

BioBrowser Project Reference Group TERMS OF REFERENCE

The project BioBrowser: Establishing a biodiversity baseline for the Australian goat industry (B.GOA.0003), has been funded by MLA from 16 June 2025 to 30 October 2027. Historically, goats have been utilised in invasive weed management and fuel load reduction in the natural environment. However, the wider contribution of harvested rangeland goats to the environment and biodiversity is poorly understood. As a maturing, high-value export commodity reliant on opportunistic harvest of wild rangeland goats, the Australian goat industry seeks to demonstrate its environmental credentials to international and domestic markets. Previous industry research to improve understanding of the grazing distribution of rangeland goats within the environment and interactions between species for total grazing pressure, will be a valuable starting point for this project.

The aim of this project is to establish a biodiversity baseline for the Australian goat industry, achieving the following five objectives:

1. Conduct an objective, evidence-based review of research and resources centred around the biodiversity footprint of goats in the Australian landscape.
2. Identify repeatable, reliable and accurate measures of biodiversity applicable to a range of environments and update the data on the total grazing pressure of goats.
3. Using six (6) case studies, determine the benefit-cost of wild harvesting rangeland goats on landscape biodiversity and evaluate its value (economic and social) to the environment, industry and the consumer. It is also expected that the outcomes from this activity this will feed into the Goat Industry Sustainability Framework.
4. Identify and explore opportunities for these findings to be disseminated and communicated to key audiences and stakeholders.
5. Develop a short-term, strategic communications campaign to promote the biodiversity credentials of goats on the Australian landscape.

This project will feed into the Goat Industry Sustainability Framework, which is under development.

The project is being delivered on behalf of MLA by a consortium led by Enviro-dynamics, in partnership with Schuster Consulting Group and Vanguard Business Services. The Biobrowser project reference group has been established to codesign developing a biodiversity baseline for the Australian goat industry, utilising the expertise of goat industry representatives and technical biodiversity experts.

1 Purpose

- 1.1 The BioBrowser Project Reference Group (**BioBrowser Project Reference Group**) is a committee established by Meat & Livestock Australia (**MLA**).
- 1.2 The BioBrowser Project Reference Group acts in an advisory capacity in accordance with these terms of reference (**TORs**).
- 1.3 The objectives of the BioBrowser Project Reference Group are to provide expert advice and guidance to the project team, which may include technical expertise or industry representative advice, and to meet as required (noted under 8 Meetings).

2 Role and responsibilities of the BioBrowser Project Reference Group

- 2.1 The role of the BioBrowser Project Reference Group is to assist MLA and the project consortium with:
 - (a) Provision of networks, connections and resources to feed into a literature review exploring the biodiversity footprint of goats in the Australian landscape;

- (b) Contribute to shortlisting potential outcome-based biodiversity metrics for exploring during an on-farm pilot;
- (c) Assist in shortlisting regions suitable for piloting on-farm proposed biodiversity measures, ensuring geographic and goat enterprise diversity, and where data collection providers are available;
- (d) Assist in developing selection criteria for pilot farms;
- (e) Provide insights into the pilot outcomes, including the results from the cost-benefit analysis, and
- (f) Provide insights into the proposed communication and extension activities.

2.2 The role of MLA is to:

- (a) Provide administrative, secretariat and project management support;

3 Membership

The BioBrowser Project Reference Group will be comprised of a maximum of eight (8) members, where at least three (3) represent the goat industry (including goat producers) and at least three (3) bring natural capital/biodiversity/ecological expertise.

3.1 BioBrowser Project Reference Group Members

The role of the individual members is to bring skills and experience in:

- (a) Understanding the strategic implications and outcomes of the BioBrowser project for Australian agriculture;
- (b) Appreciate and respect the significance of the BioBrowser project for some or all stakeholder and consider their interests;
- (c) Be committed to, and actively involved in pursuing, the outcomes of the BioBrowser project;
- (d) Participate in all meetings of the Group and provide constructive input;
- (e) Seek to achieve consensus opinion;
- (f) Work respectfully and collegially with other members and stakeholders, and
- (g) Be an advocate for the BioBrowser project.

3.2 BioBrowser Project Reference Group goat producer/industry members

The role of the goat producer members is to bring skills and experience in:

- (a) Knowledge and understanding of the Australian goat industry;
- (b) Management of a commercial-sized goat herd, or Harvested Rangeland Goat enterprise;
- (c) Environment and/or natural resource management
- (d) Sound business management and
- (e) At least one (1) producer must represent GIRDAC.

3.3 BioBrowser Project Reference Group technical reference members

The role of the technical reference members is to bring one or more of the following skills and experience in:

- (a) Demonstrated experience working in the Australian livestock industry, with a preference for members with goat expertise;
- (b) Demonstrated technical skills in biodiversity and/or natural capital measurement (particularly in goat-producing regions);
- (c) Experience in livestock industry sustainability reporting;

- (d) Experience in supply chain sustainability reporting;
- (e) Experience in livestock business management, and
- (f) Experience in extension and adoption (livestock-specific or environment/natural capital).

4 Recruitment/Selection

- 4.1 Members will be appointed by MLA, in consultation with Enviro-dynamics following a transparent Expressions of Interest and Assessment process.

5 Member removal

- 5.1 Members who are absent without advice from two (2) successive meetings will be deemed to have resigned from the BioBrowser Project Reference Group.
- 5.2 In addition to the termination rights set out in clause 10 of the Appointment Agreement, Members may be removed via a majority vote of the other Members of the **BioBrowser Project Reference Group**.

6 Code of Conduct

- 6.1 In performing the duties and responsibilities of the BioBrowser Project Reference Group, Members will:
 - (a) act in accordance with the terms set out in the Letter of Appointment;
 - (b) act in the best interests of the industry;
 - (c) have a duty of care and diligence in fulfilling their functions;
 - (d) treat all fellow stakeholders with courtesy and respect;
 - (e) be provided with well researched, complete, accurate and meaningful information in a timely manner prior to meetings;
 - (f) be given reasonable time to consult with their members and stakeholders to make key decisions;
 - (g) be open and honest during discussions;
 - (h) work constructively with all Members to towards achieving consensus on decisions;
 - (i) not make improper use of information acquired as a Member of the BioBrowser Project Reference Group;
 - (j) seek prior approval from MLA when sharing details or announcements from BioBrowser Project Reference Group in public and on social media, and
 - (k) not distribute Confidential Information acquired as a Member of the BioBrowser Project Reference Group outside the BioBrowser Project Reference Group (including within their own organisations) without the prior written consent of the BioBrowser Project Reference Group and subject to the terms of any separate confidentiality agreement.

7 Safety

- 7.1 Members of the BioBrowser Project Reference Group must ensure that its activities comply with all applicable materials, food, product and consumer safety laws and regulations, all applicable occupational health and safety laws and regulations and all other applicable industry codes of practice and Australian Standards relating to safety.

8 Meetings

- 8.1 The BioBrowser Project Reference Group is expected to meet at least seven times during the life of the project. Anticipated meeting schedule is as follows, however this may evolve as the project develops:

- 21-25 July 2025
- August/September 2025 (may be two meeting during this period)
- April 2026
- June 2026
- October 2026
- March 2027

Meetings will be scheduled at least 6-8 weeks ahead, selecting dates and times suitable for the majority of members.

- 8.2 A quorum for BioBrowser Project Reference Group meetings is six (6) representatives in attendance. Members may not nominate a proxy to attend a meeting if the member is unable to attend.
- 8.3 The BioBrowser Project Reference Group will endeavour to provide advice by consensus. If consensus is not possible and a matter is voted on, a decision of the BioBrowser Project Reference Group will be effective if passed by a vote of 75% of those Members present and voting on the matter.
- 8.4 The BioBrowser Project Reference Group may meet in person, by telephone, by another means of audio or audio-visual communication, or any combination of these.
- 8.5 Representatives from MLA are entitled to attend and participate in BioBrowser Project Reference Group meetings.
- 8.6 The BioBrowser Project Reference Group may invite any other person to attend and participate in BioBrowser Project Reference Group meetings with prior approval from MLA. This may include specific subject matter experts as required.
- 8.7 The BioBrowser Project Reference Group Members comprising State Government representatives do not receive sitting fees and are responsible for their own expenses associated with membership of the BioBrowser Project Reference Group.

9 Conflict of interest

- 9.1 If at any stage a conflict of interest arises or is likely to arise, the Member must:
 - (a) notify MLA immediately in writing;
 - (b) make full disclosure of all relevant information relating to the conflict; and
 - (c) take such steps as MLA reasonably requires to resolve or otherwise deal with the conflict.
- 9.2 The process for reporting and managing conflicts of interest will be a standing agenda item and emphasised at the start of each meeting.
- 9.3 At the commencement of each meeting, each Member must declare (and provide sufficient details) if they have a conflict of interest or likely conflict of interest that may in any way impact the Member's role in relation to any of the meeting agenda items.
- 9.4 If during a meeting, a conflict of interest, or likely conflict of interest is declared:
 - (a) the BioBrowser Project Reference Group Chair must record details of the conflict in the minutes of the meeting and the conflict register for the BioBrowser Project Reference Group;
 - (b) the declaring Member must make full disclosure of all relevant information relating to the conflict;
 - (c) the declaring Member must take such steps as the BioBrowser Project Reference Group reasonably requires to resolve or otherwise deal with the conflict; and
 - (d) the BioBrowser Project Reference Group Chair must record the steps taken/required to resolve or otherwise deal with the conflict.

10 Anti-competitive conduct

- 10.1 Members of the BioBrowser Project Reference Group must not engage in any collusion, anti-competitive or similar conduct with any other BioBrowser Project Reference Group Member or person. This includes (but is not limited to) discussion between competitors or potential competitors of prices, bids, production plans, customers or suppliers or sharing confidential or competitively sensitive information.

11 Access to information and advice

- 11.1 The BioBrowser Project Reference Group may obtain information from staff of MLA as it considers necessary for the performance of its role and responsibilities.
- 11.2 The BioBrowser Project Reference Group may obtain such other information and advice as it considers necessary for the performance of its role and responsibilities, subject to obtaining the prior approval of MLA as to any costs to be incurred in obtaining that information or advice.

12 Reporting

- 12.1 The BioBrowser Project Reference Group will arrange for minutes of meetings to be prepared with copies of them following each meeting.
- 12.2 When providing any advice or recommendations in accordance with these TORs, the BioBrowser Project Reference Group will:
- (a) provide information and material substantiating the advice or recommendation;
 - (b) provide any other information requested by the party receiving the advice or recommendation; and
 - (c) if the advice or recommendation did not result from a consensus decision, provide details of BioBrowser Project Reference Group voting on the matter.
- 12.3 The work of the BioBrowser Project Reference Group is advisory to MLA and all media enquiries received by BioBrowser Project Reference Group Members should be conveyed to the General Manager responsible for the project for which the BioBrowser Project Reference Group is engaged and MLA's Media Manager or General Manager, Communication in person or by telephone. Non-urgent media enquiries can be notified by email.

13 Secretariat

MLA will provide secretariat support to the BioBrowser Project Reference Group as required.

14 Review

MLA may review these TORs from time to time to keep them up to date and consistent with the BioBrowser Project Reference Group's role and advice that may be provided by the BioBrowser Project Reference Group. MLA will notify each member of the BioBrowser Project Reference Group of any changes to these TORs.

PAYMENT OF EXPENSES AND SITTING FEES POLICY

Policy Owner	Chief Operating Officer
Compliance	Mandatory
Approved by	Managing Director
Document	Policy
Effective Date	
Last Revised	May 2025
Next review	November 2026
Contact	Group Manager, Industry Corporate Affairs



Payment of expenses and sitting fees on MLA committees

1. Policy Statement

This policy outlines the circumstances under which travel, and accommodation expenses will be paid for attendance at MLA committee meetings, and the circumstances under which a sitting fee will be paid to committee members, invited experts, and committee chairs.

2. Who does this policy apply to?

- All members of MLA committees, where the Terms of Reference specify this policy
- Chairs of MLA committees
- Invited experts and producers invited to attend or participate in committees.
- This does not apply to committees or members of committees that are not convened by MLA, unless approved by MLA and referenced in the Terms of Reference for the committee. For committees not convened by MLA, MLA General Manager approval is required for this policy to apply.
- This policy does not apply to individuals acting as representative to organisations (such as Peak Industry Bodies) where that organisation has been appointed to a position on an MLA committee.

3. Travel Expenses

Travel expenses refers to travel and accommodation in connection with the meeting. Travel and accommodation expenses that MLA will reimburse include:

- Return economy airfares (booked as far in advance as possible).
- Taxi or mileage to and from your home to the meeting destination or your home airport (whichever is closer) as per guidelines current for the respective financial year from the Australian Taxation Office
- Parking at the airport for the duration of MLA specific activities during business travel.
- Taxis/transfers between the destination airport and meeting venue.
- Reasonable meal expenses.
- Accommodation for one night per day of meetings. One additional night is applicable for attendees travelling a long way or unable to book connecting flights in line with the meeting days.

Travel expenses are payable to all committee members, excluding Government employees, guest/observers or individuals acting as representative to organisations appointed to the Committee. Flight and accommodation expenses should be selected at best available rates.

4. Sitting Fees

Sitting fees refers to payment of attendees for their time to prepare for and participate in the meeting, separate to and in addition to travel expenses. Sitting fees are payable to committee members, with set fees outlined as per the table below.

Payment will be made to people invited to participate on a committee that meets on an ongoing basis or where members are expected to meet regularly until a task is completed.

Meetings must be initiated by MLA. During such meetings, the attendee should be present for the duration of the meeting and should be formally invited to the meeting as an active participant.

Sitting fees are not payable to Government employees, guest/observers or individuals acting on behalf of an organisation appointed to the Committee.

Sitting fees will be paid for the duration of the meeting. Sitting fees are not paid for travel days.

Producer Investment Calls

Sitting fees will be paid for the time taken by members on technical review panels (experts and producers) to review proposals submitted through the MLA Producer Investment Call. Sitting fees will be paid in accordance with the time allowances outlined in the committee's Terms of Reference.

Committee Members - Eligible sitting Fee		
Face to face meeting	Up to full day	\$500 per day ex GST
Videoconference or teleconference	Not less than 4 hours	\$500 per day ex GST
Videoconference or teleconference	Between 2 hours and 4 hours	\$250 per meeting ex GST
Videoconference or teleconference	Less than two hours	\$125 per meeting ex GST
Invited Experts – Eligible sitting Fee		
Face to face meeting	Up to full day	\$1000 per day ex GST
Videoconference or teleconference	Not less than 4 hours	\$1000 per day ex GST
Videoconference or teleconference	Between 2 hours and 4 hours	\$500 per meeting ex GST
Videoconference or teleconference	Less than two hours	\$250 per meeting ex GST
Committee Chair – Eligible sitting Fee		
Face to face meeting	Up to full day	\$1500 per day ex GST
Videoconference or teleconference	Not less than 4 hours	\$1500 per day ex GST
Videoconference or teleconference	Between 2 hours and 4 hours	\$750 per meeting ex GST
Videoconference or teleconference	Less than two hours	\$375 per meeting ex GST

5. Scope and making claims

Producer representatives from Peak Industry Bodies are eligible for reimbursement of travel expenses, but these must be paid directly to the representatives, not via the Peak Industry Body.

Travel expenses and sitting fees should be claimed using a business tax invoice unless the individual or business is not registered for GST.

If the individual is not registered for GST, a Statement by a Supplier should be completed and submitted to the Secretariat of your committee. Claims must be submitted within four (4) weeks of the meeting.

Any variation in the application of these guidelines should be done only in exceptional circumstances (for example, circumstances out of the individual's control where they have had a flight cancelled and/or incurred significant personal cost). Any such circumstances must be following agreement with the General Manager of the business unit and Chief Operating Officer, as the intention is to achieve company-wide consistency in the application of this policy.

Approval			
Version Number	Approved by:	Effective Date:	Unique ID Number:
V1-0		February 2011	
V2.0		June 2017	
V3.0		November 2018	
V4.0		March 2020	
V5.0		October 2020	
V6.0		May 2025	