

On-farm Natural Capital Accounting Demonstration Alignment with the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture Strategic Plan

An on-farm natural capital accounting demonstration has been established at the TIA Dairy Research Facility to demonstrate the process of developing a natural capital account on a working dairy farm and to explore the drivers which are increasing interest in and scrutiny around the management of on farm natural capital.



Image: TIA Dairy Research Facility

The demonstration is being delivered by Cradle Coast NRM in partnership with Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture with support from Dairy Australia and Lactalis-Mainland Dairy.

The demonstration has established a baseline vegetation and soil natural capital account through the Accounting for Nature (AFN) framework and is undertaking practical actions across the farm to maintain and improve the condition of the farms vegetation, consistent with industry sustainability targets and aspirations.

Activities being delivered include:

- Protecting and enhancing remnant native vegetation through stock exclusion and weed control
- New biodiverse native vegetation plantings
- Establishing new vegetation shelterbelts
- Protecting and enhancing paddock trees
- Establishing areas of agroforestry
- Containing and reducing environmental weeds

How does the demonstration and its practical on-farm activities align with the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture Strategic Plan 2026-2031?



The On-farm Natural Capital Accounting Demonstration at the TIA Dairy Research Facility strongly aligns with the strategic direction, objectives and initiatives outlined in the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture (TIA) Strategic Plan 2026–2031.

The demonstration provides a practical, on-ground example of TIA supporting sustainable productivity, climate resilience, industry engagement and environmentally responsible agriculture in Tasmania.

The main strategic objectives of the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture (TIA) Strategic Plan 2026–2031 are:

1. Strengthen sustainable agricultural and food productivity in Tasmania
2. Increase the resilience of the agriculture and food sectors to a changing climate
3. Deliver an attractive, relevant and world class agriculture and food education
4. Achieving meaningful industry engagement for lasting impact
5. Meaningful engagement with Aboriginal peoples
6. Build a stronger institute

How the demonstration and its actions specifically contribute to the identified Strategic Objectives and Initiatives of the TIA Strategic Plan 2026-2031:

Objective 1: Strengthen sustainable agricultural and food productivity in Tasmania

The project is particularly well aligned with **Strategic Objective 1**.

TIA identifies the critical interdependence between agriculture, healthy natural ecosystems, soil health, water quality, biodiversity and ecosystem services, and states that achieving sustainability requires balancing productivity with environmental responsibility. The demonstration directly addresses this objective through practical land management interventions that improve ecosystem health while supporting productive dairy farming systems.

Specifically the On-farm Natural capital demonstration aligns with Initiative 2 with the practical actions undertaken to maintain and improve vegetation management contributing to improving biodiversity, soil stability, water quality, carbon sequestration and ecosystem function across the farm landscape.

Initiative 2. Partner to co-develop integrated land management approaches that explicitly recognise agriculture's reliance on healthy natural ecosystems and the need for reporting, while prioritising investments aimed at preserving and regenerating the health of our soils



Image: Tributary vegetation at the TIA Dairy Research Facility

Objective 2: Increase the resilience of the agriculture and food sectors to a changing climate

TIA's Strategic Plan emphasises the need for agriculture to adopt adaptive and regenerative practices that improve resilience to drought, climate variability and environmental pressures while reducing emissions.

The proposed natural capital improvement activities contribute to this objective by:

- increasing landscape resilience to wind, heat and erosion through shelterbelts,
- improving waterway health and water retention,
- increasing carbon sequestration through revegetation and agroforestry,
- supporting pollinators and biodiversity,
- reducing weed pressures, and
- enhancing the farm's adaptive capacity under changing climatic conditions.

These activities align particularly closely with Initiative 2 under Strategic Objective 2, which focuses on “maximising carbon sequestration” and supporting regenerative practices, and Initiative 4, which seeks to “showcase innovative practices and technologies to farmers and stakeholders aimed at maximising resilience.”

Initiative 2. Resource new and ongoing research and development projects in climate mitigation and carbon neutrality through emissions avoidance, while maximising carbon sequestration, for example in soils through regenerative soil

practices, and the facilitation of their adoption by farmers.

Initiative 4. Showcase innovative practices and technologies to farmers and other stakeholders, aimed at maximising resilience and achieving net-zero greenhouse gas emissions.

Objective 4: Achieving meaningful industry engagement for lasting impact

The demonstration is being delivered collaboratively between Cradle Coast NRM, TIA, Dairy Tasmania and Lactalis - Mainland Dairy, demonstrating the type of co-designed, partnership-based approach emphasised throughout the Strategic Plan.

The demonstration also reflects TIA's commitment to delivering research and extension activities with clear industry relevance and impact pathways. The project aims to:

- demonstrate practical natural capital accounting on a working dairy farm,
- monitor and evaluate environmental outcomes over time,
- support farmer understanding and adoption,
- align with emerging sustainability frameworks and market expectations, and
- identify new market opportunities such as biodiversity and carbon credits.

This aligns strongly with TIA's stated intention to deliver industry-relevant research, accelerate adoption of innovation and support producers responding to evolving sustainability and reporting requirements.

The demonstration supports the broader strategic themes embedded throughout the TIA Strategic Plan 2026-2031, including:

- sustainable agricultural growth,
- climate-smart farming systems,
- environmental stewardship,
- resilience and adaptation,
- collaboration with industry and community,
- practical demonstration and extension, and
- supporting Tasmania's premium and sustainable agricultural reputation.

The On-farm Natural Capital Accounting Demonstration at the TIA Dairy Research Facility represents a practical implementation of the priorities and ambitions articulated in the TIA Strategic Plan 2026–2031. It demonstrates how natural capital management can support productive, resilient and environmentally sustainable agricultural systems while positioning Tasmanian agriculture to meet future climate, market and community expectations.



Visit the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture Strategic Plan 2026-2031



Scan the QR code or visit
https://www.utas.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/1905470/TIA-Strategic-Plan-2026-2031_web.pdf

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