



# Climate Proofing Australia: A whole-of-landscape approach to tackling climate change

## About Climate Proofing Australia

Climate Proofing Australia (CPA) is a conservation and industry led alliance of organisations committed to advancing the role of agribusiness, conservation and natural resource management in Australia's climate change and emissions reduction policy.

CPA advocates for a climate change policy framework that strikes the right balance between environmental, social and economic policy outcomes. Such an approach recognises that optimal sustainability and environmental restoration practices can increase productivity and/or profitability and build regional resilience through restoration of natural and social capital.

Securing the future of the Carbon Farming Initiative (CFI), and enhancing it to incentivise whole-of-landscape benefits, is key to achieving these outcomes.

With the right policy settings, the environment, agriculture and forestry sectors can work together in an unprecedented manner to significantly reduce Australia's emissions, maximise the land sector's carbon storage potential, improve environmental and biodiversity outcomes and boost economic activity across primary industries.

CPA aims to lead and inform policy makers, industry, conservationists and the general public about climate change and environmental management solutions that:

- Ensure a whole-of-landscape approach to emissions reductions and carbon storage on land that maximises environmental, social and economic benefits;
- Raise awareness that Australia's food and fibre supply chains are a critical part of the solution to lowering Australia's emissions and can play an even greater role with the right policy settings;
- Ensure biodiverse plantings are recognised as a key part of the productive landscape and land-based carbon strategies to address the current decline in biodiversity.

## CPA's ask from decision makers

CPA is calling for a national consensus to boost the role of the CFI and other initiatives to deliver even more carbon abatement on land, and to better integrate the efforts of forestry and farming with land conservation and revegetation to deliver integrated environmental and productivity outcomes.

By bringing the government, industry, and conservation sectors together we can play a significant role in Australia meeting its global emissions reduction commitments. By working towards carbon neutrality within our agricultural landscape, we can also generate regional economic activity, repair widespread land degradation and reverse declines in biodiversity.

## Our Membership

Members of CPA commit to a set of shared policy principles aimed at boosting the role of Australian land managers, rural and regional communities, and agribusiness supply chains in achieving Australia's climate change objectives. CPA welcomes new members who commit to our principles and who want to work collaboratively with other members on policy. Members of CPA undertake to support these policies as a collective and recognise that the Joint Principles are compatible with their own individual organisational mandates.



### Key Policy Principles

#### CPA supports:

1. The continuation and enhancement of the Carbon Farming Initiative (CFI) to maximise biodiversity, and food and fibre production benefits alongside the scheme's carbon sequestration objectives;
2. The development of new mechanisms and incentives for carbon abatement on land projects that brings together institutional, private and public capital;
3. The need for new and improved national environmental datasets and mapping to guide best practice and whole-of-landscape policy making that integrates forestry, farming and conservation outcomes;
4. Primary industries working towards carbon neutrality by 2030;
5. Improving the Australian landscape through a strategic approach of balancing native biodiverse plantings with agricultural production and forestry.



**“Properly integrated policy responses can also ensure policy instruments designed to address a particular issue simultaneously capture other benefits. For example, climate policies that promote carbon storage through reforestation can simultaneously improve NRM outcomes...”**

*Action on the land: reducing emissions, conserving natural capital and improving farm profitability, Climate Change Authority, March 2017*

## Securing the future of a greener Australia

Climate change and environment policy in Australia remain polarising issues in politics and the community. Furthermore, consumers of food and fibre both domestically and abroad are increasingly demanding products that makes ethical, environmental and economic sense.

Policy security and consistency is essential for the food, fibre and land conservation sectors to remain competitive and grow our industries. Despite this, the current political debate is largely silent on land-based climate change policies and the role of primary industries, despite the intrinsic connections to environment and agriculture policies.

The Emissions Reduction Fund's (ERF) future is in limbo, with no commitment of additional funding from the Coalition Government, and the Federal Labor Opposition is yet to commit to a mechanism that would provide certainty for the CFI, around which the ERF was built.

The role of CPA is not only to safeguard the future of the CFI, but also to look at other ways of delivering a substantial increase in carbon abatement on land.

In order to achieve this, the CPA advocates for better integration of farming and forestry with land conservation and revegetation to deliver improved environmental and productivity outcomes.

CPA's advocacy will have the added benefit of raising awareness about the already significant contributions its sectors make – and the potential for a marked increase – in reducing Australia's emissions.



**Since the introduction of the Emissions Reduction Fund in 2015, over 80 per cent of emissions reductions contracted to date through the ERF have come from agriculture and land sector projects.**

## The need for a whole-of-landscape approach to reducing Australia's emissions

Amid Australia's unstable climate change policy landscape over the past decade, one constant has been the Carbon Farming Initiative (CFI) in delivering consistent, quantifiable and transparent emissions reductions through Government-supported projects on the land. These projects are delivering not just carbon abatement, they also have biodiversity and environmental benefits as well as social and economic benefits in regional communities across the country.

However, throughout the more recent policy debate around Australia's climate change and energy policy framework, there has been very little focus on the future of the CFI and its continued role in Australia's efforts to achieve the Australian Government's Paris Agreement commitment of reducing our emissions by 26-28 per cent by 2030 from 2005 levels.

**Greening Australia has set a target to restore 300,000 hectares of native biodiverse habitat by 2030, based on the long term need to restore 10% of the 90 million hectares of cleared lands since European settlement across southern Australia.**



**The Australian red meat and livestock industry has committed to be carbon neutral by 2030. The National Farmers Federation echoed this aspiration in its 2030 Roadmap last year, which challenged commodities to set trajectories towards carbon neutrality by 2030.**

## **Conservation, agriculture and forestry are ready to play a greater role in tackling climate change**

As managers of nearly 50 per cent of the Australian landmass, farmers and other landholders play a key role in the conservation and restoration of Australia's natural environment.

With land-based activities accounting for around 20 per cent of Australia's greenhouse gas emissions, agriculture is a key sector for action on climate change. In particular, the grazing and farming sector faces mounting criticism for purportedly exacerbating emissions through land clearing and livestock emissions and are countering calls from some quarters for the introduction of a production cap, consumption cap and even a consumer based "meat tax."

The Australian agriculture sector readily acknowledge this, and many within it are actively working on major, industry-wide changes in response to these challenges.



**Australia's forest industries have identified the need for 400,000 hectares of new forestry plantings over the next decade to meet projected growth in demand for plantation timber. It is anticipated that up to one quarter of these new plantings can occur on farms through farm forestry.**

**For more information about Climate Proofing Australia visit:  
[climateproofingaustralia.com.au](http://climateproofingaustralia.com.au)**