

Landholder's guide to the 2021 Soil Carbon Sequestration Methodology using measurement and/or modelling



This method applies to:

- Soil carbon sequestration projects (drawing down carbon from the atmosphere and storing it in soil).
- Most Agricultural Systems including cropping, pasture, horticulture, and mixed enterprises.
- Relies upon direct measurement of soil carbon to calculate sequestration and can use models as well.

Projects can be carried out on:

- Australian land which over the period of the previous 5 years has been pasture used for grazing, cropping (including perennial woody horticulture), or bare fallow.
- Land which has soil carbon improvement potential.
- Land which you are able to sample to at least a 30cm depth.

Eligible Activities:

Examples of activities which can be undertaken on the project area to improve soil carbon include:

- apply nutrients to the land;
- apply lime to remediate acid soils;
- apply gypsum to remediate sodic or magnesian soils;
- undertake new irrigation;
- re-establish or rejuvenate a pasture by seeding establishing or pasture cropping;
- establishing, and permanently maintaining, a pasture where there was previously no or limited pasture, such as on cropland or bare fallow;
- alter the stocking rate, duration or intensity of grazing;
- retain stubble after a crop is harvested;
- convert from intensive tillage practices to reduced or no tillage practices;
- modify landscape or landform features to remediate land;
- use mechanical methods to add or redistribute soil;
- use legume species in cropping or pasture system; or
- use a cover crop to promote soil vegetation cover or improve soil health or both.

It is important to seek expert advice on which activities will best suit your project site. Carbon Farmers of Australia can carry out a 'whole of farm' carbon plan to identify these areas.

'NEWNESS' test

Carbon already stored in soils is not eligible, which is why we need to baseline or test for soil carbon at the beginning of the project.

Importantly, if you are already doing one or more of these eligible activities, you do not need to stop doing these. You just need to **add one new or materially different activity** from the list, in addition to what you are already doing.

However, the activities (for instance a soil amendment) will need to demonstrate that it is **LIKELY** to improve soil carbon storage rates, **AND** meet any other requirement of the method.

Project Duration:

Soil Carbon Projects can nominate either a 25-year duration or a 100-year duration. The implications are broadly:

- a. You can get an income for 25 years.
- b. You can have it as a 100-year project or 25 years. If you choose 25 years, they will reduce your carbon credits by 20%. If you choose 100 years, you will have an obligation to keep it as forest for 100 years.
- c. There are other discounts within the method which diminish over time. These can be discussed on a case-by-case basis.

Land Management Strategy:

An independent person must write or review a 'land management strategy' which will outline the way the activities are likely to improve soil carbon levels and evidence for this.

Record Keeping: As with all Farm Enterprises, record keeping forms a cornerstone of good management. Records on all 'new activities' will need to be maintained and are used to ensure a smooth road through audit.

Audit:

Every project is subject to a certain number of audits over the 25 years that you can earn an income from your project. This 'audit schedule' will be given to you when you register the project.

Your 'Carbon Farm' Plan:

This method could be used with another ERF method, at the same time on the same land, e.g., reduced methane from cattle. **Carbon Farmers of Australia (CFA) can assist to assess which methods may apply to your wider Carbon Farm Plan.**

What services can CFA provide?

1. Identify potential for success of the project

This includes but may not be limited to gathering information on the property such as:

- History, ownership status (e.g., leasehold, freehold etc.)
- Description of Land holding to identify it on the required mapping/ calculation tools and ultimately a carbon abatement estimation obtained (i.e., how many 'carbon credits' might be earned)
- Information around potential exclusion zones
- Decisions around the 'new' activity.

2. Register the project

This includes decisions around:

- What structure project is to be registered under — company, trust etc.
- Agreeing arrangements between CFA and Landholder — entering a 'Carbon Farming Services Agreement'
- CFA will never ask for the legal right – the Landholder is always the proponent.
- Opening an ANREU account for Proponent.
- Complete all paperwork and requirements for Registration and through to credit issuance.
- Handle all communications with the CER on an ongoing basis.

3. Oversee implementation:

- Ensure all rules/regulations are followed by both parties. CFA ensures the proponent's project is always compliant.
- Conduct necessary monitoring – including use of satellites/drones and field monitoring.
- Ensure Proponent understands record keeping requirements/ other requirements.
- Keep all necessary records. This is on-going for life of Carbon Farming Services Agreement.
- Assist with obtaining the necessary approvals.

4. Oversee Credit Claims:

- CFA has the required Australian Financial Services Licence (AFSL) to assist the proponent.
- Assist with Audit requirements – choosing an auditor, overseeing audit and compliance with audit requirements.
- Write Offsets Reports – includes all required records, calculations of abatement.
- Implement Carbon Credit Claims with the CER.

5. Selling Credits

Only project partners with an AFSL can assist proponents in this way as an ACCU is a financial instrument. CFA Will:

- Ensure Proponent understands/ has access to various options
- E.g., no requirement to bid into the ERF
- Flexibility for Proponent on Sales of ACCUs
- No fixed price contracts
- CFA has access to Secondary Market buyers.

Soil Sampling: The method sets out a process for soil sampling and analysis to measure carbon levels in soil. These are a specialised service. Ask your Carbon Service provider why the method/ supplier they are recommending is the best fit for your project.

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Attention: This document is a Summary only and you should consult a Carbon Service Provider or another group or person who understands the method to ensure ALL aspects of the method are followed and to make any decisions to develop a project. The details written in the method set out the rules for implementation and monitoring.



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