

Minutes of meeting 4 of the Soil RD&E Implementation Committee

Location: NSW Trade & Investment Centre, Zig Zag Room, Level 47, MLC Centre, 19 Martin Place, Sydney.

Date: Thursday 26th November 2015

Attendees: Georgina Kelly (Acting Chair), Neil McKenzie, Hamish Cresswell, Jennifer Alexander, Michele Barson, Dan Brough, Jim Cox, Uta Stockman (for Alex McBratney), Ian Anderson, Michael Crawford, Felice Driver, Cathy Phelps, Brenda Kranz, Cameron Allan, Karen Holmes, Noel Schoknecht, by telephone), Major General the Hon. Michael Jeffery

Apologies: Iain Young, Jan Edwards, Warwick Dougherty, Paul Lawrence, Pauline Mooney, Peter Voller, Allan Williams, Vicki Woodburn, Jason Hill, Sharon Harvey

No	Agenda Item	Discussion / comment	Decision /Action	Who	Due Date
4.1	Minutes of last meeting and correspondence	<p>Refer to agenda paper 4.1 and the minutes of the last meeting.</p> <p>Minutes of the last meeting were endorsed. Moved by Michael Crawford, seconded by General Jeffery.</p> <p>Most actions from last meeting have been completed or progressed and many appear as agenda items for this meeting.</p>	<p>Ask GRDC and leading researchers to provide an assessment of soil biology research investments, outcomes and management implications with a view to setting future priorities</p> <p>Discuss opportunities for information sharing at future meetings with Guy Roth (Water Use in Agriculture strategy). Include a standing agenda item on improving integration with</p>	<p>Secretariat</p> <p>Secretariat</p>	<p>Feb meeting</p> <p>Feb meeting</p>

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		Engagement with other sectors, particularly delivery agencies was raised. It was noted there are connections through state government agencies with CMAs (or LLS in NSW).	<p>other Strategies at future Soil RDE meetings and raise this issue with the R&I committee.</p> <p>Follow up membership nominations with ACDA</p> <p>Provide an update to the 52 CMA CEO's meeting.</p>	<p>Secretariat</p> <p>Secretariat</p>	<p>4th Dec</p> <p>2016</p>
4.2	Member updates	<p>Refer to agenda paper 4.2.</p> <p>Verbal updates were provided by members to the committee.</p>	<p>Provide an update on the virtual soil archive and catchment scale land-use mapping at a future meeting</p>	Michele	
4.3	Round 2 of Rural R&D for Profit	<p>Agenda paper 4.3 provided as background.</p> <p>The committee recognised and thanked Vicki for undertaking the difficult job of coordinating the process.</p> <p>An overview of the process was provided from the RDC's perspective:</p> <p>46 expressions of interest were received with a focus on soils. Roughly half focussed on nutrition with some more ambitious proposals requiring substantial budget and development time. The EOIs were reviewed by the RDCs. Bids needed to be targeted to be successful. Greater dialogue with relevant RDCs prior to submission would</p>			

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		<p>have been beneficial. This would help have helped clarify the RDC's quantum of interest and cash available, although it was recognised there were advantages in seeing the breadth of ideas. RDCs recognised there would also be value in being more specific about priorities. There needs to be greater clarity in the EOIs about practical outcomes and who is investing. Timing has been an issue as it is not business as usual for a number of RDCs. GRDC had elected not to co-invest in any of the soil ideas proposed.</p> <p>An overview of process was provided from the proponents perspective:</p> <p>Preparation of EOIs took considerable time and cost. It is unclear to proponents which ideas have been supported and progressed by RDCs. Proponents prefer a partnership type approach to proposal development with more dialog and that recognises their interest as significant co-investors. It was suggested that we start the process earlier to enable partnerships to develop. Greater clarity on budget scope would have been helpful. It was noted that the RRD4P program design limits the process to a certain extent. The effort to organise multiple RDCs as co-sponsors of cross sectoral soil RD&E was appreciated and could continue outside of RR4P.</p> <p>The National Soil Advocate expressed disappointment that the RDCs had not chosen to support the '100 sites' proposal despite the Implementation Committee's support for the proposal and assistance with preparation and submission of the bid. General Jeffery suggested there would be merit in short listing applications and presenting them to a representative panel for decisions on</p>	<p>Run an investor forum in 2016 to feed into this process as well as input into a potential CRC proposal. This will help to identify areas of overlap.</p>	<p>Secretariat plus Felice, Brenda and also ask Vicki</p>	<p>June 2016</p>

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		investment.			
4.4	Update from the Advocate for Soil Health	<p>Agenda paper 4.4 provided as background.</p> <p>General Jeffery provided a verbal update and outlined his proposals for 'Fixing Paddock' and 'Fixing Policy' (see image attached) to restore and maintain landscapes that are fit for purpose. General Jeffery requested support from the committee in helping advocate the importance of restoring and maintaining our soil.</p> <p>The development of a concept paper for the 100-site proposal was supported at the committee's previous meeting. With the assistance of Implementation Committee members an initial proposal was submitted to the RDCs for consideration. RDC representatives informed the meeting that the proposal was not selected to proceed to full submission. The Implementation Committee discussed options for further development of the proposal.</p>	The Implementation Committee will take the proposals from the Advocate for Soil Health into consideration in its planning activities and projects (e.g. Annual Forum, development of the register of sites and the plain English version of priorities.	All	Ongoing
4.5	Forum planning	<p>Agenda paper 4.5 provided as background.</p> <p>The forum will be held on the 3rd - 4th February. Members agreed that its purpose should be to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a clear narrative for Soil RD&E (what we want to do, the need for it, what it will deliver) that can be widely understood • Develop a strong and unified action plan to enable implementation of Soil RD&E priorities that are acceptable to all parties (CSIRO, universities, Deans of Agriculture, RDCs, industry) 	Contact other speakers within the Outlook session and, if appropriate, invite them to	Neil	18 Dec

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		The output will form the content of the session at Outlook 2016. Neil McKenzie will be the presenter, as directed by the Outlook organisers. Two other session speakers have been decided.	<p>our forum so they can assist in getting our message across.</p> <p>Members to provide recommendations for additional attendees to the forum and confirm their own availability.</p> <p>Members to suggest facilitators and comment on the format of the forum.</p> <p>'Straw-man' narrative to be developed prior to forum</p> <p>The meeting endorsed that implementation committee funds will be used to pay for venue, catering, facilitator, and potentially for the travel costs of a small number of guests. The Secretariat will identify a facilitator after considering suggestions.</p>	<p>McKenzie</p> <p>All</p> <p>All, partic Cameron Allan Secretariat</p>	<p>4 Dec</p> <p>4 Dec Mid January</p>
4.6	R&I committee presentation on Soil Strategy	<p>Agenda paper 4.6 provided as background.</p> <p>An update on the implementation of the Soil RD&E Strategy is to be presented to the next R&I committee meeting on the 24th February.</p>	<p>Neil McKenzie, as strategy co-leader, and a representative from GRDC (taking into account who is on the R&I committee) will present, one other IC representative may be invited as determined by meeting location. GRDC member on R&I may need to be briefed. Endorsed by Michael Crawford and seconded by Felice Driver. The committee members also endorsed that the costs to attend this meeting can be covered by the annual budget.</p> <p>Members were offered the opportunity to provide guidance to the Secretariat on the</p>	<p>Neil McKenzie, GRDC rep and one other</p> <p>All</p>	<p>24 Feb</p> <p>Dec 11</p>

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			reporting to R&I		
4.7	Outline of the proposed Soil RDE website	<p>Agenda paper 4.7 provided as background.</p> <p>The website will operate as a link / directory to other sites (e.g. Soils for Life, Global Soil Partnership).</p> <p>It is hoped the website will be live in the next few months once images and content have been finalized and circulated to members.</p>	Provide any further feedback on the site to the Executive Officer	All	Dec 11
4.8	Update on the Global Soil Partnership	<p>Agenda paper 4.8 provided as background.</p> <p>It was recognised as a significant achievement that the revised World Soil Charter had been released.</p> <p>The development and release of the Status of the World Soil Resources Report was discussed. The availability of scientific data to draw on is limited. The regional assessments are useful but show that there are only a few places in the world where soil is well managed (Canadian Prairies, Brazil and Argentina). Australia comes out reasonably well given climate and difficult soils. Several countries in our region show a worrisome decline in their resource base. There is a contrast between New Zealand's and Australia's understanding of soil condition with monitoring and good data available in New Zealand without particularly large investment.</p> <p>Development of the International Network of Soil Information Institutions is a new initiative from GSP Pillar 4 – the inaugural meeting is to be held at the FAO on the 8-10th of December 2015.</p>			

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4.9	Update on Soil RDE implementation activities	<p>Agenda paper 4.9 provided as background.</p> <p>A governance structure used by the Sugar industry was presented as a template for us to follow</p> <p>A plain English version of the priorities was presented and endorsed by the committee.</p> <p>The scope for the Field Sites register was presented. Sites will be included that have been monitored for a period of 10 years and are still current. The register will sit on the website in the member's login. These sites are part of our national infrastructure. The distribution of sites should be mapped and the soil-climate and agro-ecological environments should be examined for gaps and critical sites to maintain. Review and reduce fields- make as simple as possible (or optional). Add a field about how sites are funded.</p> <p>The update on trends: Initial stocktake methodology is difficult to repeat. This information forms important part of putting forward our case. Need to develop simpler methodology that is repeatable</p>	<p>Update the governance structure for the Soil RD&E Implementation Committee</p> <p>Encourage chairs of Standing Committees to provide terms of reference</p> <p>Communication staff in DEDJTR and WS University will review the document and a pdf will be developed for inclusion on the website.</p> <p>Comment on the scope.</p> <p>Map sites</p>	<p>Georgina Kelly</p> <p>Chairs of Standing Committees</p> <p>Comms plan working gp</p> <p>All Working group</p>	<p>31 Dec</p> <p>Before Feb meeting</p> <p>February</p> <p>11 Dec</p> <p>August 2016</p>

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			Dan Brough will assist with the Hack-a-thon working group		
4.10	Update on the Soil Sensing project	Agenda paper 4.10 provided as background. The process of developing this project was highlighted as a successful model.	Contact Ross.Searle@csiro.au to stay in touch with this project.		
4.11	Budget report	Agenda paper 4.11 provided as background. The balance of funds and budget were presented to the committee. It was noted that a number of activities are yet to be costed. In discussion it was noted that the committee has resources that could be used for enhanced communication and influence. Recommendations could be developed concurrent with the communication strategy. Committee expenditure should be directed towards significant high priority objectives as opposed to 'busyness'.	Working group and standing committee Chairs to provide budget proposals for their planned activities. Revise forward budget for strategy Provide a framework to the secretariat for developing impact analysis and an evaluation plan to assist with prioritising strategy activity and expenditure. Engage professional services to develop and implement the communications package once the communications plan is drafted. Put to tender after sign off from the IC.	Chairs of Standing Committees and working groups Secretariat Secretariat, Cameron Allan and Michael Crawford	18 January Before Feb meeting
4.12	2016 meeting dates	Agenda paper 4.12 provided as background. Dates were noted. Video presence availability has been			

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		requested for future meetings.	Members to flag if dates do not suit	All	11 Dec
	Reflections on progress	A number of the actions in the Strategy have not yet been addressed. We need to be well prepared for future opportunities.			
	Next Meeting	4 th February North of Melbourne (Lancefield)			