



Carbon Farming Roadmap for South Australia

2026 Update consultation discussion paper

Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Primary Industries and Regions cares for the Country and communities of South Australia. We ensure the land, sea, water and sky are healthy for future generations and strive to better understand their spiritual and cultural significance for Aboriginal people across the state. In the spirit of reconciliation, our commitment is to build progressive and trusting relationships, to share knowledge and learn from each other. We recognise and own a difficult past, and together we will walk forward. We acknowledge the many Aboriginal people of this Country as the oldest continuous living culture in the world.



Government
of South Australia

Purpose of the Roadmap Update

This discussion paper supports the update of the Carbon Farming Roadmap for South Australia, first released in 2022.

It outlines the proposed scope of the Roadmap update, summarises the current state of carbon farming in South Australia, and identifies key challenges and opportunities for further consideration.

This consultation process will be run by PIRSA on behalf of the SA Government Carbon Farming Roadmap Working Group. Please note your information will not be shared, and any findings from your responses included in the SA Carbon Farming Roadmap Update will be consolidated and anonymised.

Following this consultation process, a draft report will be submitted to the SA Carbon Farming Roadmap Working Group and a SA Carbon Farming Roadmap Update will be drafted with anticipated release in late 2026.

Please send any feedback directly to **PIRSA.ClimateChange@sa.gov.au** by 18 August 2026.



Purpose of the Carbon Farming Roadmap

The Carbon Farming Roadmap provides a strategic framework to support collaboration between the South Australian Government and relevant industry stakeholders in the development of carbon farming.

It aims to improve understanding of carbon farming activities, including associated risks and challenges, and to support knowledge and skills development across this emerging industry.

It identifies investment pathways to deliver economic development, environmental and social benefits for South Australia and support increased uptake of carbon farming where it is viable and appropriate.

The Roadmap specifically focuses on the activities and potential activities of South Australian landholders who are pursuing primary production and how they may interact with the carbon farming sector.

This Roadmap therefore considers carbon farming to be any project or activity that:

- sequesters carbon in the landscape through regeneration and planting of native vegetation; farm and plantation forestry; and improving soil management to ensure that carbon inputs exceed outputs, and
- reduces emissions, such as livestock methane emissions, fertiliser emissions and through manure management.



Scope of consultation for the Carbon Farming Roadmap update

1. Farm level decision making

Factors influencing farm level decisions to participate in existing carbon farming markets, activities or insetting, including gaps in information, capability or confidence that may affect adoption. This includes consideration of how producers understand and manage trade offs between emissions management, productivity and profitability, and how emissions reduction and sequestration can be demonstrated through a production focused lens.

2. Effectiveness of existing policies, programs and research & development activities

- Stakeholder experience of existing state and Commonwealth policies, programs and research & development activities relevant to carbon farming and carbon markets. This will include consideration of the accessibility, usability and perceived value of current programs and tools, as well as the effectiveness of regionally appropriate delivery models.
- How effective existing carbon credit methodologies are in a South Australian context and what opportunities exist to expand access to carbon markets, insetting opportunities and nature repair markets.

3. Market function and intermediaries:

Stakeholder perspectives on the role and performance of market intermediaries, including aggregators, project developers and advisors operating in South Australia. This will include consideration of where the state government has an enabling, convening or stewardship role.

4. Relationship between environmental markets and existing carbon projects:

How carbon farming and environmental markets interact, potential pathways for producer participation, and how carbon farming and environmental repair activities can co exist on agricultural land.

5. Co-benefits and trade-offs:

How co benefits and trade offs are identified, communicated and applied in decision making processes. This includes examining productivity, resilience and natural capital outcomes associated with carbon farming, and how these factors influence adoption.

6. Government leadership:

Identify areas where leadership by the South Australian Government is required to enable participation and accelerate outcomes. This may include[JB6.1] policy and programming, advocating for South Australian perspectives and biophysical conditions in national forums, monitoring existing projects and impacts, and identifying opportunities to complement Commonwealth and private sector activity.

Out of scope for this update:

- The setting of statewide or sector specific emissions reduction targets for agriculture.
- The updated Roadmap will not propose the development any specific carbon credit methodologies, however there may be opportunities identified for further exploration.
- Scientific or technical development of carbon accounting methods, measurement technologies or modelling approaches.
- Prescriptive changes to national schemes.
- Non land based or indirect emissions activities, including:
 - Blue carbon
 - Bioenergy production
 - Renewable energy generation
 - Industrial scale carbon capture
 - Downstream supply chain emissions
- Matters not directly related to the implementation and refinement of the existing Carbon Farming Roadmap, which are more appropriately addressed through other plans, frameworks or processes.



Discussion questions

To guide this consultation process[JB8.1], stakeholders are asked to review the following questions. These are proposed to begin more in-depth discussions based on your individual experiences.

Question 1.

What is your current role within the carbon farming sector? What are the key priorities for your organisation in relation to carbon farming?

Question 2.

Does the SA Carbon Farming Roadmap accurately represent current carbon farming activities? In what ways does it support your engagements in carbon farming?

Question 3.

Where are the greatest opportunities for you to further engage with carbon farming activities and projects?

Question 4.

What are the current barriers in participating in carbon farming activities or projects in South Australia?

Question 5.

Who are the main enablers of your activities within carbon farming? What support can the SA Government provide to further enable carbon farming?

Question 6.

Where do you access the majority of information regarding carbon farming currently and what communication methods and channels do you rely on?

Question 7.

Based on the existing pillars and activities of the Carbon Farming Roadmap what should the key priorities of the SA Government include moving forward?

Question 8.

Are co-benefits and biodiversity outcomes of carbon farming well represented in the Roadmap? Do these considerations impact your decision to participate in carbon farming?

Background

Within South Australia, the Carbon Farming Roadmap sits as a key delivery and enabling mechanism alongside the State's net zero and climate resilience policy settings. It complements South Australia's net zero ambition by focusing specifically on the land and primary industries sector, translating whole of state emissions reduction goals into practical, place based actions for land managers.

When developed in 2022, carbon farming had not yet occurred at scale within the state. There remains to be limited pathways to measure ongoing carbon farming activities occurring on primary production land other than those engaged in specific market projects such as ACCU market projects. There were roughly 40 new projects registered in SA in 2022 across vegetation and agricultural methods.

Over the past 4 years, there has also been an increase in programs and projects that target carbon farming knowledge, awareness and participation among primary producers and landholders from both the commonwealth and state level governments. A significant success of the Roadmap led to carbon farming becoming an approved activity under pastoral leases within South Australia, allowing for general expansion of activities into these areas.

The Clean Energy Regulator's project register shows a steady increase in SA based ACCU activity reflecting this stabilisation. Currently 74 of the 1,536 national vegetation projects and 192 of 1046 agriculture projects nationally are listed in South Australia. The majority of agriculture projects registered are through the use of the soil carbon method. The number of new registered projects peaked at ~75 in 2021-22 and has remained between 30-50 per year since. Despite the majority of projects being soil methods, more ACCU's have been issued to vegetation projects than soil.

DCCEEW is developing the Integrated Farm and Land Management (IFLM) Method, with a draft released in late 2025, to replace the sunset Human Induced Regeneration method and address the current gap for landholders, alongside the planned development of a

new Livestock Method by Meat & Livestock Australia to expand ACCU participation.

Whilst additional ACCU methods are being developed by the commonwealth Department for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water (DCCEEW), Nature repair markets in Australia have also progressed from an early concept to initial implementation, with a deliberate focus on integrity and learning rather than rapid scale. The establishment of the Nature Repair Market framework and early pilot projects from 2024 marked a shift toward recognising biodiversity and ecosystem repair as outcomes that can be credibly valued alongside carbon.

By 2025–26, these markets remain small but are increasingly seen as a complementary pathway to carbon farming, particularly where land use decisions prioritise resilience, biodiversity and landscape function over carbon returns alone.

Government Initiatives

PIRSA directly supported the development of 6 Carbon Farming Pilot Projects across the state through a \$1 million dollar investment to showcase both the co-benefits of carbon farming activities and the potential to develop ACCU projects across the state. In the 2024-25 State Budget, the South Australian Government invested a further \$8.4 million (revenue target of 24.5M) over 5 years through the Net Zero Agriculture initiative to capture opportunities to co-invest with funding bodies in SA-relevant emissions reduction research for primary producers.

The Commonwealth Carbon Farming Outreach Program (CFOP) 2024-2026 has allowed for producer and landholder level engagement to increase understanding and experience in this field. CFOP, delivered by Landscape Boards and AgEx Alliance, has convened roughly 100 workshops to 1600 attendees across the state (up to 31 December 2025). Through these workshops, South Australian landholders showed increased confidence in soil carbon and vegetation projects and carbon farming is increasingly seen as a long-term land use option rather than a short-term revenue stream.

The Zero Net Emissions Agriculture CRC (ZNE-Ag CRC) is a national 10-year collaboration supporting low-emissions agricultural innovation, backed by a \$300 million investment including \$87 million from the Australian Government, with South Australia a key partner through the South Australian Government and SARDI in advancing the state's Net Zero 2050 objectives.

Policy Landscape

Carbon farming has become an integral component within agricultural sector blueprints, circular economy and waste strategies, climate adaptation and resilience planning at the state and regional level.

Nationally, the Net Zero Plan and the Safeguard Mechanisms point to increasing private sector demand for high-integrity ACCUs and the Agriculture and Land Sector Plan reinforced carbon farming as a productivity and resilience tool.

There is a significant alignment with the current Carbon Farming Roadmap's emphasis on soil health, integrated farming systems and co-benefits focus.

There is also a new focus on risk and adaptation planning lending greater policy weight to landscape actions such as vegetation management, soil carbon growth and pastoral land stewardship that can help reduce exposure to drought, heat and land degradation.

The Australian Government is progressing national greenhouse gas accounting approaches for agriculture through initiatives such as the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry's investment in consistent on-farm emissions calculators and accounting platforms to support practical emissions measurement and decision-making across the sector.



2025 Carbon Farming Roadmap

progress review findings

A comprehensive review of the activities of the roadmap was conducted in 2025 to identify areas for further development, coordination and investment to enhance the effectiveness of the roadmaps overarching goals.

Key findings include:

- A need for clearer mechanisms to assess the effectiveness of current projects to changes in carbon sequestration and emissions reduction.
- Opportunities to enhance coordination across agencies and sectors, particularly in sustained support for landholders in understanding the benefits, risks, opportunities and return on investment and the adoption of carbon farming practices.
- Further inclusion of the Landscape Board and their responsibilities under the delivery of the roadmap pillars.
- Gaps in economic analysis and long-term planning for pilot programs and regional capability building.

- Potential to increase Aboriginal engagement and participation in carbon farming initiatives.

The outcomes of the review highlighted further opportunities to scale up across the state, design and deliver more programs to support the agriculture sector and align activities with other national and state initiatives.



Pillars of the Carbon Farming Roadmap



PILLAR 1: Develop an enabling policy and regulatory environment

	Actions	Agency lead/support
1	Address barriers and disincentives to carbon farming activities with a focus on pastoral and Crown land, including supporting policy and guidance	DEW lead PIRSA support
2	Identify options for government and private sector support and incentives for carbon farming	Joint responsibility PIRSA, DEW & GISA DTI support
3	Engage in ERF method development to support new carbon farming projects	Joint responsibility PIRSA & DEW



PILLAR 2: Progress research, innovation and market development

4	Map the potential and undertake an economic analysis of carbon farming opportunities across South Australia	Joint responsibility PIRSA & DEW GISA
5	Deliver soil carbon research and extension to help improve the health and productivity of soils	Joint responsibility PIRSA & DEW GISA
6	Undertake research to support the value of co-benefits being recognised in carbon farming projects	PIRSA lead DEW support
7	Explore opportunities for access to new international and domestic markets, or the attraction of new investment	DSD lead PIRSA & DEW support
8	Identify and help facilitate new research including pathways for carbon neutrality, soil amendment opportunities, pest and disease management opportunities and new ecosystem services	PIRSA lead DEW & GISA support



PILLAR 3: Build knowledge and skills

9	Develop a centralised source of carbon farming information, resources and tools for South Australian land managers, industry and other stakeholders	PIRSA lead DEW support
10	Work with key partners to explore regional priorities including development and implementation of capability building programs for land managers and industry	PIRSA lead DEW & GISA support
11	Deliver a Carbon Farming Pilot Program to demonstrate carbon farming methods and opportunities best suited to South Australia	PIRSA lead DEW support



PILLAR 4: Engage, collaborate and partner

12	Work with national and state partners to support agricultural stewardship and other related programs	PIRSA lead DEW support
13	Support existing and new networks to facilitate networking, share knowledge on carbon farming and partner on key initiatives, including with local industry	Joint responsibility PIRSA, DEW & GISA
14	Work with industry to integrate carbon farming into agricultural sector blueprints and sector reporting	PIRSA lead DEW support
15	Support and grow Aboriginal engagement and participation in carbon farming	PIRSA lead

Timing Legend: Underway (started) Short term (up to 2 years to start) Ongoing (core business)

Abbreviations for agencies include Department of Primary Industries and Regions (PIRSA), Department for Environment and Water (DEW), Department for Trade and Investment (DTI), Green Industries SA (GISA).

