



Australian Beef
Sustainability
Framework

2017 Framework Report

Transparency • Inclusivity • Credibility • Practicality • Relevance



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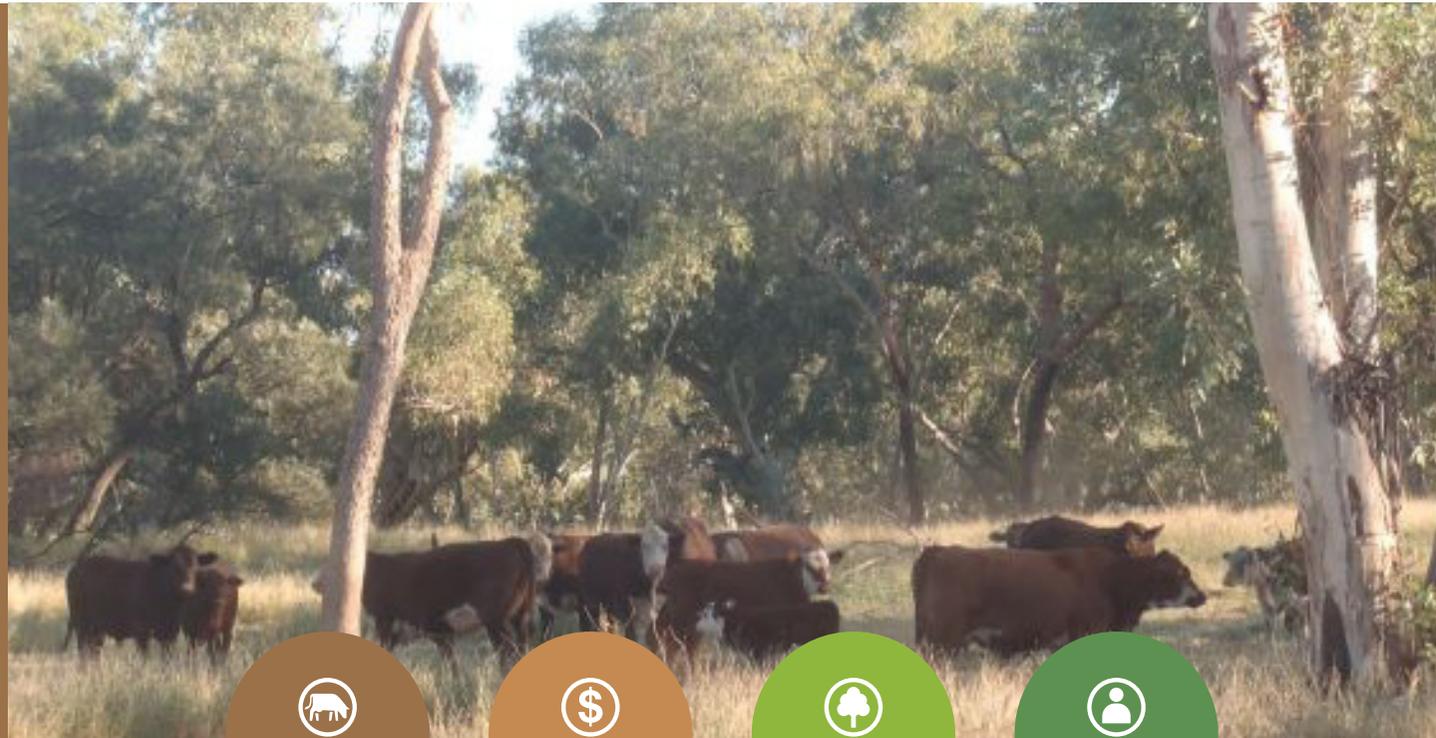
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Australian Beef Sustainability Framework

OUR VISION

A thriving Australian beef industry that strives to continuously improve the wellbeing of people, animals and the environment.

We believe sustainability is the production of beef in a manner that is socially, environmentally and economically responsible. We do this through the care of natural resources, people and the community, the health and welfare of animals, and the drive for continuous improvement.



What is the Framework?

The Framework has been developed to meet the changing expectations of customers and stakeholders by defining what sustainable beef production means in Australian production systems.

The Framework supports the strategy outlined in the *Meat Industry Strategic Plan 2020* to deliver for the longevity and prosperity of our people, our livestock and the communities we serve.

Developed through multi-stakeholder dialogue, both within and external to industry, the first Australian Beef Sustainability Framework will:

- Define sustainable beef production in an Australian context;
- Identify the priority areas and indicators to measure over time and demonstrate a commitment to continual improvement; and
- Where data is available, report current performance.

The Framework will be used to:

- Direct industry investment for continual improvement;
- Help protect and grow access to investment and finance;
- Foster constructive relationships with stakeholders to work collaboratively on continual improvement;
- Promote our industry to the community and customers; and
- Guide continuous improvement for industry.

The Framework does not:

- Establish or endorse measurement systems at an individual business level;
- Provide an accreditation or certification system;
- Endorse prescriptive management practices; or
- Create paperwork for individual businesses — existing data will be used where available.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO PRODUCERS AND INDUSTRY?

At an individual business level the framework will not require any direct input. It will, however, deliver value for grassroots industry by providing the proof behind Australia's reputation as one of the global leaders in sustainable beef production. This will assist to ensure continued market access.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR CONSUMERS AND CUSTOMERS?

Consumers, customers and other interested stakeholders are now able to clearly see in one central location the key priorities for the beef industry across environmental, welfare, social and economic areas.

The Framework transparently acknowledges not only achievements but also areas where improvement is required.

As the Framework will continually evolve, there will be ongoing opportunities for external stakeholders to have a say in what the Framework includes.

IF YOU CAN'T MEASURE IT, YOU CAN'T MANAGE IT

You will notice there are many priority areas that don't have measurements yet. We could have tried to wait to get all of the data, but the point of the first report was to work with our stakeholders, both within and external to industry, to identify what is important to measure and from there work out how best to measure it. There are some measures that require a small amount of work to develop which will occur over the next year, while for others there is currently no way of capturing the information so this will take some time.

This report is the start of the process and we welcome your continued input.

WELCOME TO OUR FIRST REPORT
FROM THE RMAC INDEPENDENT CHAIRMAN,
DON MACKAY



“Please join us in growing a thriving Australian beef industry that strives to continuously improve the wellbeing of people, animals and the environment.”

The Australian beef industry recognises that many consumers want to know where their beef comes from and how it is produced.

We know the costs and benefits of doing this well. The *Meat Industry Strategic Plan 2020* was the result of nationwide consultation with the whole of the beef industry — from paddock to plate — which told us that if we get the policy settings right we can add up to \$7 billion in value to Australian red meat and livestock businesses by 2030.

It also showed us we stand to lose up to \$6 billion in value to those same Australian red meat and livestock businesses if we get it wrong.

The Australian Beef Sustainability Framework is about addressing this, and growing the prosperity and longevity of the businesses, the families and the communities our industry represents.

The consultation process for the Framework drew on the views of our major customers, investors and industry stakeholders. It showed clearly that the longevity and prosperity of our industry is reliant on being able to demonstrate continued improvement in how we contribute to our own growth, deal with our customers and the community, address animal welfare concerns and manage our environmental impacts.

We are not alone. Some of our major beef competitors globally have already begun this process of future-proofing. The onus is on us to do this — this Report is simply a starting point. It maps out our progress, acknowledges where we need to improve and seeks to engage more openly with our stakeholders to foster greater understanding and collaboration.

It’s backed by a clear action plan and a strong, inclusive governance process that engages leaders in grassroots beef production, as well as those enjoying beef on their plates. We have a plan for continuous improvement and anyone can continue to help drive the industry forward through ongoing consultation at www.SustainableAustralianBeef.com.au.

I thank all of those producers who took the time to engage in this process for their commitment to the longevity of the sector, and particularly acknowledge the efforts of the Sustainability Steering Group in developing the inaugural Framework, which is an embodiment of the values of transparency, inclusivity, credibility, practicality and relevance.

Please join us in growing a thriving Australian beef industry that strives to continuously improve the wellbeing of people, animals and the environment. It is the responsibility of us all.



DON MACKAY

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF THE
SUSTAINABILITY STEERING GROUP,
PRUE BONDFIELD



“The process that our grass roots steering group undertook was comprehensive and incredibly valuable, with valuable insights gained from stakeholders.”

When I was approached by RMAC to lead the development of the first Australian Beef Sustainability Framework I knew I had to be involved. Our own cattle seedstock business has enabled us to connect with beef producers from around the world as well as commercial Australian beef producers selling across a range of markets. I have seen first-hand the changing expectations of our stakeholders. Most importantly I could see the opportunity that increased transparency presented to our industry.

The process that our grass roots steering group undertook was comprehensive and incredibly valuable, with valuable insights gained from stakeholders.

The Sustainability Steering Group developed a draft outline for discussion based on material gathered from a number of prior projects undertaken by industry. It was critical that the Framework development process was industry-led, so the first stage of consultation was with 25 industry groups and companies to ensure broad industry input to the draft Framework. As a result, we changed a number of aspects of the draft Framework prior to taking it to our key external stakeholders.

I wish everyone in the industry could have the opportunity that I had to meet face-to-face with the 37 groups from our major customers, special interest groups, academics, government, investors and banks. What was clear to me after these meetings was that having industry reporting on sustainability, (economic, environment, welfare and people & community), was no longer just a nice ‘to do’. I am firmly convinced that it is now an imperative for our industry to ensure we remain competitive in both domestic and global markets.

I heard from customers, both in Australia and overseas, about the need for reporting on priority areas in our welfare and environmental performance. They encouraged us to highlight the areas where the Australian beef industry is leading the world. They also stressed the importance they placed on the economic pillar, they want us to be profitable and productive and they also want to ensure the health and welfare of our workforce and our industry’s continuing contribution to regional communities.

It has been an honour to work with such a passionate group of beef industry people from right across the value chain in the Sustainability Steering Group to develop the first Framework. I encourage everyone to look at the next steps on page 8, as this is really where industry can generate long term value and ensure enhanced market access.

I would like to thank everyone that has been involved in developing this Framework; the industry organisations and individuals we met with at the start of the process; the considered and constructive input from our key external stakeholders and the grassroots industry.

This report really marks the start of the process and I look forward to the continued constructive engagement within industry and with external stakeholders to ensure that we deliver on our vision for a thriving Australian beef industry that strives to continuously improve the wellbeing of people, animals and the environment.

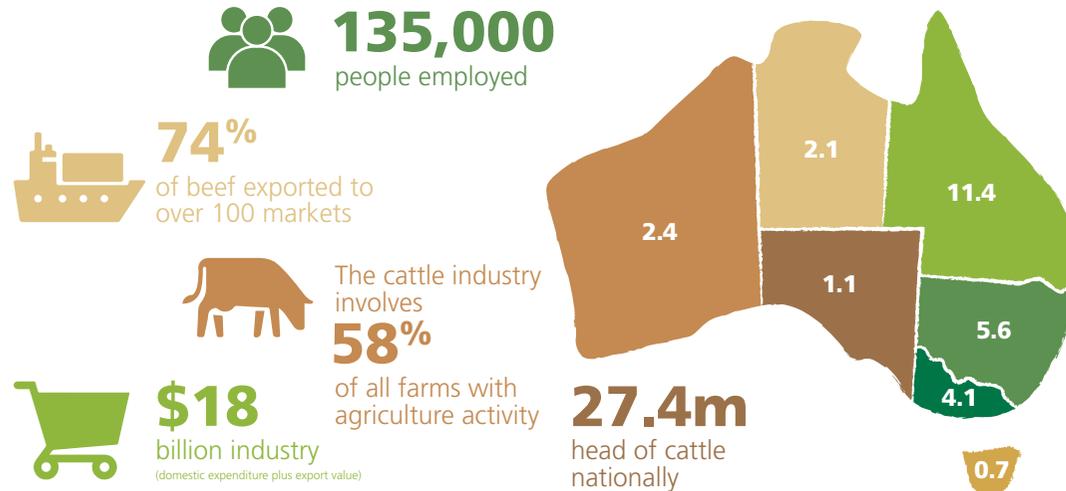


PRUE BONDFIELD

Our Industry

BEEF BY THE NUMBERS

The beef industry is one of Australia's largest industries and the highest value agricultural industry. Here's a snapshot.



THE BEEF VALUE CHAIN

The Australian beef value chain is complex and varies depending on the end market. The full value chain includes transport, retail and the end consumer. However, as discussed in the Framework boundaries on page 19, the Framework is focused on those areas where the industry can exercise some control.



Framework objectives

The Australian Beef Sustainability Framework has been established to meet the changing expectations of customers and stakeholders and ensure continued trust and market access for Australian beef.

The Framework addresses areas of stakeholder interest that are understood to contribute value and enables industry to take a coordinated approach and response to these areas. The Framework does this through using available data, without imposing unnecessary costs or reporting burdens through the value chain.

The Framework is not a process for establishing or endorsing measurement systems at an individual business level and does not present prescriptive management practices, an industry certification program or standard, or impose regulatory provisions.

The Framework will be used by industry to help guide investment in research, development and extension to ensure continuous improvement.

A NATIONAL APPROACH

The Framework is addressed at a national level, looking at the priority areas as identified by industry and our stakeholders. The Framework does not address specific geographic regions. We recognise there are highly sensitive ecosystems in some regions and that local action plans are required to ensure that cattle production does not adversely impact these regions. There are numerous examples where industry is working with other partners to ensure production is sustainable in particular regions, for example in the Great Barrier Reef catchments a voluntary Best Management Practice (BMP) program has been running to help farmers identify practices to improve productivity and environmental outcomes. In addition the Reef Alliance has been established to improve alignment and integration of reef water quality programs (such as the BMP), investment, delivery systems and communication systems to ensure all stakeholders are combining their efforts.

Throughout the report are a series of short case studies on some practical examples of what individual businesses are doing to address the priority areas. Further case studies can be found on the website.

The Framework in Action



ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Producer Peter, Simone, Brooke & Ty Lawrie
Location Rockhampton, QLD



"In 2007 we converted our 1600ha property 'Montevideo', to a rotational grazing system, consisting of 36 paddocks and 14 water troughs. The increase in paddock numbers and additional watering points has allowed us to utilise more land and rest paddocks to allow the rejuvenation of pastures and more control of grazing management. The improvements have allowed us to double our carrying capacity over a five-year period, whilst still increasing soil and pasture health."

Peter Lawrie

View full case study on the website
www.SustainableAustralianBeef.com.au

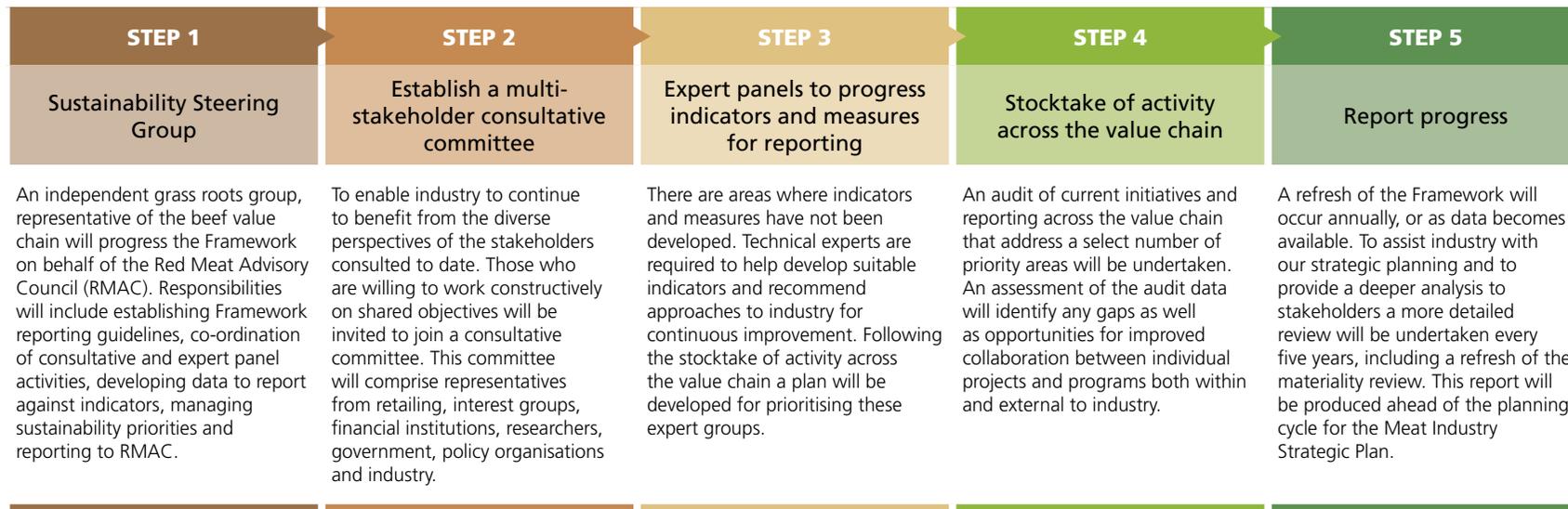


Next steps

This Report is a starting point. The Australian beef industry has a clear action plan and strong governance framework to address and drive the risks and opportunities identified in this Report.

This Framework will be used by industry to align efforts through the value chain to genuinely improve sustainability. The Framework provides an opportunity for continued dialogue with stakeholders, and to demonstrate progress against the credentials established in the first report.

The following steps will be undertaken to realise the Framework vision.



FOUR THEMES OF SUSTAINABILITY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN BEEF INDUSTRY



Animal welfare

The wellbeing and health of animals is paramount for farmers and the broader beef industry. The industry invests in research, development and adoption programs to ensure high standards of animal welfare and continuous improvement.

In addition, good animal welfare is a legal requirement in Australia and cruelty to animals is a criminal offence.

The animal welfare theme in the Framework has been developed with the five freedoms and the more recent five domains of animal welfare in mind:

- 1. Freedom from hunger and thirst:** by giving ready access to fresh water and a diet to maintain full health and vigour.
- 2. Freedom from discomfort:** by providing an appropriate environment, including shelter and a comfortable resting area.
- 3. Freedom from pain, injury or disease:** by prevention through rapid diagnosis and treatment.
- 4. Freedom to express normal behaviour:** by providing sufficient space, proper facilities and company of the animal's own kind.
- 5. Freedom from fear and distress:** by ensuring conditions and treatment which avoid mental suffering.



Environmental stewardship

The beef industry is particularly exposed to environmental risks, including climate variability which can impact on water and feed availability. Without a healthy natural environment, including soil, water, air and a thriving natural ecosystem, the industry is unable to thrive.

The beef value chain is committed to ensuring that any environmental impact is minimised. Working in partnership with the natural environment is essential on-farm.

The Framework focuses on:

- Improving land management practices
- Minimising waste, and
- Mitigating and adapting to climate change, including efficient water use

In Australia strong environmental laws and regulations govern on-farm, feedlot and processor production.



Economic resilience

Australia is one of the world's largest exporters and most efficient producers of beef. However, on-farm rates of return for the Australian beef industry are often marginal and lower than those achieved in many other industries. Additionally, off-farm costs are consistently higher than all of our major global competitors.

The Australian industry's commitment to maintain and improve the integrity systems that underpin our international reputation is essential as is continued investment into improving productivity and profitability through the value chain.

The Framework focuses on maintaining economic resilience and optimising market access.



People & the community

A safe, healthy and capable workforce, together with prosperous and resilient regional communities, is essential to the sustainability of the industry. Ensuring we provide safe, nutritious and consistent beef for consumers is also critical to our long term future. In Australia well-enforced laws and regulations govern human rights and fair work and as such the Framework focuses on the areas of building workforce capacity and ensuring a safe and healthy workforce, as well as the provision of safe and nutritious food to consumers.

The Framework



ANIMAL WELFARE

Priority Area	Indicator	Data	Value chain impact						
			On farm	Feedlot	Sale yard	Processing	Export	Transport	Consumer
1. Enhance animal wellbeing									
1.1 Competent livestock handling Competent skills in livestock handling results in optimal animal wellbeing and reduced stress which improves meat quality. Compliance with best practice guidelines including the Australian Animal Welfare Standards for Cattle and the National Feedlot Accreditation Scheme, along with training in stock handling all facilitate improved wellbeing.	1.1a The % awareness with the Australian Animal Welfare Standards for Cattle <i>Rates of compliance is the optimal measure; currently awareness is tracked. The expansion of the on-farm LPA system to include a welfare module may address this in the future as the framework progresses.</i>	56% ¹							
	1.1b The % compliance with National Feedlot Accreditation Scheme (NFAS) Animal Welfare requirements <i>NFAS is an independently audited quality assurance scheme that was initiated by the feedlot industry and is managed by an industry Committee the Feedlot Industry Accreditation Committee.</i>								
	1.1c % awareness of the Australian Model Code of Practice for Livestock Saleyards and Lairages <i>Persons directly involved with livestock handling in saleyards and lairages should be conversant with the Australian Model Code of Practice for Livestock Saleyards and Lairages — a guide to aid saleyard and lairage owners and operators in achieving the required standards for among other things — the handling of cattle (including unaccompanied calves). A measure is yet to be developed for this indicator.</i>								
	1.1d The number of reportable incidents of shipboard mortality incidents <i>The live export industry is embarking on piloting indicators for the measurement of animal wellbeing through the live export supply chain. Until these animal welfare indicators are piloted the shipboard reportable mortality incidents provides a useful proxy measure. The Australian standards for the export of livestock (ASEL) defines a reportable mortality level by species on a voyage or air journey. For cattle on journeys under 10 days 0.5% and over 10 days 1% Exporters must comply with the standards to be permitted by the Australian Government to export livestock.</i>	0.11% ² (1,451 mortalities)							
1.2 Safe livestock transport Ensure the safety and wellbeing of livestock during transportation on trucks/train domestically and by sea / air internationally to reach processors or end-markets, in accordance with industry standards and government regulations that govern the transportation of animals.	1.2a The % of transporters Truckcare accredited <i>TruckCare is an independently-audited quality assurance program for the Australian Livestock Transport Industry. The program is built around the quality assurance principles contained in international standards and Australian laws. It addresses animal welfare, food safety, OH&S and biosecurity risks.</i>								
	1.2b The % compliance with the Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock (ASEL) <i>ASEL covers the sourcing and on-farm preparation of livestock, land transport of livestock for export, management of livestock in registered premises, vessel preparation and loading, on-board management of livestock and air transport of livestock. It sets the basic standards for the conduct of the livestock export trade, as required by the Australian, state and territory governments. Exporters must comply with the standards to be permitted by the Australian Government to export livestock.</i>								
1.3 Animal husbandry techniques Husbandry procedures used on cattle include castration, horn removal (dehorning), branding, and ear marking. The industry aims to find alternatives to invasive practices and where practicable administer pain relief before carrying out necessary husbandry procedures.	1.3a The % of the Australian cattle herd with poll gene <i>Polled means cattle that naturally do not have horns in breeds that are normally horned. By identifying the poll gene selective breeding will result in not having to dehorn cattle for animal welfare and workers safety reasons. Currently the only tracking for the poll gene is via a producer survey undertaken every five years for on-farm animal welfare.</i>	51% polled cows, 71% polled bulls ¹							
	1.3b The % of the Australian cattle herd using pain relief regularly for husbandry procedures <i>The use of pain relief for routine husbandry procedures such as castration, dehorning and branding in the Australian industry.</i>	4% ¹							

Continues overleaf

The Framework continued



ANIMAL WELFARE

Priority Area	Indicator	Data	Value chain impact						
			On farm	Feedlot	Sale yard	Processing	Export	Transport	Consumer
1.4 Humane processing When preparing cattle for food they must be restrained, stunned and slaughtered in a humane and effective manner. The animal must be either killed instantly or rendered insensible to pain until death supervenes.	1.4a The % compliance with the Australian Livestock Processing Industry Animal Welfare Certification System (AAWCS) <i>The AAWCS is an independently audited certification program used by Australian livestock processors to demonstrate compliance with the industry best practice animal welfare standards.</i>								
	1.4b The % compliance with Exporter Supply Chain Assurance System (ESCAS) <i>ESCAS is an assurance system based on four principles:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Animal welfare: animal handling and slaughter in the importing country conforms to World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) animal welfare recommendations 2. Control through the supply chain: the exporter has control of all supply chain arrangements for livestock transport, management and slaughter. All livestock remain in the supply chain 3. Traceability through the supply chain: the exporter can trace all livestock through the supply chain 4. Independent audit: the supply chain in the importing country is independently audited 								
2. Promote animal health									
2.1 Maintain healthy livestock Prevent and treat disease where possible through the use of vaccines, nutritional supplements, antibiotics, pasture management, appropriate husbandry and infection control.	2.1a Vaccination rates for clostridial disease <i>Clostridial diseases are caused by bacteria and are widespread in the environment and are normally found in soil and faeces. They can survive in the environment for very long periods so vaccination is required for good animal health. This measure is from a producer survey and looks at vaccination for all clostridial diseases excluding botulism.</i>	71% ¹							
	2.1b The % of national cattle herd covered by a documented animal health plan <i>A documented animal health plan provides operations with a considered approach to managing cattle health and welfare and controls the risk of disease in a cost-effective way and maximises the production and profit potential.</i>								
2.2 Minimise biosecurity risk Observe biosecurity measures to prevent, respond to and recover from pests and diseases that infect cattle in order to keep Australia free of major diseases such as foot and mouth disease and mad cow disease. Essential to this is the national plans and funding to prevent disease incursion and successfully eradicate any incursions that do occur.	2.2a The % of national cattle herd covered by a documented biosecurity plan <i>A documented plan that outlines the simple, everyday biosecurity practices to protect the health of livestock, limit production losses and help maintain market access for Australia's beef producers.</i>								
	2.2b Australia continues to be declared free from exotic diseases by World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) <i>Australia aims to remain free from exotic diseases in cattle. Use the OIE reportable disease list as the basis of assessment.</i>	100% free from exotic diseases ³							

¹ MLA, National producer survey of cattle husbandry practices, 2016

² Livestock mortalities for export by sea, Department of Agriculture & Water Resources www.agriculture.gov.au/export/controlled-goods/live-animals/live-animal-export-statistics/reports-to-parliament

³ OIE reportable diseases list

The Framework continued



ECONOMIC RESILIENCE

Priority Area	Indicator	Data	Value chain impact						
			On farm	Feedlot	Sale yard	Processing	Export	Transport	Consumer
3. Enhance profitability and productivity									
3.1 Profitability across value chain To be economically sustainable the industry must generate a positive rate of return over the long-term on all capital used in cattle raising and beef production.	3.1a Farm business profit at full equity (expressed as a rate of return) <i>A 5 year rolling average of farm business profit at full equity divided by operating capital — as produced by ABARES (but with individual farm results weighted by farm size, rather than a simple average).</i>								
	3.1b Profitability across all industry sectors <i>Would require new data collection on the profitability of the feedlot and processing sectors.</i>								
3.2 Farm, feedlot and processor productivity and cost of production Make ongoing and sustained productivity improvements across farms, feedlots and processor facilities in order to remain competitive with other beef supplying countries and proteins. Utilise innovation, new technologies and improve skills to achieve efficiencies.	3.2a Total farm productivity <i>A 5-year rolling average Total Factor Productivity for beef specialist farms, as produced by ABARES, which is the ratio of an index of market outputs relative to an index of market inputs.</i>								
	3.2b Cost of beef produced on Australian farms <i>A rolling 5-year average cost of beef produced in Australian farms using existing Agri benchmark data. As finished cattle prices are volatile depending on seasons, international demand and exchange rates, it is the trend that needs to be monitored.</i>								
	3.2c Average cost of cattle processing per head <i>Would require new data collection — currently there is no credible data on which to base an indicator.</i>								
4. Optimise market access									
4.1 Barriers to trade Maintain and enhance access to beef and live cattle markets globally by combatting trade barriers that are either economic (tariffs) or technical (labelling requirements, standards on technical specifications and quality standards).	4.1a Market Access Index <i>There is currently no measure of Australia's global access, however data exists to develop such an index. It is recommended that a Market Access Index be developed using the tariff equivalent of tariffs and quotas to all key beef markets (weighted by total beef imports) and that this be compared to similar indices derived for the US, NZ and Brazil.</i>								
	4.1b Costs of technical trade barriers <i>Technical trade barriers, such as the use of import permit restrictions or delays, failure to grant exporter clearance or spurious phytosanitary regulations represent significant costs to the industry. It is estimated that technical trade barriers cost the Australian industry \$2bn (2014 MLA estimate). This work should periodically be updated and included in the sustainability report.</i>	\$2billion per annum							
4.2 Product integrity Consumers choose Australian beef domestically and internationally because they experience it as fresh, safe, tasty and of a consistent quality backed by a trusted reputation.	4.2a The % of consumers globally that consider Australian beef fresh, safe, tasty and of a consistent quality <i>Market access ultimately relies on end consumers desire to purchase Australian beef. A measure based on consumer attitude (weighted by market expenditure) will be developed using existing annual tracking in Australia's major export markets on perceptions of Australian beef.</i>								
	4.2b Comprehensive integrity systems (which ensure that market access is maintained) <i>Measure to include information on the percent of the national herd covered by LPA, the percent of feedlots covered by the National Feedlot Accreditation Scheme, the percent of processing establishments accredited under AUS-MEAT and the percent of saleyards covered by the National Saleyard Quality Assurance program.</i>								

The Framework continued



ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Priority Area	Indicator	Data	Value chain impact						
			On farm	Feedlot	Sale yard	Processing	Export	Transport	Consumer
5. Improve land management practices									
5.1 Minimise nutrient and sediment loss Ground cover primarily protects the valuable soil surface and reduces soil and nutrient loss into river systems. Maintaining good land condition and matching stock numbers to available feed helps ensure valuable soil is kept on the property and not washed into adjacent waterways.	5.1a Number of days per year soil covered by vegetation <i>The quality of vegetation is important to managing the feedbase for cattle producers. To protect waterways from runoff and prevent land degradation any groundcover, whether it be native vegetation, pastures or even weeds will fulfil that role. Until a measure is available to segment quality from poor groundcover a measure of any vegetation cover will be developed.</i>								
	5.1b Soil health <i>A measure to be developed to understand healthy productive soils and soil degradation across the beef industry.</i>								
	5.1c Water quality <i>A measure to be developed to track management and rehabilitation of riparian areas and wetland ecosystems, in order to maintain hydrological processes, minimise pollutant loads entering waterways at farm and catchment level.</i>								
5.2 Balance of tree and grass cover Well managed landscapes work harmoniously with cattle production and the two are not mutually exclusive. In regions in Australia heavier tree cover is not always an optimal environmental outcome. For this reason the Australian industry is working towards a definition for deforestation to ensure protection of high conservation areas without unintended environmental or production consequences.	5.2a Area of native vegetation managed for conservation outcomes <i>Recognising the environmental benefits, especially for biodiversity, of native vegetation. A measure that can be developed is looking at the land set aside for conservation purposes. Caution should be exercised in interpreting this as more conservation equals greater environmental outcomes. In many landscapes active management is required to control weeds and fires and cattle grazing is the only appropriate active management practice.</i>								
	5.2b Maintaining grassland systems from unproductive encroachment of native & introduced species <i>Thickening and encroachment reduces carrying capacity and has negative effects on biodiversity and farm productivity. A measure will be developed for regrowth and non high value vegetation to ensure that vegetation management leads to optimal environmental and productivity outcomes.</i>								
	5.2c No deforestation of primary forests <i>A measure to be developed to define and identify high value forests in order to track any conversion that may occur outside of existing state regulations that govern vegetation management.</i>								
	5.2d Increase in healthy grassland systems <i>Managing grasslands and pastures, both native and/or introduced species is good for soil health, soil carbon, soil organic matter and for quality ground cover that has environmental and productivity benefits. A measure of what constitutes healthy grasslands systems needs to be developed.</i>								
6. Mitigate and manage climate change									
6.1 Manage climate change risk Greenhouse gases are emitted along the entire beef value chain, including methane through cattle digestion, fertiliser application and fossil fuel use (both on-farm and in processing). The beef industry also has a role to play in sequestering carbon in healthy soils and vegetation.	6.1a kg CO₂e emitted per kg liveweight when raising beef <i>Life Cycle Assessments are a globally accepted environmental measure that attributes all emissions associated with grazing, feedlotting and associated activities of cattle production up until the point of processing. Over the 30 years since 1990 emissions were reduced by 14%.</i>	13.1 kg CO ₂ -e per kg LW ⁴							
	6.1b kg CO₂e emitted per tonne Hot Standard Carcass Weight (HSCW) when processing beef <i>Processing plants produce greenhouse gases from energy use and waste treatment.</i>	432 kg CO ₂ -e per tonne HSCW ⁵							
	6.1c Carbon captured and re-used in processing <i>Methane and other gases are able to be captured during wastewater treatment to create biogas that is then used in the facility reducing the use of natural gas.</i>	6.6% of energy use ⁵							
	6.1d Carbon sequestration <i>The cattle industry is able to sequester carbon through effectively managing the integration of soil, water and plant assets assists in reducing CO₂ emissions, increases CO₂ draw down from the atmosphere and increases soil organic carbon levels, thus improving on-farm productivity. Currently there is no widely agreed methodology to measure sequestration across the cattle industry.</i>								

Continues overleaf

The Framework continued



ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Priority Area	Indicator	Data	Value chain impact						
			On farm	Feedlot	Sale yard	Processing	Export	Transport	Consumer
6.2 Climate change adaptation and preparedness Agricultural industries are particularly vulnerable to a changing climate. Emergency preparedness and adaptation to expected increases in drought, storms and other environmental risks are necessary to manage business risks.	6.2a Producer confidence in having the information, tools, technologies and resources (both business and biophysical) to be able to adapt to change over time <i>A changing and unpredictable climate has a direct impact on agricultural industries. Individual businesses ability to adapt and respond to incidents is essential. A measure is not currently available.</i>								
	6.2b The % of producers with a drought plan <i>Drought is the most prevalent climatic event that impacts the cattle industry. Operations that have thought about and ideally documented a plan are better placed to manage droughts. A survey will need to be established to gather this data.</i>								
6.3 Efficient use of water Producing beef requires water for use for cattle hydration through to the water required for processing. The internationally accepted measure for water use in cattle production is a life cycle assessment figure, which looks at how much 'blue water', or water diverted from another potential use is used. Processing is measured by town water used.	6.3a Kilolitres of water used per tonne of Hot Standard Carcass Weight (HSCW) for raising cattle <i>Life Cycle Assessments are a globally accepted environmental measure that attributes all emissions associated with grazing, feedlotting and associated activities of cattle production up until the point of processing. Over the 30 years since 1990 water use was reduced by 65%.</i>	515 litres per kg HSCW ⁴							
	6.3b Kilolitres water used per tonne Hot Standard Carcass Weight (HSCW) when processing beef <i>In processing water is primarily used to ensure food safety and hygiene during operations.</i>	8.6 KL per tonne HSCW ⁵							
7. Minimise waste									
7.1 Solid waste to landfill from processing Solid waste to landfill from the processing sector represents a significant waste stream. The industry recognises that the majority of waste occurs at the consumer and retail end through food and packaging waste; however for the first report the scope excludes waste at the consumption end, and will consider inclusion in the future.	7.1a Kilograms of solid waste per tonne Hot Standard Carcass Weight (HSCW) when processing beef <i>The majority of waste solids (85%) generated are organic in nature and are recycled. Since 2003, there has been a 57% reduction in waste solids sent to landfill.</i>	5.9 kg per tonne HSCW ⁵							

⁴ Wiedemann S.G., Henry B.K., McGahan E.J., Grant T., Murphy C.M., Niethé G., 'Resource use and greenhouse gas intensity of Australian beef production: 1981-2010', ScienceDirect, vol. 133, pp. 109-118, viewed 30 March 2017, www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0308521X14001565

⁵ AMPC, Environmental Performance Review: Red Meat Processing Sector, 2015

The Framework continued



PEOPLE & THE COMMUNITY

Priority Area	Indicator	Data	Value chain impact							
			On farm	Feedlot	Sale yard	Processing	Export	Transport	Consumer	
8. Produce nutritious and safe food										
8.1 Beef is eaten as part of a healthy balanced diet The beef industry advocates the consumption of beef as part of a healthy, balanced diet as recommended by the Australian dietary guidelines. The Australian Dietary Guidelines recommend 65g/day (455g/week) cooked fresh red meat. Red meat is defined as beef, lamb, pork, kangaroo and game meat.	8.1a The % of consumers in Australia who consider beef part of a healthy balanced diet <i>Australian Dietary Guidelines recommend 65g/day (455g/week) cooked fresh red meat. Red meat is defined as beef, lamb, pork, kangaroo and game meat. Measurement is limited to the Australian market due to access to data.</i>	58% ⁶								
	8.2 Food safety Ensuring that the procedures that guarantee the safety and quality of Australian beef is critical to maintaining customer confidence in our product.	8.2a The number of food safety incidents relating to raw beef <i>Number of recalls for raw beef for food safety reasons. Measure limited to fresh beef due to industry control over food safety up until the point of meat processing and does not extend to product that has been manufactured.</i>								
	8.3 Antimicrobial stewardship Antimicrobials are a valuable shared resource. Maintaining their efficacy so that infections in humans and animals remain treatable is of critical importance. Antimicrobial Stewardship aims to improve the safe and appropriate use of antimicrobials, reduce patient harm and decrease the incidence of antimicrobial resistance.	8.3a The % of cattle covered by an antibiotic stewardship plan <i>A documented plan that outlines practices to ensure responsible treatment of cattle for health reasons. Measure to be developed.</i>								
	8.3b Antimicrobial surveillance program <i>Though the National Antimicrobial Resistance Strategy, in consultation with the Australian Antimicrobial Resistance Prevention and Containment (AMRPC) Steering Group develop and implement a nationally coordinated surveillance program for antimicrobial resistance and usage in the Australian cattle industry.</i>									
9. Build workforce capacity										
9.1 Education and training Sustainable beef production is enhanced through workforce capacity building. This can be achieved in many ways, including traineeships and apprenticeships, degrees, other formal industry qualifications as well as on-the-job training.	9.1a Number of traineeships and apprenticeships enrolled and completed <i>Measure will need to be developed and it is recognised that separating beef from wider agriculture will be difficult.</i>									
	9.1b On-the-job training completed <i>A measure to be developed, recognising the difficulty in capturing this data from across the industry. It is expected data will exist in corporate farm operations, feedlots and processing but will be difficult to capture for family farms.</i>									
	9.1c Number of degrees enrolled and completed <i>Measure will need to be developed and it is recognised that separating beef from wider agriculture will be difficult.</i>									
9.2 Diversity in the workforce Embrace the well-documented benefits to the value-chain of gender, age and cultural background diversity.	9.2a The % of women and men in the workforce <i>Measure to be developed across the value chain.</i>									
	9.2b The age breakdown of the workforce <i>Measure to be developed across the value chain.</i>									
	9.2c The % Indigenous representation in the workforce <i>Measure to be developed across the value chain.</i>									

Continues overleaf

The Framework continued



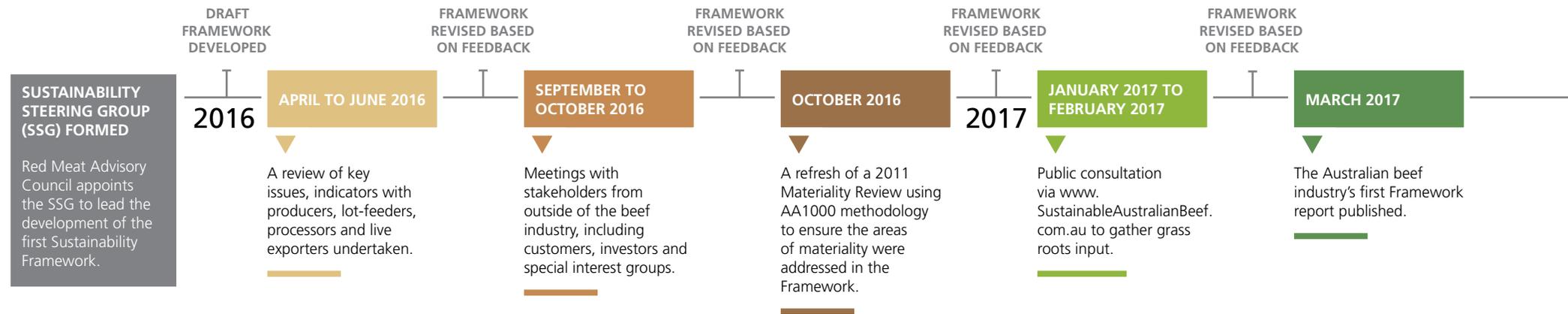
PEOPLE & THE COMMUNITY

Priority Area	Indicator	Data	Value chain impact						
			On farm	Feedlot	Sale yard	Processing	Export	Transport	Consumer
10. Ensure health, safety and wellbeing of people in the industry									
10.1 Health and safety of people in industry Working environments through the beef value chain, especially on-farm expose employees and contractors to risk. Currently reliable data only exists for notifiable fatalities, however the industry recognises that injuries resulting in time off work present a significant risk to our people and productivity.	10.1a Notifiable fatalities The combination of hazards found in farming as well as the context in which farm work is done, make farming one of the most dangerous industries in which to work.	10 fatalities in 2013/14 ⁷							
10.2 Wellbeing of people in the industry Emotional wellbeing is as essential to worker health and safety and industry productivity as physical wellbeing. It is important to look at both the satisfaction of people in the industry at the same time as being mindful of the wellbeing of Australia's farmers.	10.2a Global Life Satisfaction (GLS) Index GLS quantifies a person's subjective wellbeing in a 'global' sense, which is to say the whole of someone's wellbeing, rather than any specific aspect of it. Survey participants are asked to think about their life and personal circumstances and to rate how satisfied they are with that life on an 11 point scale. This measure is widely used internationally and has been shown to be highly correlated with a number of health and other outcomes in a person's life.								

⁶ Millward Brown Quarterly Australian consumer tracking, Q4 2016

⁷ Safe Work Australia Traumatic Injury Fatality database, 2015

How the Framework was developed



As outlined in the *Meat Industry Strategic Plan 2020* and the *Beef Industry Strategic Plan*, increased transparency through reporting has been identified as a strategic imperative. In order to ensure that the Framework meets the expectations of industry and external stakeholders it was essential to develop the Framework collaboratively.

During development of the Framework three phases of consultation were undertaken, providing anyone with an interest in the beef industry a chance to provide input. At the conclusion of each phase of consultation the Sustainability Steering Group (SSG) met to review the feedback and revise the Framework accordingly.

The three versions of the Framework that were taken to consultation can be found at on the website www.SustainableAustralianBeef.com.au The website also provides further detail on the process for agreeing to the priority areas and indicators contained in this report. This includes responses from the SSG to suggestions and comments received during online, public consultation can be found on the website.



Keeping the process focused

Extensive consultation resulted in extremely varied suggestions and opinions. The Sustainability Steering Group (SSG) recognised that a robust process needed to be established to ensure all feedback was reviewed objectively and the delivered Framework would be useful to both industry and stakeholders.



Five principles guided development of the Framework.

Relevance

▶ The priority area is important (or likely to be important) to our customers, the community and the Australian beef industry and is within the industry's scope of influence.

Inclusivity

▶ The constructive views of industry, customers, consumers, government and community groups as to how industry can continually improve performance will be valued and considered.

Credibility

▶ The decision (about a theme, priority area, indicator, KPI or recommendation) is grounded in evidence. It can or has the potential to be monitored and managed.

Practicality

▶ The indicator is realistic. The industry is able (scope of influence) to make changes that represent value in the value chain through continual improvement.

Transparency

▶ The industry can provide an open and honest picture of performance using the most appropriate data available.

Following the materiality review (available on the website) and external stakeholder face-to-face meetings, the SSG prioritised indicators and measures. Three simple questions guided this prioritisation:

1. Can we track continuous improvement?
2. Is it useful to industry?
3. Will stakeholders understand it?

At the conclusion of the online consultation there were over 350 comments. These were grouped by topic and reviewed by the SSG. As a result changes were made to the Framework.

The SSG believes that for the Framework to be useful it needs to contain a manageable number of relevant priority areas and indicators.

Four questions guided the final selection of priority areas and indicators:

1. Has the issue generated stakeholder interest through consultation?
2. Is there impact across value chain, rather than just in one sector?
3. Are the issues contained in the materiality review?
4. Do the issues align with the Meat Industry Strategic Plan?

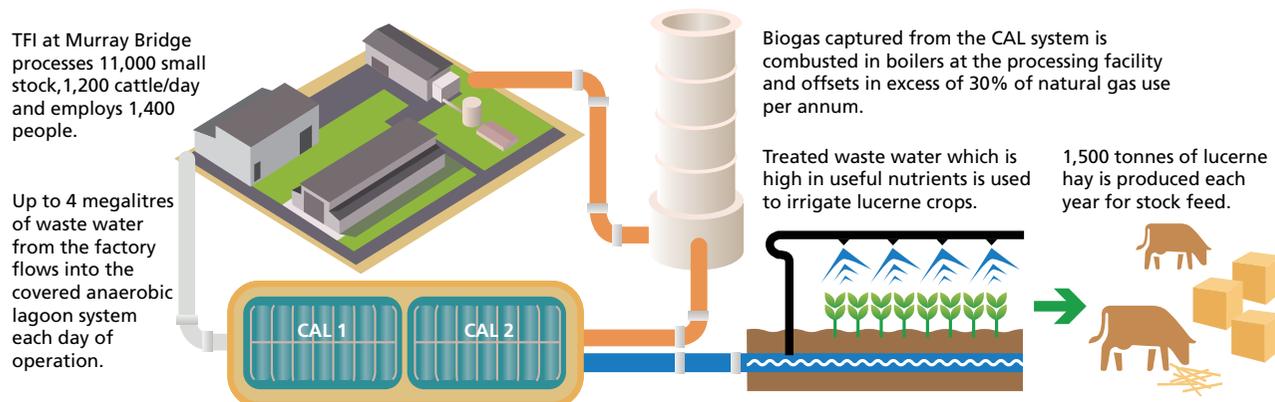
The SSG recognises that this is not an exact science and on some occasions indicators that don't answer each of the questions in the affirmative have been selected. However the SSG strongly advocates that the Framework is living and will evolve over time. It is highly likely that some indicators in this first report won't be in the next report and that new indicators will be added. It is the view of the SSG that the establishment of the consultative committee and the expert working groups (outlined on page 8) will provide greater clarity.

Boundaries of the Framework

The Framework covers beef production from the paddock to the point of delivery to either processor or end market. The scope of the Framework is limited to those sections of the value chain where the industry has direct or some control. The Framework has also given consideration to those areas outside of direct control that are material to the industry.



CLOSED LOOP WASTE WATER TREATMENT IN ACTION



The Framework in Action



ANIMAL WELFARE

Producer Gary and Michelle Riggs
Location Lakefield Station, NT



"Lakefield Station has been investing in polled (no horns) Brahman genetics for the last six years. We breed some of our own polled bulls, due to the limited availability of polled genetics on the market. Our herd is currently 30% polled and this polled population continues to increase, with the aim of achieving near 100% polled in five years so that dehorning is not required."

Gary Riggs

View full case study on the website
www.SustainableAustralianBeef.com.au

Aligning the Framework with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) represent the world's plan of action for social inclusion, environmental sustainability and economic development. As a global citizen in a global industry we are committed to taking a leadership position to deliver on the goals. Below are the SDGs that the Australian Beef Sustainability Framework addresses. Mapping of SDGs to the priority areas contained in this report is available at www.SustainableAustralianBeef.com.au



The Framework in Action



ANIMAL WELFARE

Producer Geoff Birchnell

Location Loomberah, Northern NSW



“Our family operates a stud and commercial beef cattle herd and practice low-stress stock handling. To do this we have designed paddocks, lanes and cattle yards which allow the cattle to move freely with minimal pressure.”

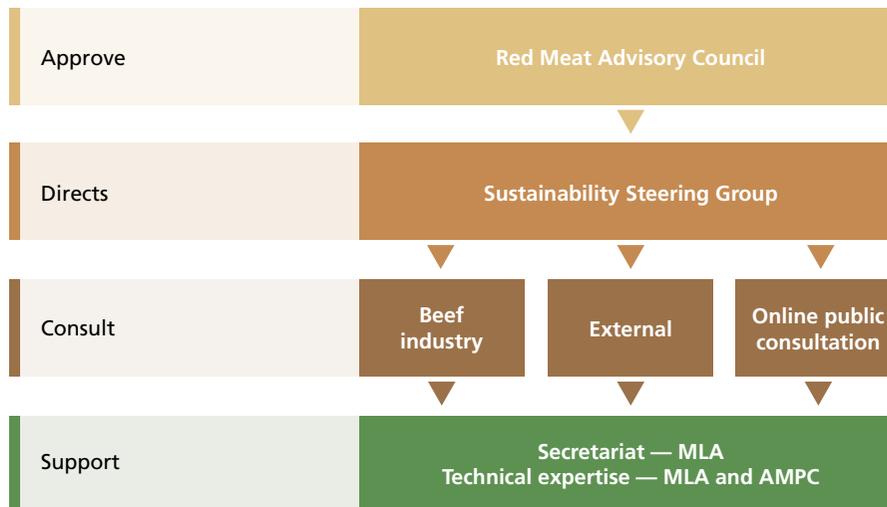
Geoff Birchnell

View full case study on the website
www.SustainableAustralianBeef.com.au

Governance for framework report development

The Framework is an initiative of the Red Meat Advisory Council (RMAC), who appointed an independent 11 person grass roots Sustainability Steering Group (SSG) to lead the development of the Framework and this report. Members of the first SSG can be viewed on page 23. The Framework was developed through consultation as outlined on page 17.

Funding for the first Framework report, SSG meetings and costs associated with consultation was provided by Meat & Livestock Australia through grass-fed, grain fed and processor levies.



The Framework in Action



ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Producer

Brett Hall

Location

Oatlands, Tasmania



"The amount of organic matter in the soil is a key factor for water retention. To achieve this aim, we need to maximise the amount of perennial grasses to pump as much CO₂ out of the atmosphere as possible to increase the organic matter content in the soils."

Brett Hall

View full case study on the website
www.SustainableAustralianBeef.com.au

How the Framework will be implemented

A revised governance structure has been developed to facilitate implementation of the Framework, as outlined below. Recognising the different skills required for implementation, a new Sustainability Steering Group (SSG) will be appointed by RMAC. A formal consultative committee will be established to enable industry to benefit from continued insights from stakeholders.

Recognising the whole of value chain implementation required to deliver continual improvement, funding will be provided by the three service providing companies for the beef industry, MLA, AMPC and LiveCorp. Secretariat support will continue to be provided by MLA.

Approve	RMAC	
Direct	Sustainability Steering Group	
Consult	Consultative Committee	Technical experts
Support <i>Deliver research, development, extension and secretarial support</i>	Industry service companies (MLA, AMPC and Live Corp)	
Adopt best practice	Producers, processors, feedlots, transport	

Ongoing measurement

The Framework in Action



ECONOMIC RESILIENCE

Producer Simon and Di Matear
Location Wantabadgery, NSW



"It's easy to focus on per head performance but you need to also look at your per hectare production and costs to gain a clear idea of overall business performance. By quantifying and understanding these variables you can make the changes that will really make a difference to the business. For us, this started with time of calving. Now we are looking at refining this further through fine tuning of our stocking rate and further pasture improvement."

Simon Matear

View full case study on the website
www.SustainableAustralianBeef.com.au

Sustainability Steering Group

The Red Meat Advisory Council (RMAC) appointed an independent 11 person grass roots Sustainability Steering Group (SSG) to lead the development of the first Framework and report.

The members of the Sustainability Steering Group who developed this report are:

- **Prue Bondfield (chair):** Queensland cattle producer and seedstock operator with a background in law and project management;
- **Tom Stockwell:** Northern Territory cattle producer and previous Department of Primary Industries manager from Katherine with more than 20 years experience with research and extension in northern cattle operations;
- **Tony Hegarty:** New South Wales cattle producer with a focus on natural resource management and almost 30 years involvement in the Landcare movement;
- **Pip Job:** more than 20 years as a cattle producer and 10 years as the CEO of the Little River Landcare Group in Central Western NSW. Pip currently leads a new initiative within the NSW Department of Primary Industries creating tools and resources to support farming families and businesses;
- **Richard Rains:** More than 40 years experience promoting and selling Australian beef to the world with a strong understanding of the Australian beef value chain and what our major customers are requiring;
- **Tess Herbert:** Director of a sixth-generation cattle business with successful feedlots in Central and Southern NSW and a commitment to animal welfare and innovation in the feedlot sector;
- **Jim Cudmore:** Led the review of how the Australian beef industry should promote its sustainability credentials which was the precursor to this group being formed. He is a former feedlot manager and well-respected industry veteran;
- **Mark Inglis:** Background in animal husbandry and animal production on a broad range of properties, including cattle properties in Western Australia's Kimberley. In his current role Mark has developed a detailed understanding of emerging customer requirements around production practices;
- **Tom Maguire:** Tom has been involved in the Australian meat industry since 1997 and has a deep understanding of the Australian beef value chain and what international customers are requesting the Australian industry to demonstrate in sustainability;
- **Dr Peter Barnard:** More than 30 years experience providing market information to the Australian beef industry and assisting the industry during Free Trade Agreement negotiations.
- **Greg Brown:** Northern Queensland cattle producer with extensive experience in natural resource management and understanding value chain demands.

INDUSTRY PEAK COUNCILS



INDUSTRY SERVICE COMPANIES



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

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