

# Global Farm Metric

A common framework  
for sustainability



[www.globalfarmmetric.org](http://www.globalfarmmetric.org)

# The Challenge

Almost half of the world's habitable land is now farmed to feed our global food production system. What happens on this land will determine our biodiversity, climate and future health.

There are barriers that prevent farmers becoming drivers of positive change.

**Lack of a common language.**

There is no consistent definition of on-farm sustainability, limiting understanding of the issues and where to start.

**Where definitions exist, they often overlook the interconnectedness of the farming system.** Sustainability must be understood holistically, taking into account environmental, social and economic impacts.

**Assessments based on narrow definitions mean some impacts can be overlooked.** The pursuit of a single outcome, such as carbon reduction or biodiversity gain, can come at a cost to other parts of the system, giving rise to unintended consequences.

**There is no consistent way of measuring and monitoring sustainability at farm-level.**

Farmers are asked to collect data in different ways, increasing the time-burden and complexity of assessment.

**Food and farming stakeholders do not have a consistent baseline of farm-level data.** This hinders transparency and the creation of a system that rewards sustainable farming outcomes.

We urgently need farmers to measure their whole-farm impacts in a rigorous and consistent way to accelerate the transition to more sustainable food and farming systems.



# The Mission

Our mission is to enable the transition to more sustainable food and farming systems.

The Global Farm Metric creates a common language for sustainability that provides a roadmap to understand, identify, and measure farm level impacts.

It is a framework to align existing metrics, connect food and farming stakeholders around the world and enable collective action.

The Global Farm Metric Coalition is supported by over 80 partners, including farmers, consultants, researchers, educators, environmental groups, certifiers, food companies, financial services and government agencies.\*

Collective action drives positive change.





# The Framework

The Global Farm Metric defines on-farm sustainability and measures whole-farm impacts.

The framework has three levels – categories, sub-categories and indicators — that acknowledge the inherent interconnectedness of the farming system. Once integrated into existing farm data collection systems, the framework will create a common language for sustainability that helps farmers to understand and communicate their impacts in a holistic way. It is not a new assessment tool, standard or certification.

At farm-level, the **categories** of the framework encompass all aspects of sustainability, so none are considered in isolation. The **sub-categories** explain the categories in greater depth, providing focus for the subsequent indicator level. The **indicators** identify how to measure the sub-categories and encourage further investigation.

Evidenced based and evolving, the framework is verified by researchers and farmers so that data collection is both practical and useful. It is outcomes focused to recognise the diversity of farming systems and practices. It identifies impacts and unintended consequences to improve environmental, social and economic outcomes.

**“A common framework is the start of this process, not the end.”**

The framework defines the baseline. This will form the common thread of data to align existing farm assessment and management systems.



# Applications of the Framework

The Global Farm Metric is designed to be embedded into farm assessments, audits, certification schemes and management tools. This establishes a common language and baseline of data for sustainability which will strengthen and align existing metrics of the food and farming industry.

## **The framework defines a common set of indicators for data collection on key areas of impact.**

These are whole-farm, outcomes based and practical to collect. They enable farmers to identify areas for improvement, initiate further investigation and support decision making.

A common framework starts and ends with consistent data collection.

Alignment of the data collected for the Global Farm Metric with the requirements of existing tools and applications will reduce duplication and encourage their use by farmers. For more specialist applications, additional data will still be required. For example, a carbon calculator may need more information on sources of emissions and sequestration to evidence carbon net gain and access new markets.



## What's in it for us?

**Farmers:** Reduce complexity, save time and improve sustainability outcomes

**Finance:** Evidence ESG targets, net zero goals and sustainable investments

**Government:** Consistent data to evidence and monitor public goods

**Food industry:** Evidence, transparency and communication

**Certifiers and consultants:** increased take up by farmers

# Driving Change

A common language drives positive action. It enables shared understanding, a supporting policy and economic environment and informed consumer choice.

**For farmers to drive positive change, they must have a shared understanding of sustainability.**

A common framework enables consistent monitoring and reporting of impacts so farmers can evidence and improve the production of nutritious food, growth of natural capital and delivery of public goods.

**For farming to be part of the solution, governments must create an enabling policy environment and monitor progress at farm level.**

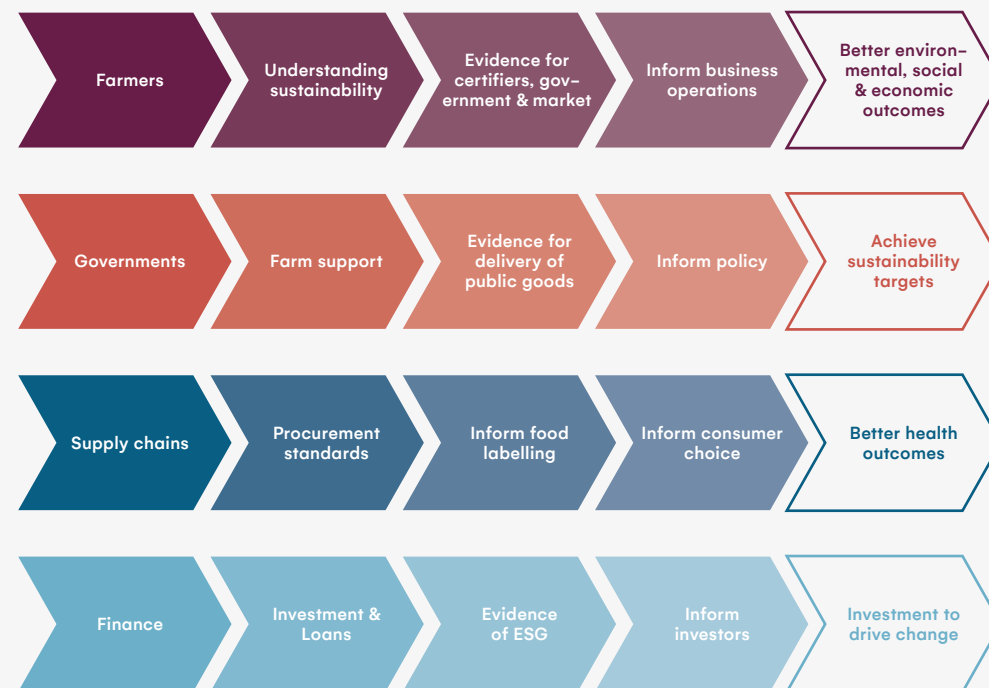
A baseline of farm level data can be aggregated to track change at a local, national and international scale, monitoring progress towards sustainability goals and providing data for evidence-based agriculture and trade policy.

**For financing the transition towards more sustainable systems, we must have a common baseline of data.**

These data can be used as a basis for farm support payments, provide access to new markets and support sustainable investment by the finance and food industries.

**For citizens to mobilise consumer power, we need consistent and verifiable information.** A common language enables transparency and accountability across the supply chain. It aligns food labelling and raises awareness of whole-farm sustainability.

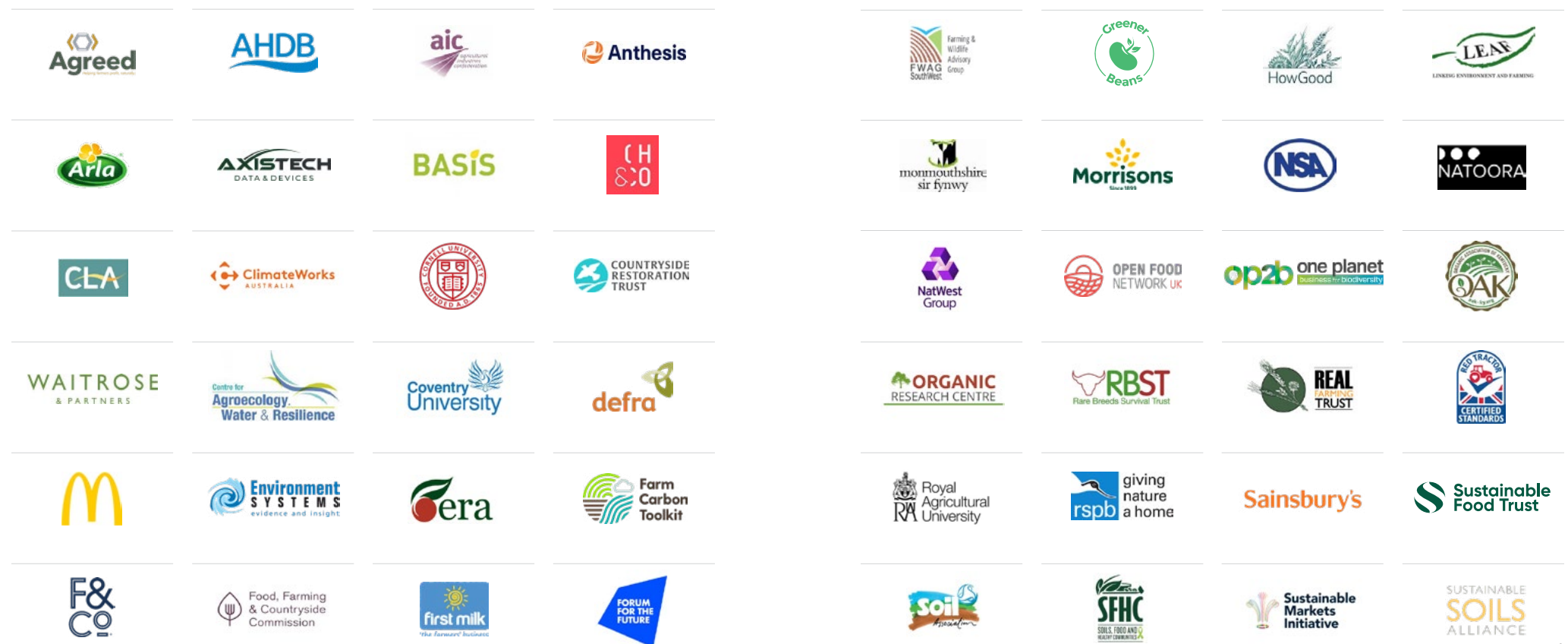
**For knowledge exchange that inspires innovation and drives change globally, we need a definition for sustainability at farm-level.** Expressed through the Global Farm Metric framework, this will enable dialogue between educators, learners, consultants and farmers.



**“Achieving our sustainability goals is dependent on everyone being able to do better.”**

# Coalition

The Global Farm Metric Coalition is supported by over 80 organisations from across the global food and farming sector. We are working together to establish a common language and framework for on-farm sustainability. These are some of the organisations that have been driving the mission.







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# Get Involved

To use the framework, join the coalition, join a trial or find out more, contact:

**[info@globalfarmmetric.org](mailto:info@globalfarmmetric.org)**

You can also visit the website:

**[www.globalfarmmetric.org](http://www.globalfarmmetric.org)**

Find us on social media:

**[@GFMCoalition](https://twitter.com/GFMCoalition)**





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