



  
**farmers for  
climate action**

**Annual Report 2022-23**

# VISION

Farming Forever: Farmers and our representatives are climate leaders

# MISSION

To influence Australia to adopt strong economy-wide climate policies and realise a prosperous and sustainable future, full of opportunity for farmers and farming communities.

# THEORY OF CHANGE

We believe that if we grow the number of farmers, their communities and their representatives who are leading on climate-smart farming solutions and championing strong economy-wide climate policy, we can influence governments to implement climate policies that mitigate climate change and benefit rural communities.



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# A message from the Chair

**Charlie Prell**

Farmers for Climate Action has enjoyed another year of strong growth in 2022-23. This is a credit to our extraordinarily capable CEO and staff. Importantly, this is not just growth for growth's sake. FCA is growing to fill the need for strong leadership in tackling climate change. In the last twelve months we have become the largest organisation to represent farmers around Australia who want to see aggressive action on climate.

We now represent over 8,000 farmers and more than 45,000 Australians are supporting us. These numbers are compelling and allow us to demand climate action from the Australian Government with an authenticity that compels them to listen. It also gives us authority and authenticity when we engage with agri-political and other organisations.

In my role as Chair of FCA, I have led a very committed, and voluntary, Board of Directors. I would like to welcome a new Director to the Board in Brett Hosking. Brett is a grain and sheep farmer from western Victoria who has extensive experience in the agri-political world. He brings a fresh pair of eyes to our Board. We are actively seeking to recruit others to our Board and I expect the Board to grow in size as we oversee the governance of FCA.

In the last twelve months we have had the opportunity to work with a Labor Government led by Prime Minister Anthony Albanese. This new Government has seen a fresh approach to tackling climate change and a consequent change in our relationship with them. We remain fiercely and proudly non-partisan, and are now working with all sides of the Parliament to strive for stronger economy-wide policies on climate change. We are engaging with policy-makers on how this action is implemented, to ensure that farmers and Australians who live in the regions are benefiting.

Farmers for Climate Action has developed a reputation for presenting compelling reports on matters of concern for Australian farmers. Our most recent report, Farming Forever, outlines a pathway forward for Australian agriculture. I was immensely proud to be the Chair of Farmers for Climate Action as I watched a group of farmers represent us at a function in Parliament House in March, taking this report to Canberra.



The energy, enthusiasm and professionalism of these participants in our Climate-Smart Farming Scholarship renews my hope for the future of agriculture in Australia. It also confirms the capability of Farmers for Climate Action to engage with and share knowledge with farmers from across Australia. We will continue to develop these reports which elevate key policy issues that need to be highlighted into the future.

This is my last Annual Report as Chair of Farmers for Climate Action. I resigned from the Chair in July and handed the baton on to my successor, Brett Hall. It has been an honour and a privilege to lead such a wonderful group of human beings. I commend the Board of Directors to you. They are all honorary and have all committed many, many hours to overseeing the well-being of this remarkable organisation. I want to thank them all for the support they have given me over the past three years. I also commend the staff to you and thank them for the way they commit to our task. Most particularly, I want to thank our retiring CEO, Dr Fiona Davis. Fiona stepped into the CEO role at a critical and challenging time for this organisation. She has been a very accomplished CEO and has led us with skill and courage.

I believe I am leaving Farmers for Climate Action in a much stronger position than when I took up the Chair and am very grateful for the opportunity I have had to lead it.

**Charlie Prell**  
**Chair**  
July 2023



# A message from the CEO

**Fiona Davis**

Recently the Climate Change and Energy Minister Chris Bowen used Farmers for Climate Action in a speech as an example of Australian farmers addressing the challenge of climate change.

It seems like a small thing, but it's also a big thing. A really big thing. We've grown out of a meeting of concerned farmers in the Blue Mountains to a network of 8,000 farmers that's being used as an example on the international stage.

There is not one thing that we've done that has meant we've reached this position, rather its many things over and over again. I'm so thankful to all of you in the Farmers for Climate Action community who have helped make this happen.

Over time, Farmers for Climate Action has built the big three assets required to influence outcomes: a farmer base too big to ignore, A-grade staff who share a strategic outlook, and a multi-party strategy which has created trusting relationships with key Ministers and Government MPs, Shadow Ministers and Opposition MPs, Independents, Greens and their offices.

It's been a real honour to lead Farmers for Climate Action, and to see our organisation capitalise on the position we've spent years establishing over the past twelve months. Some highlights have included:

- **Launching our Farming Forever report in March this year with the Federal Agriculture Minister.** The report outlined what farmers need from a national plan for climate change and agriculture. We're now working closely with both the Federal Agriculture and Climate Change departments on how this plan is shaped in a way that works for farmers.
- **Strengthening the Government's signature emissions reduction policy: the Safeguard Mechanism.** We worked with farmers to call on the Government to take stronger action on Australia's biggest climate polluters to ensure agriculture isn't left to pick up the pieces.
- **We took farmers to Canberra to meet with politicians at Parliament House.** We met with politicians of all stripes, and our farmers shared their stories and ideas about how we can work together for a prosperous future for Australian ag.



- **Training farmers to become leaders in climate-smart agriculture** and increase the resilience of their farms. These training opportunities included field days, webinars, a five-month national fellowship for 20 farmers and a training day for 120 farmers that we developed with the Australian National University.
- **Supporting farmers to be spokespeople in the media and in their local communities**, as some of the most trusted messengers sharing their stories, from the front lines of floods, drought, and fires on their land.

This is my last report as Farmers for Climate Action's CEO, and I want to note my gratitude to everyone that has made my time as CEO and as Deputy Director before that a genuine joy. It's been such a privilege to lead this incredible organisation and I'm so thankful to our staff, Board, farmers, partners and other supporters for all they've done to make the past five years such a rewarding experience.

I can't wait to see what Farmers for Climate Action achieves next.

**Fiona Davis**

**CEO, Farmers for Climate Action**

July 2023



# About us

**Farmers for Climate Action is a movement of farmers, agricultural leaders and rural Australians working to influence Australia to adopt strong climate policies by growing the number of farmers, farming communities and elected representatives championing ambitious action.**

We connect farmers with each other and support them to advocate for and enact climate solutions both on and off farm.

We are independent, non-profit and non-partisan. We represent more than 8,000 farmers across Australia, and our supporter base includes over 45,000 Australians committed to climate action for agriculture.

Our members and our Board can be found across the country from the tropical north of Queensland to the cooler climate of Tasmania, and from the wheatbelt of Western Australia right across to the sheep and cropping farms of New South Wales. Our staff members are spread across Australia, working remotely and from our office hubs.

We work closely with people and organisations across the agricultural and climate sectors to find opportunities to tackle the challenge of climate change and ensure rural communities' interests are represented.

We are a member of the National Farmers' Federation and a member of the Climate Action Network Australia.



**FCA Board Directors  
August 2022**  
(absent: Angus Emmott)



**FCA staff and contractors  
November 2022**



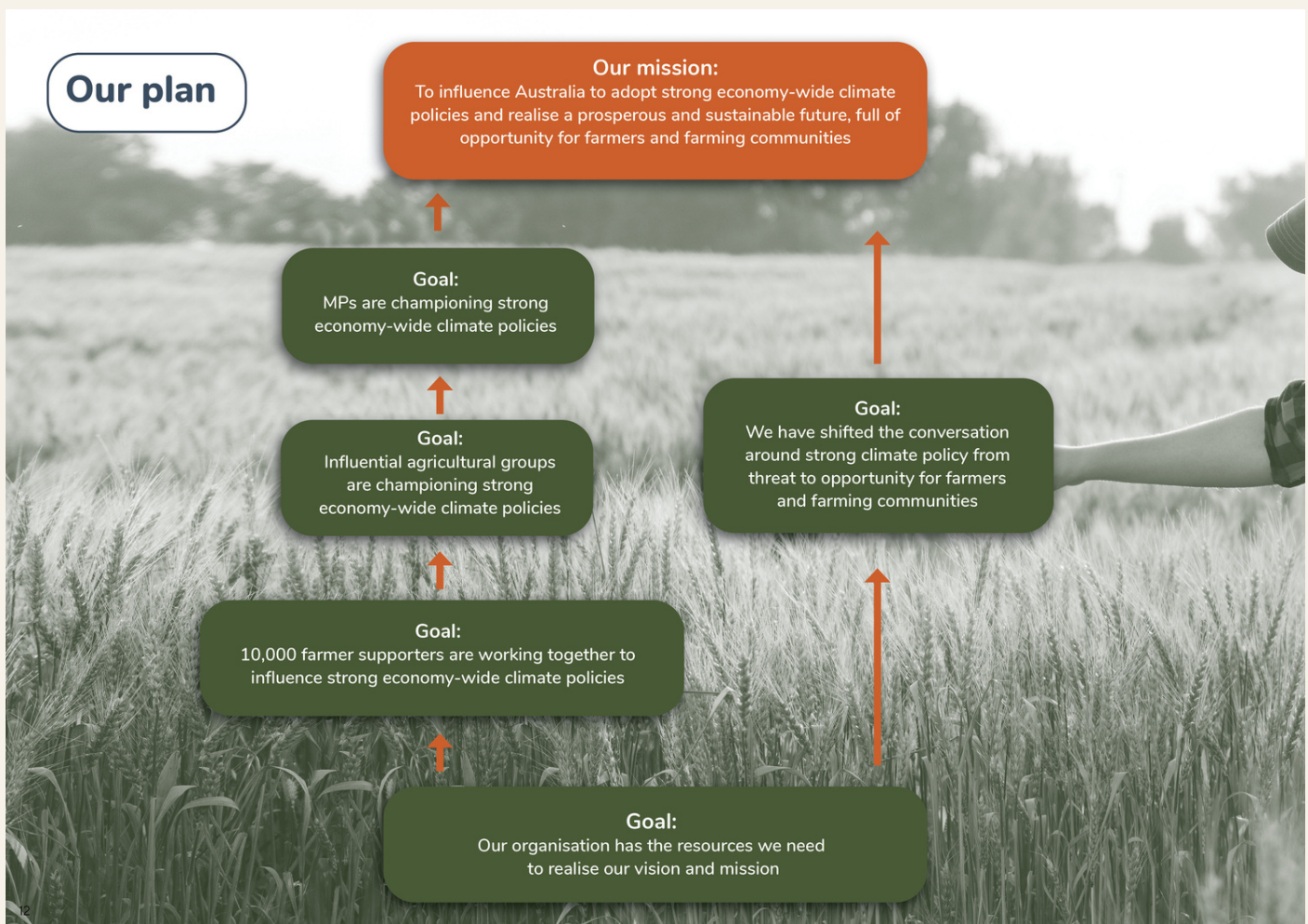
# Our strategy

## Overview

Our work this year has continued to be guided by our 2022-24 Vision and Plan, which paves the way for us to achieve our mission to influence Australia to adopt strong economy-wide climate policies and realise a prosperous and sustainable future, full of opportunity for farmers and farming communities.

Our plan builds on the work we've done since Farmers for Climate Action began, and keeps us on a focussed path to achieve ambitious climate action in this critical decade and ensure our farming future is healthy and prosperous.

Farmers for Climate Action's full strategic plan can be view on our [website](#).



# Strategic Plan impact and highlights

## GOAL 1

### MPs are championing strong economy-wide climate policies

Throughout this year we've met with more than 50 political representatives and their advisors and continued our call for deep economy-wide emissions cuts this decade to protect Australian farming families from more climate change impacts. We have connected with parliamentarians across the political spectrum, to build multi-partisan support for strong climate policies.

#### Highlights:

- We ran a powerful campaign to strengthen the federal government's proposed Safeguard Mechanism which included an open letter from Phil Gardiner, a farmer from Western Australia who was concerned about gas companies buying up productive farmland. We also called publicly for limits to carbon offsets and met multiple times with the office of Chris Bowen, Minister for Climate Change and Energy, and the Federal Agriculture Minister Murray Watt. The new amended Safeguard Mechanism bill includes a hard cap on the emissions driving climate change and the reduced use of, and improved scrutiny of, carbon offsets.
- In March 2023 we launched a flagship report, 'Farming Forever: a national plan for climate change and agriculture' which brought together the views of farmers and ag industry groups. Agriculture Minister Murray Watt joined us to launch the report and welcomed the recommendations which include greater support for farmers to reduce emissions on-farm.
- 20 farmers from our network formed a delegation to Parliament for our 'Cuppa with a Farmer' event, bringing together parliamentarians from the Government, Opposition and crossbench to hear about our latest report 'Farming Forever' and connect with the expertise of our climate-smart farming leaders.





## GOAL 1 cont'd

- In the 2023 federal budget we welcomed the announcement of funding for farm extension officers, and the announcement of the Small Business Energy Incentive which will enable farm businesses to claim tax incentives for their investments in on-farm batteries and electrification.
- The Federal Department of Agriculture invited us to contribute to the formation of a National Climate Change and Agriculture Statement, signed by all state and territory agriculture ministers.
- Elevating farmer voices on nature and biodiversity markets by surveying our farmers and using their views to make a submission to the Nature Repair Market legislation senate inquiry. We also held a webinar on the topic with almost 1000 RSVPs.



FCA Climate-Smart Farming Scholars  
visit Parliament House



Agriculture Minister Murray Watt  
with FCA policy manager Claire Boyle



Leader of the Nationals  
David Littleproud  
with farmer Jane Campbell

## GOAL 2

# Influential agricultural groups are championing strong economy-wide climate policies

Supporting agriculture to step up its climate commitments and leadership is a key part of our work. Our farmers, staff and Board are closely engaged with the agriculture industry and its representative bodies.

We are active members of the National Farmers' Federation and we engage via its relevant committees, in particular the Sustainable Development and Climate Change Committee.

### Highlights:

- Our Climate Smart Farming Scholarship deepened our relationship with and grew the capacity of ag's current and emerging leaders.
- Tony Mahar, the CEO of the National Farmers' Federation, appeared as a guest on our Over the Fence podcast discussing the NFF's climate priorities and our latest report, 'Farming Forever'.
- We held stalls at field days and shows, including Henty Machinery Field Day, AgQuip, Farm World, PrimeX, AgFest and more
- We were part of industry events including the Renewables in Agriculture conference, Australian Dairy Sustainability Framework Summit and the ABARES Conference.

FCA Farmers at PrimeX, Casino



Community Outreach Officer Peter Holding at Henty Machinery Field Day



Deputy Chair Anika Molesworth speaking at Birchip Cropping Group event





## GOAL 3

# 10,000 farmer supporters are working together to influence strong economy-wide climate policies

We now have more than 8000 farmer supporters across Australia in our network! Together, our farmer movement is working both on-farm and beyond the farm gate to advocate for strong climate policies that protect our farming future.

Over the past year, we have supported and grown our farmer networks via a range of activities, including:

- Climate-smart agriculture workshops and events
- An electric ute roadshow across NSW and Victoria, in partnership with Solar Citizens
- A full day 'Climate Essentials' course delivered to 120+ farmers and ag industry colleagues
- Surveys, open letters and petitions to take farmers' voices to decision-makers
- Regional farmer networks growing and strengthening in local areas, including Tassie and northern NSW
- Farm gate signs displayed on fences across rural Australia, demonstrating farmer support for climate action

Soil and climate  
workshop  
Tasmania



The Electric Ute  
roadshow



Farm gate  
signs across  
Australia



Climate and  
livestock  
health  
workshop  
with Vets for  
Climate Action





### Climate-Smart Farming Scholarship

Between November 2022 and March 2023 we ran our inaugural Climate-Smart Farming Scholarship program, providing 20 leading farmers from across Australia with the knowledge needed to succeed in a changing climate, enabling them to become leaders in climate-smart agriculture and increase the resilience of their farms.

The scholarship included courses run by Melbourne University, the Australian National University and Accounting for Nature, and culminated in a three-day trip to Canberra, where scholars met peers, politicians and industry experts.

**Scholars told us they benefited greatly from this program and the connections they made:**

“This is an essential course for farmers of the 21st Century - the future of farming depends on how we approach the next decade. Being climate smart is necessary and will result in some outstanding opportunities for farmers to build a resilient future.”

“I highly recommend the Climate Smart Farming program, it provided me with the latest scientific evidence on climate change and also doing carbon audits; as well as the opportunity to network with other farm businesses from across Australia all working in their own way to make a difference to climate change.”





## GOAL 4

# We have shifted the conversation around strong climate policy from threat to opportunity for farmers and country communities

We have continued to shift the conversation around climate change with our farmer case studies, extensive media outreach, and social media engagement. We have led the public conversation on climate change and agriculture via our policy reports and farmers' stories.

In March, the launch of our landmark report Farming Forever outlined what farmers need from a national plan for climate change and agriculture, and generated more than 450 media hits, including all rural and agricultural press and a 10-minute special on ABC TV's Landline.

Media generated by Farmers for Climate Action played a key role in the Safeguard Mechanism debate. The Federal Agriculture Minister Murray Watt's office and Federal Climate Change and Energy Minister Chris Bowen's office both contacted us to say they saw our media coverage. We also got important stories up in the Sydney Morning Herald, ABC news and The Weekly Times.

'Farming Forever' report  
launched March 2023



## GOAL 4 cont'd

### Highlights:

- Our farmer stories and case studies shared positive examples of farmers leading on climate-smart agriculture. This year we published more than 20 new 'Farmer in Focus' profiles to our website and social media channels.
- Our webinars provided rich information and conversations with scientists, farmers, business leaders and industry excerpts - we covered topics including electric vehicles on farm, floods and climate science, biodiversity markets, and young farmer leadership.
- We've been a constructive voice in the public conversation about energy developments and transmission lines and their impacts on farmers - we've called for farmers to be consulted properly and for real community benefits to be distributed fairly.
- Our social media followers have grown steadily, with supporters participating in active conversations and sharing our farmers' voices far and wide.



**2,445**  
Media items featuring  
Farmers for Climate Action

### The Sydney Morning Herald

## Unlimited carbon offsets could harm agriculture, farmers warn



Mike Foley

March 8, 2023 – 4:44am

## Farmers looking to sky, and the future



JOSH HARRIS

FARMERS looking for education and advocacy in evolving farming operations towards a more sustainable and climate-responsible manner can find support from their fellow farmers at Farmers for Climate Action.

On-farm effects: Brett Hall and Pippa Mills at Agfest.

is a movement of farmers, agricultural leaders and rural Australians working to influence Australia to adopt strong climate policies by growing the number of farmers, farming communities and elected representatives championing ambitious action. Brett Hall and Pippa Mills were a few of the many farmers from across the state and the country to give their time at Agfest to educate climate-conscious farmers of what they can do to responsibly manage their effects on their farm and the wider world. "The big push is for advocacy on behalf of farmers," Mr Hall said. To vocalise that there are a lot of farmers who have a clear message about climate change and want to make a change. "We offer our members education on climate change, on-farm practice change like what activities they might undertake to minimise their impact and what projects they could do on farm to mitigate the effects of climate change."

Tasmanian Country, September 2022

## Social media followers

**f**  
**19,769**  
Facebook

**Instagram**  
**4,770**  
Instagram

**Twitter**  
**12,745**  
Twitter

**in**  
**2,172**  
LinkedIn



# Farm Powered - opportunities for regional communities in the renewable energy boom

As the renewable energy wave rolls across regional Australia, Farmers for Climate Action released a key report in October 2022: [Farm Powered: Opportunities for regional communities in the renewable energy boom.](#)

The report called on the federal government to support solutions that benefit regional farming communities while at the same time reducing emissions.

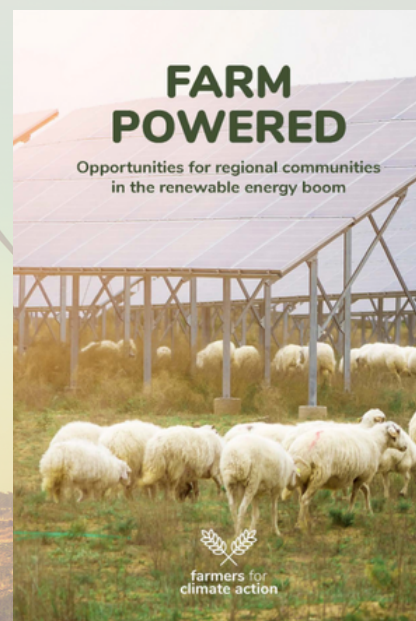
The report's recommendations included:

- A national climate change and agriculture policy that delivers on-farm renewables and subsidised batteries
- The introduction of renewable energy incentives for farmers to increase rapid uptake on farms and reduce input costs
- State and federal governments to provide a mechanism for annual rent to be paid to farmers for transmission lines, and better benefits for communities

This report highlighted that the roll out of renewable energy across Australia can be a massive positive for farming and regional communities. It also showed that reducing farmers' costs can reduce the cost of food on the supermarket shelves and reduce cost of living for everyday Australians.

Farm Renewables Consulting, ReAlliance and Online Power were commissioned to complete this report.

Read the report in full [here on our website.](#)



# Our organisation has the resources we need to realise our vision and mission

Farmers for Climate Action had a healthy year, securing vital funding and consolidating partnerships to secure support for our work.

Our passionate team of talented staff has driven our impact and farmer engagement, and we have taken opportunities to support their development. During this year, our organisation supported our CEO Fiona Davis to take part in a three-month leadership sabbatical through Social Impact Leadership Australia. Fiona handed the CEO reins over for the summer, using this sabbatical to expand her own leadership practice and to empower our wider team to grow their experience in leading Farmers for Climate Action's impact and operations.

### Highlights:

- Our farmer delegation to Parliament in Canberra in March resonated strongly with supporters who chipped into a crowdfunding campaign to support this high-impact project.
- We ran a highly successful end of financial year crowdfunder with dollar-for-dollar matched giving contributions from three generous donors, achieving a result well exceeding our targets.
- We hosted key donors and supporters at an immersive retreat in Tasmania in April, connecting these champions of FCA with the latest science, solutions and farmer leadership on climate.
- Our staff team worked remotely and hybrid across Australia, forming the 'engine room' of our work. We took opportunities to come together as a team in person via two retreats during the year.
- Our Board grew with Brett Hosking joining as a Director in March 2023. Brett is a producer from Quambatook in Victoria, and former Chair of GrainGrowers.



Young Henrys brewers supported Farmers for Climate Action with a fundraising campaign featuring Pete Holding from our team



# Financial snapshot

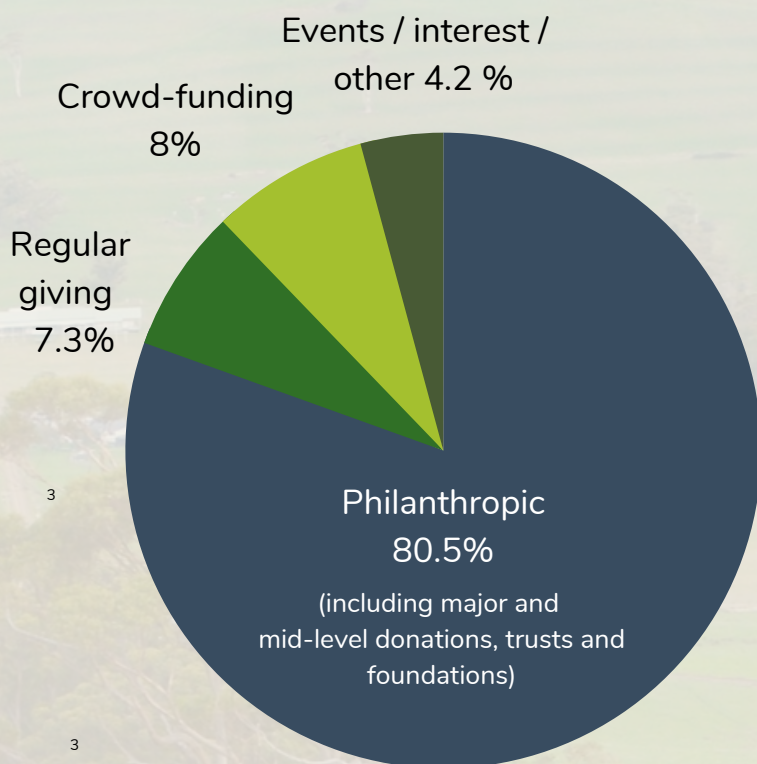
Farmers for Climate Action Limited will report to its members at the 2023 AGM the audited financial report for the period 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023:

Highlights of the report include:

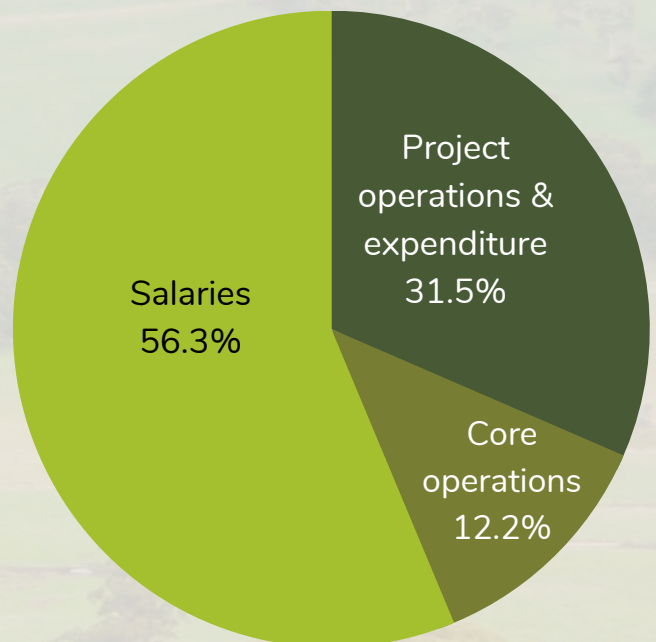
1. Revenue: \$1,532 950
2. Expenditure: \$1,545 270
3. Net operating profit/(loss) after income tax: \$(12,320)
4. Net assets: \$1,587 121

Our full financial statement will be reported to the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission and available [here](#).

## INCOME



## EXPENDITURE



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Cover image: Peter Lake, FCA Farmer from Ulmarra NSW. Source: ABC Rural.

