

## Minutes of meeting 1 of the Soil RD&E Implementation Committee

CSIRO Corporate Centre Conference Room, Limestone Avenue, Campbell, ACT  
 Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2015

Attendees: Georgina Kelly (phone until 12.30), Hamish Cresswell, Jennifer Alexander, Michael Crawford, Damien Field, Alex McBratney, Michele Barson, Allan Williams, Neil McKenzie, Iain Young, Martin Blumenthal, Vicki Woodburn, Noel Schoknecht, Brenda Kranz, Felice Driver, Paul Lawrence, Cathy Phelps, Cameron Allan (phone 11am – 12.30pm)

Apologies: Adrian Loschiavo, Peter Voller, Mike Grundy, Pauline Mooney, Jason Hill, Ian Anderson

No	Agenda Item	Discussion / comment	Decision /Action	Who	Due Date
1.1	Election of the Chair	<p>Dr Neil McKenzie chaired the first part of the meeting.</p> <p>Agenda paper 1.1 sets out the role of the Chair and proposed procedure for selecting the Chair of the Soil RD&amp;E Implementation Committee.</p> <p>Each nominee gave a short statement of interest in the position of Chair.</p> <p>A representative from UNE is to be invited to the committee since the Chair is no longer representing that University while in the role. A second representative from NSW DPI is also invited but only when the Deputy Chair is acting in the role of Chair.</p>	<p>The procedure for electing the Chair of the Soil RD&amp;E Implementation Committee as outlined was supported. Two nominations were received. It was agreed to appoint a Chair and Deputy Chair.</p> <p>Iain Young was appointed as the Chair, Georgina Kelly as Deputy Chair (9 votes to 6).</p> <p>The Chair and deputy Chair will nominate organisational representatives as replacements.</p>	Chair and Deputy Chair	Before the next meeting

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1.2	Governance and membership	<p>Agenda paper 1.2 provided as background.</p> <p>Decision making process proposed to be by consensus (defined as the absence of sustained opposition)</p> <p>Membership - membership of the committee was discussed. Department of Agriculture had previously requested nominations during the finalisation of the Strategy and interested agencies had been invited to commit resourcing in return for membership.</p> <p>Current membership needs to be checked against the previous processes for nomination and resource contributions. 'Major national role in providing or funding soil science RD&amp;E' criteria applies, as does the preparedness to commit resources.</p> <p>Soil Science Australia could be represented through existing members.</p> <p>The opportunity for agencies who are not members of the Implementation Committee to contribute to working groups was noted.</p> <p>Role of members - The terms of reference needs to be agreed to, then a formal invitation requesting representation will be made to relevant organisations. It needs to be confirmed whether members are just representing their organisation or a wider group or jurisdiction.</p>	<p>The decision making process of the committee will be by consensus.</p> <p>The Secretariat is to confirm a list of current members with the committee.</p> <p>The Australian Council of Deans of Agriculture will be formally invited to have representation (representation could be through existing members).</p> <p>The Secretariat is to draft a terms of reference for members, and the mechanism for adding members.</p> <p>The Secretariat is to confirm whether members represent just their organisation or a wider group or jurisdiction.</p>	<p>Secretariat</p> <p>Secretariat with Iain Young</p> <p>Secretariat</p> <p>Secretariat in discussion with</p>	<p>Before next meeting</p> <p>Before next meeting</p> <p>Before next meeting</p> <p>Before next meeting</p>

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		<p>Key responsibility of the secretariat is to report back to a wider group on the activity of the committee.</p> <p>Funding calls and the role of the committee was discussed. The role of the committee is to help set national strategy, well-articulated and agreed RD&amp;E priorities, provide proactive facilitation and coordination, reduce duplication and unhelpful competition, identify funding opportunities, build trust and collaboration. It is not the committee's role to endorse projects or seek project level RD&amp;E funding.</p> <p>The committee should coordinate a forum for information exchange between RD&amp;E funders and providers (already included in the strategy).</p>	<p>It was decided that the committee will meet face-to-face quarterly. The Secretariat, including the Deputy Chair, will meet monthly. The Secretariat will identify meeting dates and venues as soon as possible.</p> <p>Introduce roundtable updates (a 'state of the nation' from each agency) at the next committee meeting (recurrent item for agenda).</p>	<p>committee members.</p> <p>Secretariat</p> <p>Secretariat</p>	<p>As soon as possible</p> <p>Before next meeting</p>
1.3	Work plan	Prof Iain Young takes the role of Chair for the remainder of the meeting			

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		There was further discussion about the role of the Implementation Committee (summarised earlier in these minutes) and the timing of the annual soil RD&E forum. The need for well-articulated and detailed RD&E priorities was again emphasised and it was noted that a synthesis of previous soil research priority setting processes would be valuable.	Secretariat to prioritise proposed actions in the strategy (Table 8, p53-56) set new dates, and circulate as a draft to the committee.  Circulate the Securing Our Industries and Land (SOIL) proposal provided by The University of Sydney to the committee.  Draft a set of soil RD&E priorities in a digestible form (5-10 pages maximum).	Secretariat  Secretariat  Secretariat	Before next meeting  Before next meeting  Before next meeting
1.4	Advocate for Soil Health	Background to this item was given in agenda paper 1.4 including terms of reference for the Soil Advocate.  A brief update on the activities of the Advocate for Soil Health was given. It was noted that the Advocate's report will be submitted to the Department of Agriculture before going to the office of the Prime Minister.  It was suggested that the communications planning for this Soil RD&E strategy should connect with the Future Directions International and Soils For Life groups.	Provide update from this meeting to the Advocate's office	Secretariat	By 31 March 2015
1.5	Science research priorities	Background to this item was given in agenda paper 1.5.  The expert working group for the Soil and Water priority area is to meet on 2nd March 2015. Information on the membership of the expert working group was shared. There is a need to frame compelling soil RD&E priorities. The RD&E Strategy provides a good foundation having been developed through a national process. The identified	List to be developed of top 5 Soil RD&E priorities with a top 2-3 also identified.	Neil McKenzie	27 Feb 2015

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		<p>Soil RD&amp;E priorities have been passed to the working group through the contributing expert panel members. The working group process is under the auspices for the Department of Industry and Science.</p> <p>The Australian Academy of Science is reviewing agricultural research as part of developing a 10 year strategy for Agriculture (led by Roger Lee, University of Adelaide).</p>			
1.6	Australian Soil Assessment Program	<p>Refer to agenda paper 1.6.</p> <p>Noel Schoknecht provided a presentation of the proposed Australian Soil Assessment Program (ASAP) on behalf of the National Committee for Soil and terrain (NCST). Development of the ASAP proposal had previously received funding support from this committee.</p> <p>The proposal was discussed including the need for national soil data infrastructure, the need for soil information at sub-paddock scale, and the need for the monitoring and forecasting of soil condition. The RDC representatives questioned the grower benefits from the activity proposed with ASAP. It was acknowledged that some of the benefits from ASAP would be public as well as private but that there is a lack of investment opportunities (and institutional model) for public good soil RD&amp;E.</p> <p>The meeting indicated support for publishing the ASAP proposal on the upcoming Soil RD&amp;E strategy web site, making clear that the proposal pre-dates the launch of the</p>	<p>NCST terms of reference to be put to our next meeting</p> <p>Put ASAP report on website as is.</p>	<p>Noel Schoknecht</p> <p>Exec officer</p>	<p>Before next meeting</p> <p>Once website established</p>

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		<p>Australian Soil and Landscape Grid.</p> <p>It was noted that the NCST is positioned as a sub-committee of this Soil RD&amp;E Implementation Committee. NCST should be given direction by this Soil RD&amp;E Implementation committee and should report back through the IC.</p> <p>The working groups of the Soil RD&amp;E Implementation Committee were discussed.</p> <p>Working groups were identified along with their leaders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge Exchange Working Group (Martin Blumenthal)</li> <li>• Skills and Capacity Working Group (Damien Field)</li> <li>• Data and Information Working Group (Noel Schoknecht with the NCST)</li> <li>• National Models for Collaboration (Paul Lawrence)</li> </ul> <p>It was suggested to shift the soil archiving work to become a responsibility of the Data and Information Working Group and continue reporting to the NCST (as well as to the IC).</p> <p>The Physical Infrastructure Working Group will not start operating as yet. It was suggested to ask Phil Moody if he would lead this WG. It was agreed that the Physical Infrastructure Working Group should report to the NCST.</p> <p>Other future Working Groups could include one to organise the next Soil RD&amp;E National Forum. Establish a WG for this</p>	<p>Each Working Group is asked to bring a 5 dot-point terms of reference statement plus a proposed draft Working Group membership (suggested size was seven members or less) to the Secretariat to develop into a consistent set of Working Group TORs.</p> <p>A draft letter is to be prepared by the Secretariat to State Agencies and other members inviting participation (in-kind support) in the Working Groups and the NCST.</p> <p>Ask Phil Moody to take lead of Physical infrastructure group.</p> <p>Establish a Working Group to run the Annual Forum.</p>	<p>WG leaders and Secretariat</p> <p>Exec Officer</p> <p>Neil McKenzie</p> <p>Exec Officer</p>	<p>31 March 2015</p> <p>10 April 2015</p> <p>31 March 2015</p> <p>Second half of 2015</p>

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		purpose.			
1.7	Program support, funding and business development	<p>Refer to agenda paper 1.7.</p> <p>The committee discussed ways of increasing investment into soil RD&amp;E. Suggestions included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordination and facilitation around larger national opportunities.</li> <li>• Developing proposals for National programs.</li> <li>• Building national consortia to deliver such programs</li> <li>• Developing proposals for components of the National Centre for Soil Health Research (Soil Advocate recommendation).</li> <li>• Developing RD&amp;E priorities that are attractive to both industry and RD&amp;E providers.</li> <li>• Facilitating deep engagements between funders and RD&amp;E providers about priorities and capacity to deliver</li> <li>• Enhancing industry engagement</li> </ul>	<p>Produce a 1-page communiqué on the outcomes from this meeting and the Soil RD&amp;E strategy implementation.</p> <p>Investigate options for establishing the web site for the Soil RD&amp;E strategy implementation.</p> <p>Provide a budget proposal and report to the next IC meeting.</p>	<p>Secretariat</p> <p>Secretariat</p> <p>Secretariat</p>	<p>31 March 2015</p> <p>Before next meeting</p> <p>Before next meeting</p>
1.8	Other business				
	Next Meeting	To be advised.			