

Are you responding on behalf of an organisation or industry body?

Yes

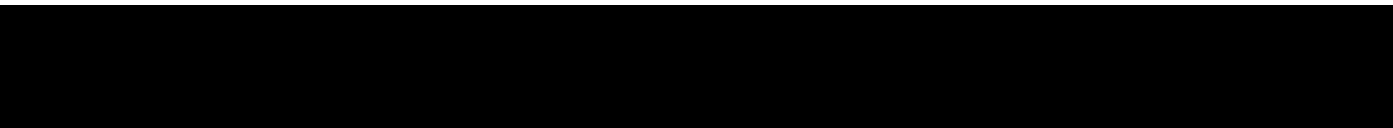
Who are you responding on behalf of?

[Redacted]

How would you like to respond?

c. Both

Upload your document here:



What are the opportunities to reduce emissions and build carbon stores in agriculture and the land? What are the main barriers to action?

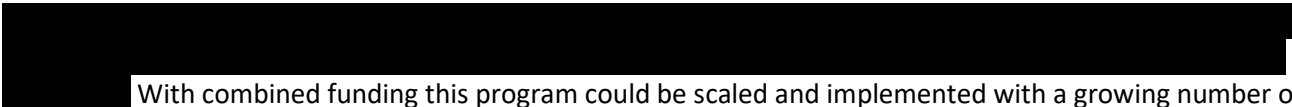
Significant opportunity exists in the Norther Arid Zone (NAZ) for an extension of the low rainfall savanna burning method. Ensuring that all Indigenous held land is included in future methods that are developed is vital in improving

national accounts for emissions reduction. Better understanding landscape function and accounting for improvements in land management at scale will see immediate improvements in land condition and emissions abatement.

How can we progress emission reduction efforts whilst also building resilience and adapting to climate change?

Streamlining the process of having methods reviewed and new inclusions made by the Clea Energy Regulator would see an immediate improvement in accounts and opportunity. Investing in skills and capacity to support regional and remote communities to develop adaptation strategies that are locally relevant and scalable. Ensuring the skills for implementing this strategies are embedded into community and government functions, rather than becoming the focus of consultants and the private sector, will see these skills implemented across sectors for the public benefit.

Are there initiatives or innovative programs underway that could be applied or expanded on at a national scale?

 With combined funding this program could be scaled and implemented with a growing number of partners. Government funding for this program is crucial at this stage in its development, with alternative financing mechanisms yet to be available for regions south of the current savanna burning footprint. The benefits of improved fire management can be seen in regional and remote communities. Enabling better collaboration between sectors will see improved outcomes for neighbouring land holders as well as direct benefits for indigenous held land.

How can the Australian Government bring together existing effort and new initiatives into one coordinated plan?

There have been numerous consultations of late that have many cross cutting themes. Focusing in establish and coordinated sharing of information across government departments to extract the best information possible from many angles will make the best of the time spent in consultation.

What are the most important options to be further adopted or supported, looking in the short and the longer-term?

combining the nature repair market and carbon opportunities to ensure the best quality and most viable outcomes for land management projects.

What are the practical solutions to increase uptake?

Broad community education and engagement for regional, remote and low socio-economic communities to encourage knowledge sharing and uptake. Frameworks that ensure that the primary beneficiary of new programs is the land holder and local communities, rather than third party providers and aggregators.

How do you see the agriculture and land sectors contributing over the medium and longer-term? What are the opportunities to deliver emission reductions in parallel with wider goals?

The nation needs a cultural shift in how we view our place in nature. We are a part of the environment, and our collective actions and attitudes can have a profound positive or negative impact on our surroundings. As a society we need to shift our interest to become more engaged in the landscape, and more supportive of those who are working positive outcomes.

How can the Australian Government better support agriculture and land sectors to:

a) drive innovation

b) build capacity

c) ensure the system enables emissions reductions

Ensure that knowledge and skills are made available to landholders on an equitable and accessible footing. Fund locally relevant bodies to work with interest groups sustainable, well-informed actions.

What new initiatives could the Australian Government design that would support emissions reduction and carbon storage in agriculture and land and help ensure a productive, profitable, resilient and sustainable future for the sectors?

Enable the extension of current methods into new areas, such as the extension of the low rainfall savanna method in to the NAZ. Ensure that water resources are managed in a way that creates a positive impact on land and agriculture. this may require greater coordination with the mineral resource industry.

A consistent and trusted approach for assessing and reporting emissions is often raised as a barrier to reducing emissions. Is there a role for the Australian Government in addressing this concern, and how can producers and land managers be supported?

Providing better guidance, and embedding skilled personnel within government to allow for a 'no cost' model of information distribution and knowledge sharing would be a huge benefit. There is currently a capacity gap being filled by third party for profit companies.

What skills, knowledge and capabilities do you think producers and land managers need to implement change? What information and data would help them make decisions about emissions reductions and sustainable land management in the short and longer-term?

One size does not fit all in this space. Producers will want to see any change in practice as one that will benefit their bottom line without providing extra burden on an already stretched system. there is a lack of data to support decision making in regional and remote areas. Climatic, rainfall, vegetation and fire data are all required to inform changes in practice. skilled interpretation of that data is also desperately needed.

Do you have any additional views or feedback that you would like to include in your response?

please see submission attached.

Is your response confidential?

No

Do you agree to your response being published on our website?

Yes

Please de-identify my response

Yes

I have read and understood the privacy notice and consent to the collection, use and disclosure of my personal information as outlined in the privacy notice.

Yes

Confirm that you have read and understand this declaration.

Yes

[REDACTED]

The Hon Murray Watt
Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
GPO Box 858
Canberra ACT 2601

13/12/2023

Dear Minister Watt,

Engaging First Nations people in Australia's agricultural and land sector plan

The specific inclusion of First Nations people and First Nations managed lands in the Agriculture, Land and Emissions Discussion Paper is a welcome acknowledgment of the critical role that First Nations people play in land management.

Desert First Nations people:

- are responsible for managing 22 Indigenous Protected Areas (IPA), a large portion of Australia's National Reserve
- stewards for a significant proportion of Australia's remaining landscapes and biodiversity
- play an essential role in Australia's ability to meet international conservation and biodiversity protection targets.

[REDACTED]

A recent face-to-face consultation, showed that there is a significant need for the coordination of expertise that can support regional and remote Australia to understand what climate change and adaptation means for them. [REDACTED] has observed that this is a capacity gap for those working with First Nations, farming or other communities. Many small communities and the organisations that support them have difficulty in prioritising engagement in the array of consultations that occur through various departments. Finding and resourcing methods for consultation and engagement with communities to understand their priorities will assist in the engagement of those communities. Building relationships will then allow for elevation of the importance of issues that are identified remotely from those communities.

This is a challenge that extends beyond the scope of this discussion paper. Investment in regionally focused entities that can bridge the gap between the community and government is essential if

[REDACTED]

locally focused climate adaptation is to be a priority. [REDACTED] supports this observation from the discussion paper.

There are a number of initiatives underway on First Nations lands which directly and indirectly address and build resilience to climate change. This includes the successful IPA program and Indigenous Ranger Programs, as well as Healthy Country Planning. Demand for these programs continues to outstrip available funding. There is ongoing opportunity for growth and expansion, particularly through guaranteed long-term funding. These programs deliver on Australian Government commitments under multiple portfolios, highlighting not only the need to continue to support them, but also the opportunity to build and expand on their success through cross-agency support and collaboration.

[REDACTED]

The benefits of the [REDACTED] program are much broader than the funded objectives. As well as protecting biodiversity, the program is reducing wildfire spread and protecting communities. This program is an example of varied benefits from a single source of funding. These outcomes were achievable because of the funding model. Allocating a specific fund to the combined benefits of this style of land management would open up opportunities to look after less productive or intensively managed lands, while protecting the productive value of adjacent land and communities. It should be noted that the IDA has invested significantly in seeking alternate funding, as well as developing carbon and biodiversity methods that we anticipate will generate income in the near future, provided the right pathways as outlined below, are established by government.

The Australian Carbon Credit Unit (ACCU) Scheme, as taken up through the Savanna Fire Management (SFM) method, is another example of a program that could be expanded nationally across First Nations lands. As already noted, the majority of lands where First Nations people would hold the right to undertake an ACCU Scheme project are not currently covered by an applicable method. Concerningly, it appears that addressing this inequity and ensuring these methods will support expanded First Nations participation is not a priority for DCCEEW. To expand upon the success of the existing Savanna carbon industry, emerging and new methods under the ACCU Scheme need to explicitly seek to overcome this inequitable coverage.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

has undertaken for DCCEEW. Indigenous rights and interests are legally recognised over 89% of the proposed 850,000km2 extension area. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] are seeking to have the SFM method extended further south as soon as possible to provide northern desert Indigenous groups with an opportunity to participate in the carbon economy

The Nature Repair Market provides a further opportunity to expand opportunities and build climate resilience in the land sector. Nature Repair projects will deliver direct environmental benefits, such as improved biodiversity. They will also have flow-through benefits for climate adaptation, including increased landscape and community resilience. In order to realise these benefits, it is essential that the Nature Repair market is accessible to First Nations people and applicable to First Nations country.

Recommendations

1. The crucial role of First Nations people as landowners, managers, and stewards, as recognised throughout the Discussion Paper, means that targeted, and supported engagement, including through dedicated face-to-face workshops in appropriate locations with First Nations groups, will be essential to ensure First Nations' voices are appropriately reflected in the Agricultural and Land Sector Plan.
2. To support the efficiency and efficacy of this consultation, the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) should identify crossovers with related programs and consultations, for example ACCU Review and developing Nature Repair markets, and work with other agencies to deliver coordinated collaborative workshops.
3. The IFLM and SFM methods should be developed to ensure maximum geographic coverage of First Nations lands.
4. The IPA and Indigenous Ranger Programs should be strengthened through ongoing commitments to long-term funding. Support should be offered for the full sector, including cross agency support and ongoing professional development of rangers.
5. The developing Nature Repair Market should identify and explicitly prioritise application to First Nations lands, and should work with First Nations organisations to collaboratively design and develop the program. All methods should be reflective and inclusive of the value of First Nations land management practices.

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]