



Smart Farming Partnerships – Round 2

Final Report

Application ID:	SFP2- 6TVSDNXW
Grantee Name:	Meat & Livestock Australia Limited
Project Title:	Verifiable sustainability beef credentials and practice change modules
Activity ID:	4-D4VTR2F
Grantee contact person who	Jennifer Lim
prepared the report:	
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	[Signature] Date:7 June 2024
Date submitted	7 June 2024

• Where there are text fields – Space can be increased or deleted as required to accommodate information to be reported.

• Please send the completed report to: <u>DAFF.Manage@communitygrants.gov.au</u> and cc <u>NHTprograms@aff.gov.au</u>

Due Date

The due date is specified in section C of the Grant Agreement.

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Project Description Use this section to summarise the purpose or objective(s) of the Activity

This project aimed to find solutions to outcome 2 of the Smart Farming Partnerships grant, to improve the knowledge about, capacity for and the ability to demonstrate the adoption of sustainable management practices on farm. It also focused on key components of outcome 1 in terms of soil, water, vegetation and biodiversity.

Customers and other industry stakeholders are increasingly looking for evidence of sustainable production practices across agricultural industries. The 'demonstrating beef sustainability credentials and fostering practice change' project provided an opportunity for the development of a tool for beef producers to demonstrate the environmental sustainability of their production practices. The project gave producers and beef industry stakeholders an opportunity to design an environmental sustainability demonstration and learning platform that was simple, practical, user friendly, meaningful and voluntary. This resulted in the development of the Environmental Credentials for Grassfed Beef platform. The platform focused on five environmental theme areas: tree cover, biodiversity stewardship, ground cover, carbon balance, and drought resilience. The project design incorporated producer and industry feedback and engagement throughout, with the project guided by an Advisory Group comprised of representatives from across the beef value chain, and co-design groups created to guide each theme development.

The project was funded for three years with an extension (until June 2024) through the Australian Government's Smart Farms program. It was delivered by a consortium led by Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA), with WWF-Australia and University of Queensland as partners, and Pinion Advisory engaged as project coordinators. Expertise from CSIRO and the Australian National University was brought in for key stages, and a platform development team consisting of Servian, RMCG and CiboLabs was engaged. This platform was piloted at the end of 2023 and officially launched by the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Murray Watt, at the recent Beef Australia 2024 event in Rockhampton Queensland.

Overview of Project delivery

Executive summary

Use this section to summarise the findings of the Activity.

Explain how the outcomes and outputs of this Activity will benefit Australian agriculture.

Include key findings, and the significance of these findings for policy makers and the Australian agricultural industry.

Identify any questions that remain unanswered or arose as a result of the Activity.

Customers and other industry stakeholders are increasingly looking for evidence of sustainable production practices across agricultural industries. The 'demonstrating beef sustainability credentials and fostering practice change' project provided an opportunity for the development of a tool for beef producers to demonstrate the environmental sustainability of their production practices. The project gave producers and beef industry stakeholders an opportunity to design an environmental sustainability demonstration and learning platform that was simple, practical, user friendly, meaningful and voluntary.

The overall project aim was to enable growth in the value of and trust in Australian grassfed beef products and their production through demonstrating environmental credentials and fostering on-farm practice change.

The resulting output of the project is a user-friendly platform which enables:

- i. Australian grassfed beef producers to demonstrate their environmental credentials; and
- ii. learning pathways for producers that support continual improvement.

This project has the potential to enable the following significant outcomes:

- Australian grassfed beef producers are rewarded for demonstrating their environmental credentials to customers, consumers and the community by entering competitive new markets and maintaining access.
- Australian grassfed beef producers are able to undertake self-directed learning to improve performance across five key environmental themes; and
- Australian grassfed beef producers are able to respond to other market drivers (for example but not limited to customer requirements, accessing farm loans or schemes etc.) requiring demonstrable environmental credentials.

With further investment there is the possibility for future expansion of the platform to cater for other red meat industries as well as to support data gathering and reporting for additional credentials such as water use efficiency and animal welfare. Questions around the availability of accessible data at a low cost and the accuracy of this data have arisen as a result of this project. This is especially highlighted in the biodiversity component of the platform where remote sensing technologies are unlikely to be able to be used at this stage due to inaccuracy and a lack of ground truthing. Further work in identifying ways in which to strengthen this area of the platform will need to be explored.

Post launch engagement has also raised questions about other technologies and areas that could be incorporated into the platform and other uses for the platform. Livestock management applications, financial planning or mapping technologies could be incorporated to create a central location for this data and reports that could be used for multiple purposes. Use of the platform to demonstrate sustainable practices to a changing international market have also been raised, along with the incorporation within other existing systems such as the Livestock Production Assurance program (LPA) or Meat Standards Australia (MSA) data to track sustainability credentials down to an individual animal level.

Engagement and extension activities will continue post launch by MLA with producer engagements and presentations as well as industry partnerships with the supply chain in the pipeline to encourage further adoption outcomes. A steering group has also been established and will continue to ensure the platform remains relevant to the industry and evolves with industry requirements.

Did the project achieve all contracted activities, measures and outcomes as described in the Project Work Plan and any amendments?	Yes ⊠	No
If NO, please explain why not everything was delivered.		
Have you had any major incidences which required risk management and implementation of mitigation strategies as outlined in your Risk Management Plan in the Work Plan?	Yes ⊠	No
If YES please explain these and what the implications were.		
Delays in progress due to COVID-19 did occur which pushed back timelines. A lack of consensus in the co- design process caused delays in beginning the platform development. An extension of the grant		

agreement to the beginning of June was given to ensure that all activities could be completed.

Project Administration

Please provide a summary of project administration activities undertaken during the reporting period e.g. progress towards implementing the Activity Plan; appointment of or changes to Activity staff; establishment of agreements/contracts with Activity participants, compliance with terms and conditions of the Grant Agreement.

The consortium team met fortnightly for the majority of the project to progress implementation plans, create linkages and act on opportunities within MLA and other industry activities, and conduct work necessary for achieving project objectives and deliverables. The National Project Coordinator managed the administrative duties and supported the consortium team. Project management of the following activities were completed by the National Project Co-ordinator and different members of the consortium across the project.

- 1. A project Advisory Group was established to give strategic input and guidance to the project.
- 2. Theme leads were subcontracted to produce final theme issues papers for review by the project Advisory Group.

- 3. Stakeholder consultation occurred throughout the project in accordance with the stakeholder engagement plan.
- 4. A facilitator of the co-design process was contracted to manage the co-design process and report findings to the Advisory Group.
- 5. Recruitment of beef producers and other representatives from the beef supply chain for the codesign groups under each theme was completed.

Oversight of these activities and processes was embedded within project team meetings, with clear accountability to delivering on actions post-meeting. The management and implementation of a living workplan helped to drive project tasks throughout the project. Risk assessment was reviewed regularly, and project methodology adapted as required to address new or emerging risks. Monitoring of the M&E and communications plan and working with project team at relevant stages ensured tasks stayed on track with regular comms bursts sent out to the Advisory Group. Regular Advisory Group meetings were held across the life of the project, all documents and action items were noted within the live workplan.

Continued engagement with the co-design groups to encourage their participation in pilot testing of platform and a producer consultative network database was maintained.

Project Activities

Use this section to provide details of how the Project activities were conducted including any unanticipated events or technical/resourcing difficulties and how these were overcome. If there was a need to change the Project activities, please explain how this change was incorporated into the Project as well as reflected in the Project WorkPlan, and if this affected the outcomes of the Project.

Explain how each Project activity contributed to the Project objectives as listed in your WorkPlan, including metrics if relevant (e.g. hectares impacted, number of landholders impacted etc.). Where possible include evidence of activities (e.g. data, photographs etc.) and list any communications materials that resulted from the activity.

These activities should match those listed in your Project WorkPlan and budget template.

Project Activity 1 (as listed in your WorkPlan)		
What did you do?	Project management - Ongoing project management processes to ensure smooth running of the project to guarantee objectives and timeframes were met.	
How did you do it?	A Project Coordination team was established along with a project email address for all email correspondence, and a shared file storage system was set up for all project partners to access.	
	Regular project team meetings were set with the consortium. Meetings were held fortnightly, with project management meetings held once a	

	fortnight, and content meetings held on the alternate fortnight. Standing agenda items and action items from the previous meeting were tracked and reviewed along with workplans, risk assessments and upcoming activities or events. The Project Coordinator sent out the agenda, took minutes and assisted MLA in facilitating these meetings. These meetings allowed the members of the consortium to raise any issues and ensured consistent touch points throughout the project. The Project Coordinator reported to the MLA project lead.
	A project workplan was established using Smartsheet, all project team members had access to the project workplan, and the workplan was reviewed at monthly project team meetings.
	A communications plan and monitoring and evaluation plan were drafted early in the project and reviewed regularly. The University of Queensland team and the Project Coordinator utilised the monitoring and evaluation plan to inform evaluation of the co-design phase and the platform pilot testing phase.
When did you do it?	From 2020 to 2024. Project management activities continued throughout the project. Different activities were relevant at different times of the project.
Who participated?	MLA, Pinion Advisory, University of Queensland, WWF Australia. The project team all had some engagement with project management tasks throughout the project.
Who will delivered the activity?	Meat & Livestock Australia delivered the final platform, along with the report to the Department. A National Coordinator was recruited to look after project management tasks for the life of the project. The Project Coordinator was responsible for the majority of project management tasks and reported to the project consortium.
What was the output? How did this contribute to Program objectives listed in the WorkPlan?	 Project management throughout the entire project has allowed for the co- ordination of all other project activities and the reporting of these activities. This activity has allowed for the initial workplan to be developed, the submission of progress reports, financial reports, supplier and partner management and the ultimate delivery of the project. Outputs related to project management included: Workplan Governance plan M&E plan Risk management plan Communications plan Project team meeting minutes Terms of reference for Advisory Group Advisory Group meeting minutes Terms of reference for Co-design Group Progress reports Communications/media tracking report

	Evidence is available for outputs related to project management:
What evidence can you provide? (e.g photographs?	 Workplan Governance plan M&E plan Risk management plan Communications plan Project team meeting minutes Terms of reference for Advisory Group Advisory Group meeting minutes Terms of reference for Co-design Group Progress reports Communications/media tracking report

Project Activity 2 (as listed in your WorkPlan)		
What did you do?	 Scoping, initial research and intelligence. Extensive research into market demand for tools to be used by producers to report environmental performance existing tools and information available both nationally and internationally preferences from producers about the key attributes of a tool scope and purpose of each of the theme areas general sustainability issues identified by members of the beef supply chain in order to provide the sustainability context from a business perspective that underpin the overarching project 	
How did you do it?	A project Advisory Group was formed in May 2021 to guide the development of the platform and provide strategic input and advice to the project team, to ensure the resulting product meets the needs of users. A Terms of Reference was drafted and members were offered sitting fees in line with MLA policies. Regular Advisory Group meetings were held during the project, with all meetings conducted online. These were effective in providing strategic guidance and overarching industry perspective to the project team. Theme leaders presenting learnings from their earlier research and existing verification tools and platforms relevant to each of the five themes co- design groups. Technical experts for each of the five themes guided the material which informed the co-design process. Findings from the business sustainability scan sub-project was presented to the Advisory Group at the December 2021 meeting and valuable insights were gathered to inform and direct the remainder of this work. This information was presented to the five co-design groups. The five theme briefing papers were presented to the relevant co-design groups and the Advisory Group and were used as a foundation for co-design working group discussions	

	 The discrete pieces of work related to this activity were embedded in the business scan sub project, the co-design phase, and advice from the Advisory Group. In the Business Scan sub-project, work focussed on documenting the general sustainability issues identified by members of the beef supply chain in order to provide the sustainability context from a business perspective that underpinned the overarching project. By exploring business aspects across the value chain, this subproject sought to determine and provide evidence of the value proposition for producers, customers' requirements for the proposed solution, identify whether the proposed solution addresses their need/solved a problem, and identify where the proposed technology platform and approach fits within their business model. The work aimed to establish the minimum requirements from the perspective of the customer and producer, of what the solution must address. Two phases of interviews were conducted: 1) Stage 1 (Preliminary Scan) involving semi-structured interviews with key value chain stakeholders 2) Stage 2 (Deep Dive) involving interviews with producers
	Findings from this work informed the co-design phase of the project.
	The co-design phase underpinned the majority of the project activity, ensuring that the voice of Australian beef producers was heard when planning and designing the platform. Co-design theme leaders conducted research into existing verification tools and platforms relevant to each of the five themes and produced issues scoping papers. Thes scoping papers were used by the producers to set the scene for the co-design phase. Technical experts were recruited for each of the five theme areas, to act as sounding boards, fact check and oversee the preliminary information which informed the co-design process.
	Advisory Group members were able to share experiences and intelligence through regular meetings and when reviewing project material. Valuable insights were gained into how environmental sustainability verification is being tackled in other industries, and learnings shared.
When did you do it?	May 2021 to December 2021. A significant amount of the scoping, research and intelligence gathering occurred in the first year of the project. This activity was required to set the scene for the remainder of the work. Continual learning and refinement occurred throughout the project, and as new knowledge emerged, it was incorporated into the project work.
Who participated?	Project Advisory Group, co-design group, University of Queensland, WWF Australia, MLA, Pinion Advisory. The project team members, theme leads, technical experts, Advisory Group members, co-design group members.
Who delivered the activity?	Theme leads, MLA, Pinion Advisory. Members of the project team were responsible for coordination of these phases, and reporting of the research activities.
What was the output?	Outputs relating to these activities include: • Theme scoping papers

How did this contribute to Program objectives listed in the WorkPlan?	 Business scan sub-project reports Theme co-design recommendation papers to inform platform build Advisory Group meeting minutes Academic publication relating to Business Scan sub-project.
What evidence can you provide? (e.g photographs?	 Evidence of outputs relating to these activities is available: Theme scoping papers Business scan sub-project reports Theme co-design recommendation papers to inform platform build Advisory Group meeting minutes Academic publication relating to Business Scan sub-project: Sarwar S, Ross H, van Bommel S, Polack S, Waschka M, Lubcke K, Bryceson K, Cooper TL, Butler DW and Macintosh A (2023) Developing a new technology for demonstrating environmental sustainability in the Australian grassfed beef industry. Front. Sustain. Food Syst. 7:1241077. doi: 10.3389/fsufs.2023.1241077

Project Activity 3 (as liste	d in your WorkPlan)
What did you do?	Co-design is an approach to design attempting to actively involve all stakeholders (e.g. for this project producers, value chain representatives, retailers and other end users) in the design process to help ensure the result meets their needs and is usable.
	This design approach was used to set the scope, purpose, aim and functionality aspects of the platform and the five themes.
How did you do it?	Co-design groups were formed in September 2021 to assist with defining the scope of the themes and guide the development of the platform and learning modules. A Terms of Reference was drafted and members were offered sitting fees in line with MLA policies. An expression of interest process was used, and producers were asked to nominate their preferred theme to be involved with. The selection criteria for membership of the co- design groups can be found in the discussion. The co-design lead (UQ) and respective theme leads were responsible for corresponding with the co- design members, and the Project Coordinator was responsible for processing sitting fees.
	The Advisory Group acted as a champions for the project and provide strategic input to project design. Supported by an internal team, the co- design meetings were facilitated by an independent facilitator which was selected via a tender process. The co-design process was developed by the consortium and reviewed by a technical expert.
	I hroughout the piloting phase, the co-design group were invited to trial the platform and provide feedback. At the end of the piloting phase in October

	2023, findings and next steps were presented to the co-design and advisory group members.
	The design criteria for the Publicly Available Specifications was also shared with the Reference Group, and endorsed.
When did you do it?	September 2021 to October 2023. The co-design phase main activity was in the second quarter of the project.
Who participated?	Co-design group members, Advisory Group members, University of Queensland, Pinion Advisory, Meat & Livestock Australia. Fifty members of the beef industry, industry experts, theme leads, and an independent facilitator.
Who delivered the activity?	Meat & Livestock Australia, University of Queensland, Pinion Advisory. The theme leads were responsible for the co-design phase, with oversight from Dr Severine van Bommel from UQ as the co-design lead.
What was the output? How did this contribute to Program objectives listed in the WorkPlan?	 Outputs from the co-design phase include: Theme scoping papers to inform the co-design process Theme co-design reports to inform platform design Meeting recordings from co-design meetings Theme lead final reports to MLA Co-design final report to MLA
What evidence can you provide? (e.g photographs?	 Evidence of outputs from the co-design phase are available: Theme scoping papers to inform the co-design process Theme co-design reports to inform platform design Meeting recordings from co-design meetings Theme lead final reports to MLA Co-design final report to MLA

Project Activity 4 (as lis	ted in your WorkPlan)
	Develop platform.
	A user-friendly platform was built to enable producers to:
	 a) self-assess against one or more of the five themes b) access evidence to use for voluntary third-party verification of environmental credential claims c) participate in learning activities to improve environmental practices.
What did you do?	
	The guiding principles for the platform were:
	 Be free of charge and utilise remote sensing data without the need for on the ground verification. Simplicity - Needs to be a tool that is user friendly for producers and as simple as possible. Desirable - Needs to have commercial applications and drivers (current or emerging).

	 Industry acceptance - Needs to have buy-in from industry representative groups. Broad application - Needs to service the full grassfed beef industry supply chain, not only niche value chains. Encourage continual improvement - Needs to support self-directed learning and encourage practice change in a non-threatening manner. Outcomes-based standards - Needs to be based on objective outcomes-based standards to ensure clarity, consistency and equity.
How did you do it?	equity. The Project Coordinator was responsible for establishing the process to enable recruitment of the platform development team. An Eol document was prepared, outlining the scope, budget and timeframes of the project, and several responses were received. Applicants were requested to present a pitch to a selection panel. The Project Coordinator managed the pitch process, collated feedback from the selection panel, and communicated with applicants. A scoping of which of the five themes it was possible to create a credential from, based on existing credentials, access to remotely sensed data, ability for scalability and a tiered approach as requested by the co-design phase. A Publicly Available Specification (PAS) was created for informing the biodiversity theme on the platform by CSIRO. A Terms of Reference was written for the Steering Committee and the committee met on four occasions to provide guidance and review progress. A developer, Servian, was engaged to build a digitised version of the SB-GAF and G-GAF PICCC tools. This was identified as a necessary component for the Environmental Credentials platform. Later in the project, the Go-GAF and F-GAF capabilities were added to allow for expansion of the platform to other user types. The consortium and platform theme leads collated all the feedback and information from the co-design process. This was given to RMCG to created interactive learning modules that were aimed at a producer audience with increasing complexity to match the increasing tiers. Servian was engaged again to build the platform. Data management and report generation were also built by Servian with the data generated by the platform held in MLA's instance of AWS Athena.
	Sprint meetings with Servian were held with MLA's project manager every two weeks to ensure that the project remained on track for delivery and was fit for purpose.

	The Quick Start Carbon Calculator, which is designed to compliment the full GAF calculator as a planning tool for producers was also created by Servian. An eLearning module to help producers work through this tool and the full carbon calculator tools was developed in partnership with Pinion Advisory. The platform was required to be piloted by industry prior to it being finalised. An expression of interest portal was created for beef producers to
	pilot the platform and provide their feedback. The pilot testing process was outsourced to a third party through a formal call for service from MLA (a separate Pinion Advisory team were the successful providers appointed). This is detailed further in 'Stakeholder engagement and extension'.
When did you do it?	This activity occurred from November 2021 to March 2024. Platform development occurred over several months in the third quarter of the project.
Who participated?	MLA, RMCG, Servian, University of Queensland, WWF Australia, Pinion Advisory, Cibo Labs, CSIRO
Who delivered the activity?	RMCG delivered the learning modules, Servian delivered the platform and MLA delivered the reporting and delivery of the platform as a whole. The platform development consortium (Servian, CiboLabs and RMCG) were primarily responsible, with oversight and direction from the MLA project manager.
	The Environmental Credentials platform was officially launched at Beef Australia 2024 in May. This has delivered a platform that allows producers to demonstrate their on farm sustainable practices and practice change over time with the supply chain.
What was the output? How did this contribute to Program objectives listed in the WorkPlan?	 Other outputs from the platform development phase include: Platform piloted by producers, including learning modules for the 5 themes, a carbon credential, a biodiversity credential, and the ability to generate reports to be downloaded or shared. Presentation of guided demo of the pilot platform. Theme scoping papers to inform the co-design process. Servian, RMCG and CiboLabs progress reports and final reports to MLA.
What evidence can you provide? (e.g photographs?	 Evidence of outputs from the platform design phase are available: 10 learning modules around carbon, biodiversity and drought resilience. The Environmental Credentials platform is now available at www.envcred.com.au or you can visit the MLA website page at https://www.mla.com.au/extension-training-and-tools/environmental-credentials-platform/. The MLA carbon calculator can be accessed here: https://carbon-calculator.mla.com.au/ The Carbon in Action eLearning and Quick Start Carbon Calculator can be accessed here: https://elearning.mla.com.au/courses/carbon-in-action/ and https://quick-start-carbon-calculator.mla.com.au/ Pilot promotional content and mail outs, post pilot presentation,

Project Activity 5 (as listed in your WorkPlan)		
What did you do?	Scientific standards development. This activity brought together industry experience and supporting research to analyze the key characteristics of the current Standards, Certification and Assurance (SCA) schemes applicable to extensive beef production. This work was to inform which credentials to include on the platform and how to design the credentials.	
How did you do it?	It became apparent that work was required to inform which themes could be designed to create a credential on the platform, based on existing credentials, access to remotely sensed data, ability for scalability and a tiered approach as requested by the co-design phase. It was also suggested that a Publicly Available Specification (PAS) was created for informing the biodiversity theme on the platform. A team from CSIRO were engaged to conduct this work. A steering committee was established to oversee this activity. A Terms of Reference was written for the Steering Committee and the committee met on four occasions to provide guidance and review progress.	
	The CSIRO work, along with the work from co-design phase was used by the platform development consortium to create the platform.	
When did you do it?	This work was done at the beginning of the platform development phase, in the third quarter of the project.	
Who participated?	CSIRO, the MLA project manager and a steering committee consisting of producers and technical experts.	
Who delivered the activity?	CSIRO were primarily responsible, with oversight and direction from the MLA project manager.	
What was the output? How did this contribute to Program objectives listed in the WorkPlan?	 Outputs from the platform development phase include: CSIRO academic publication summarising the research conducted to inform the platform development. CSIRO work steering committee meeting minutes and recordings. CSIRO final report to MLA. 	

What evidence can you provide? (e.g photographs?	 Evidence of outputs from the platform design phase are available: CSIRO academic publication summarising the research conducted to inform the platform development. Thomas, D.T.; Mata, G.; Toovey,
	A.F.; Hunt, P.W.; Wijffels, G.; Pirzl, R.; Strachan, M.; Ridoutt, B.G. Climate and Biodiversity Credentials for Australian Grass-Fed Beef: A Review of Standards, Certification and Assurance Schemes. Sustainability 2023, 15, 13935. <u>https://doi.org/10.3390/su151813935</u>
	 CSIRO work steering committee meeting minutes and recordings. Theme scoping papers to inform the co-design process. CSIRO final report to MLA.

Project Activity 6 (as listed in your WorkPlan)		
What did you do?	Stakeholder engagement and extension. Stakeholder engagement was fundamental to project progress. Regular and consistent communication with stakeholders was undertaken.	
	Extension of the platform occurred when the platform was ready for piloting.	
	Pilot testing of the platform occurred, enabling beef producers from around Australia to test the platform, using data from their own properties, and share their feedback about potential improvements or changes.	
	The communications plan created at the beginning of the project was implemented and continually updated. A stakeholder database was created, segregating stakeholders into categories of 'consult', 'involve' and 'collaborate'.	
How did you do it?	The Project Coordinator took the lead role in preparing the external communication updates and obtaining MLA approval prior to circulating according to the communications plan. They were responsible for preparing communication burst documents to share with stakeholders. These documents were prepared annually at a minimum, and occasionally a second was created when required. The Project Coordinator would prepare a draft, share it with the project team for feedback, and work with the MLA communications team members to finalise the documents.	
	Over the course of the project, stakeholder engagement and extension activities have been occurring. The co-design process allowed for consultation with the industry and a collaborative approach to be taken. Updates have been given via the MLA website and email throughout the project. The Advisory Group acted as champions for the project and provided strategic input to project design. Producers were aware that they	

	played a vital role in the co-design by being advocates and champions for the project in their networks.
	The communications plan was regularly reviewed. Meetings were held with numerous external parties, including: ANU biodiversity project team, Sustain Cert, CCA/Agforce, Dairy Australia, Department of Agriculture and Fisheries Qld, NRM Regions Australia, Landcare Australia.
	The platform was piloted at the end of 2023. A series of webinars were held to allow producers and other stakeholders to see a demonstration of the platform and ask questions. Feedback surveys were also circulated so that people piloting the platforms could provide suggestions on improvements before launch. A post pilot follow up webinar was also held to outline next steps, improvements that could be made before the launch and improvements noted for future iterations of the platform.
	Case studies were also created to demonstrate producer use cases. Video case studies have also been produced by OGA Design to demonstrate the 'Who' and 'What' of the platform.
	The platform has been incorporated into MLA's new CarbonEDGE program. In this two-day workshop, the Environmental Credentials platform as well as the MLA Carbon Calculator is introduced and feedback is taken on the tools.
	The Platform was officially launched at Beef Australia 2024 by the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry of Australia, Murray Watt. Tech talks and lightening presentations to demonstrate the platform were also held across the week. During the month post launch, advertisements on MLA social media accounts and online news sites, such as Beef Central, were initiated. A media release from MLA was put out with interviews conducted to promote the platform.
	Presentations to different forums such as the Newman BeefUp and the Beef Sustainability Framework steering committee meeting, banks, processors, peak industry councils, retailers, government departments and commercial agribusinesses have been conducted. This will be an ongoing activity.
	A steering group has also been set up consisting of stakeholders involved in the initial co-design of the platform as well as other interested participants such as Landcare, Universities and other state government departments. The first meeting will be held in the second half of 2024. They will be held every six months to ensure that the platform remains relevant to industry and improves with the changing needs of stakeholders.
	May 2020 to May 2024 and ongoing.
When did you do it?	Extension of the platform occurred when the platform was ready for piloting and will continue beyond the life of the project to ensure adoption by industry.

	Pilot testing occurred in the final quarter of the project.
Who participated?	Meat & Livestock Australia, Pinion Advisory, OGA Design, the Word Farmer, University of Queensland, project team, industry stakeholders
Who delivered the activity?	Meat & Livestock Australia, Pinion Advisory, Project team, MLA project manager
What was the output? How did this contribute to Program objectives listed in the WorkPlan?	 Outputs from the stakeholder engagement and extension activity include: Stakeholder database Communication/media log Communications burst documents Presentation files promoting the project Feedback received from producers about the platform pilot Video and written case studies
What evidence can you provide? (e.g photographs?	 Evidence of outputs from the platform design phase are available: Stakeholder database Communication/media log Communications burst documents Presentation files promoting the project Summary report - feedback received from producers about the platform pilot Case studies, written and video.

Discussion

Use this section to fully describe the results of each outcome and output. Include a description of the Activity overall achievements against the objectives, deliverables and key performance indicators.

Include tables, diagrams or graphs as required.

Project management

It was identified that a Project Coordination team would be needed to assist in the administrative, organisation and co-ordination of the different groups involved in the project. This role was put out to tender and awarded to Pinion Advisory. The Project Coordination team was made up of Leanne Sherriff and Jo Jones from Pinion Advisory working in a shared capacity until May 2023, and for the last portion of the project, Jo Jones alone. The Project Coordinator reported to MLA, the project lead. There were five Project Managers at MLA over the life of the project, and the Project Coordinator supported the transition between these Project Managers.

Monthly content meetings were scheduled on a fortnightly basis, or as required to review the detail underpinning key project deliverables. These meetings provided a forum to ensure consistency in delivery of the co-design activity and enable consortium input into other activities (such as platform developer Expressions of Interest process, etc). The Project Coordinator provided a minute taking service for these meetings, developed the agenda, supported MLA with facilitating meetings as required and maintained the live working sheet to keep track of actioned and actionable items. The monthly project management meetings were used to keep the project on-track. Standing agenda items at these meetings included action items from the previous meeting, workplan progress/review, risk assessment update and communications activities update. Additional items were added as required. The Project Coordinator drafted the agenda and assisted MLA to facilitate these meetings.

A project workplan was established using Smartsheet, detailing the outputs agreed to in the Smart Farms grant, and the steps required to achieve them. All project team members had access to the project workplan, and the workplan was reviewed at monthly project team meetings. The workplan enabled monitoring of progress of all tasks and assisted in ensuring all deliverables from the Smart Farms Grant agreement were accounted for.

The Project Coordinator drafted a detailed risk assessment early in the project. This was regularly reviewed by the project team, and new risks added when necessary. The Project Coordinator would bring relevant risks to the attention of the project team during project management meetings. A communications plan and monitoring and evaluation plan were also drafted early in the project, and reviewed regularly. The communications plan informed the stakeholder engagement process throughout the project. The University of Queensland team and the Project Coordinator utilised the monitoring and evaluation plan to inform evaluation of the co-design phase and the platform pilot testing phase.

Ultimately, the project management of this project enabled the delivery of the platform, the development of the MLA Carbon Calculator, eLearning modules, scoping and co-design of the project and all communication and stakeholder engagement. Original KPIs for number of users will continue to be worked towards with further engagements planned throughout 2024 and 2025.

Scoping, initial research and intelligence

A project Advisory Group was formed in May 2021 to guide the development of the platform and provide strategic input and advice to the project team, to ensure the resulting product meets the needs of users. A Terms of Reference was drafted and members were offered sitting fees in line with MLA policies.

The selection criteria for membership of the Advisory Group were:

- 1. Demonstrated national livestock industry networks.
- 2. Experience and/or demonstrated interest in sustainability in livestock production or processing systems.
- 3. Innovative/creative thinkers (move away from business-as-usual approaches).
- 4. Understanding of and/or experience in delivery/design of extension/learning programs for livestock producers.
- 5. Understanding the drivers behind producer and market interests in sustainability.
- 6. Previous involvement in steering committees or advisory groups.
- 7. A demonstrated collegial approach to working with others.
- 8. Willing to champion the demonstrating beef sustainability project amongst networks.

The Project Coordinator was responsible for communicating with the project Advisory Group, developing the agenda for meetings, preparing material for sharing, facilitating some sessions during meetings, taking minutes and processing sitting fees.

A briefing document covering scope, purpose, objective, guiding questions and reporting was developed. Key foundational resources were developed (workplan, risk assessment, program logic, communications plan, advisory group Terms of Reference), and the key research phase was completed. The business sustainability scan sub-project was delivered by the University of Queensland which conducted deep dive surveys of producers, reporting the findings back to the Advisory Group.

This initial desktop scoping and exploratory work helped to guide the co-design groups and Advisory Group in their discussions. This was completed in line with the five key theme areas and resulted in the development of peer reviewed summary reports that were presented back to the Advisory Group. This informed the groups what technologies and research were already available ensuring that work was not being replicated. This step was essential in seeing what technologies could realistically be incorporated into the platform and if it was fit for purpose to demonstrate sustainable practices in the key theme areas.

Co-design

Difficulty was experienced in getting businesses to agree to being interviewed initially for the design of the platform. MLA assisted in getting agreement for these interviews. Subcontracts for each of the theme leads with clear scope, deliverables and timeframes was created. These were regularly reviewed by the consortium team to ensure that activities were progressing. Program agreement was negotiated and agreed by project partners and an internal team meeting facilitated by an independent facilitator to work through any issues and challenges was conducted. This allowed an agreed process for working effectively together to be developed.

Theme leaders had conducted research into existing verification tools and platforms relevant to each of the five themes, and produced issues scoping papers during the previous activity, 'scoping, initial research and intelligence'. Technical experts for each of the five theme areas were identified and oversaw the preliminary information gathering which informed the co-design process. This was an important part to start the conversations with the co-design groups and guide the meetings.

Co-design groups were formed in September 2021 to assist with defining the scope of the themes and guide the development of the platform and learning modules. The co-design process was developed by the consortium and reviewed by a technical expert. A tender was sent out to appoint an external facilitator that would assist and facilitate the co-design group meetings. Work with each of the theme leads and report findings. Co-design groups consisted of beef producers, value chain members and other industry representatives.

A Terms of Reference was created, and members were offered sitting fees in line with MLA policies. An expression of interest process was used, and producers were asked to nominate their preferred theme to be involved with.

The selection criteria for membership of the co-design groups were:

Suitable beef producer working group members will have:

• Current established commercial grass-fed beef production experience (one or more of northern, southern or western production systems).

- A strong interest in demonstration of on-farm environmental performance.
- Strong beef producer and broader industry networks and a willingness to bring a broader perspective to the table.
- Demonstrated ability to work collaboratively as part of a working group.
- Experience with vertical integration/processor/customer end of the value chain would be an advantage.
- Experience using existing MLA platforms such as myMLA, myMSA or Livestock Data Link (LDL) is desirable but not essential.

Beef value chain stakeholders suitable for the working groups will have:

- A current working role in the Australian beef industry value chain relevant to demonstrating environmental performance e.g. sustainability manager, supply chain manager (or equivalent).
- A demonstrated interest in environmental sustainability of beef production systems.
- Strong beef industry networks and a willingness to bring a broader perspective to the table.
- Demonstrated ability to work collaboratively as part of a working group.
- Experience in delivering and/or sourcing sustainably produced agricultural products (beef or other)

The Project Coordinator managed the EOI process and prepared documents for the project team to use to assign members to groups.

The co-design lead (University of Queensland) and respective theme leads were responsible for corresponding with the co-design members, and the Project Coordinator was responsible for processing sitting fees. The Advisory Group acted as champions for the project and provided strategic input into the project design. The Co-design working group considered group composition to achieve optimal geographic and demographic spread to maximise communication and engagement throughout industry. Producers were all aware that they played a vital role in the co-design by being advocates for the project in their networks and making sure that the platform was fit for purpose.

The expression of interest process for recruitment of co-design group members was successful and five full groups were formed. 110 expressions of interest were received from producers from all beef producing regions of Australia. This co-design process was critical in informing the development of the platform and ensuring that it met the needs of producers and the supply chain to demonstrate their on farm sustainable practices. The design process led to the creation of the tiered system within the platform which allows producers to demonstrate where they are in their sustainability journey. It also helped inform what content should be included within the platform and areas which needed improvement.

When the platform was piloted, the co-design group was invited to trial it and provide feedback. The results from the pilot and aggregated feedback was presented back to them at the end of the piloting period along with next steps. Post launch, some members of the co-design and Advisory Group will continue their role in informing the direction of the platform by being a part of the steering committee. This committee met at least twice a year and included producers, supply chain stakeholders (banks, retailer, processor) as well as other interested parties such as Landcare, universities and government departments.

Develop platform

The Project Coordinator was responsible for establishing the process to enable recruitment of the platform development team. An EoI document was prepared, outlining the scope, budget and timeframes of the project, and several responses were received. Applicants were requested to present a pitch to a selection panel. The Project Coordinator managed the pitch process, collated feedback from the selection panel, and communicated with applicants. Through this process, Servian were awarded the contract for the development of the platform.

It became apparent that work was required to inform which of the five themes it was possible to create a credential from, based on existing credentials, access to remotely sensed data, ability for scalability and a tiered approach as requested by the co-design phase. It was also suggested that a Publicly Available Specification (PAS) was created for informing the biodiversity theme on the platform. A team from CSIRO was engaged to conduct this work. A steering committee was established to oversee this activity. A Terms of Reference was written for the Steering Committee and the committee met on four occasions to provide guidance and review progress. The Project Coordinator supported MLA in managing the steering committee and the progress of this phase of work, including setting online meetings, taking minutes and sharing meeting recordings.

The project coordinator did not have a key role in the actual platform design process, but did attend sprint meetings with the platform design team to ensure they could share progress with the project team. Sprint meetings with Servian were held with MLA's project manager every two weeks to ensure that the project remained on track for delivery and was fit for purpose. Towards the end of the platform development, these meetings were held more regularly to ensure that refinements were being made in line with feedback from the co-design group and consortium.

The platform was required to be piloted with industry prior to it being finalised. An expression of interest portal was created for beef producers to pilot the platform and provide their feedback. The pilot testing process was outsourced to a third party through a formal call for service from MLA (a separate Pinion Advisory team were the successful providers appointed). The Project Coordinator was responsible for supporting MLA to create information for the pilot producer EoI process, collating responses and passing these on to the platform pilot team.

A web interface for the PICCC SB-GAF tools was identified as a key component needed for the carbon balance theme. A developer, Servian, was engaged to build a digitised version of the SB-GAF and G-GAF PICCC tools. Later in the project, the Go-GAF and F-GAF capabilities were added to allow for expansion of the platform to other user types in the future. It would also allow any beef producers with multiple enterprises to include this data in their reports.

The consortium and platform theme leads collated all the feedback and information from the co-design process. This was given to RMCG to create learning modules centred around these themes in Rise360. RMCG created interactive learning modules that were aimed at a producer audience with increasing complexity to match the increasing tiers.

Servian, was engaged again to build the final platform. This included all the API connections to the MLA Carbon Calculator and the Cibo Labs platform that make up a portion of the data collected by the platform. Data management and report generation was also built by Servian with the data generated by the platform held in MLA's instance of AWS Athena. The platform was tested by the MLA project manager before the pilot period. After the pilot, all feedback was collated by Pinion Advisory and as many of the suggested improvements and refinements were implemented before the launch as possible.

An extension to the grant was given at this point to allow for a more strategic launched to be planned. This also enabled bigger adjustments to the platform to be made and other suggested improvements to the MLA Carbon Calculator to be implemented.

The Quick Start Carbon Calculator, which is designed to compliment the full GAF calculator as a planning tool for producers was also created by Servian. An eLearning module to help producers work through this tool and the full carbon calculator tools were developed in partnership with Pinion Advisory. This filled a need for a quick tool so producers could more easily test scenarios on their farm to get an estimation of their on farm emissions.

The platform is now live and connected through MLA's myMLA platform. Users can provide feedback to MLA via email or a feedback form built into the platform. The platform, as it is, is considered a first iteration and does have some limitations. Potential improvements for future iterations have been noted by the MLA project manager and are being scoped for pipeline projects. Some of these phase two improvements that were informed by the pilot phase include:

- Updating learning modules and additional links as new information becomes available
- Additional learning modules to encourage continued learning as well as the creation of more tiers so producers can continue to demonstrate practice change over time
- Additional technologies and platforms to allow existing systems to be incorporated into the reports
- Expand the relevance to other production systems (i.e. sheep, goat, feedlot)
- API integrations for in product sharing with other end users such as producer to bank or processor to retailer
- Further customisation of reports and supporting information
- Mobile compatibility

Work towards these phase two improvements will continue with pipeline projects to connect other end users being scoped. It is expected that the platform and final reports will evolve with the needs of the industry.

Stakeholder engagement and extension

The Project Coordinator took the lead role in preparing the external communication updates and obtaining MLA approval prior to circulating according to the communications plan. They were responsible for preparing communication burst documents to share with stakeholders. These documents were prepared annually at a minimum, and occasionally a second was created when required. These documents aimed to provide an update on the progress of the project and encourage involvement from

industry at key phases, for example registering for the co-design groups and piloting the platform. The Project Coordinator would prepare a draft, share it with the project team for feedback, and work with the MLA communications team members to finalise the documents.

The Advisory Group acted as a champions for the project and provide strategic input to project design. The Co-design working group design considered group composition to achieve optimal geographic and demographic spread to maximise communication and engagement throughout industry. Producers were aware that they played a vital role in the co-design by being advocates and champions for the project in their networks. There was a good spread of stakeholders involved in the design of the platform with increased engagement throughout the project. It also made sure that the platform was relevant to as many beef producers as possible. As these producers were intrinsically involved in the design and delivery of the project, the platform has received positive feedback throughout the piloting and initial launch phases in terms of the value of the platform and how it can help with the sharing of sustainability data.

With the University of Queensland as the lead of the co-design groups and process, they were responsible for circulating any communication with these groups. Having consistency in the contact person or company for each of these groups improved the feedback loops for any improvements that needed to be made of design considerations.

The communications plan was reviewed frequently with progress snapshots circulated regularly throughout the project. Engagement and interest in the project have been strong (e.g. EoIs for codesign groups, platform development, advisory group engagement and commitment) throughout the entire process. This resulted in good numbers of EoIs for the co-design group and pilot participation. Good engagement in these stages was essential to ensure that the platform was relevant for users.

Over the course of the project, stakeholder engagement and extension activities have been occurring. The co-design process allowed for consultation with the industry and a collaborative approach to be taken. Updates have been given via the MLA website and email throughout the project.

Other stakeholders were also involved and updated throughout the project. Meetings were held with numerous external parties, including: ANU biodiversity project team, Sustain Cert, CCA/Agforce, Dairy Australia, Department of Agriculture and Fisheries Qld, NRM Regions Australia, Landcare Australia. Some of these stakeholders will continue their involvement within the steering group. It was important that engagement with these various organisations was included to increase the network and touch points the platform can have throughout the supply chain. This will improve adoption rates and will be a key component of the adoption plan for the platform moving forward.

The platform was piloted at the end of 2023. A series of webinars were held to allow producers and other stakeholders to see a demonstration of the platform and ask questions. These were facilitated by Pinion Advisory. Feedback surveys were also circulated so that people piloting the platforms could provide suggestions on improvements before launch, the answers were consolidated in a report and presented to MLA. A post pilot follow up webinar was also held to outline next steps, improvements that

could be made before the launch and improvements noted for future iterations of the platform. The pilot highlighted the need for further editing of the eLearning content to meet the needs of the intended audience and so an independent editor was used (The Word Farmer) to make sure that the content was as accessible as possible. Over 100 producers participated in the one-month pilot with around 500 learning modules completed. A follow up session was identified as an important step by the consortium to close the information loop and ensure that producers who took the time to participate in the pilot and provide feedback could see tangible changes as a result. This would ensure that continued engagement post launch could occur.

Case studies were also created to demonstrate producer use cases. These written case studies will be used in MLA publications and has been earmarked for the 2024 edition of the *Feedback Magazine*. Video case studies have also been produced by OGA Design to demonstrate the 'Who' and 'What' of the platform. This included interviews with stakeholders across the supply chain (retailers, processors and banks) to demonstrate the growing needs from the supply chain, why the platform was created and how it can help supply environmental credential reports along the supply chain.

The platform has been incorporated into MLA's new CarbonEDGE program which helps producers develop an action plan for their business and highlight the tools that could help them demonstrate and implement sustainable practices. In this two-day workshop, the Environmental Credentials platform as well as the MLA Carbon Calculator is introduced and feedback is taken. From the end of 2023 through to mid-2024, CarbonEDGE has been piloted across Australia with over 100 people participating in these pilots. Another 10 CarbonEDGE workshops are planned throughout 2024 where the Environmental Credentials platform and MLA Carbon Calculator will continue to be demonstrated.

The platform was officially launched at Beef 2024 by the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry of Australia, Murray Watt at MLA's Sundowner event. Tech talks and lightening presentations to demonstrate the platform were also held across the week. During the month post launch, advertisements on MLA social media accounts and online news sites, such as Beef Central, were initiated. A media release from MLA was put out with interviews conducted to promote the platform.

Presentations to different forums such as the Newman BeefUp and the Beef Sustainabiltiy Framework steering committee forum, banks, processors, peak industry councils, retailers, government departments and commercial agribusinesses have been conducted. These engagements have led to pipeline project scoping to improve the useability to other end users and potential networks that could be used to improve adoption. These presentations will continue as various events such as LambEx and Red Meat Updates in Launceston. Engaging end users is now a part of MLA's adoption plan to help producers become aware of the platform and improve uptake. Some value test cases are being scoped with processors, banks and retailers now.

A steering group has also been set up consisting of stakeholders involved in the initial co-design of the platform as well as other interested participants such as Landcare, Universities and other state government departments. The first meeting will be held in the second half of 2024. They will be held at

least every six months to ensure that the platform remains relevant to industry and improves with the changing needs of stakeholders.

Contribution to the Smart Farming Partnerships outcomes

Explain the contribution that this project has made to the Smart Farming Partnerships outcomes (as detailed in Section 2.4 of the Program Guidelines).

The outcomes of this project are consistent with the guidelines of the Smart Farming Partnership program. The project has developed, trialed and implemented a new and innovative tool that supports uptake of sustainable agriculture practices in the beef industry. This tool has the potential to be rolled out to the other red meet industries including lamb and goat producers and value chain stakeholders.

The project outcomes align closely with outcomes 1 and 2 from the Smart Farming Partnership guidelines summarized here.

Outcome 1 – Protecting the natural resource base

Delivering this outcome will:

- assist entities to improve their own productivity, profitability and ability to adapt to significant changes in climate, weather and markets, while improving the capacity of Australian farmers to demonstrate the sustainability of their operations and the traceability of their products
- deliver benefits to the broader community such as cleaner air and water, and better protected biodiversity.

Outcome 2 – Innovation in capacity building and promotion of sustainable resource management practice

The Environmental Credentials platform components each work towards building capacity for producers to implement and demonstrate sustainable resource management practices

Delivering this outcome will:

- increase the awareness and use of institutional, sectoral, market and supply chain-based initiatives to promote adoption of sustainable farm practices, such as product traceability
- increase the capacity and confidence of regional community leaders, including women, young people and Indigenous Australians involved in agriculture or fisheries production and the protection of natural resources to plan for and manage Australia's natural resource base
- increase engagement and participation by regional communities and groups, including Landcare, professional farming system groups, industry, other community groups or individuals in natural resource management activities
- increase community awareness and understanding of the importance of managing Australia's soil, water and vegetation, and the contribution that innovative practices on-farm can make to agricultural sustainability, adaptation to climate change and the quality of the environment enjoyed by the broader community.

Project finances

Progress against Project Budget

If there is a variance of more than 10]
If there is a variance of more than 10% between the actual receipt of co-and the Project budget, please explain the reasons and what is being done to address the issue. What are the implications, if not addressed and what does this mean for the Project activity in terms of outcomes?		
Was Project expenditure in accordance with the Project Budget	Yes	No
provided in the Project Plan?	get ⊠ □	
If there is a variance of more than 10% between the actual receipt of contributions and / or expenditure and the Activity Plan budget, please explain the reasons and what is being done to address the issue. What are the implications, if not addressed and what does this means for the Activity in terms of Activity outcomes?		
If there is a variance of more than 10 expenditure and the Activity Plan bu address the issue. What are the imp	% between the actual receipt of o dget, please explain the reasons ications, if not addressed and wl s?	contributions and / or and what is being done nat does this means for t

Is there any other information you think we may be interested in for this project?

Throughout the extensive pilot testing and refinement phases of the project, ideas for future improvements and extensions of the platform outside the scope of the current project have emerged, as outlined in this report. A strong case exists for further investment to allow for additional innovation and design features to be added to the platform, and expansion of the learning framework to allow for greater education and practice change. MLA are keen to engage with future project partners to attract investment to allow for phase two of the project to be created.

There is opportunity for the platform capability to be expanded to cater for lamb and goat producers, as well as other themes of sustainability such as water use efficiency and animal welfare. These will be informed by the steering group that has been set up for on going design of the platform. Currently, other user types can utilise the platform to generate the report as the Cibo Labs and MLA Carbon Calculator components are still highly relevant. The case studies and some of the practice recommendations within the learning modules are grass fed beef focused. MLA will look to add additional case studies relevant to these other user types to increase the potential user base of the platform.

Attachments

Attachment 1: A two page Project Summary –summarising the key findings and outcomes of the Project. **Attachment 2**: A list of all Project materials including all intellectual property created or arising over the life of the Project.

Attachment 3: A report of all assets created or acquired during the delivery of the project.

Project Summary

Project title

Verifiable sustainability beef credentials and practice change modules

Partner organisations

Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) (Lead organization) University of Queensland (UQ) (Consortium Partner and drought resilience theme lead) World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) Australia (Consortium Partner and biodiversity, ground cover and tree cover themes lead) Pinion Advisory (National project coordinator, carbon theme lead) Australian National University (sub-contractor for biodiversity, ground cover and tree cover themes) Servian (platform build partner) CiboLabs (platform build partner) RMCG (platform build partner) CSIRO (credential development for biodiversity theme)

Project summary

Customers and other industry stakeholders are increasingly looking for evidence of sustainable production practices. Australian beef producers were not able to demonstrate their sustainability credentials and achieve recognition without common standards and a common reporting system. This project enabled the development of a free, national platform, utilising satellite imagery for verification of sustainability credentials and provides a solution for producers wishing to demonstrate sustainability performance to various markets against five areas; vegetation management, ground cover, biodiversity stewardship, carbon balance and drought resilience. Learning modules have been developed to align with the theme areas and motivate grass-fed beef producers to implement practice change where required through self-directed learning. Beef producers and other members of the value chain were involved in the design, development and testing of the platform, thus ensuring the platform is relevant, practical and fit for purpose.

Objectives

The key objectives for the project were:

- Development of a national online platform for grass-fed beef producers that enables them to access emerging markets by verifying their environmental credentials.
- Motivating grass-fed beef producers to implement practice change where required through self-directed learning.

Key activities

This project has delivered a national tool for demonstrating land management and sustainability credentials for Australian grass-fed beef producers. The system uses an opt-in on-line platform, guidance on standards and learning modules to inform continual improvement. The platform utilises satellite imagery for verification of sustainability credentials and provides a solution for producers wishing to demonstrate sustainability performance and build knowledge of vegetation

management, ground cover and soil conservation, biodiversity stewardship, carbon balance and drought resilience.

The *Environmental Credentials of Australian grassfed beef* platform was built through a robust codesign process, meaning it is designed by beef producers, for beef producers.

The involvement of industry and technical experts ensured that the design of the platform allowed for scientifically valid principles to underpin design features and content of the platform, and that usability was aligned with needs of producers and other members of the beef value chain.

Case studies have been created to show how using the platform can support decision making on farm, and support producers to respond to other market drivers requiring demonstratable environmental credentials.

This platform was piloted at the end of 2023 with producers and supply chain stakeholders attending introduction webinar sessions, trialing the platform and providing feedback. Improvements were implemented before the official launch in May 2024 with other suggestions noted for future additions to the platform. The platform has been incorporated into other extension activities such as MLA's new CarbonEDGE two-day workshop. It has been demonstrated at forums, webinars and to stakeholders across the supply chain. A steering group has been established to ensure that the platform remains relevant to the industry and changes to meet the growing need for the ability to share sustainability data across the supply chain.

Outcomes

The following outcomes have been achieved through the successful delivery of the project:

- 2. Australian grassfed beef producers are able to be rewarded for demonstrating their environmental credentials to customers, consumers and the community.
- 3. Australian grassfed beef producers are able to undertake self-directed learning to improve performance across five key environmental themes; and
- 4. Australian grassfed beef producers are able to respond to other market drivers (for example but not limited to customer requirements, accessing farm loans or schemes etc.) requiring demonstrable environmental credentials.

The platform can be found at <u>https://www.envcred.com.au</u>. More information can be found at <u>https://www.mla.com.au/extension-training-and-tools/environmental-credentials-platform/</u>

A direct link to the MLA Carbon Calculator can be found here: <u>https://carbon-calculator.mla.com.au/</u> and a link to the elearning modules is <u>https://elearning.mla.com.au/courses/?search=&filter-categories=sustainability</u>

Implications

The platform created through this project will enable growth in the value of and trust in Australian grassfed beef products and their production through demonstrating environmental credentials and fostering practice change. It is anticipated that the platform will motivate grass-fed producers to implement sustainability practice change through interpreting credential reports and participating in self-directed learning.

Data gathered through producers using the platform will provide a baseline for aggregated and deidentified national trends data for the beef industry across sustainability areas that can be used for monitoring, directing adoption and industry wide reporting.

Project materials including intellectual property

Please list all Project materials including all intellectual property created or arising over the life of the Project.

Project	Project materials generated
L.SFP.1003 National Co-ordinator for the project Demonstrating Beef Sustainability	 Risk assessments Project reference group Terms of Reference Live SmartSheet Milestone reports Final report Privacy Threshold Assessment Consortium meeting minutes Advisory group meeting minutes and contacts Communications bursts and plan Consortium governance plan Activity work plan
L.SFP.1004 Value Chain Business and Sustainability Scan and Analysis	 Project team meeting minutes and agendas 1 page summary paper Advisory Committee Update brief Sustainabiltiy scan briefing document Milestone reports Final report Interview guide Advisory committee report Beef Industry Business Sustainabiltiy Scan Deep Dive report
L.SFP.1005 Ground Cover Theme Development: Sustainable Beef Program	 Co-design platform brief Ground Cover Issues paper Milestone reports Final report
L.SFP.1006 Drought Theme Development - Sustainable Beef Program	 Final report Milestone reports Drought theme Issues paper Co-design platform brief
L.SFP.1007 Tree Theme Development – Sustainable Beef Program	 Final report Milestone reports Tree Cover Issues paper Co-design platform brief
L.SFP.1008 Biodiversity Theme Development – Sustainable Beef Program	 Final report Milestone reports Biodiversity Issues paper Co-design platform brief

L.SFP.1009 Smart Farms Co-design - Sustainable Beef Program L.SFP.1010 Carbon Theme Development - Sustainable Beef Program	 Co-design evaluation survey Final report – Co-design final paper Milestone reports Co-design meeting minutes and reports from each theme Co-design participants list Co-design webinar slide deck and minutes Co-design working group letter of appointment Final report Milestone reports Carbon theme scoping paper
L.SFP.1011 CMA - Environmental credentials for Beef	 Meeting agendas and presentation CarbonEDGE materials relating to the MLA Carbon Calculator and Environmental Credentials platform Case study brief 2 written producer case studies 3 video case studies outlining 'who', 'what', 'how' MLA media release Advertising, comms and promotional plan Presentation slides for launch and post launch promotion
L.SFP.1012 Environmental Credentials for Beef project - Facilitation Services	 Milestone reports Final report
B.CCH.2301 Pathways to climate-neutrality for the Australian red meat sector	 Terms of Reference Climate Neutral Pathways Privacy Threshold Assessment Study outcomes presentation CSIRO literature review list Advisory group meeting agenda and minutes Publicly Available Specification development project Steering Committee Terms of Reference Steering committee meeting agendas and minutes
L.SFP.1013 Publicly available specification for verifying climate and biodiversity credentials for Australia grassfed beef	 Milestone reports Final report Privacy Threshold Assessment
L.SFP.1014 Environmental Credentials Information Technology Platform Build	 Milestone reports Final report Learning library modules and descriptions Environmental Credentials platform, website and data storage Privacy Threshold Assessment Privacy Impact Assessment

L.SFP.1015 Development of a web version of the SB-GAF calculator tool	 Sprint meeting presentations Drought resilience checklist Biodiversity checklist Meeting minutes, agendas and recordings MLA Carbon Calculator website, data storage Carbon accounting technical manual Milestone reports Final report Sprint meeting presentations Privacy Threshold Assessment Data checklist Glossary Fact sheets User guide
L.SFP.1016 Carbon calculator explanatory videos and promotional material	 Video brief Video explanation on how to fill out the MLA Carbon Calculator Privacy Threshold Assessment
L.SFP.1017 Environmental Credentials Platform piloting	 Environmental Credentials for Australian grassfed beef Project piloting phase - Terms of Reference Milestone reports Final report Recommendations and feedback report Recommendations and feedback relating to each theme General feedback relating to the platform Feedback relating to the navigation and ease of use Summary of webinar comments Webinar registration and attendance Pilot webinar presentation slides Feedback survey Post webinar information pack Post pilot overview webinar agenda eDM content for co-design mail out Social media and promotional content
L.SFP.1018 Updates to the MLA carbon calculator	 Milestone reports Final report Privacy Threshold Assessment Sprint meeting presentations
L.SFP.1019 Carbon in action module consultancy	 Carbon in Action proposal Milestone reports Final report Privacy Threshold Assessment Carbon in Action eLearning module

L.SFP.1020 Carbon in action tool development Here	 Sprint meeting presentations Privacy Threshold Assessment Quick Start Carbon Calculator online tool Carbon in Action proposal
L.SFP.1021 Environmental Credentials for Grassfed Beef - Independent review	Milestone reportsFinal report
L.SFP.1022 Update to the MLA carbon calculator	Sprint meeting presentations Milestone reports
	Final report
	MLA Media release

Project media, communications and extension materials

Date	Source	Link	Ref
Jan 2022	Project comms burst #2	Communications update document circulated	
Feb 2022	Meeting with industry stakeholder	ANU biodiversity project team, Sustain Cert (meeting led by Doug McNicholl, MLA)	
Mar 2022	Meeting with industry stakeholder	CCA/Agforce, Dairy Australia (meeting led by Doug McNicholl, MLA)	
Apr 2022	Meeting with industry stakeholder	Department of Agriculture and Fisheries Qld (meeting led by Doug McNicholl, MLA)	
May 2022	Meeting with industry stakeholder	NRM Regions Australia, Landcare Australia (meeting led by Doug McNicholl, MLA)	
July 2022	Industry Forum webinar	Webinar held to bring all co-design participants together to wrap up co-design stage of project and introduce platform design next steps. Recording stored internally, not shared publicly.	
Aug 2022	Australian Beef Sustainability Framework Annual Update 2022	https://www.sustainableaustralianbeef.com.au/globalassets/beef- sustainability/documents/absf_update_2022_web.pdf	Page 28
Aug 24 2022	Monaro Post	https://ausprint.meltwater.com/print_clip_previewer/403669333?text=on&keyword=on&pdf=new	
Aug 23 2022	High Country Herald	https://ausprint.meltwater.com/print_clip_previewer/403487740?text=on&keyword=on&pdf=new	
Aug 25 2022	The West Australian	https://www.countryman.com.au/countryman/livestock/mla-partners-with-agcotech-and-the-university-of- sydney-to-reduce-emissions-and-boost-herd-profitabilityc- 7973929?utm_source=csp&utm_medium=portal&utm_campaign=Meltwater&token=pN%2Bs3j2BD1m3l1GGikWs Aw9q2ENUkvSmCisboZ8T6QC493EWOkIpuUp5UH256ZbpE8ybvltZXuVfSUM78jyjtA%3D%3D	
Aug 25 2022	Beefcentral	https://www.beefcentral.com/carbon/mla-partners-with-agcotech-and-sydney-uni-to-reduce-livestock-methane- output/?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Beef%20Central%20News%20Headlines%20August%2019%202022 &utm_content=Beef%20Central%20News%20Headlines%20August%2019%202022+CID_8192d862ab572e6a705e 9773e84c855d&utm_source=eGenerator&utm_term=Click%20here%20for%20full%20story	

Aug 29	CSIRO ECOS	https://ecos.csiro.au/australian-red-meat-stakes-claim-for-carbon-neutral-future/			
2022		Australian red meat stakes a claim for a carbon neutral future			
Oct 25	Farm Weekly	https://www.farmweekly.com.au/story/7954127/how-medicated-molasses-blocks-are-reducing-methane-			
2022		emissions/			
		How medicated molasses blocks are reducing methane emissions in pastoral cattle			
Nov 2022	Inquiry into Food Security	y <u>https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House/Agriculture/FoodsecurityinAustrali#:~:text=</u>			
	in Australia	Following%20a%20referral%20from%20the,into%20food%20security%20in%20Australia			
		The Environmental Credentials for grass-fed beef in Australia project will be mentioned in the context of the			
		importance of recognizing producers for environmental stewardship efforts.			
Nov 2022	Project comms burst #3	Communications update document circulated including promotion of registrations open for pilot phase			
		https://www.mla.com.au/news-and-events/events-and-workshops/environmental-credentials-for-australian-			
		grassfed-beef-it-platform-pilot/			
Nov 2022	Project presentation at	https://updates.mla.com.au/			
	MLA Updates, Toowoomba				
Dec 2022	WA Angus magazine	Full page advertisement for registrations for pilot testing.			
Dec 2022	MLA Sustainability 'connect	nnect MLA is committed to providing our key investor and customer stakeholders with regular updates on progress a			
	up' webinar	outcomes from key sustainability programs and projects.			
		Katelyn Lubcke presented on the Environmental Credentials for grass-fed beef in Australia project.			
Jan 2023	MLA & Agri Futures	Meeting to discuss various sustainability initiatives- opportunities for Agri Futures to be involved and promote the			
	meeting	Environmental Credentials project			
Jan 2023	MLA & CBA meeting	Meeting to discuss various co-innovation initiatives across the supply chain			
		Katelyn Lubcke presented on the Environmental Credentials for grass-fed beef in Australia project.			
Feb 2023	MLA & NAPCO meeting	Meeting to discuss various sustainability initiatives			
		Katelyn Lubcke presented on the Environmental Credentials for grass-fed beef in Australia project.			
Feb 2023	MLA & Woolworths	Meeting to discuss various sustainability initiatives			
	meeting	Katelyn Lubcke presented on the Environmental Credentials for grass-fed beef in Australia project.			
Feb 2023	MLA & Paradigm Foods	Meeting to discuss various sustainability initiatives			
	meeting	Katelyn Lubcke presented on the Environmental Credentials for grass-fed beef in Australia project.			
Feb 2023	Australian Beef	https://www.sustainableaustralianbeef.com.au/resources/news/call-to-test-grassfed-beef-environmental-			
	Sustainability Framework	credentials-platform/			
	newsletter				
Mar 2023	TNQ Drought Hub	https://www.tnqdroughthub.com.au/event/environmental-credentials-for-australian-grassfed-beef-platform-			
		pilot-online/			

Mar 2023	Carbon Farming News	https://news.carbonfarming.org.au/articles/2260-new-tool-for-grass-fed-beef-farmers article promoting piloting	14/3/23
		of platform	
Mar 2023	MLA & Hewitt Cattle Co	Meeting to discuss various sustainability initiatives	
	meeting	 Katelyn Lubcke presented on the Environmental Credentials for grass-fed beef in Australia project. 	
Mar 2023	WA Agtech Meetup:	Livestock sustainability webinar	
	Sustainability in livestock	Katelyn Lubcke presented on the Environmental Credentials for grass-fed beef in Australia project.	
Mar 2023	MLA & Gulf Savannah NRM	Meeting to discuss various sustainability initiatives	
	meeting	Katelyn Lubcke presented on the Environmental Credentials for grass-fed beef in Australia project.	
Mar 2023	MLA Co-innovation	Meeting to discuss various co-innovation initiatives across the supply chain	
	network webinar	Katelyn Lubcke presented on the Environmental Credentials for grass-fed beef in Australia project.	
Mar 2023	MLA & AFF meeting	Meeting to discuss credentialling projects across agricultural commodities and MLA progress	
		Katelyn Lubcke presented on the Environmental Credentials for grass-fed beef in Australia project.	
Mar 2023	MLA & Aspire Ag meeting	Meeting to discuss beef credentialing projects	
		Katelyn Lubcke presented on the Environmental Credentials for grass-fed beef in Australia project.	
Mar 2023	Cattle Australia Webinar -	Webinar to update on beef industry projects, tools and resources- call for pilot participants	
	Industry Preview - MLA's	Katelyn Lubcke presented on the Environmental Credentials for grass-fed beef in Australia project.	
	new sustainability		
	verification and learning		
	resources		
Mar 2023	Landcarer webinar and	https://www.landcarer.com.au/events/event-description?CalendarEventKey=d8775901-4dbd-4900-bbd3-	
	online promotion	0188082eabf3&CommunityKey=c3fa92ce-5964-4adb-b573-	
		78bba1b84b44&Home=%2Fcommunities%2Fcommunity-home%2Frecent-community-events	
Mar 2023	Regen Farming newsletter	https://regenfarming.news/articles/2260-new-tool-for-grass-fed-beef-farmers	
Apr 2023	Inspire Summit conference	Katelyn Lubcke presented on the Environmental Credentials for grass-fed beef in Australia project.	
	Perth, WA		
Apr 2023	MLA & FAMA AG meeting	Meeting to discuss beef credentialing and sustainability reporting projects and tools	
		Katelyn Lubcke presented on the Environmental Credentials for grass-fed beef in Australia project.	
Apr 2023	MLA & Rabobank meeting	Meeting to discuss beef credentialing and sustainability reporting projects and tools	
		Katelyn Lubcke presented on the Environmental Credentials for grass-fed beef in Australia project.	
Apr 2023	AgForce Cattle Board	Katelyn Lubcke presented on the Environmental Credentials for grass-fed beef in Australia project.	
	meeting		
May 2023	MLA & ANZ meeting	Meeting to discuss beef credentialing and sustainability reporting projects and tools	
		 Katelyn Lubcke presented on the Environmental Credentials for grass-fed beef in Australia project. 	

May 2023	MLA & Eggs Australia	Meeting to discuss beef credentialing and sustainability reporting projects and tools			
	meeting	Katelyn Lubcke presented on the Environmental Credentials for grass-fed beef in Australia project.			
May 2023	MLA & FMG meeting	Meeting to discuss beef credentialing and sustainability reporting projects and tools			
		Katelyn Lubcke presented on the Environmental Credentials for grass-fed beef in Australia project.			
May 2023	MLA & AIA meeting	Meeting to discuss beef credentialing and sustainability reporting projects and tools			
		Katelyn Lubcke presented on the Environmental Credentials for grass-fed beef in Australia project.			
May 2023	NRM RA Industry	Webinar to update on beef industry projects, tools and resources- call for pilot participants			
	Partnership Webinar	Katelyn Lubcke presented on the Environmental Credentials for grass-fed beef in Australia project.			
May 2023	Central Queensland	Field day for producers to view competition steers, hear from industry speakers and gain updates			
	Carcase Classic- local	Katelyn Lubcke presented on the Environmental Credentials for grass-fed beef in Australia project			
	carcase competition				
May 2023	MLA & Southwest Timber	Meeting to discuss various co-innovation initiatives across the supply chain			
	hub meeting	Katelyn Lubcke presented on the Environmental Credentials for grass-fed beef in Australia project.			
May 2023	MLA & RBI meeting	Meeting to discuss various co-innovation initiatives across the supply chain			
		Katelyn Lubcke presented on the Environmental Credentials for grass-fed beef in Australia project.			
May 2023	MLA & WWF Australia	Katelyn Lubcke presented on the Environmental Credentials for grass-fed beef in Australia project.			
	meeting				
July 2023	MLA Sustainability Connect	ect Margaret Jewell presented an update on the project - CN30 Road Map and Environmental Credentials for			
	Up	Australian Grassfed Beef by Dr Margaret Jewell – MLA CN30 Manager			
Aug 2023	Phys Org	Australian red meat industry stakes a claim for a carbon neutral future <u>https://phys.org/news/2023-08-</u>			
		australian-red-meat-industry-stakes.html			
Aug 2023	Frontiers in Sustainable	Academic manuscript:			
	Food Systems	Sarwar S, Ross H, van Bommel S, Polack S, Waschka M, Lubcke K, Bryceson K, Cooper TL, Butler DW and Macintosh			
		A (2023) Developing a new technology for demonstrating environmental sustainability in the Australian			
		grassfed beef industry. Front. Sustain. Food Syst. 7:1241077. doi: 10.3389/fsufs.2023.1241077			
Aug 2023	Beef Central	MLA launches 'Environmental credentials platform' for livestock producers -			
		https://www.beefcentral.com/news/mla-launches-environmental-credentials-platform-for-livestock-producers/			
Sep 2023 Project comms burst #3 Communications update document circulated including promotion of registrations op		Communications update document circulated including promotion of registrations open for pilot phase			
		https://www.mla.com.au/news-and-events/events-and-workshops/environmental-credentials-for-australian-			
		grassfed-beef-it-platform-			
		pilot/?utm_campaign=451802_MLA%20to%20launch%20Environmental%20Credentials%20pilot%20for%20grassf			
		ed%20beet%20producers&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Meat%20%26%20Livestock%20Australia&dm_i=4PK			
		B,9OM2,26TNFB,14GEH,1			

Nov 2023	Trade stand promotion at	https://updates.mla.com.au/	
	MLA Updates 23 November		
	2023		
Nov 2023	MLA and AWI meeting	Jenny Lim presented on the Environmental Credentials for grass-fed beef in Australia project to AWI sustainability team	
Feb 2024	USA delegation	Jenny Lim presented on the Environmental Credentials for grass-fed beef in Australia project to a US delegation	
Feb 2024	Australian Beef	lenny Lim presented on the Environmental Credentials for grass-fed beef in Australia project the Australian Beef	
1 00 202 1	Consultative Committee	Consultative Committee	
Feb 2024	Rabo Bank	Jenny Lim presented on the Environmental Credentials for grass-fed beef in Australia project to internal staff at	
		RaboBank and had discussions around potential pipeline projects to support RaboBank customers with using the platform and linking their system with it.	
Feb 2024	Commonwealth Bank of	Jenny Lim presented on the Environmental Credentials for grass-fed beef in Australia project to internal staff at	
	Australia	СВА	
Mar 2024	NAB	Jenny Lim presented on the Environmental Credentials for grass-fed beef in Australia project to internal staff at	
Mar 2024	Aldi guartarly project	NAB	
10101 2024	meeting	calculator to internal staff at Aldi	
Mar 2024		lenny Lim presented on the Environmental Credentials for grass-fed beef in Australia project to internal staff at	
10101 2024		AMPC and had discussions around nineline projects to support processors and producers to use the platform	
Apr 2024	MLA and AIA meeting	Jenny Lim presented on the Environmental Credentials for grass-fed beef in Australia project to AIA development	
		team	
Apr 2024	ALFA	Jenny Lim presented on the Environmental Credentials for grass-fed beef in Australia project during an ALFA R&D	
		update as well as the MLA Carbon Calculator	
Apr 2024	Cattle Australia	Jenny Lim presented on the Environmental Credentials for grass-fed beef in Australia project and the MLA carbon	
		calculator to internal sustainability staff at Cattle Australia (previous MLA project manager for the Environmental	
		Credentials platform)	
Apr 2024	Landcare	Jenny Lim presented on the Environmental Credentials for grass-fed beef in Australia project and the MLA carbon	
		calculator to internal staff at Landcare with discussions around how their producer network can be utilised to	
		support use of the platform	
May 2024	Beef 2024	Jenny Lim presented on the Environmental Credentials for grass-fed beef in Australia project and the MLA carbon	
		calculator in lightening presentations in the MLA trade tent at various points throughout the week. The platform	
		was also presented by Julia Waite at the Beef Tech Talks. It was officially launched by the Minister for Agriculture,	
		Fisheries and Forestry of Australia, Murray Watt at MLA's Sundowner event.	
May 2024	MLA Media release	https://info.mla.com.au/cr/AQjrtA0Qs5UgGMP7ogc_u4uqMFGsC2qtPuLp2UzoFBdudq2sXMbabcMXfKbUWg	
May 2024	BeefCentral	BeefCentral advertisement campaign in email and website banners.	

May 2024	Food&Beverage	https://www.foodmag.com.au/mla-launches-environmental-credentials-platform-for-red-meat-industry/	
May 2024	Newman BeefUp	Jenny Lim presented on the Environmental Credentials for grass-fed beef in Australia project as well as the MLA	
		Carbon Calculator at the Newman BeefUp event	
May 2024	AuctionsPlus	Jenny Lim presented on the Environmental Credentials for grass-fed beef in Australia project as well as the MLA	
		Carbon Calculator to AuctionsPlus and had discussions around how an Environmental Credential offering could be	
		put on their sales platform so demonstrate the value proposition and increase adoption	

Project assets

NA – no physical assets were acquired during this project

Please report all physical assets created or acquired during the delivery of the project

Asset	Approximate value (as new)	Who paid for it	What will happen to this asset
EXAMPLE: 5 Soil moisture probes	\$350 each = \$1750	Paid for out of Commonwealth grant money	Soil moisture probes will be kept within the Sandy Creek Landcare group (who are project partners) and used for future soil erosion work