage and a rewarding, enriching work environment
			C24. Human rights are unequivocally respected
	Animal Wellbeing	P12. Farmed animals are given the best care for whole of life	C25. Workplace diversity is valued and actively supported
			C26. Best practice on-farm husbandry is demonstrated
			C27. Safe transportation of animals is demonstrated
	Social Contribution	P13. Society benefits from the agricultural industry's positive contribution	C28. Humane end of life for farmed animals is ensured
			C29. Industry contributes to local community economic growth and social capital
			C30. Indigenous culture is recognised, respected, valued and actively supported
			C31. Community trust in the industry is upheld

THEME	CATEGORY	PRINCIPLE	CRITERIA
 <div>ECONOMIC RESILIENCE</div>	Biosecurity & Resilience	P14. Biosecurity threats are assessed, mitigated and effectively managed in systems of continuous improvement	C32. Farms have systems in place to monitor risk, prevent and mitigate adverse impacts from biosecurity threats
			C33. Industry has systems in place to monitor risk, prevent and mitigate adverse impacts from biosecurity threats
			C34. Government has systems in place to monitor risk, prevent and mitigate adverse impacts from biosecurity threats
		P15. Resilience is protected and enhanced by assessment, mitigation and management of risks	C35. Government and industry develop and extend overarching national scenario planning for industry risks
			C36. Industry participants develop, implement and regularly review risk management plans
			C37. Innovation and infrastructure are well-resourced and supported by government and industry, and can be equitably accessed by industry participants
	Fair Trading	P16. Industry participants behave ethically and lawfully	C38. Compliance with applicable laws and regulations is demonstrated
			C39. Fair access to participate equally in markets is ensured
			C40. Zero tolerance for bribery or corruption is demonstrated
		P17. Supply chain accountability ensures a level playing field and the elimination of unconscionable conduct	C41. Product provenance information is readily available via robust traceability
			C42. Information asymmetry in the supply chain is eliminated where perverse outcomes are a risk
			C43. Sustainability accounting is harmonised to ensure fair and just assessments of baselines and progress across the industry

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