



Biodiversity Stewardship

The Australian Government's initiatives to extend opportunities to reward farmers for the stewardship of their land are a key part of the Agriculture 2030 2021–22 Budget package. Australia's farmers are some of our greatest environmental stewards. Agricultural production occurs on over 50% of Australia's landmass. Australia's farmers have a role in maintaining healthy ecosystems, which are of critical importance to future production, the environment, regional communities and the broader economy.



What's in this year's Budget

The 2021–22 Budget delivers an additional **\$32.1 million** in new funding to continue to promote biodiversity stewardship. This investment builds on the Australian Government's ongoing Agriculture Stewardship Package in recognition that Australia's agriculture industry depends on a biodiverse and well-managed resource base.

Biodiversity Stewardship

We will support innovation and trial new programs to help farmers to increase biodiversity on their land. Additional 2021–22 Budget investments include:

- **\$22.3 million** to deliver a pilot stewardship program
- **\$5.4 million** to implement an Australian farm biodiversity certification scheme
- **\$4.4 million** to establish a Biodiversity Trading Platform.

The **pilot stewardship program** will be a scientifically robust on-ground trial that aims to improve existing native vegetation on farms. It will test biodiversity protocols developed by the Australian National University.

This new funding will allow around 140 farmers across several Natural Resource Management regions to participate in the trial. Farmers participating in the trial will be required to improve the protection and management of existing high value native vegetation. Farmers with target vegetation can apply to receive a price offer for a commitment to long-term management actions.

The **Australian farm biodiversity certification scheme** aims to deliver a premium price for products and keep up with the growing market demand for improved environmental credentials for Australian food and fibre. It will provide a credible, independent assessment of activities farmers are doing to protect biodiversity, certifying participating farms as 'biodiversity friendly'.

The **Biodiversity Trading Platform** will enable farmers to connect with buyers of biodiversity outcomes and kick-start private sector biodiversity markets. The platform will integrate spatial information alongside buyer

and seller information. This will allow verification, monitoring and reporting of biodiversity services, building transparency and credibility in the market.

Why is this important

We are expanding our support for agriculture stewardship to create market opportunities for farmers who look after biodiversity. It's a win-win for farmers and the environment, and contributes to industry's Ag2030 agenda.

A market approach to biodiversity improvements will be trialled to test a scheme for rewarding improved management of existing high value remnant vegetation. This is part of our agenda to use markets and catalyse private sector investment to help deliver environmental outcomes and returns to farmers.

There is growing global market interest in higher environmental standards for exported agricultural goods. Delivering a certification scheme will give our agricultural producers credibility and a market edge.

These budget measures build on the work we're already delivering through our [Carbon + Biodiversity Pilot](#). This pilot is trialling a market-based mechanism to reward farmers for increasing biodiversity while also sequestering carbon. Farmers who undertake plantings under the Emissions Reduction Fund can receive additional payments for maximising the biodiversity benefits from these plantings.

How much will this cost

	2021-22 \$million	2022-23 \$million	2023-24 \$million	2024-25 \$million	TOTAL \$million
Soil and Stewardship – pilot stewardship program	6.0	5.6	5.6	5.1	22.3
Soil and Stewardship – implement an Australian farm biodiversity certification scheme	1.8	1.8	1.8	0.009	5.4
Soil and Stewardship – develop a biodiversity trading platform	1.8	1.6	0.6	0.4	4.4
Total: Biodiversity Stewardship	9.6	9.0	8.0	5.4	32.1

More information

For more information about our commitments to biodiversity stewardship and the Agriculture 2030 2021–22 Budget package, visit awe.gov.au/budget

For more information about the 2021–22 Budget visit budget.gov.au

