



Queensland Agri-ESG Community of Practice

Terms of Reference

Connecting Queensland's Agri-System for Conversations on ESG

What is a community of practice?

Communities of Practice (CoP) are groups of volunteer participants that have an ongoing interaction around a shared concern. CoPs provide an environment in which professionals can share their practice experiences, develop and discuss areas of interests and build a sense of community. CoPs generate value for their participants as individuals and the organisations they belong to (see Appendix 1).



Image based on Allan's *Knowledge Creation within a Community of Practice*

What is ESG?

ESG is an economy-wide trend that is global and gaining momentum rapidly. The Finance sector is under pressure to stop funding activities that are leading to perverse outcomes across a range of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) topics. This is putting pressure on the food and agriculture supply chain to demonstrate how they are managing these risks. Corporates are adopting targets based on frameworks such as the Science Based Targets Initiative and will be using their own supply chains to drive compliance at the farm level. Financiers are also bringing in direct requirements for farmers to access capital.

Context

The number and speed of new requirements for ESG that impact on the Queensland agricultural sector is increasing. While many of these requirements have been under development by individual companies or supply chains for some time, as company policy positions reach maturity they are now increasingly being discussed more broadly.

Policy staff within industry peak bodies and corporate sustainability managers are working to stay abreast of new developments in national and global policy to lead the development of solutions for their supply chains. At the same time, the Queensland Government Department of Agriculture and Fisheries is being asked to advise on policy, engage with industry and support events that are shaping the way that the Queensland agri-system is addressing ESG concerns.

Purpose

Provide a forum for the Queensland agri-system to have joined up conversations on ESG across the private and public sectors, across industries and across supply chains.

To help participants to stay abreast of emerging issues, strengthen networks and build better capacity to assist with industry, corporate and government policy and decision making.

To bring together different areas of policy and expertise and facilitate cross pollination of ideas and solutions to the ESG challenges being faced by industries.

Scope

- Understanding emerging ESG requirements for access to capital and market access
- Initial focus to be on sustainability aspects of ESG (deforestation, climate, biodiversity, etc)
- Major Queensland agricultural industries (Beef, Cane, Horticulture, Grains, Cotton)
- ESG frameworks (SDG, SBTi, TFND, TFCF, ISSB, GRI 13) and net zero targets
- Sharing supply chain responses to ESG requirements

Membership

- DPI staff primarily from RED, ABP, ASQ that are engaged in sustainability and industry development
- Government staff in other agencies that have a strong interaction with agricultural policy
- Industry - targeting sustainability managers within corporates from across the supply chain (including the financial sector)
- Peak bodies – policy staff with a sustainability focus (Queensland and National farming peaks)
- NGOs – targeting project leaders with a focus on agricultural sustainability
- Members will be invited in the first instance and added over time. Organic growth will be encouraged, once the topic for each meeting is announced it will be sent to members with an invitation to forward to interested parties and a process for being added to the CoP as a member.

Outcomes/ aspirations

Our aspirations for the CoP are:

- Queensland agri-system shares knowledge and uses networks to find solutions to the emerging requirements for ESG credentials across the supply chains of key sectors.
- Queensland's global reputation as a leading food producer is strengthened by fit for purpose and accurate ESG credentials that recognise Queensland's strong commitment to environmental management.

Outcomes we will achieve through the CoP are:

- Information sharing – leading by example, sharing solutions across industries
- Understanding emerging requirements - market access, reporting and access to capital

Format

- Monthly meeting - depending on speaker availability
- Format to include:
 - 20 minute deep dive by a guest speaker
 - 30 minutes questions/ discussion (building community and thought leadership)
- Noticeboard/chat to flag upcoming events/emerging policies or new reports/work (sharing knowledge) by encouraging members to add links out of session
- Polls and surveys will be used to understand what members find useful and this information will be used to shape the CoP over time

Facilitation

DPI (APID) will administrate, facilitate and host the CoP
Meeting summaries will be created
Recordings to be made available for members to access

How to get involved and get value from the CoP

A Community of Practice is more than a webinar! We invite input from all participants to help shape the CoP. We are keen to hear:

- Active participation in discussions and questions
- Asking for help or offering help
- Opportunities to utilise the CoP network to seek input or disseminate information
- Nominations for speakers
- Promotion of relevant work/events
- Follow up on ideas with other members out of session
- Ways of working – its about our practice as developing ESG professionals as well!

CoP etiquette

Please don't use transcript software or allow bots in the meeting. To comply with IT policy we will remove AI bots from the meeting.

Privacy

Information shared in the CoP should be able to be shared in the public domain, but please respect confidentiality if its requested. Please seek permission first if you want to share information more broadly outside the CoP.

Appendix 1 – value created by Communities of Practice



Version 1.0



Image derived from Wenger's *Cultivating Communities of Practice – a quick start up guide*