Global Farm Metric Trials Report 2025

GLOBAL FARM METRIC

www.globalfarmmetric.org

Acknowledgements

Researched and written by:
Marina Suarez, Anna Heinlein, Olivia Boothman,
May Wheeler and Rachel Kehoe.

The authors extend their thanks to the farmers, partners and funders who have engaged in our trials — from Cameroon to Cumbria, your feedback and insights are at the heart of our mission and critical to the progress towards a common framework for all food system actors.

Date of publication: May 2025

Design: greenhat.studio

Photography: Photos taken from our trials, with stock imagery from www.pexels.com

Global Farm Metric (2025).
Global Farm Metric Trials Report 2025.
Available at: globalfarmmetric.org/reports

GLOBAL FARM METRIC

www.globalfarmmetric.org

Contents

Executive Summary

The Global Farm Metric (GFM) has been tested across six continents, spanning a wide range of farming systems, landscapes and geographies. As global demand for sustainability assessment grows, this report explores how a holistic framework can support aligned data collection, inform decision-making and drive better outcomes across the farming system.

This report presents the findings from over 240 farm trials conducted across 23 countries from 2023–2025.

The trials tested the use of a holistic framework for farm sustainability, aligning farmers and stakeholders from across the farming system, including retail, finance, NGOs, academia and government.

The findings have shaped the development of the GFM and recommendations for stakeholders in the farming system. Explore the latest framework (GFM2.0) here: **globalfarmmetric.org.**

Key findings:

DRIVING CHANGE
The GFM kickstarted sustainability conversations and aligned stakeholders through shared understanding and common goals. Farmers used baseline data to assess sustainability, identify opportunities and track progress. This data has potential to shape policies, evidence outcomes and underpin finance.

DATA COLLECTION
All trials collected data within each GFM category. While time, cost and complexity were challenges, they were addressed through solutions such as advisor support and technology.

GLOBAL RELEVANCE
The GFM was successfully tested across diverse farming systems, demonstrating adaptability and global relevance. Trials highlighted the potential and demand for a holistic farm sustainability framework.

Calls to action:
The true power of the GFM lies in its ability to unite diverse stakeholders around a shared vision of sustainability. We call on all those across the sector to take the following actions:

ALL STAKEHOLDERS
Adopt a holistic framework to define, measure and advance farm sustainability across the sector.

FARMERS
Assess whole-farm sustainability to identify opportunities, connect with networks and unlock support.

FINANCE AND POLICYMAKERS
Implement an outcomes-based approach to support schemes, policy design and monitoring to enable and incentivise farm-level sustainability.

RETAILERS AND SUPPLY CHAIN
Align primary data collection to drive transparency and inform procurement and investment decisions.

ASSESSMENT PROVIDERS
Harmonise tools, reduce duplication and enable aligned, holistic and locally relevant data collection.

Ongoing trials and collaboration are central to the GFM's mission to drive positive outcomes for climate, nature and people.

@GFMcoalition
Info@globalfarmmetric.org
www.globalfarmmetric.org/get-involved/

What is the Global Farm Metric?

Our mission is to support positive outcomes for climate, nature and people. The GFM is a holistic framework for all farming stakeholders. It supports understanding and the collection of primary data to monitor and guide the transition to more sustainable farming systems.

What happens on our farms has a significant impact on the health of nature, climate and people. Almost half the world's habitable land is now farmed to feed our global food production system. Climate and nature emergencies, combined with a growing world population, present a significant threat to food security across the globe. If we are to withstand and overcome these global challenges, we need to farm in a way that is socially, environmentally and economically sustainable.

The GFM is an outcomes-based framework, co-designed with farmers and stakeholders. It can be used directly to define farm-level sustainability, align understanding and establish a common language. It can also be applied into existing infrastructure to enable holistic measurement and align data collection.

The framework is holistic, covering the social, environmental and economic dimensions of the farm. It has 12 **categories**, representing the key parts of the farm system. All categories are interconnected and interdependent, meaning one category cannot be considered in isolation. Each category is anchored by a sustainability **outcome**; an ambition that can be shared by all stakeholders. **Subcategories** break down the categories into key areas where sustainability impacts occur. Outcomes-based **indicators** are identified to enable harmonised measurement of each subcategory.

Regular assessment using GFM indicators can measure the environmental, social and economic state of the farm and monitor progress towards sustainability goals. When aggregated, this data forms a robust evidence-base to inform decision-making by farmers, policy makers, certifiers, banks and other food system stakeholders. Outcomes-based data can also support the delivery of public goods by enabling fair rewards for producers, empowering them to drive positive outcomes for climate, nature and people.

Fig 1: GFM 2.0 framework

Part one

Overview & Methods

A farmer in Wales walks the trials team through how they grow crops for their community veg box scheme.

Trials overview

TRIALS OVERVIEW

Running trials allows the GFM to be tested in real-world farming settings.

We engaged 242 farms in 23 countries and 6 continents between 2023 and 2025 (Fig 2). These trials brought together a diverse range of stakeholders – from farmers and land managers to farm advisors, retailers, government bodies, international non-profits and researchers.

Nine trials were conducted by or in partnership with the GFM team (Table 1, pages 14–15). Each trial tested the GFM framework and pursued research objectives tailored to each trial partner and project. Each trial varied in focus and was unified by the framework, highlighting its broad potential for application and harmonisation.

TRIAL OBJECTIVES

This report presents the findings and data relevant to three key research questions consistent across all trials:

1. Driving change: How can the GFM framework and farm-level data drive change? What are the barriers and solutions that affect the transition to more sustainable farming systems?
2. Data collection: Is it feasible to collect data against all parts of the framework?
3. Global relevance: Is the GFM relevant and adaptable to a variety of farming contexts, systems and geographies?

DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

All tools used in the trials were based on the GFM 1.1 framework[1]. For each trial, the most suitable data collection tool was selected or designed to align with the specific objectives and farming systems involved.

The standard GFM research tool was used in three of the trials, while two trials developed unique tools. Four trials adapted the GFM research tool—modifying aspects such as language, format, software and complexity. In some cases, questions from other assessments were added to meet a trial's unique aims. For example, in the Defra ELMS Test and Trial 070A, questions from LEAF's Sustainable Farming Review were included. See Table 1 (page 14) for details of the different tools used in the trials.

The process of selecting and adapting data collection tools demonstrates how the GFM can be applied into existing initiatives and infrastructure.

TRIALS PROCESS

While each trial has its own focus and priorities, all followed a shared process and are grounded by a common framework (see Fig 3, page 17).

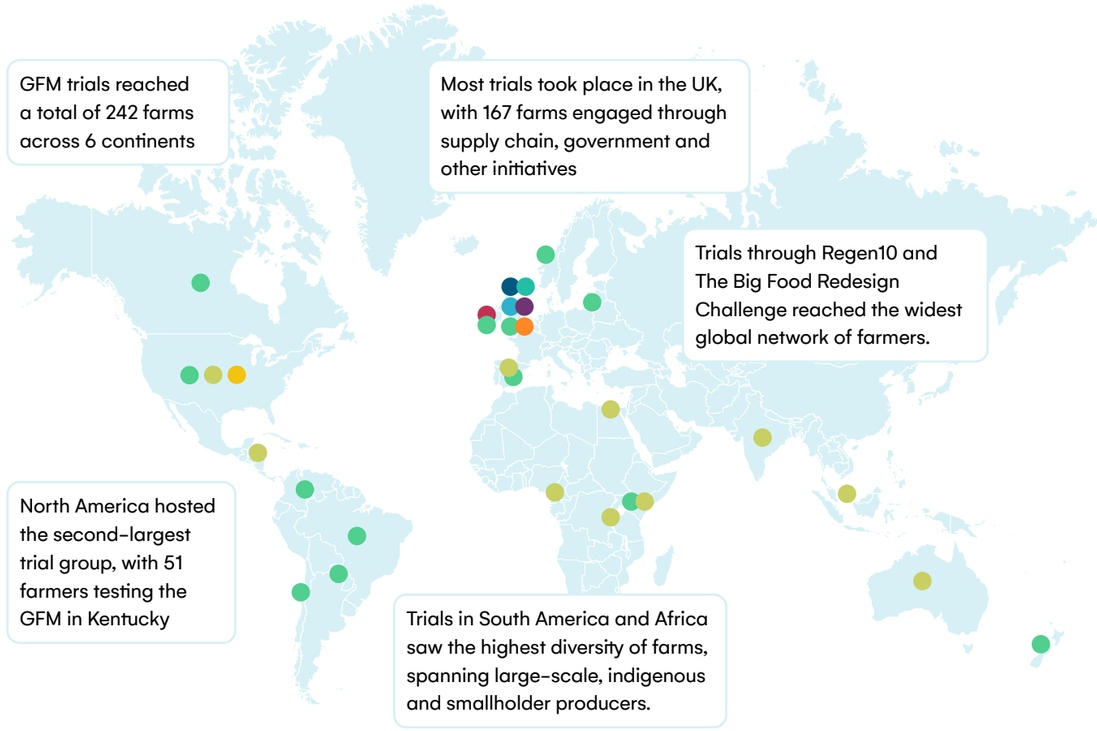
Each starts by defining aims with farmers and partners, using the framework to ensure they are holistic and meet practical needs on the ground. The most relevant indicators are then selected for data collection on key sustainability questions.

Next, we adapt or design the right data collection tools to suit the context. With everything in place, the trial begins: farmers collect data with support, results are reviewed and insights start to emerge.

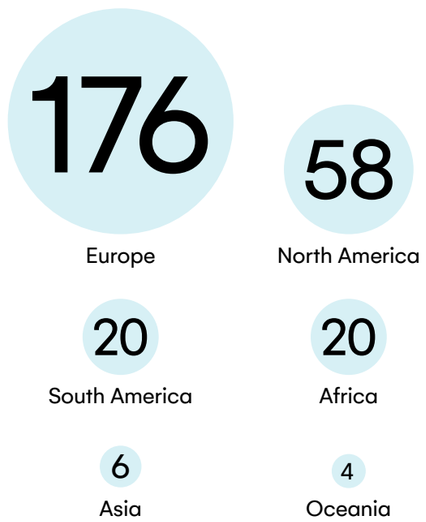
Finally, we gather feedback through interviews, discussions and surveys. This is analysed alongside the assessment data to generate practical, evidence-based recommendations for farmers, stakeholders and the development of the GFM.

1. Kipling, R.P. Arguile, L., Smith, J., Bromovsky,F., Smith, L. (2023). The Global Farm Metric Framework: Categories, sub-categories, and indicators explained. Sustainable Food Trust. DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.10657440

Fig 2. Map of 2023–25 farm trials



Number of farms by continent



Trials key

- Climate smart farming and marketing
- Communication in the supply chain
- Farm clusters
- Defra ELM TEST & TRIAL 022A
- Big food redesign challenge
- Supply chain transparency and communication
- Sustainability in the dairy sector
- Defra ELM TEST & TRIAL 070A
- Regen 10

Table 1. Overview of GFM trials 2023 – 2025

NAME OF TRIAL*	TRIAL OBJECTIVE	PARTNERS	NO. ENGAGED	COMPLETION RATE	LOCATION	DATA COLLECTION TOOL USED
Climate smart farming and marketing	Promote the adoption of climate-smart farming practices and develop markets for climate-smart commodities.	Organic Association of Kentucky (OAK)	48	94%	US, Kentucky	GFM US Farm Sustainability Assessment Tool
Communication in the supply chain	Use of holistic data to improve communication and empower farmers in supply chain partnerships.	Natoora	8	38%	UK	GFM UK SOTSA
Farm clusters	Use of the GFM framework to facilitate peer-to-peer knowledge exchange and collaboration.	Hay on Wye farm cluster, The Wye & Usk Foundation	10	Still open	Wales	GFM UK SOTSA
Supply chain transparency and communication	Use of holistic data to measure and communicate the sustainability of products to create supply-chain transparency and underpin informed consumer purchases.	Neal's Yard Dairy (NYD)	20	Still open	UK	GFM UK SOTSA + additional dairy questions
Sustainability in the dairy sector	Investigate sustainability across different dairy production systems using holistic data.	Pasture for Life, University of Bristol, Neal's Yard Dairy	30	Still open	UK	GFM UK SOTSA + additional dairy questions
Defra ELM TEST & TRIAL 070A	Investigate value of a common-framework for understanding, measuring, monitoring and communicating sustainability at farm level and across landscapes.	Soil Association Exchange, BASIS, LEAF, the Andersons Centre, ABP	40	65%	England	GFM UK SOTSA + LEAF Sustainable Farming Review (LSFR)
Defra ELM TEST & TRIAL 022A	Create methodology for habitat and sustainability baselines to facilitate investment at landscape scale.	FWAG SW, Land App, CEH, Rothamsted Research, Ordnance Survey, Gloucestershire Local Nature Partnership, Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust	50	32%	England	GFM UK Research Tool
The big food redesign challenge	Inspire the food sector to design products using principles of circular design.	Ellen MacArthur Foundation	Unknown**	Unknown**	Norway, USA, Kenya, UK, Republic of Ireland, Canada, Brazil, New Zealand, Lithuania, Columbia, Peru, Spain, Paraguay, Chile	GFM Lite
Regen 10	Test a global, outcomes-based framework and its ability to support the transition to regenerative agriculture.	World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), World Farmers Organisation (WFO), IUCN, Climate Farmers, Rainforest Alliance, Technoserve, SNV, Earthworm Foundation, GC Resolve, Southern African Agri Initiative (SAAI), Council on Energy, Environment and water (CEEW), The Fruit Farm Group, RegenWA.	36	100%	Australia, Cameroon, Egypt, India, Kenya, Malaysia, Nicaragua, Rwanda, South Africa, Spain, USA	Regen10 outcome-based tool

*More information on each trial can be found on the GFM website: globalfarmmetric.org

**The number of farmers reached is unknown, as 59 local food product designers were responsible for engaging suppliers. GFM only received the total number of completed assessments, not the number of farmers contacted.

DATA ANALYSIS

We collected two kinds of data – on farms and from farmers – to understand not just how sustainable systems perform, but how people experience them.

1. Farm data
The quantitative and qualitative data collected against the GFM framework using the data collection tool. This data provides measurable insights into the sustainability of individual farms and can indicate trends and correlations across the trial groups.

For this report, statistical analysis of farm data was conducted in R version 4.4.2, using chi square tests for binomial associations, and spearman's correlation coefficient for correlational analysis.

2. Feedback data
The qualitative data collected through Q&A sessions, stakeholder meetings, workshop sessions, emails and one-to-one interviews. This data provides an understanding of stakeholder perspectives and needs to inform the development of the GFM framework and mission.

Individual comments and suggestions were recorded and collated during the trial. All feedback was coded and analysed to identify key themes.

From soil samples to farm stories, our trials combined numbers with narratives to shape a truly farmer-led framework.

CONSIDERATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

The findings and insights offered in this report must be considered in light of the following factors:

Sample size:
Although the average trial completion rates (70%) align with those expected for similar programmes, the limited number of participants in relation to the whole farming population affects the generalisability of the findings.

Sector representation:
While the trials covered a large diversity of farms – from smallholder mixed systems to large scale arable – they were not representative of all farm types and were skewed towards livestock and grassland systems. This can limit the applicability of findings.

Data verification:
Many of the trials relied on data collection using a self-assessment tool. This meant there was opportunity for mistakes, misinterpretation and reduced accuracy. Data quality checks aimed to reduce the chance of error, but the data has not been independently verified.

Stakeholder focus:
The farmers who participated in the trials were predominantly those already engaged in sustainability, affecting the generalisability of the results. While some trial partners actively sought to engage historically underrepresented groups, including women and Indigenous Peoples, there is still a way to go to improve representation and inclusion.

Trial partners:
While trials engaged a diversity of stakeholder groups, including farmers, governments and value-chain actors, the findings shared in this report have not been disaggregated according to these groups which will have unique perceptions and challenges.

Fig 3. Trials process

1. Define trial aims, objectives and research questions, considering the needs of farmers and trial partners

2. Select the relevant GFM indicators required to answer trial objectives

3. Create or adapt the assessment tool

4. Run the trial – confirm consent, share resources, collect data, check data quality, explore results and discuss opportunities

5. Collect feedback through farmer and partner interviews, group discussions, surveys

6. Aggregate and analyse trial assessment data and feedback to farmers and partners

Part two

Trial findings

Insights from whole-farm data

How can the GFM drive change?

Can everything be measured?

Global framework, local fit?

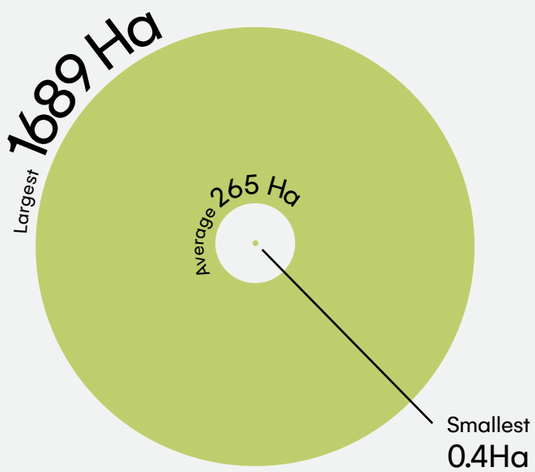
On their family's oil palm farm in Malaysia, a trial farmer explains the soil health techniques they're experimenting with. They plan to monitor the impact of practice change by repeating data collected in the trial in the long-term.

Meet the UK trial farms: insights from whole-farm data

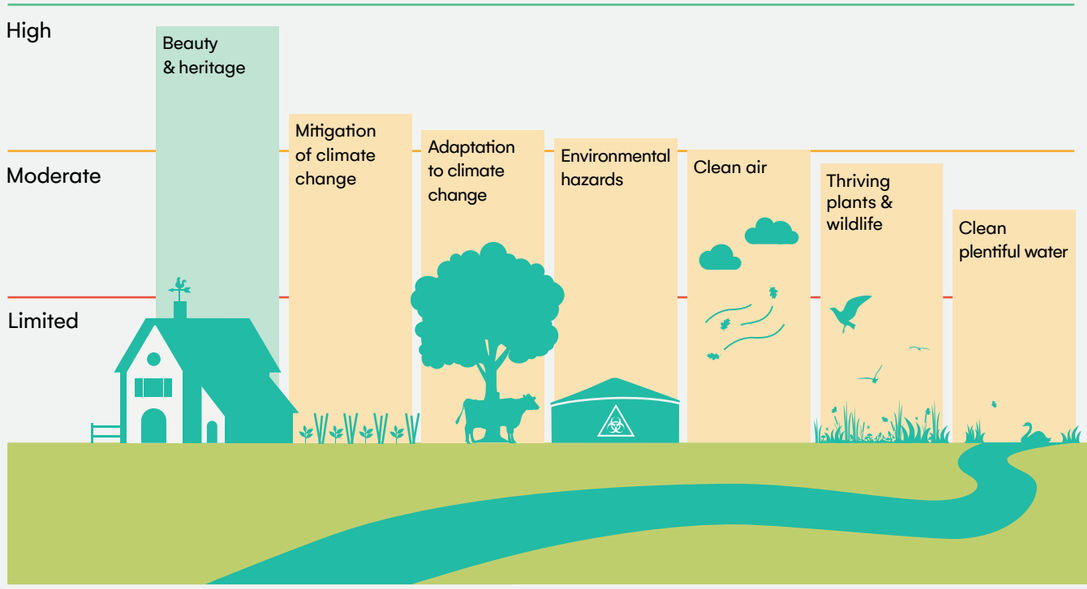
Explore the results from our UK trials and discover some key insights into the sustainability outcomes they are delivering.

We focused on UK data as it was the largest comparable data set, while recognising that each farm operates within its own unique context. Insights from across the globe can be found on the website: **globalfarmmetric.org.**

FARM SIZE (HECTARES, HA)



DELIVERY OF PUBLIC GOODS: HOW OUR FARMS SCORED



TRIALS BY FARM ENTERPRISE

90 Livestock

85 Forage & Grassland

60 Arable

30 Fruit

25 Horticulture

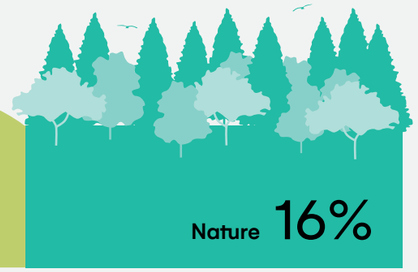
15 Non-food crops

5 Other food crops

BIRD SPECIES IDENTIFIED

FULL-TIME WORKERS

HOW IS FARM LAND USED?



Agriculture 84%

Nature 16%

How can the GFM drive change?

Our farm trials have provided real examples and powerful insights into how farming stakeholders are using the GFM to drive change.

1. HOLISTIC DATA TO IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES AND TRACK PROGRESS

For farmers, the GFM-based assessments offered immediate value by providing data on the state of the farm's sustainability and practices.

Farmers, advisors and stakeholders valued the holistic nature of the framework. It helped surface issues and opportunities across their operations that may have previously been overlooked when assessing farm sustainability.

"The detailed nature of the assessment revealed areas of my farming practices that I hadn't previously considered, highlighting the importance of a comprehensive approach to sustainability."

South African farmer, Regen10 trials

Data collection against all categories of the framework enabled farmers to identify the parts of their farm that were in a good state, and those which may need attention. This was used to inform decisions about where to focus practice change. However, some farmers highlighted the need for additional guidance on how to turn outcome-based data into actionable steps, and how to account for factors outside their control, like the weather.

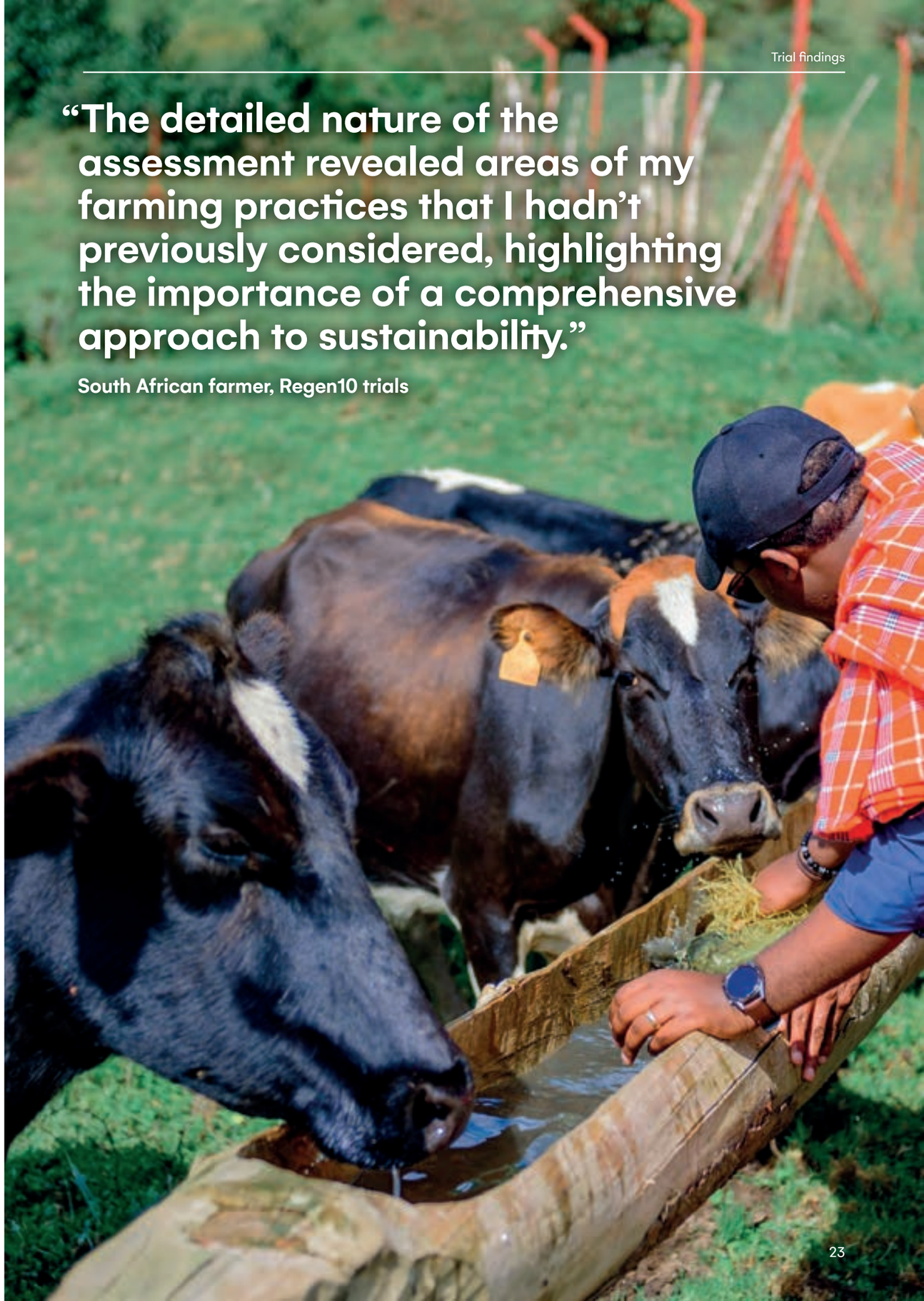
"Looking at the results again makes it very clear that having that covered space is a priority for us next year. It always helps when you have some other external thing saying this is a problem, a different perspective always adds value if you're not sure at the time."

– UK horticulture business, Communication in the supply chain trial

All trials were conducted as one-off assessments, prompting farmers to emphasise the value of repeating the process over time to track progress. They noted that a single assessment may miss important context—such as the farm's journey, recent changes in practice and the efforts of the farmer already underway.

"It would be lovely to have the opportunity to revisit it in a period of time where we could or should have made changes and to look at how differently I think or feel."

– UK mixed farmer, DEFRA ELM Test & Trial 070A



2. A TOOL FOR COMMUNICATION

Some farmers found that trials presented an opportunity to collaborate with their supply chain, sparking valuable conversations about sustainability and farm practices. Both farmers and partners noted that the assessment provided a good starting point for discussing challenges, opportunities and future management plans to meet the shared goals of the individual farm and those of the supply chain.

Following the Big Food Redesign Challenge and Communication in the supply chain trials, stakeholders reported that they better understood the challenges faced by their suppliers. The data collected for the assessment enabled a data-driven exploration of how retailers could support farmers to improve their long-term sustainability ambitions.

"[the trial has helped with] Chatting with growers, helping them to plan, have realistic goals of what they can grow, what that's going to sell for... finding a crop and maybe saying 'this is really popular on the market'."

— UK greengrocer

Further, farmers were able to share outcomes-based farm data with retailers or other food system stakeholders, allowing them to gain recognition and market value for their sustainability initiatives. This demonstrates how transparent sustainability data, especially when validated by a third party, helps farmers build trust with supply chains, which in turn can help build trust with consumers.

3. AN EVIDENCE-BASE FOR POLICY

The framework can provide policymakers with valuable insights into the current state of farm sustainability, providing a baseline and measure of progress towards goals and the delivery of public goods. At a landscape level, aggregating farm-level data by region can reveal broader regional and systemic issues, such as a lack of essential infrastructure. This was valued as a verifiable means to enable evidence-based policy making, assess policy efficacy, and identify areas where more policy and/or economic support are needed, which can be used for strategic context-specific planning.

"The more data there is, the easier it is for somebody to sit in a meeting and say 'look here are three thousand farms that can't now actually reach abattoirs in a sensible place, time or cost'."

— UK livestock farmer, DEFRA ELM Test & Trial 070A

Figure 4 details how GFM assessments can provide information on the delivery of public goods, in line with the UK government's agricultural policy strategy since Brexit.

4. A LEARNING RESOURCE

Before collecting farm data, our Regen10 trial partners used the framework to introduce the concept of whole-farm sustainability to farmers – as one partner commented 'first you learn about it, then you measure it'.

For farmers in Malaysia, the framework was the first time they had explored a more holistic view of sustainability that integrated social and economic factors, alongside environmental. This allowed trade-offs across the system to be highlighted, including the need to balance productivity and soil health when it comes to fertiliser use.

"Participating in this program improved my confidence as a solo operator, because I got data and validation from OAK. It's also motivated me to do things that I've been wanting to do but wasn't sure whether it would be worthwhile. It's good to see that 'Yes, it is worthwhile'."

— Organic farmer, Kentucky,
Climate Smart Farming and Marketing

Other farmers in the trials mentioned that they would share the knowledge they gained from collecting data with their peers. For example, farmers in Kenya and Rwanda who were leaders in their agricultural communities said that they would use the framework to teach others about regenerative agriculture. By providing a common language, the GFM allowed farmers with different farm systems to compare their data, helping them to learn from each other's successes and failures.

"I will share all the knowledge I learned from the process as it will help my community and develop farmers around me."

— South African farmer, Regen10 trials

Fig 4. Alignment of the GFM with DEFRA's Public Goods

Table illustrating how the GFM 2.0 framework aligns with DEFRA's Public Goods, highlighting its potential to monitor and support the delivery of key environmental and social outcomes.

MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE

All categories

PROTECTION FROM AND MITIGATION OF HAZARDS

Agricultural supplies

CLEAN AND PLENTIFUL WATER

Water
Soil

CLEAN AIR

Air & climate

THRIVING PLANTS AND WILDLIFE

Biodiversity
Crops & pasture
Livestock

BEAUTY, HERITAGE & ENGAGEMENT

Land use
Crops & pasture
Livestock
Farmers & workers
Community

Can everything be measured?

Our trials have unequivocally shown that it is possible to collect data against all parts of the framework in diverse geographies and on different farm types. However, there are a range of factors that affect how easy this is to achieve.

1. COMPLEXITY, COST AND CAPACITY

Several practical challenges emerged from the trials, highlighting key opportunities to improve future applications of the framework.

While many assessments were designed to be low-cost, certain expenses – such as lab-based soil testing – remained a barrier, even though farmers saw them as highly valuable. Time also emerged as a significant indirect cost, with some trials offering financial contributions to acknowledge this burden.

Many farmers found the assessment process initially complex and time-consuming. In some cases, such as the Climate-Smart Farming trial, the process became quicker in the second year as farmers grew more familiar with the tool and had already gathered basic data. However, since most trials ran for just one year, it's unclear whether this improvement would be seen more widely.

Participants also reported frustrations with the data collection tools. These included technical issues, unclear language and an overwhelming volume of information. Some farmers felt the questions were too general and not well suited to their specific farming systems.

Another challenge was confidence in data collection, particularly for field-based observations. Farmers noted a lack of expertise in identifying species or conducting soil assessments. In response, some trials introduced tech-based aids like bird ID apps or provided support through farm advisors.

New technologies—from remote sensing and satellite imagery to eDNA and AI—offer promising ways to capture more data with greater accuracy. However, use of these tools can also lead to duplication, confusion and a fragmented picture that makes benchmarking progress difficult.

"To collect this data accurately, I need both technical and financial support [...] This assistance will be key to boosting the farm's productivity and sustainability through informed decisions based on reliable data."

— South African farmer, Regen10 trial

One of the central insights is that the value of sustainability data is shaped by the farmer's individual goals and context. A farmer just beginning their journey may benefit most from a simple, whole-farm overview, while others may need detailed, verifiable data to support access to schemes like biodiversity credits or sustainability-linked finance. A one-size-fits-all approach risks failing to meet these varying needs.

Future trials will focus on streamlining tools, improving clarity, integrating digital and practical support, as well as building farmer capacity to make the trials more accessible, tailored and efficient.

2. MOTIVATION, SUPPORT AND COMPLETION RATES

Farmers' motives for joining a trial are varied and affected trial completion rates.

Farm advisor support played a key role in boosting trial completion. Advisors helped farmers navigate the tool, carry out practical surveys, verify data and make sense of the results. This helped overcome the challenges of assessment complexity and improved both completion rates and the quality of responses (see Fig 5).

However, advisors weren't the only factor. A survey of farmers in the Climate Smart Farming trial (USA) found that 'environmental benefit' was the top motivating factor for farmers re-engaging with the trial in year 2, followed by the 'financial benefit' offered to farmers for participation. Results from trial motivation survey:

46% environmental benefit
25% financial benefit
15% partnerships or networks
10% new market opportunities
3% improved soil health
3% other

The Big Food Redesign Challenge saw high completion rates without advisor support, thanks to a simplified assessment using practice-based data and strong marketing incentives, including a chance to be on supermarket shelves. This highlights the trade-off between usability and data depth—key for designing sustainability assessments

Overall, a combination of advisor support, practical enablers and motivational incentives influence farmer engagement and trial completion. Finding's underscore the diverse challenges farmers face and the importance of tailored solutions.

Fig 5. Impact of advisor support on trial completion rates

This figure compares trial completion rates between farms supported by advisors and those without advisor support (i.e. self-assessments). Additional factors affecting completion rates are explored above.

Global framework, local fit?

The GFM framework is designed to be globally applicable – but can it really work across such a diverse range of farming systems, geographies and climates? Our trials put this to the test and confirmed global relevance.

Through partnerships with OAK, Regen10, and the Ellen MacArthur Foundation—as well as a series of UK-based trials—we tested the framework on over 240 farms in 23 countries. The results confirmed the GFM's broad relevance. Farmers in Regen10 trials, spanning 11 countries, reported that all categories of the framework were applicable to their local context.

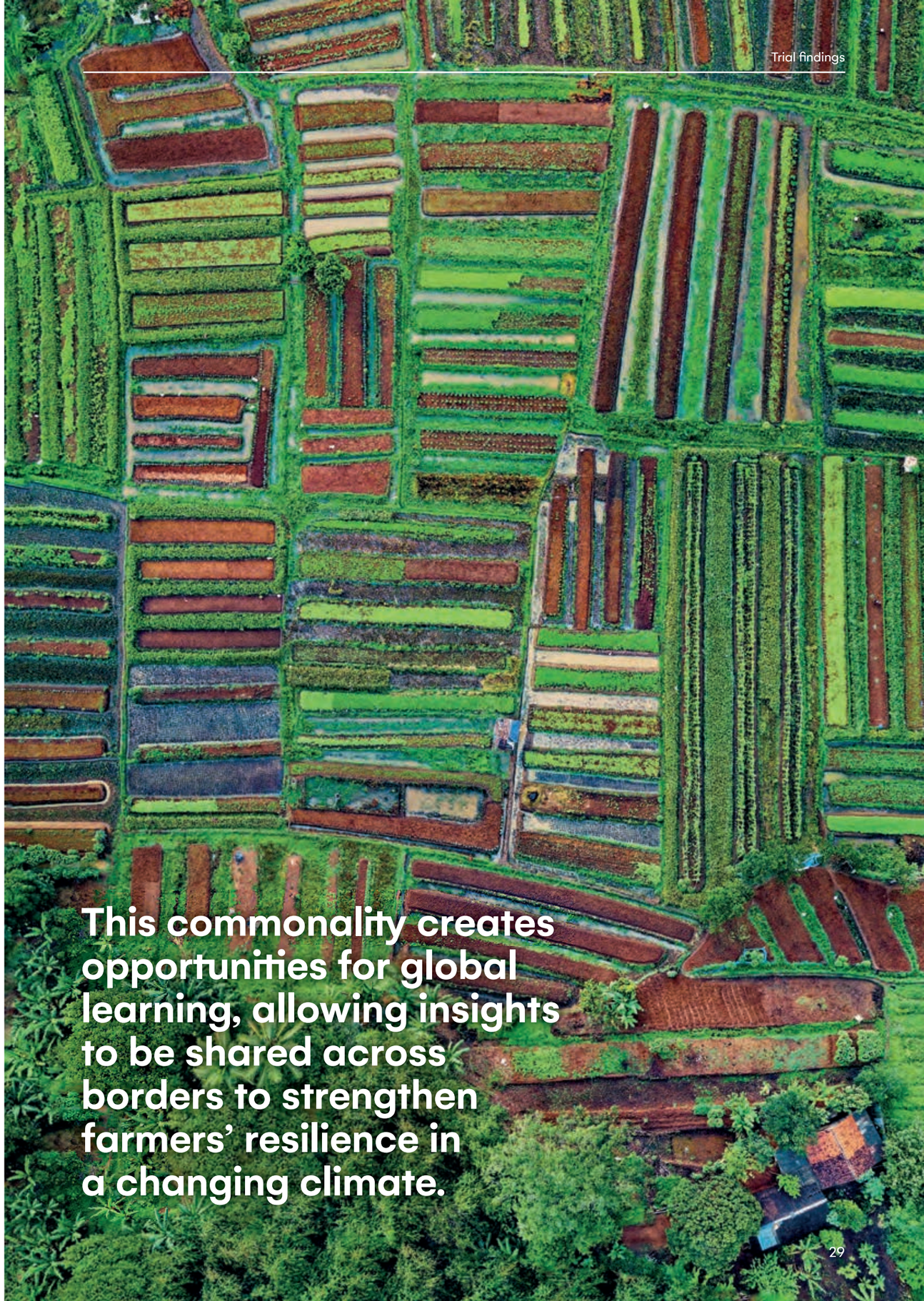
However, while the GFM framework was found to be globally relevant, its application in an assessment required local adaptation. For example, in the Regen10 trial, tools were adjusted to suit both small-holders and large-scale farms, by tailoring questions around employment and land-use. In the Climate-Smart Farming trial, a tool was created to better reflect American environments and farming systems. In this case, the GFM framework aligned US and UK tools through a shared approach to soil health, while allowing flexibility in the choice of indicator species – termites in the US, worms in the UK.

Despite differences in these applications, the framework established a common language across all trials. This commonality creates opportunities for global learning, allowing insights to be shared across borders to strengthen farmers' resilience in a changing climate.

By enabling locally grounded yet globally comparable assessments, the GFM offers a powerful way to aggregate data and build an evidence base for sustainable farm systems. This can be used by farmers, advisors, policymakers and food businesses alike to build resilience from farm level to international scales.

"Being able to participate in the Climate Smart project through OAK has enabled me, a soil health conscience farmer, to have a benchmark not just for my own farm year to year but a comparison to world metrics. Data driven decisions are important to me."

Organic farmer, Kentucky, Climate Smart Farming and Marketing.



Part three

Conclusions

Conclusion

These findings demonstrate that a holistic, outcomes-based approach to farm sustainability is not only possible but urgently needed. Tested across multiple continents and farming systems, the GFM has shown its potential to unite stakeholders, align data collection and drive meaningful change globally. As we move forward, continued collaboration will be essential to building resilient food systems that deliver for climate, nature and people.

The results of the GFM trials offer a strong foundation for the future of holistic farm sustainability education and assessment. The trials answered our core research questions with largely positive results: the GFM proved to be globally relevant; it was possible to collect data across all parts of the framework, despite practical challenges; it drove change and positive outcomes at farm level and across the farming system.

These trials also revealed important nuances, tensions and opportunities for further development. From costs and emerging technologies to complexity and varying farmer motivations, several challenges emerged that can affect the success of a trial. These insights offer critical lessons for broader sustainability initiatives seeking to engage farmers, collect meaningful data and inform decision-making across the food and farming system.

This is where the GFM framework offers a unique contribution. By providing a consistent, outcomes-based and practical structure for defining farm-level sustainability, it acts as a map of the whole system – allowing farmers, policymakers and assessment providers to align around shared goals. The framework can be adapted to accommodate a wide range of use cases and technologies, while maintaining a holistic perspective that sustainability requires.

As we look ahead, the GFM will continue to evolve through long-term testing, cross-sector collaboration and feedback from those who use it on the ground. By refining the framework and supporting its integration into real-world systems—across finance, policy, supply chains and beyond—we can move closer to a food and farming system that works for climate, nature and people.

We invite all stakeholders to join us on this journey and help shape the next chapter of sustainable farming.

Calls to action

Transformation requires collective action. Change from the ground-up hinges on a shared understanding, supportive policy and business incentives and access to knowledge and skills. To make this a reality, we call on all stakeholders to take the following actions:

ALL STAKEHOLDERS	Adopt a holistic framework to define, measure and advance farm sustainability across the sector.
FARMERS	Use the GFM to explore whole-farm sustainability to identify opportunities for improvement, connect with networks and unlock support across the value chain.
FINANCE AND POLICY MAKERS	Implement an outcomes-based approach to policy design, monitoring and evaluation to enable and incentivise farm-level sustainability.
RETAILERS AND SUPPLY CHAIN	Align data collection to drive transparency, inform procurement and invest in more sustainable farming.
ASSESSMENT PROVIDERS	Harmonise tools to reduce duplication and collect holistic, locally relevant data.

Next steps

We are excited to release an updated version of the framework, GFM 2.0. This is the culmination of the learnings and findings from the 2023–25 farm trials and other parts of our work, including research, education and alignment.

Our focus for the next year is to further explore real-world applications of the framework. This will include the GFM's use in finance, procurement, policy, education and True Cost Accounting.

Farm trials and research will continue to ground the framework in the latest evidence. Ongoing stakeholder consultation and engagement will test adoption and alignment, helping to deliver the GFM's mission of driving positive change.

How can you get involved?

- Explore the GFM and discover how it can support your work and priorities
- Stay up to date by signing up to our newsletter and socials
- Join a working group to help shape the future of the framework
- Get in touch to discuss trial and collaboration opportunities

Get in touch: info@globalfarmmetric.org
Find out more: globalfarmmetric.org/reports
Stay up to date: globalfarmmetric.org/get-involved

Farm trials highlight the importance of shared understanding and holistic measurement in a complex and changing world. When the farming system aligns, progress becomes possible.

GLOBAL FARM METRIC

www.globalfarmmetric.org