

*Practical information, resources and opportunities for
north-west Tasmanian farmers and agricultural service providers.*

Welcome to the October edition of *Our Natural Advantage*, Cradle Coast NRM's monthly climate-smart farming snapshot.

The theme of this edition is:

On-farm Natural Capital

The often under-valued farm assets

'Natural capital' is a relatively new term that has been in the limelight lately. But what is natural capital?

The terms 'natural capital' or 'natural assets' are really just a re-branding of our natural resources – such as soil, water and living things – so they can be better recognised and valued in an economic sense. Natural capital represents significant ecological and commercial value and can be accounted for alongside agricultural assets like land, infrastructure, and livestock to provide a complete picture of a farm's assets.

Natural Capital Funding Opportunity - Now Open!

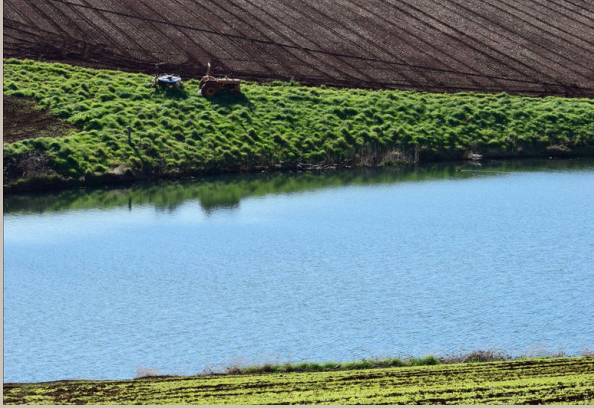
Nature underpins much of the value and growth in our economy. Unfortunately, indicators of natural capital show that nature is declining globally, which threatens both nature and our economic prosperity.

The good news is that there is positive data on the economic and ecosystem benefits of protecting and improving natural capital on farms.

The production benefits of protecting natural capital have been long recognised, since the German naturalist Alexander Von Humbolt witnessed and documented landscape scale change from extensive deforestation while visiting lake Valencia in Argentina during the early 1800's. Upon observation, Von Humbolt realised that clearing the land entirely for farming had removed the shade provided to the lake by tree canopy cover, resulting in greater evaporation and reduced water holding capacity of the lake.

He also realised that the water holding capacity of the soil had been reduced in the absence of leaf litter and understorey forest plants to cover and protect the now exposed soil from sunlight. The exposed soil was also prone to greater evaporation from the sun and erosion from heavy rainfall events which reduced the area of cropping land as the banks of the lake were now eroding.

Von Humbolt encapsulates the productive benefits of tree cover by the quote, “The wooded region acts in a threefold manner in diminishing the temperature; by cooling shade, by evaporation and by radiation”.



A farm dam with no surrounding vegetation would experience greater water loss through evaporation, just like the lake Von Humbolt observed.

While the benefits trees can provide have been recognised in a general sense for centuries, studies in Tasmania have begun putting some hard numbers to increased farm productivity. Sheltered pasture paddocks can yield up to 30% more herbage than paddocks without shelter. Wind speeds can be moderated by shelter, leading to reduced soil moisture loss and pasture desiccation.

By increasing pasture production in this paddock by 30% through shelter, the gross margin was effectively increased by 15%, translating to an increase of around \$63 per hectare for the farmer. This solely values the benefit to increasing grazing productivity, and does not include other benefits such as timber production, carbon sequestration, amenity and biodiversity that trees on farms can provide. Water quality improvements can also be a benefit from waterways flanked with intact vegetation, as vegetation can filter surface runoff and reduce the sediment load, nutrient loss and coliforms from animal dung entering the water.



Vegetation surrounding on-farm waterways can improve water quality and reduce erosion.

Funding Opportunity - Now Open!

Cradle Coast NRM is inviting north-west Tasmanian farmers to apply for the Our Natural Advantage – Natural Capital Incentive Program.

The program supports farmers to assess natural capital opportunities and risks on their property, with opportunities for on-farm visits and a Natural Capital Assessments. Eligible farmers can also access **funding for practical actions** which protect and enhance farm vegetation, provide multiple on-going co-benefits to support farm profitability, capture and store greenhouse gas emissions, enhance biodiversity and adapt to climate change.

What support is available:

- **Farm Natural Capital Assessment** including farm maps and basic desktop review of opportunities and risks
- **Farm visit** to discuss natural capital assessment and potential improvement activities.
- **Funding for on-ground works** – contributions between \$5,000 and \$20,000 available for eligible projects (excluding GST)

Funding support is available for:

- Establishing native mixed species farm shelterbelts
- Fencing and planting creek and riverside buffers and wetlands
- Protecting and enhancing existing on farm native vegetation through fencing, in-fill planting and weed control

Expressions of interest are open from 1 October to 16 November 2025.

Farms must be in the Cradle Coast region with the funded activity completed within 24 months. Landholders are expected to contribute to the project through in-kind or cash co-contribution, or a combination of both.

Projects will be assessed competitively against set criteria. Please read the Natural Capital Incentive Program Guidelines, available at www.cradlecoast.com/ncip.

For more information and to view and download the program Guidelines and Expression of Interest Form, visit the Natural Capital Incentive program webpage by clicking the button below.

Natural Capital Incentive Program

Alternatively, visit www.cradlecoast.com/ncip or contact the Land Program Team on 6433 8400 or at landprogram@cradlecoast.com.



Resources

The economic benefits of trees on farms by

Farming for the Future: a report developed in collaboration with Commonwealth Bank detailing the benefits of on-farm natural capital. [View the report here.](#)

Environmental natural capital accounting

and assessment by CSIRO: Learn about natural capital on-farms, including CSIRO's work. [Download the fact sheet here.](#)

Events and Opportunities

October Seasonal Update with AgLogic

Hosted by: TAS Farm Innovation Hub

Location: Online

Date: 3 October, 1:00pm to 1:45pm

[Register for the webinar here.](#)

Burnie Show and Agri-Expo

Location: Burnie

Date: 3 & 4 October

[Get your tickets here.](#)

Wynyard Tulip Festival

Hosted by: Waratah Wynyard Council

Location: Wynyard

Date: 11 October

[Find out more here.](#)

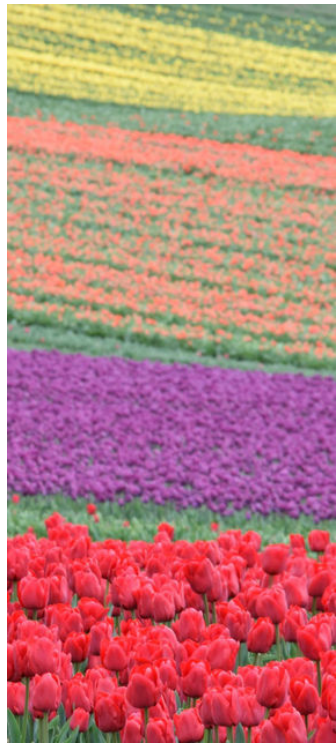
Nitrogen Efficiency in Dairy Systems Forum

Hosted by: Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture

Location: Online

Date: 12 October, 12:00pm to 1:30pm

[Register your interest here.](#)



Edition 6

1 October 2025



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