

LAND USE
FUTURES

GLOBAL FOOD AND LAND USE TRANSITIONS



Prioritising diversity and inclusion

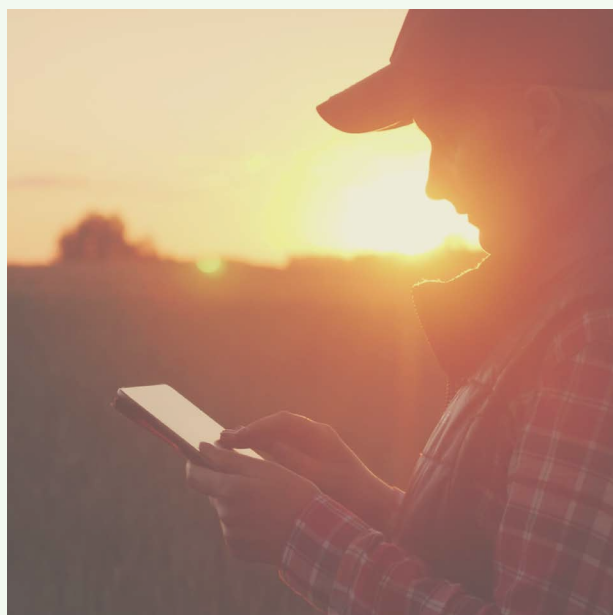
GLOBAL FOOD AND LAND USE TRANSITIONS |

Any conversation about land in Australia must begin with an acknowledgement that this country was colonised, and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have been forcibly dispossessed of their land and excluded from exercising traditional land, food, water and species management. The priority is to address this historical and ongoing injustice, including through continuation of processes for self-determination, land rights, ownership and control of land. At the same time, and as a secondary priority, this effort can be aided through supporting Indigenous projects that are consistent with sustainability transitions.

In addition to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, women and young people are often under-represented and under-valued in both the workforce and in leadership and decision-making rolesⁱ.

Inequality and exclusion threaten social and economic development and limit thinking. Including broader perspectives may support the successful implementation of each transition by driving innovation¹ while helping to ensure all transitions also contribute to meeting multiple SDGs. For example, integrating Indigenous leadership and traditional knowledge to support the revival of Indigenous foods and land management practices could support Indigenous communities, enable the development of a uniquely Australian cuisine and prompt wider adoption of land management practices better suited to the Australian environment².

Prioritising diversity and inclusion could also have more transformative impact by opening up new possibilities based on different world views. For example, the Indigenous perspectives on the connection and relationship between humans and nature and the integration of these perspectives into cultural norms and practices could prompt rethinking of some dominant cultural norms and practices in the food system.



ⁱ The globally-focused Growing Better report defines the transition as “Improving Gender Equality and Accelerating the Demographic Transition”. The focus of this transition on the global level is to improve gender equality in all aspects of the food and land use system. This paper has adjusted the scope to suit the specific Australian context, and focuses on inclusion of young people, women and Indigenous people in food production and land management. We acknowledge that this scope is still limited, and this paper does not address issues facing many other groups of people, such as those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

AUSTRALIAN CONTEXT

Despite some progress, a range of systemic barriers obstruct Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders' ability to fully exercise cultural connections to land, and contribute to agricultural and land management discourse

- Native species like finger limes, wattleseed, lemon myrtle, bush tomato and Kakadu plum form the basis of a growing bush foods industry, involving Indigenous people at all stages, from harvest and cultivation, to food processing and cultural tourism³.
- Some aspects of Indigenous land management practices are beginning to gain recognition in sustainable land management schemes, such as the recognition of the emissions reduction benefits of traditional burning practices in the Emissions Reduction Fund⁴. Indigenous ranger groups are positioned to leverage new environmental markets to offer job security and financial opportunity to highly marginalised populations.
- However, a range of systemic barriers still exist. For example, while Indigenous interests in country have been formally recognised over more than half of Australia via native title⁵, Indigenous Protected Areas⁶ and Indigenous Land Use Agreements⁷, the legacy of colonisation means that most freehold agricultural land in Australia remains held by non-Indigenous owners⁸. Most Indigenous employees in agriculture are employed as labourers⁹, although the share in management positions has been increasing¹⁰. Indigenous people also face social and financial disadvantages, as well as ongoing exclusion of Indigenous knowledge and worldviews¹¹.

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Women continue to be heavily under-represented and under-valued in the agricultural workforce and leadership roles

- Women make up more than half of student enrolments and completions in tertiary 'Agriculture, environmental and related studies'¹².
- Women remain under-represented in the workforce, making up around a third of the agricultural workforce¹³, and this number is declining¹⁴. The proportion of women workers drops to only 20% for higher skilled jobs¹⁵.

- Women's representation in agricultural leadership and decision-making roles is even less equal. Women make up only 9.3% of CEOs, 18.3% of key management positions, 14.3% of directors, 5.2% chairs of boards and 16.5% of board members¹⁶.
- The gender pay gap in agriculture, forestry and fishing remains high, with women on average earning \$25,000 less per year than men for full time positions¹⁷.
- The sector remains one of Australia's most unequal in both pay and representation¹⁸.

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The farming workforce is older than average and further aging, and aspiring young farmers face a range of barriers to entry

- The average farmer is 56, which is 17 years older than the average Australian worker¹⁹.
- Despite reasonable wage attractiveness²⁰, a range of factors restrict young people from entering into farm employment or ownership, including:
 - Decreasing farm profitability making it hard for single enterprises to support multiple generations at the same time²¹.
 - Longer education periods, later retirement, and later partnering and household formation²².
 - Shortage of accommodation and issues around working in isolation²³.
 - A range of financial barriers to entry including high capital requirements and issues with financial literacy²⁴.





CURRENT STATE OF PLAY

The outlook for improving diversity and inclusion in the food and land use system depends to a significant degree on policy settings, and social and economic developments much broader than this particular system. Nevertheless, there are opportunities to contribute to this outcome by prioritising diversity and inclusion within the food and land use system and within each of the other critical transitions.

Key action areasⁱⁱ²⁵ for prioritising diversity and inclusion include:

- **SUPPORT GREATER DIVERSITY IN LEADERSHIP** throughout the food and land use system, for example by reducing or removing institutional barriers and stereotypes that continue to exclude underrepresented groups, supporting mentoring programs and peer to peer networks for aspiring leaders, and investing in

trusted intermediary organisations with on-ground networks such as Land Councils and NRM organisations, and promoting and celebrating existing diversity.

- **INCREASE FUNDING** for diversifying leadership in food and land use, and for initiatives that prioritise or enable diversity and inclusion outcomes.
- **RAISE AWARENESS OF THE BENEFITS** of greater diversity, including through assessing and promoting the social, economic and environmental benefits achieved from leading initiatives and case studies.

The table below outlines the current state-of-play for each action area, including major current and proposed initiatives.

ii Drawn from a range of sources, see references for additional details.

KEY ACTION AREA	PROGRESS TO DATE
<p>SUPPORT GREATER DIVERSITY IN LEADERSHIP</p>	<p>ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDERS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There are a range of programs that support Indigenous leadership in agriculture at local and regional scales. For example, the Indigenous Pastoral Program²⁶ and the Pastoral Real Jobs Program²⁷ provide training and support to increase Indigenous employment in the Northern Territory’s pastoral industry. ● A number of non-profit initiatives support Indigenous leadership in land management, e.g. Bush Heritage Australia partners with Aboriginal landowners to collaboratively develop and implement Healthy Country Plans that achieve positive conservation outcomes and livelihood goals for landowners and local communities²⁸. Bush Heritage also uses ‘right-way’ science, which integrates Indigenous knowledge systems with western scientific principles²⁹. ● CSIRO developed a National Indigenous Climate Change Opportunities Roadmap in 2013 as part of the broader National Indigenous Climate Change project³⁰. ● A second National First Peoples Gathering on Climate Change is being planned following the first Gathering in 2018³¹. ● An Indigenous youth climate network called Seed has been established as a platform to motivate and empower young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to lead climate campaigns and projects³². <p>.....</p> <p>GENDER DIVERSITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A range of non-agriculture-specific government units focus on gender diversity in the workplace. But some experts recommend re-establishment of work units in government departments that are specifically focused on women’s representation in agricultural leadership, along with targeted support for women to secure board positions³³. ● The NFF’s 2030 Roadmap sets a goal to achieve gender parity in the agricultural workforce, and double the number of women in management roles³⁴, and it runs a Diversity in Agriculture Leadership Program. ● A number of organisations represent, create support networks for and champion women in agriculture, including Country Women’s Association (CWA) of Australia and state-based CWAs, Australian Women in Agriculture, the National Rural Women’s Coalition, and state and territory-based networks e.g. Queensland Regional and Remote Rural Women’s Network. <p>.....</p> <p>YOUNG AUSTRALIANS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A range of support, networking and knowledge sharing initiatives are in place to support and engage young farmers and encourage participation in governance and leadership, e.g. Young Farmers Connect, Future Farmers Network, Young Aussie Farmers, Agriculture Victoria Young Farmers Advisory Council, a number of industry-led networks such as Young Dairy Network Australia, state-based Young Farmers Federations and Young Farmer of the Year awards.

CONT. 

KEY ACTION AREA	PROGRESS TO DATE
<p>INCREASE FUNDING</p>	<p>ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDERS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Indigenous land and sea management projects are in operation across Australia, and are supported by government, Land Councils, community and non-government organisations, and NRM organisations³⁵. ● The National Landcare Program invests in many initiatives focusing on supporting and enabling Indigenous partnerships to reinvigorate and share Indigenous ecological knowledge and sustainable farming practice (e.g. invasive species management), and includes funding for Indigenous rangers³⁶. Funding of \$250 million for Indigenous rangers was announced from 2018-2021³⁷, as part of the Indigenous Advancement Strategy administered by the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA)³⁸. ● Federal government funding for the next phase of the National Landcare Program includes \$15 million for the creation of new Indigenous Protected Areas³⁹. ● The Emissions Reduction Fund savanna burning methodology has supported cultural burning for 76 registered projects across northern Australia⁴⁰. ● A number of programs have been designed to support Indigenous benefits from carbon markets, including the Indigenous Carbon Farming Fund (now ceased)⁴¹, the Aboriginal Carbon Foundation Indigenous-led Core Benefits Verification Framework⁴² and the Queensland Land Restoration Fund 'co-benefits' funding⁴³. ● The Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation has been established to assist Indigenous people to acquire and manage land to achieve economic, environmental, social and cultural benefits⁴⁴ including by facilitating development of Indigenous agribusiness⁴⁵. <p>.....</p> <p>GENDER DIVERSITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The AgriFutures Rural Women's Award provides \$10k for 'innovative ideas and projects, access to professional development and alumni networks'⁴⁶. ● Scholarships contributing to leadership courses for women in agriculture are periodically offered through Women and Leadership Australia⁴⁷. <p>.....</p> <p>YOUNG AUSTRALIANS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A range of financial and other support schemes exist to incentivise support young people to enter agribusiness industry and provide start-up capital e.g. NSW Young Farmers Business Program⁴⁸, Cultivate Farms investor/new farmer 'matchmaking' initiative⁴⁹. ● A number of concessional loans are available for new farmers (e.g. Qld First Start and Sustainability Loan Schemes⁵⁰, Tas AgriGrowth Loan scheme⁵¹) and the current Federal Government has committed to establish a concessional AgriStarter loans program⁵². ● Some financial support exists for agricultural studies, e.g. AgriFutures Horizon scholarships⁵³ and Agriculture Victoria Young Farmers Scholarship Program⁵⁴, NSW Farmers' Association Tertiary Scholarships⁵⁵, and scholarships or bursaries offered for courses by specific universities⁵⁶ or TAFE. In 2019, TAFE announced that 'priority courses' would be completely free. This includes a number of agriculture courses⁵⁷.

CONT. 

KEY ACTION AREA	PROGRESS TO DATE
<p>RAISE AWARENESS OF THE BENEFITS</p>	<p>ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDERS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indigenous land management is beginning to be recognised in educational curriculum, e.g. the TAFE Cert II in Conservation and Land Management being taught by Nyungar elder Clint Hansen⁵⁸; Charles Darwin University runs the ‘Natural resources and Indigenous Livelihoods Course’ for resource management practitioners⁵⁹. Landcare maintains a database of NRM projects led by, supporting, or using knowledge of Indigenous people⁶⁰. <p>.....</p> <p>GENDER DIVERSITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Invisible Farmer Project is the ‘largest ever study of Australian women on the land’ and seeks to increase visibility of female farmers and promote the role they play in agriculture and regional communities⁶¹. Visible Farmer is a 15 part web series telling the stories of the ‘women behind our food and fibre and the vital role they play’⁶². Australian-based celebrations of the international ‘Rural Women’s Day’, e.g. an article from The Land celebrates the contribution of particular women to agriculture⁶³. <p>.....</p> <p>YOUNG AUSTRALIANS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many universities provide career support services, such as holding career fairs, to prepare agriculture students for the workforce and industry representatives to prospective employees. Agricultural shows are also an opportunity to support and raise the profile of young Australians in agriculture, e.g. The Rural Ambassador Award run by Agricultural Shows Australia recognises the achievements of young leaders in the industry⁶⁴. ABC’s Heywire program holds an annual storytelling competition for young Australians living in regional areas. The winning entry is broadcast on ABC Radio and wins a trip to the Heywire Summit, where participants work together on ideas that will create positive change for their communities⁶⁵.



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FOR MORE INFORMATION

The Land Use Futures program is working to adapt the global transitions to reflect Australia's unique national and regional circumstances, and identify key actions to accelerate the transition. This paper is the first step in that process.

Find out more about Land Use Futures by visiting our website: www.climateworksaustralia.org/project/land-use-futures

The Land Use Futures program is led by ClimateWorks Australia (working within the Monash Sustainable Development Institute), Deakin University and CSIRO.

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