

CV 2: Farmers Driving their Future Program

Develop a “Farmers Driving their Future Program”, to support industries to make well informed decisions NOW about changes to practice that will build resilience in the face of future challenges, including climate change.

This strategy delivers on these Regional Themes	Biodiversity	Biosecurity	Coastal Systems	Sustainable Industries	Water
	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
This strategy delivers on these Strategic Outcomes	Supportive, policies, plans and regulations	Collaborative, adaptive planning and action	Traditional Owner Benefits	Sustained and diverse resourcing	Community stewardship, values and action
	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Outcome	<p>A “Farmers Driving their Future” Program will result in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Farmers making decisions about their practices now that will lead them on an alternative pathway (and adaptive pathway) towards a more resilient future. ▪ Farmers having a greater opportunity to be in the ‘driving seat’ of their future (future makers, not future takers!).
Justification	<p>Providing industries with information about likely future impacts of climate change, population dynamics, market forces etc. on their livelihoods and lifestyles will provide greater insight into the range of possible futures on offer, and support decisions now that will build greater resilience and enable timely transformative adaptation. Having a greater understanding of the challenges/opportunities that the future will bring will enable people to plan their response more proactively, and have a greater influence over their own future. This initiative can form part of the Extension and Knowledge Package.</p>
Key steps	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Develop interactive future scenarios visualisation tools – spatially packaging long term projections that overlay demographics, agriculture trends, climate impacts, available resources, sea level etc. to produce practical decision support tools eg. future scenarios which illustrate how things may ‘look’ and operate in 20 years’ time that can form the basis for people to determine their preferred future and the actions they need to take now to get there. It will be important to be able to quantify the benefits of new approaches and also the costs/implications of continuing with business as usual. 2) Trial the system in a pilot area in the Wet Tropics, to determine its effectiveness in influencing the decision making processes of landholders from different industries. 3) Hold regular multi-disciplinary ‘futures forums’ to showcase case studies and stimulate creative thinking and action about resilient farming futures.
Feasibility considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Climate change impacts could make current food distribution systems less viable, increasing demand for smaller scale, local and more sustainable supply – this could give more control back to the farmers. ✓ The Wet Tropics (soil/water/temp) has enormous potential for diversification and innovation – with some new more sustainable industries becoming more mainstream (eg. aquaculture, legumes). ✓ Climate change market opportunities could contribute to viability and resilience (e.g. soil carbon). ✗ Food distribution systems favour large enterprises closer to large warehousing facilities.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✘ Local industry feels disempowered by uncontrollable market forces and this is hard to break through. ✘ The climate change impacts contain great uncertainties, making it difficult to plan effectively for any future. ✘ There are increasing pressures on primary producers, whose identity is linked with the land, and a tendency to turn off to the enormity of the problem. It is seen as too overwhelming and a positive way through is difficult to envisage. 	
Local Landscape Projects	Local Landscape Project	Location
	SC20 Futures Forums	Southern Cassowary Coast