

Instructions

Tip: Use this Instructions flap as a handy bookmark

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Self-Assessment:

Complete the Self-Assessment Sheets. The columns to be filled in are:

Your rating

Place the rating (A-E) that best describes the situation on your property in the column headed 'Your Rating'. If the issue does not apply to your property, please mark it n/a (not applicable).

Priority

Once you have rated the issue, assign a priority by determining how important it is to you to improve the rating on your farm. Mark a High, Medium or Low priority in the Priority box.

Your Goal Rating

In the box marked Your Goal Rating, place the rating (A-E) that best describes the situation that you would like to see your farm progressing towards in say the next 5-10 years. The rating should be realistic and consider the workload and cost as well as the environmental improvement achieved.

Action Required

Indicate (yes/no) whether you wish to address the issue by undertaking practice change or by making improvements to your farm.

Actions/Notes

Write your immediate "doing" thoughts here - it may be just to make a phone call or some planning notes for a larger project.

Action planning:

Complete the Action Planning Summary Sheets at the end of each section to record any actions here that come immediately to mind. You can then rank the actions from all sections later and develop an annual action plan.

Deciding on priority actions:

What are your goals for the farm?
What can be achieved?

Consider any risks involved in the current situation and the benefits possible:

- Legal requirements
- Environmental implications- farm and catchment.
- Financial implications- costs/benefits, capital value.
- People implications- safety, labour, time.

Where possible, work on the cause as well as the symptom.

e.g. fence and repair a saline gully- but also consider trees, perennial grasses or altering grazing management to address the groundwater balance.

Consider both short-term and long-term projects. The size of actions can vary greatly. For larger jobs, it's a good idea to list incremental, achievable steps in your action plan with an estimate of the time frames required.

Consider new practices. Researching or trialing a practice is a useful action.

Documenting one action may cover a number of topics in the workbook.

Build monitoring and recording into all actions. These records will help to tell a story of environmental improvement. Remember that your starting point is not as important as identifying whether the changes that you have implemented are having the desired effect, or that they need altering.

Useful ideas can come from visiting other properties. Discussing aspects of action plan with neighbours can open up opportunities for cost sharing. Linking corridors, sharing fencing costs, applying for grants or taking joint action on weeds or foxes can be achieved by thinking outside the boundary fence.

Example goals and suggestions for monitoring changes are provided on the reverse side of the action planning sheets.

Property Management Planning

2. Managing to land class
Land class is determined by gradient, soil type, aspect and rainfall. There are a variety of methods to identify land classes. The simplest is to think about how the land needs to be managed. If it needs to be managed differently, then it is most likely a different land class e.g. a sandy well-drained bracken-covered area versus waterlogged clays at the bottom of paddocks, or steep sloping land versus flatter land.
Land classes can be identified and mapped on a whole farm plan, aerial photograph or farm map. Implementing your whole farm plan should involve progressive re-fencing to land class for ease of management, better grazing control and protection of soil, water and vegetation.
For further information see: Land Classing Kit for Farmers (2000), Baxter, N and Williamson, J. Agriculture Victoria, Bendigo, Vic.

Potential Impacts: Positive - ease of management, better grazing control, reduced likelihood of over or under grazing. Negative - stock camps, variation in crop or pasture growth.

| A | B | C | D | E |
|--|---|---|---|--|
| All significant land classes identified on a whole farm plan and fenced appropriately. | | Major land classes fenced and managed separately. | | No land class fencing across the property. |

Your Current Rating (A-E) or N/A: A B C D E

Your Priority (High, Medium, Low): High Medium Low

Your Goal Rating (A-E): A B C D E

Action Required
 YES NO

Actions / Notes

3. Monitoring farm productivity and environment
Monitoring is a key activity that helps you to understand whether altering your practices is having the desired effect. Photo monitoring is an inexpensive and useful tool for monitoring changes.
For further information see: Monitoring sheets at the back of this manual.
www.dpi.vic.gov.au/science/EMS and follow the links > **Environmental Monitoring Tools**