

Land Management Commitment

March 2024 progress update

What is the Land Management Commitment?

The Australian beef industry exports over 70% of its beef production. Increasingly, our international markets and their companies are aligning Environment, Social and Governance (ESG) reporting to meet shareholder and consumer interest in demonstrating sustainable food production, and global commitments to the Paris Agreement.

Over 6000 global companies have aligned with the Science Based Target Initiative (SBTi). SBTi is a European-driven not-for-profit organisation that requires companies to set public reporting targets for reduced emissions, zero deforestation, and demonstrated improvements to biodiversity within their supply shed. Importantly, these global companies will be required to report their progress against their targets by 2024 via mandatory public disclosures.

The Australian landscape is one of the driest in the world and has some of the oldest soils in the world. Evolving over the past 50 million years, our landscape, its plants, animals and ecological systems are incredibly unique.

While we haven't always gotten it right, we have learned and evolved our practices as science and research and development improve. Australian producers have a strong history of innovating and developing land management practices to suit the environment. Given the unique nature of the Australian landscape, we must provide regionally specific indicators for global reporting that recognises the inherent ecological differences within Australia.

What are the commitments?

1. Develop a national definition on deforestation for the Australian context, to be globally accepted for use in the supply chain and by financial institutions.
2. Develop a voluntary and market-driven minimum sustainability standard on environmental stewardship to be used in the traceability system to inform consumers.

Rockhampton Industry Roundtable

An Australian beef industry meeting was held in Rockhampton, Queensland, on November 7 and 8, 2023. The goal of this meeting was to seek a commitment that a clear evidence-based definition of deforestation and biodiversity for the Australian landscape is required. The group of 50 industry leaders from across the

supply chain - including leading producers, corporate agricultural companies, peak industry bodies, government, state farming organisations, processors, retailers, and finance industry representatives - discussed a national approach to international reporting requirements. This provides transparency and traceability to our customers and gives confidence to consumers and stakeholders in the scientific validity of land management practices in Australian beef production systems.

What happened in March?

In March, the Advisory Board met twice to review the applications for the request for proposal. These meetings included important discussions around the Governance, communications, funding, risk register, and webinar planning.

Cattle Australia published a Request for Proposal (RFP) document seeking interested parties to submit an RFP for the required consulting work. Cattle Australia and key funding partners assessed the RFPs against the key required criteria outlined in the published RFP. The RFP deadline closed at midnight on March 13.

On March 27, Cattle Australia presented on the Land Management Commitment project to key industry stakeholders at the Australian Beef Sustainability Framework Industry Forum in Canberra. This provided an opportunity for industry representatives to raise important questions, with strong support shown for the project.

Cattle Australia met with several industry stakeholders including research and development bodies, government departments and supply chain partners to update them on the Land Management Commitment and seek their support.

Most recently, Cattle Australia called for applications for a Technical Working Group. The purpose of this Technical Working Group is to ensure key technical expertise is covered in the project's representation. Applications closed on April 5.

What are the next steps?

Finalise and execute contracting arrangements for the successful candidate.

Continued engagement with other agricultural commodities to ensure we maintain cross-commodity alignment.

Update the communications plan that supports the Land Management Commitment work.

Work on key communications activities to support the engagement of stakeholders at Beef Australia, from May 5 -11 in Rockhampton, Queensland.