

# Future Drought Fund – Regional Drought Resilience Planning Program

## FEDERATION FUNDING AGREEMENT – ENVIRONMENT

| Table 1: Formalities and operation of schedule             |   |                  |            |                   |                |         |         |         |       |  |                   |                  |            |                   |       |           |           |     |                  |       |           |           |     |                  |       |           |           |     |                  |      |           |         |     |                  |      |           |         |     |                  |       |         |         |     |                |       |         |   |     |                |      |         |         |     |                |
|--|---|------------------|------------|-------------------|----------------|---------|---------|---------|-------|--|-------------------|------------------|------------|-------------------|-------|-----------|-----------|-----|------------------|-------|-----------|-----------|-----|------------------|-------|-----------|-----------|-----|------------------|------|-----------|---------|-----|------------------|------|-----------|---------|-----|------------------|-------|---------|---------|-----|----------------|-------|---------|---|-----|----------------|------|---------|---------|-----|----------------|
| Parties  | Commonwealth<br>New South Wales<br>Victoria<br>Queensland<br>Western Australia<br>South Australia<br>Tasmania<br>Australian Capital Territory<br>Northern Territory   |                  |            |                   |                |         |         |         |       |  |                   |                  |            |                   |       |           |           |     |                  |       |           |           |     |                  |       |           |           |     |                  |      |           |         |     |                  |      |           |         |     |                  |       |         |         |     |                |       |         |   |     |                |      |         |         |     |                |
| Duration   | This Schedule is expected to expire on 31 December 2025.  |                  |            |                   |                |         |         |         |       |  |                   |                  |            |                   |       |           |           |     |                  |       |           |           |     |                  |       |           |           |     |                  |      |           |         |     |                  |      |           |         |     |                  |       |         |         |     |                |       |         |   |     |                |      |         |         |     |                |
| Purpose  | <p>This Schedule will support the delivery of financial assistance from the Commonwealth to the State and Territory governments (States) to deliver the Regional Drought Resilience Planning Program (the Program). The States will use this funding to assist partnerships of local government consortia (or equivalent) and regional stakeholders to develop Regional Drought Resilience Plans (RDR Plans) for their region.</p> <p>This Schedule is an extension to the 2020-21 foundational year Future Drought Fund – Regional Drought Resilience Planning Program Schedule, signed by all states in 2021.</p>   |                  |            |                   |                |         |         |         |       |  |                   |                  |            |                   |       |           |           |     |                  |       |           |           |     |                  |       |           |           |     |                  |      |           |         |     |                  |      |           |         |     |                  |       |         |         |     |                |       |         |   |     |                |      |         |         |     |                |
| Estimated financial contributions                          | <p>The Commonwealth will provide an estimated total financial contribution to the States of \$29.4m in respect of this Schedule.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Table 1.1 (\$)</th> <th>2022-23</th> <th>2023-24</th> <th>2024-25</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td><b>Estimated total Commonwealth financial contribution</b></td> <td><b>23,934,000</b></td> <td><b>5,466,000</b></td> <td><b>Nil</b></td> <td><b>29,400,000</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>- NSW</td> <td>5,803,479</td> <td>1,313,714</td> <td>Nil</td> <td><b>7,117,193</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>- VIC</td> <td>6,147,634</td> <td>1,391,621</td> <td>Nil</td> <td><b>7,539,255</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>- QLD</td> <td>5,237,630</td> <td>1,185,626</td> <td>Nil</td> <td><b>6,423,256</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>- WA</td> <td>2,868,355</td> <td>649,301</td> <td>Nil</td> <td><b>3,517,656</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>- SA</td> <td>2,486,741</td> <td>562,916</td> <td>Nil</td> <td><b>3,049,657</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>- TAS</td> <td>736,497</td> <td>166,719</td> <td>Nil</td> <td><b>903,216</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>- ACT</td> <td>150,000</td> <td>0</td> <td>Nil</td> <td><b>150,000</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>- NT</td> <td>503,664</td> <td>196,103</td> <td>Nil</td> <td><b>699,767</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> |                  |            |                   | Table 1.1 (\$) | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | 2024-25 | Total | <b>Estimated total Commonwealth financial contribution</b> | <b>23,934,000</b> | <b>5,466,000</b> | <b>Nil</b> | <b>29,400,000</b> | - NSW | 5,803,479 | 1,313,714 | Nil | <b>7,117,193</b> | - VIC | 6,147,634 | 1,391,621 | Nil | <b>7,539,255</b> | - QLD | 5,237,630 | 1,185,626 | Nil | <b>6,423,256</b> | - WA | 2,868,355 | 649,301 | Nil | <b>3,517,656</b> | - SA | 2,486,741 | 562,916 | Nil | <b>3,049,657</b> | - TAS | 736,497 | 166,719 | Nil | <b>903,216</b> | - ACT | 150,000 | 0 | Nil | <b>150,000</b> | - NT | 503,664 | 196,103 | Nil | <b>699,767</b> |
| Table 1.1 (\$)   | 2022-23   | 2023-24          | 2024-25    | Total             |                |         |         |         |       |  |                   |                  |            |                   |       |           |           |     |                  |       |           |           |     |                  |       |           |           |     |                  |      |           |         |     |                  |      |           |         |     |                  |       |         |         |     |                |       |         |   |     |                |      |         |         |     |                |
| <b>Estimated total Commonwealth financial contribution</b> | <b>23,934,000</b>   | <b>5,466,000</b> | <b>Nil</b> | <b>29,400,000</b> |                |         |         |         |       |  |                   |                  |            |                   |       |           |           |     |                  |       |           |           |     |                  |       |           |           |     |                  |      |           |         |     |                  |      |           |         |     |                  |       |         |         |     |                |       |         |   |     |                |      |         |         |     |                |
| - NSW  | 5,803,479   | 1,313,714        | Nil        | <b>7,117,193</b>  |                |         |         |         |       |  |                   |                  |            |                   |       |           |           |     |                  |       |           |           |     |                  |       |           |           |     |                  |      |           |         |     |                  |      |           |         |     |                  |       |         |         |     |                |       |         |   |     |                |      |         |         |     |                |
| - VIC  | 6,147,634   | 1,391,621        | Nil        | <b>7,539,255</b>  |                |         |         |         |       |  |                   |                  |            |                   |       |           |           |     |                  |       |           |           |     |                  |       |           |           |     |                  |      |           |         |     |                  |      |           |         |     |                  |       |         |         |     |                |       |         |   |     |                |      |         |         |     |                |
| - QLD  | 5,237,630   | 1,185,626        | Nil        | <b>6,423,256</b>  |                |         |         |         |       |  |                   |                  |            |                   |       |           |           |     |                  |       |           |           |     |                  |       |           |           |     |                  |      |           |         |     |                  |      |           |         |     |                  |       |         |         |     |                |       |         |   |     |                |      |         |         |     |                |
| - WA   | 2,868,355   | 649,301          | Nil        | <b>3,517,656</b>  |                |         |         |         |       |  |                   |                  |            |                   |       |           |           |     |                  |       |           |           |     |                  |       |           |           |     |                  |      |           |         |     |                  |      |           |         |     |                  |       |         |         |     |                |       |         |   |     |                |      |         |         |     |                |
| - SA   | 2,486,741   | 562,916          | Nil        | <b>3,049,657</b>  |                |         |         |         |       |  |                   |                  |            |                   |       |           |           |     |                  |       |           |           |     |                  |       |           |           |     |                  |      |           |         |     |                  |      |           |         |     |                  |       |         |         |     |                |       |         |   |     |                |      |         |         |     |                |
| - TAS  | 736,497   | 166,719          | Nil        | <b>903,216</b>    |                |         |         |         |       |  |                   |                  |            |                   |       |           |           |     |                  |       |           |           |     |                  |       |           |           |     |                  |      |           |         |     |                  |      |           |         |     |                  |       |         |         |     |                |       |         |   |     |                |      |         |         |     |                |
| - ACT  | 150,000   | 0                | Nil        | <b>150,000</b>    |                |         |         |         |       |  |                   |                  |            |                   |       |           |           |     |                  |       |           |           |     |                  |       |           |           |     |                  |      |           |         |     |                  |      |           |         |     |                  |       |         |         |     |                |       |         |   |     |                |      |         |         |     |                |
| - NT   | 503,664   | 196,103          | Nil        | <b>699,767</b>    |                |         |         |         |       |  |                   |                  |            |                   |       |           |           |     |                  |       |           |           |     |                  |       |           |           |     |                  |      |           |         |     |                  |      |           |         |     |                  |       |         |         |     |                |       |         |   |     |                |      |         |         |     |                |

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| Additional terms | <p>States will be responsible for providing an agreed minimum co-contribution as specified in the agreed Program Implementation Plan and maintenance of effort to support the implementation of this Schedule. Estimated Commonwealth financial contributions are subject to, and will be scaled up to, matched (or otherwise agreed) co-contributions from the states up to the limits set out in Table 1.1. The Commonwealth's financial contribution will be finalised in the agreed Program Implementation Plan.</p> <p>States must deliver the program in accordance with the agreed Program Implementation Plan. Program Implementation Plans must be informed by and aligned to the Program Framework at Appendix A.</p> <p>In addition to Paragraph 21 of the Federation Funding Agreement - Environment, and Schedule E, Clause 26 of the Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. The Commonwealth will provide states with a program Communication Plan and Co-branding guidelines. States must undertake program communications and branding consistently with the national guidance.</li><li>2. the announcement of a program or a project under this Schedule must be made jointly with the Australian Government and the relevant jurisdiction, unless otherwise agreed by the Commonwealth</li><li>3. when referring to the program or a project under this Schedule, it must be described as "jointly funded by the Australian Government and (insert name of jurisdiction) under the Future Drought Fund"</li></ol> <p>In addition to Part 4 of the Federation Funding Agreement - Environment, the Commonwealth will provide a program Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan (MEL Plan). States will negotiate with the Commonwealth to agree a format for progress-reporting in the context of their Program Implementation Plan, and the MEL plan.</p> <p>States are expected to deliver the program in accordance with public sector ethical values and duties such as probity, accountability, and transparency.</p> <p>As per the provision in Subsection 22(4) of the <i>Future Drought Fund Act 2019</i>, where states do not meet the requirements of the agreed Program Implementation Plan states may be required to refund to the Commonwealth part or all of any previously distributed funding that remains unexpended.</p> |
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**Table 2: Performance requirements, reporting and payment summary (2022-25)**

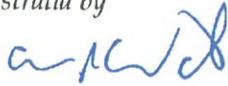
| Output   | Performance milestones  | Report due  | Payment  |
|--|---|---|--|
| Deliver revised Program Implementation Plan              | <p>Completion of a Program Implementation Plan, <b>as evidenced in writing and signed by both the Commonwealth and the relevant state and territory government officials</b>, that outlines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Program delivery approach and timing, including alignment with program framework (Appendix A) and any jurisdictionally tailored inclusions</li> <li>b) Program governance, risk management and stakeholder engagement</li> <li>c) Program budget, including Commonwealth, State and participant co-contributions and any industry sponsorship and expected number of funded program participants</li> <li>d) Communication and co-branding strategy (consistent with Commonwealth requirements)</li> <li>e) Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Plan (consistent with Commonwealth requirements)</li> </ul> | 30/10/2022 or within one month of the Schedule being signed by both parties, whichever is later | 50% Commonwealth financial contribution for 2022-23 identified in Table 1.1 as adjusted in accordance with the additional terms. |
| Delivery of Regional Drought Resilience Planning program | Completion of deliverables and provision of a progress report, as per the agreed Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Plan, detailing performance against this Schedule and the agreed Program Implementation Plan for reporting period to 31 December 2022.  | 28/02/2023  | 50% Commonwealth financial contribution for 2022-23 identified in Table 1.1 as adjusted in accordance with the additional terms. |
|  | Completion of deliverables and provision of a progress report, as per the agreed Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Plan, detailing performance against this Schedule and the agreed Program Implementation Plan for reporting period to 30 June 2023   | 30/08/2023  | 50% Commonwealth financial contribution for 2023-24 identified in Table 1.1 as adjusted in accordance with the additional terms. |
|  | Completion of deliverables and provision of a progress report, as per the agreed Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Plan, detailing performance against this Schedule and the agreed Program Implementation Plan for reporting period to 31 December 2023.  | 29/02/2024  | 50% Commonwealth financial contribution for 2023-24 identified in Table 1.1 as adjusted in accordance with the additional terms. |
|  | Completion of deliverables and provision of a progress report, as per the agreed Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Plan, detailing performance against this Schedule and the agreed Program Implementation Plan for reporting period to 30 June 2024.  | 30/08/2024  | Nil  |

**Table 2: Performance requirements, reporting and payment summary (2022-25)**

| <b>Output</b> | <b>Performance milestones</b>  | <b>Report due</b> | <b>Payment</b> |
|---------------|--|-------------------|----------------|
|               | Completion of deliverables and provision of a progress report, as per the agreed Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Plan, detailing performance against this Schedule and the agreed Program Implementation Plan for reporting period to 31 December 2024.   | 28/02/2025        | Nil            |
|               | Completion of all deliverables and provision of a final report, as per the agreed Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Plan, detailing performance against this Schedule and the agreed Program Implementation Plan for the reporting period to 30 June 2025.  | 30/08/2025        | Nil            |
|               | Provision of an evaluation report, as per the agreed Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Plan, that describes the delivery, benefits and outcomes of the program as a whole (including the foundational year 2020-21) and evaluates the program, including assessing the extent to which the outcomes have been achieved, or not. | 31/12/2025        | Nil            |

The Parties have confirmed their commitment to this schedule as follows:

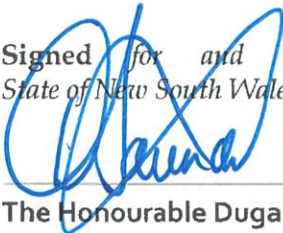
**Signed for and on behalf of the Commonwealth of Australia by**



**Senator the Honourable Murray Watt**  
Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry;  
Emergency Management

20/11/2022

**Signed for and on behalf of the State of New South Wales by**



**The Honourable Dugald Saunders MP**  
Minister for Agriculture; Western New South Wales

22/2/23 2022

**Signed for and on behalf of the State of Victoria by**

**The Honourable Gayle Tierney MLC**  
Minister for Agriculture; Training and Skills; Higher Education

2022

**Signed for and on behalf of the State of Queensland by**

**Signed for and on behalf of the State of Western Australia by**

**The Honourable Mark Furner MP**  
Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities

**The Honourable Alannah MacTiernan MLC**  
Minister for Regional Development; Agriculture and Food; Hydrogen Industry

2022

2022

**Signed for and on behalf of the State of South Australia by**

**Signed for and on behalf of the State of Tasmania by**

**The Honourable Clare Scriven MLC**  
Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development and Minister for Forest Industries

**The Honourable Jo Palmer MLC**  
Minister for Primary Industries and Water

2022

2022

**Signed for and on behalf of the Australian Capital Territory by**

**Signed for and on behalf of the Northern Territory by**

**Ms. Rebecca Vassarotti MLA**  
Minister for the Environment and Heritage


**The Honourable Paul Kirby MLA**  
Minister for Agribusiness and Fisheries

2022

2022

The Parties have confirmed their commitment to this schedule as follows:

*Signed for and on behalf of the Commonwealth of Australia by*



**Senator the Honourable Murray Watt**  
Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry;  
Emergency Management

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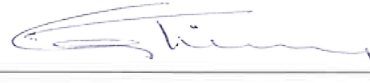
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**Ms. Rebecca Vassarotti MLA**  
Minister for the Environment and Heritage

2022

*Signed for and on behalf of the State of Victoria by*



**The Honourable Gayle Tierney MLC**  
Minister for Agriculture; Training and Skills; Higher Education

14 / 06 / 2023

*Signed for and on behalf of the State of Western Australia by*

**The Honourable Alannah MacTiernan MLC**  
Minister for Regional Development; Agriculture and Food; Hydrogen Industry

2022

*Signed for and on behalf of the State of Tasmania by*

**The Honourable Jo Palmer MLC**  
Minister for Primary Industries and Water

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Minister for Agribusiness and Fisheries

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Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales

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**Signed for and on behalf of the State of Victoria by**

**The Honourable Gayle Tierney MLC**  
Minister for Agriculture; Training and Skills; Higher Education

2022

**Signed for and on behalf of the State of Queensland by**



**The Honourable Mark Furner MP**  
Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities

08/12/ 2022

**Signed for and on behalf of the State of Western Australia by**

**The Honourable Alannah MacTiernan MLC**  
Minister for Minister for Regional Development; Agriculture and Food; Hydrogen Industry

2022

**Signed for and on behalf of the State of South Australia by**

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Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development and Minister for Forestry Industries

2022

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**The Honourable Jo Palmer MLC**  
Minister for Primary Industries and Water

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Emergency Management

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**The Honourable Gayle Tierney MLC**

Minister for Agriculture; Training and Skills; Higher Education

2022

**Signed for and on behalf of the State of Western Australia by**



---

**The Honourable Jackie Jarvis MLC**

Minister for Agriculture and Food; Forestry; Small Business

20 APR 2023

2023

**Signed for and on behalf of the State of Tasmania by**

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**The Honourable Jo Palmer MLC**

Minister for Primary Industries and Water

2022

**Signed for and on behalf of the Northern Territory by**

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**The Honourable Paul Kirby MLA**

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22/12/ 2022

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Minister for Primary Industries and Water

15/12/ 2022

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21/4/2023

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**Signed for and on behalf of the Australian Capital Territory by**

**Ms. Rebecca Vassarotti MLA**  
Minister for the Environment and Heritage

2022

**Signed for and on behalf of the State of Victoria by**

**The Honourable Gayle Tierney MLC**  
Minister for Agriculture; Training and Skills; Higher Education

2022

**Signed for and on behalf of the State of Western Australia by**

**The Honourable Alannah MacTiernan MLC**  
Minister for Minister for Regional Development; Agriculture and Food; Hydrogen Industry

2022

**Signed for and on behalf of the State of Tasmania by**

**The Honourable Jo Palmer MLC**  
Minister for Primary Industries and Water

2022

**Signed for and on behalf of the Northern Territory by**



**The Honourable Paul Kirby MLA**  
Minister for Agribusiness and Fisheries

2022



# Future Drought Fund

## Regional Drought Resilience Planning Program 2022-25

### Overview

#### The Future Drought Fund

The Future Drought Fund (the Fund) is a long-term investment fund that provides a sustainable source of funding to help Australian farmers and communities become more prepared for, and resilient to, the impacts of drought. Established under the *Future Drought Fund Act 2019* in September 2019, the Fund began with a \$3.9 billion investment, with earnings to be reinvested by the Future Fund Board until the balance reaches \$5 billion. The Fund is part of the Australian Government's Drought Response, Resilience and Preparedness Plan, and a key deliverable under the National Drought Agreement. From July 2020, \$100 million from the Fund is available each financial year to invest in drought resilience programs.

#### The Drought Resilience Funding Plan 2020-2024

The *Future Drought Fund (Drought Resilience Funding Plan 2020 to 2024) Determination 2020* (the Funding Plan) serves as a framework for all expenditure from the Fund, it guides the design of the program and types of projects offered.

The Funding Plan has three inter-connected strategic priorities:

- economic resilience for an innovative and profitable agricultural sector
- environmental resilience for sustainable and improved functioning of farming landscapes
- social resilience for resourceful and adaptable communities.

The Fund's three objectives to achieve the strategic priorities will enhance the public good by building drought resilience through programs that will:

- grow the self-reliance and performance (productivity and profitability) of the agricultural sector
- improve the natural capital of agricultural landscapes for better environmental outcomes and
- strengthen the wellbeing and social capital of rural, regional and remote communities.

#### The Regional Drought Resilience Planning Program 2022-25

The Regional Drought Resilience Planning Program (the program) is one of eight foundational programs under the Future Drought Fund in 2020-21.

The program provides funding for consortia of regional partners to develop regional drought resilience plans (RDR Plans). The plans will be community led and owned, and focus on innovative ways to build regional drought resilience across the agricultural sector and supporting industries, through a triple bottom line, collaborative and evidence-based approach. This program contributes to each of the Fund's objectives and strategic priorities.

The program is delivered through the state and territory governments in their respective jurisdictions with Commonwealth funding provided via a schedule to the *Federation Funding Agreement - Environment* (Funding Agreement Schedule). The program creates a national framework for regional drought resilience planning, while providing flexibility for jurisdictions to deliver a program that builds on existing expertise and delivery mechanisms where they exist or establish new programs if needed.

In 2020-21 the Australian Government invested \$9.85 million from the Future Drought Fund for a foundational year of the program (with activities to 30 June 2022) with a co-contribution from state and territory governments.

A \$31 million extension to the program was announced through the 2021-22 Federal Budget. The extension is expected to enable RDR Plans to be developed across all agricultural regions in each jurisdiction, building on the foundational year. As part of this extension, small grants will be available to take forward priority actions identified in RDR Plans. The extended program is supported by matching (or otherwise agreed) co-contributions from state and territory governments.

Implementation of the program will continue to be informed by any relevant findings of the National Royal Commission into Black Summer Bushfires (Natural Disaster Arrangements) as well as Federal and State Drought Inquiries where relevant.

### **Purpose of this document**

This document outlines the desired outcomes, guiding principles and core elements of the program. This framework for the extended program is included in an amendment to the Funding Agreement Schedule and should be read alongside it. State and territory governments will deliver the program in accordance with an agreed Program Implementation Plan, which must be informed and aligned to this framework.

### **Program objectives and outcomes**

The program aims to achieve the following objectives and outcomes outlined in Table 1 (below):

**Table 1: Regional Drought Resilience Planning Program objectives and outcomes 2020-25**

| <b>Objectives</b>                           | <b>Program information</b>   |
|---|--|
| The strategy                                | Establish drought resilience plans across all agricultural regions based on evidence and collaboration, to drive proactive management of drought risks   |
| What are we trying to achieve?              | Regional drought resilience plans, led and owned by the community, drive decisions, actions and investments to proactively manage drought risks  |
| How will this support drought resilience?   | Informed and planned action to manage drought risks at a regional scale will support resilience of the region’s economy, farmers, businesses, communities, and the landscape   |
| How will we assess whether it’s successful? | <p>Overall success measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There’s an increase in the number of agricultural regions that have drought resilience plans</li> <li>• Plans have buy-in from key stakeholders in the region</li> <li>• Plans are informed by relevant data, co-design and best practice approaches to resilience planning</li> <li>• Plans are implemented</li> </ul> |



| <b>Outcomes</b>                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <b>Short term (1-2 years)</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regions have a plan against which to monitor their drought resilience status</li> <li>• Communities use best practice data and information to better understand their resilience to drought and make decisions</li> <li>• Regions have identified and planned for the impacts of drought on their region</li> <li>• Drought resilience planning draws on a wide range of inputs, informed by effective partnerships within the region</li> <li>• Communities empowered to identify the impacts of drought</li> <li>• Communities given the opportunity to communicate regional drought resilience needs and priorities which may inform future investment</li> <li>• Communities share their learnings about drought resilience with other regions</li> <li>• Regional level drought resilience planning leverages and aligns with planning at other scales</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Intermediate (2-4 years)</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The majority of plans have had elements implemented</li> <li>• Actions, pathways and opportunities (including innovative and transformative) to improve regional drought resilience, mitigate risks and adapt to change are identified</li> <li>• Partnerships, networks and engagement are built between stakeholders managing natural resources</li> <li>• Communities share knowledge, collaborate and partner with government more often to build drought resilience</li> <li>• Greater sharing of learnings related to drought resilience between communities</li> <li>• The number of, and participation in, local networks and programs to enhance drought resilience increases</li> <li>• Increased community understanding of the region’s current and future drought resilience, considering the region’s unique economic, environmental and social characteristics</li> <li>• Regional leaders are in a stronger position to implement strategic actions, adapt to change and take advantage of opportunities to build economic resilience as they arise</li> <li>• Communities use best practice data and information to better understand their resilience to drought and plan for resilience to drought</li> <li>• Regional representatives have considered and planned incremental, transitional and transformational opportunities to strengthen resilience</li> <li>• Primary producers and businesses supported to improve their sustainability and resilience</li> <li>• Natural resource management capability is improved across region</li> </ul> |

Program administration outcomes along with longer-term outcomes, linking to the Funding Plan and FDF Monitoring Evaluation and Learning Framework, are detailed in the program Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan (MEL Plan). The outcomes will continue to be refined collaboratively with the states and territories through the MEL Plan and associated reporting.

State and territory governments will be required to provide robust performance monitoring and reporting to ensure the program meets the program’s outcomes, outputs and strategic priorities as documented in the program MEL Plan.

## Core program elements

### Regional Drought Resilience Plans

- RDR Plans will explore and focus on innovative and diverse pathways to build drought resilience in agricultural, primary production and agricultural supply chain industries. RDR Plans will also be underpinned by triple-bottom-line considerations and the impacts that future droughts may have on the broader landscape and regional communities which depend on or contribute to agriculture and rural economies. The process will foster learning and build social capital.



- RDR Plans must be developed:
  - using a partnership and co-design process (see ‘Partnering’ below) and harness the diverse region-specific knowledge and skills required for a triple-bottom-line approach to ensure the plans are community led and owned
  - using best-practice resilience planning principles including consideration of adaptation pathways and scenario testing
  - building on, complementing and taking account of existing strategic planning, to the extent it is available and relevant.
- RDR Plans must include:
  - a regional context, inclusive of an integrated assessment of how drought has affected the region in the past (if applicable) and how drought is likely to affect the region’s economic, environmental and social characteristics in the future, based on up-to-date information, research and climate science (projections, mapping, modelling and scenarios) for the region.
    - The Commonwealth and the state and territories will provide, including through the Australian Government’s Future Drought Fund Climate Services for Agriculture Program, access to reliable, evidence-based information and research outputs to assist with the development of RDR Plans including available social research, climate data, and examples from other communities to encourage shared learning.
  - an evidence-based, triple-bottom-line strategy, outlining actions and pathways to mitigate and/or adapt to drought impacts, facilitate transformational change, and increase drought resilience within the region.
    - The strategy should consider the feasibility and practical implementation of actions to provide triple-bottom-line public good benefits to the region. Actions could include, for example, economic development opportunities, environmental management approaches, or wellbeing and social capital building initiatives.
    - The strategy should focus on innovative ways to build drought resilience in agricultural, primary production and agricultural supply chain industries. Supply chain industries include those genuinely involved in getting the agricultural product to the consumer and are therefore dependent on the agricultural industry.
  - a process to continue to engage and communicate with the community about proposed activities to be implemented under the plan and implementation progress, on a regular basis.
  - specify a monitoring, evaluation and review process to ensure transparency, adaptive management, and long-term implementation.
  - other relevant elements tailored to the jurisdiction or region may be included providing those additional elements are consistent with the program outcomes and objectives and do not affect delivery of core elements.
- Once complete, RDR Plans will be independently assessed by an assessor appointed by the Commonwealth.
  - the assessment framework will be nationally consistent and reflect the requirements of the Funding Agreement Schedule including the program framework contained within
  - following independent feedback, regional consortia will have the opportunity to consider and incorporate feedback into their RDR Plan prior to approval



- Final RDR Plans must be provided to the Commonwealth Minister for Drought for approval.
  - approval requirements will reflect the program framework and independent assessment criteria
- Approved RDR Plans will be published on the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment website (or other appropriate centralised location determined by the Commonwealth in consultation with the applicable jurisdiction), to enable communities to learn from each other and enable those with less expertise or capacity to benefit from access to examples and case studies. Plans may also be published elsewhere at the discretion of the state, territory or regions.

### Funding for planning

- The program will provide funding not exceeding \$600,000 per regional project (in Commonwealth funding) for consortia or similar partnerships/alliances of regional stakeholders (regional consortia) to develop RDR Plans.
- The funding for RDR Plans is to be determined by the respective state or territory government, in consultation with the Commonwealth, considering factors such as the proposed regional planning project's scope and scale.
  - it is expected not every plan will require the maximum quantum of funding available.
  - it is expected that required funding will enable all agricultural regions in each jurisdiction to be covered by RDR Plans.
- For larger RDR planning projects, total funds spent on preparing an RDR Plan could exceed \$600,000, with the additional funding being provided from other sources, for example regional consortia, regional partners, local governments or state and territory government program co-contributions. Such co-contributions may also be used to fund additional elements to:
  - extend the reach of the program to more agricultural regions
  - support implementation of activities specified in the plans
  - cover administrative costs.
- State and territory governments are also permitted to use other sources of funding (not considered co-contributions) to connect regional drought resilience planning into broader strategic planning and other relevant initiatives; broaden the scope of planning beyond agricultural, primary production and agricultural supply chain industries; or broaden the scope of planning more generally (for example bushfire response planning).

### Governance

#### Application and selection

- State and territory governments are responsible for defining agricultural regions and selecting regional drought resilience planning projects within their jurisdictions for funding and determining the priority and timing of these projects.
- Regional planning projects should be selected using a structured, transparent, and where appropriate, contestable process.
- In making a selection, state and territory governments should consider:
  - the significance of agriculture to the region
  - the relevance of, and necessity and urgency for, drought resilience planning in the region
  - the consortia's proposed process for co-design, partnering and collaboration

- the consortia's proposed approach to build on, complement and take account of existing strategic planning, to the extent it is available and relevant
- potential qualitative and quantitative outcomes and expected public benefits—not necessarily in monetary terms
- probability of successful completion of the plan.

#### Eligibility

- Regional consortia can be formed from local governments and/or other appropriate entities to develop a RDR Plan under this program.
  - regional consortia must consist of two or more local governments or other appropriate entities
  - other appropriate entities are defined as legal entities that undertake planning at a regional scale and include Regional Development Australia committees, Indigenous organisations, Regional Natural Resource Management Organisations, statutory authorities or other entities as deemed relevant by state and territory governments for their jurisdiction
    - where possible Local Government Authority (LGAs) should be the project lead, however in areas without LGAs, areas with indigenous governance arrangements, or where LGAs lack capacity, or are unwilling or unable to partner together, development of an RDR Plan could be led by other appropriate entities
    - if a project has a non-local government lead, relevant local governments must still be partners in the planning process where possible and relevant
  - regional consortia can be based on existing regional groups or partnerships, including partnerships of councils (for example Joint Organisations of Council or Local Government Regional Organisations)
  - regional consortia members should be located in the same geographical area, with common regional interests and preferably, but not necessarily, share common borders
  - agricultural industries must be justifiably significant (or have the genuine potential to be significant) to the region in which the consortia is located, through its economy, landscape, and/or community/social aspects
  - regional consortia may participate in but are not permitted to be funded as part of more than one regional project
  - acknowledging that regions do not necessarily align with jurisdictional borders, consortia that straddle state and territory jurisdictional borders may apply for funding under this program. Facilitation of cross-jurisdictional applications will be undertaken on an ad-hoc basis.
- Whilst regional consortia will be responsible for developing RDR Plans, these plans will be community led and owned.

#### Partnering

- Regional consortia must partner, collaborate and consult widely with relevant regional, community and industry stakeholders, and organisations who undertake relevant planning processes to:
  - foster co-designed, community-led planning and collective ownership of the resulting plan and its implementation
  - leverage existing local, regional and state strategic planning and other relevant initiatives and avoid duplication of effort

- recognise the diversity of people, businesses and landscapes involved in agricultural production, including Indigenous groups and landholders
- harness diverse region-specific knowledge and skills for a triple-bottom-line approach.
- Partners and stakeholders to be engaged in co-design and/or consultation on RDR Plans include, where they exist in the region, but not necessarily limited to:
  - Farming groups and businesses
  - Regional Development Australia (RDA) Committees
  - Natural Resource Management (NRM) organisations
  - Indigenous groups
  - Local government authorities / councils (where they are not the lead)
  - community organisations, community leaders, Local champions e.g. Country Women's Association, Rotary, Lions.
  - Research organisation
  - Agricultural industry representative groups (peak bodies)
  - development commissions
  - State or territory governments
  - power, emergency, fire and medical services
  - water authorities
  - banks, and/or other financial experts, organisations or institutions.
  - farm advisers, consultants, agronomists and stock and station agents.
- Regional consortia also need to partner with their local FDF Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hubs (the Hubs). This will ensure Hubs are embedded in the planning process to support regions to consider relevant evidence-based information and research outputs and connects the Hubs with the drought resilience needs of their area. The Hubs also provide an important linkage with networks of primary producers and community groups.

### Implementation grants

- Regional consortia will be eligible to receive an implementation grant of up to \$150,000 (commonwealth contribution) per plan to support implementation of priority actions identified in their RDR plan.
  - the Commonwealth contribution is to be matched, or as otherwise agreed, by the respective state and territory government as part of the overall program budget specified in the Funding Agreement Schedule
  - the Commonwealth may negotiate, on a case by case basis, an increased grant amount if the relevant state or territory government meets the following requirements:
    - sufficient funding had been allocated to fund development of RDR Plans to the quality standard required by the program, AND
    - has achieved, or is on track to achieve, coverage of all agricultural regions, AND
    - has made provision for maximum implementation grant funding (\$300,000 including matching state co-contribution) per plan for all regions developing an RDR Plan, AND
    - any increased Commonwealth contribution towards implementation grants is matched by the relevant state or territory government.
- Activities funded through an implementation grant must:
  - be outlined in an independently assessed and approved RDR Plan
  - be endorsed/sponsored by the relevant consortia responsible for developing/approving the RDR Plan
  - take place within, or apply to, the region for which the approved RDRP Plan exists



- aim to improve drought resilience in the agricultural sector, and/or its supporting communities and supply chains
- deliver a public benefit
  - grants must not be used for payments direct to farmers, nor to provide on-farm infrastructure.
- Regional consortia are encouraged, but not required, to co-contribute towards the funded activities.
- State and territory governments will make decisions on and administer implementation grant funding to regions consortia.
  - method of administration of implementation grant funding will be tailored by each jurisdiction
  - Policy guidance will be developed by the Commonwealth, in consultation with the state and territory governments, to assist with administering implementation grant funding, consistent with the principles outlined above
  - grant funding administration will be underpinned by principles of probity, transparency and accountability.
- The Commonwealth, through the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, must be consulted prior to a decision on making a grant.
- Consistent with the Funding Agreement, implementation grant activities must be jointly branded and announced unless otherwise agreed.