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**Which of the following best describes your situation?**

Landowner

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

No

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**How would you like to respond?**

a. Answer discussion paper questions via the online survey

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

Opportunities are around land management and the need for more knowledge. Individual farmers are time poor and lack access to labor resources so often do not have the time to investigate, money to test soil for carbon sequestration, complete field work for biodiversity counts etc. They need local personnel eg LLS staff to support them individually to garner greater understanding around the health of their own land and what opportunities are available to increase understanding and provide strategies to assist with decreasing emissions. Opportunities are about looking at enterprises holistically and measuring what is a naturally occurring function as opposed to an introduced industrialised function.

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

Once again this needs to be a grass roots campaign where farmers are taken along the journey with support that is both local and practical. It is no good stating what has to be done without individual support provided by local expertise that farmers are prepared to trust. This means it needs to be people who have a knowledge of agricultural

practices today but also understand how to modify these to move forward without diminishing the financial return to the farmer so they are still able to operate in what will become a more difficult climate.

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

Regenerative ag needs to be promoted more but at the same time provide farmers (both long term and new practitioners) with opportunities to learn how to measure increases in biodiversity, carbon sequestration. Also more studies around the impacts of different type of pasture species in livestock diets and how they impact on methane production. Are we better to be grazing native pastures as opposed to introduced species? are quick moves into freshly growing pastures less harmful than set stocking. Can farmers offset some of their stock emissions by implementing other practices on farm such as battery storage for electricity, reducing fuel via solar but at the same time still remain profitable when having to incorporate the capital expenses to do so? This is why one size does not fit all.

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

The Australian government needs to work more closely with grassroot organisations that are on the ground like LLS. Making policy without the on ground knowledge will never work and will have less credence with local farmers. The Australia government needs to also support the clean green image of Australian agriculture and provide opportunities for the farming community to gather data to support this. At the moment it is very piecemeal and with poor communication in rural Australia and the assumption that everyone is engaged with the internet means that often you do not hear about opportunities till it is too late.

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

A methane vaccine for stock should be pushed for further research. Instruction on how farmers can improve biodiversity instead of growing monocultures. An understanding that grasslands are just as valuable as trees and their biodiversity can be promoted by pasture cropping.

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**What are the practical solutions to increase uptake?**

Education and knowledge at the local level so it is climate, topography, soil specific to suit local areas. Development of integrated systems for water management on farms. Many have adopted solar systems for bores however they still require night time pumping with diesel. Cost of batteries and/or electricity to isolated areas is often prohibitive

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**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?**

Methane vaccine Agriculture is already contributing much more than the urban environment to reductions. Through adoption of solar both home and bores, reduction in land clearing and the introduction of designated REZ regions that are removing much land from agricultural production means that the impose on the agriculture sector has been huge. If every urban household was encouraged to adopt solar with batteries and every new house had to have insulation, double glazing, solar etc this would help. The adoption of electric transport in rural Australia needs to be investigated much more thoroughly. There are very few charging stations (they should be every 50 kms to spread

them out more). Currently many of the vehicles that are electric do not have a suitable spare tyres for rural travel which means you are still locked in to diesel/petrol vehicles. Government needs to legislate for emissions with petrol vehicles. Natural agricultural systems need to be maintained and supported so that they are profitable and productive as there is a perception often you have to be a big commercial enterprise to succeed however often these systems have a lot of waste in resources, time etc. They are often the go to farmers to garner opinions and consequently have more weight in decision making which often means that small ideas that can have a big impact are often overlooked.

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**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**

Drive Innovation - Ask farmers individually rather than just farming organisations and government entities. This will be more costly and take more time however it will result in a much better outcome and a broad cross section and is a good opportunity to increase knowledge about the headwinds ag is facing. Build Capacity Education and knowledge shared through practice in local communities is much more valuable. ENSures systems enable emissions reductions Provide information about how farmers can reduce emissions. Provide a calculator that takes into account the whole picture not just fuel usage and stock numbers. It needs to look at grazing management, adoption of renewal energy into the business, resources used, reused, recycled, tree planting, biodiverse pastures, waste production from farm etc. The knowledge on how to measure all these areas that make up a farm is what farmers need so they can accurately measure their output. Every city household should have to measure their output also based on cars, air travel, adoption of renewal energy systems, waste etc to get a real picture of how Australia travels.

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**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?**

New Initiatives 1. Stop centralisation of services to prevent so much travel. Most rural people now travel much greater distances than we did as children with no public transport available. 2. Put local back into local government to prevent wastage, excess travel, lack of knowledge about their constituents who live a long way from the hub. 3. Provide realistic support for people to insulate old farm houses, double glaze windows, adopt renewal energy for households and farm resources. 4. Actually look at what carbon storage in ag is possible by adopting biodiverse cropping, choice of best feed pastures for grazing animals and reducing manufactured fertilizers. 5. Be more holistic about approach rather than create silos of experts that do not put the whole picture together. Specialisation results in wasted time as farmers have to spend time picking the bits out of things that suit their area to implement. Need local whole of community projects that people can adopt and bring the numbers with them. 6. Treating things like mental health in isolation is not good enough to build resilience eg. Current stress around compulsory acquisitions of land for transmission lines without providing support services where they are needed, appropriate strategies for alternative income, and options on how to negotiate construction periods effectively in rural Australia without have appropriate consultation does not produce resilience or provide for sustainable long term resilient communities. 6. Sustainability is about economic, environmental and social outcomes in rural Australia so all policies need to address these aspects much more effectively. Eg if government legislates to tax ag for emissions how will that impact the community, long term profitability and Australia's food security. 7. Food security for Australians will gradually reduce as more land is used for urbanisation, renewal energy projects, mining, offsets etc so government needs to put some value on the long term sustainability of ag. There has to be a measure for this and farmers attempting to do the right thing should be rewarded more.

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**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?**

Totally agree with this statement. It is hard to get a holistic picture of the true emission levels of ag when you are producing protein but at the same time increasing biodiversity, sequestering carbon, adopting renewal energy etc. Farmers need to be supported to measure some of these aspects so they can be recorded accurately at the moment it is so piecemeal and there are no calculators that look at the carbon producing measures and offset them with the carbon reducing measures.

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**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?**

Skills on how to measure outputs effectively so they are consistent across the industry. Financial support to get a baseline measurement of carbon sequestration and soil health. Once farmers have accurate data that is meaningful for their individual enterprise they can then adopt measures to support a reduction in emissions as they will have a greater understanding of where their farm fits and what needs to be done. This is a huge task to measure each farm and educate in the process individually however the long term outcomes for increased knowledge and understanding would be great for the industry.

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

It would be great to have an agricultural plan however it will not work unless farmers are taken on the journey with its formation. The plan has to be localised and implemented by local personnel. It has to appear relevant and entice individual farmers to engage as it appears to help their business. It is no good adopting plans for example based on satellite mapping imagery data unless it is fact checked first as history has shown where the mistakes are. Farmers know their land, where productive soils are, where lightning strikes usually occur, which areas are hard to grow trees in and where natural propagation of trees occurs easily. This knowledge is valuable and should be respected and incorporated in individual farm plans to increase sustainability. Often the little things like support to fence certain areas differently and change watering points can have just as big an impact on biodiversity and animal behaviour. Farmers are great observers, question continually why something happens and are great problem solvers and their knowledge needs to be utilised.

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**Is your response confidential?**

No

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

Yes

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**Please de-identify my response**

Yes

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**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

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**Confirm that you have read and understand this declaration.**

Yes

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