



Australian Government
Department of Agriculture,
Fisheries and Forestry

Statement of Strategic Intent

Growing Australia together



Secretary's foreword

The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) leads the Australian Government's efforts to support, protect and grow the country's food and fibre production industries. We play a pivotal role in contributing to Australia's health and economic prosperity by developing and promoting sustainable agricultural production practices, increasing trade and market access, maximising economic opportunities for our First Nations peoples, and keeping Australians safe through effective biosecurity.

Our work touches the lives of all Australians, particularly those living in regional and rural areas. Every day we protect our industries, communities and natural environment from potentially devastating pests and diseases. We support every clean, safe meal that Australians sit down to enjoy.

Our vision is a more sustainable and prosperous Australia through biosecurity, production and trade. By working collaboratively to develop more sustainable, resilient, productive and profitable food and fibre industries, we can help ease cost-of-living pressures for all Australians.

We work with multiple stakeholders to support the diversity and complexity of the agricultural supply chain. Our role is providing food and fibre for all Australians, and to many overseas markets, where demand for Australian commodities continues to be strong. We have cut red tape for exporters because international trade creates jobs and prosperity and is critical to the Australian economy. Streamlining our processes has opened opportunities for Australian businesses to expand and prosper.

Our stakeholders are on the frontline of climate change and the transition to a net-zero economy. Global supply chains, international markets and the finance sector increasingly require agricultural producers to show their climate and sustainability credentials. We support producers to reduce emissions and embrace climate-smart practices to ensure Australia's long-term agricultural productivity and food and fibre security. Sustainable agricultural opportunities provided through the Net Zero Plan and the Future Made in Australia package will help achieve greater economic prosperity.

We are bolstering our biosecurity preparedness and response with the states, territories and industry through the National Biosecurity Strategy. As biosecurity risks continue to evolve, a sustainably funded biosecurity system means we are better placed to meet the challenges of the future. We continue to engage with and rely on approved arrangements with industry to help manage biosecurity risks effectively and efficiently.

As the largest public sector employer of veterinarians in Australia and deployer of biosecurity detector dogs, we have a strong commitment to animal welfare. We are partnering with stakeholders and state and territory governments to develop a National Statement on Animal Welfare. We are also overseeing support to the industry for the government's policy to end the export of live sheep by sea.

Under the banner of One DAFF, our people work together to develop impactful policy and program solutions that promote productivity growth, secure improved access to international markets and safeguard our animal and plant health status and Australia's environment.

This Statement of Strategic Intent sets out the department's vision and strategic objectives. It complements DAFF's corporate plan by outlining our role, capabilities and purpose. Our partnerships with governments, industry, First Nations peoples, the community and research organisations will ensure Australia's agricultural, fisheries and forestry industries are resilient now and into the future.

I look forward to working with stakeholders to realise our aspiration of a more sustainable and prosperous Australia. We will grow Australia together through strengthened biosecurity, more successful and sustainable production and increased trade.



Adam Fennessy PSM
Secretary
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry



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Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of Australia and their continuing connection to land and sea, waters, environment and community. We pay our respects to the Traditional Custodians of the lands we live and work on, their culture, and their Elders past and present.

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Page 5 and 6 photograph: © Kerry Trapnell.

Our Statement of Strategic Intent

This Statement of Strategic Intent outlines the high-level strategic goals of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry as we look towards and beyond 2030. The statement aligns with and complements our corporate plan by building on a strong foundation of governance and accountability. We are delivery focused and connected, growing Australia's agricultural sector – the agricultural, fisheries, forestry, food and fibre industries – together with our stakeholders and strategic partners.

Our vision

A more sustainable and prosperous Australia through biosecurity, production and trade.

Our purpose

Working together to safeguard and grow sustainable agriculture, fisheries and forestry for all Australians.

Our strategic objectives

1 Sector growth

Support Australia's agricultural sector, including the food and fibre industries, to be increasingly prosperous and internationally competitive in an ever-changing world.

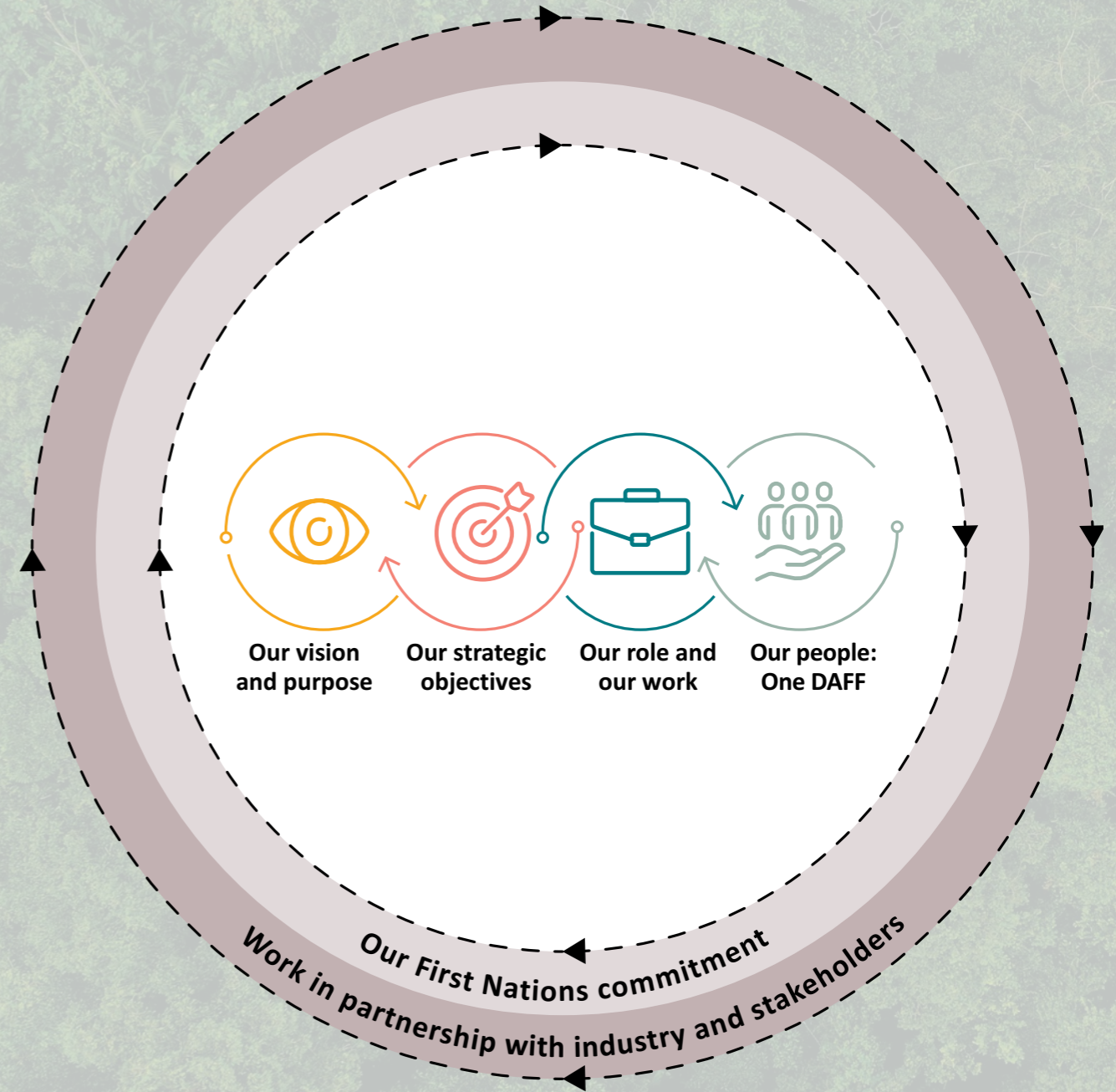
2 Sector resilience and sustainability

Increase the contribution agriculture, fisheries and forestry make to a healthy, sustainable and low-emissions environment.

3 National biosecurity

Strengthen our national biosecurity system to provide a risk-based approach and an appropriate level of protection for Australia's people, our environment and economy.

Figure 1 Statement of Strategic Intent



Our first partners — Australia's First Nations peoples

We commit to empowering First Nations economic self-determination across Australia's agricultural, fisheries and forestry industries. We do this by working in partnership with First Nations stakeholders and elevating First Nations voices through ongoing engagement.

We acknowledge that First Nations Australians hold an unceded connection with the land, waters and seas of this country and hold aspirations for more sustainable, productive and profitable land- and sea-based economies. We commit to supporting First Nations agribusiness ownership and employment. We encourage the use of Indigenous knowledges to activate the economic value of land and sea resource rights to enhance the productivity, resilience, innovation and sustainability of the Australian food and fibre supply chain. We commit to strengthening the role of Indigenous Ranger groups in Australia's biosecurity protection and expanding pathways for First Nations food and fibre exporters to international markets.

We commit to embedding the priority reforms and supporting the achievement of outcomes under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap. Working in partnership is at the core of this Statement of Strategic Intent and our partnerships with First Nations Australians are a central priority in our strategy.





Spotlights

Indigenous Rangers

As the continent's Traditional Custodians for more than 65,000 years, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have deep-seated connections to community and to the land. These connections and traditional knowledge help protect Australia from the threat of biosecurity incursions.

We partner with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ranger organisations across northern Australia to keep a look out for unusual pests, diseases or weeds and participate in diverse programs that help to protect our agricultural sector, our unique environment, our culture and way of life. Rangers contribute vital biosecurity surveillance data that helps support Australia's export trade.

Global and national context

Australia is committed to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, including food security and promoting sustainable agriculture. We recognise our role in feeding the world's growing population and enabling access to the highest-quality food and fibre products, while simultaneously reducing the environmental and climate-related impacts of agricultural production.

The agricultural sector is focused on international opportunities, with around two-thirds of Australia's agricultural products exported. The sector's profitability relies on the multilateral trade system commitment to free and open markets, along with science- and risk-based decision-making in the development of agriculture and food health and safety standards. Australia's reputation as an exporter of climate-smart, sustainable food and fibre will continue to be crucial to maintain our competitive edge in global markets.



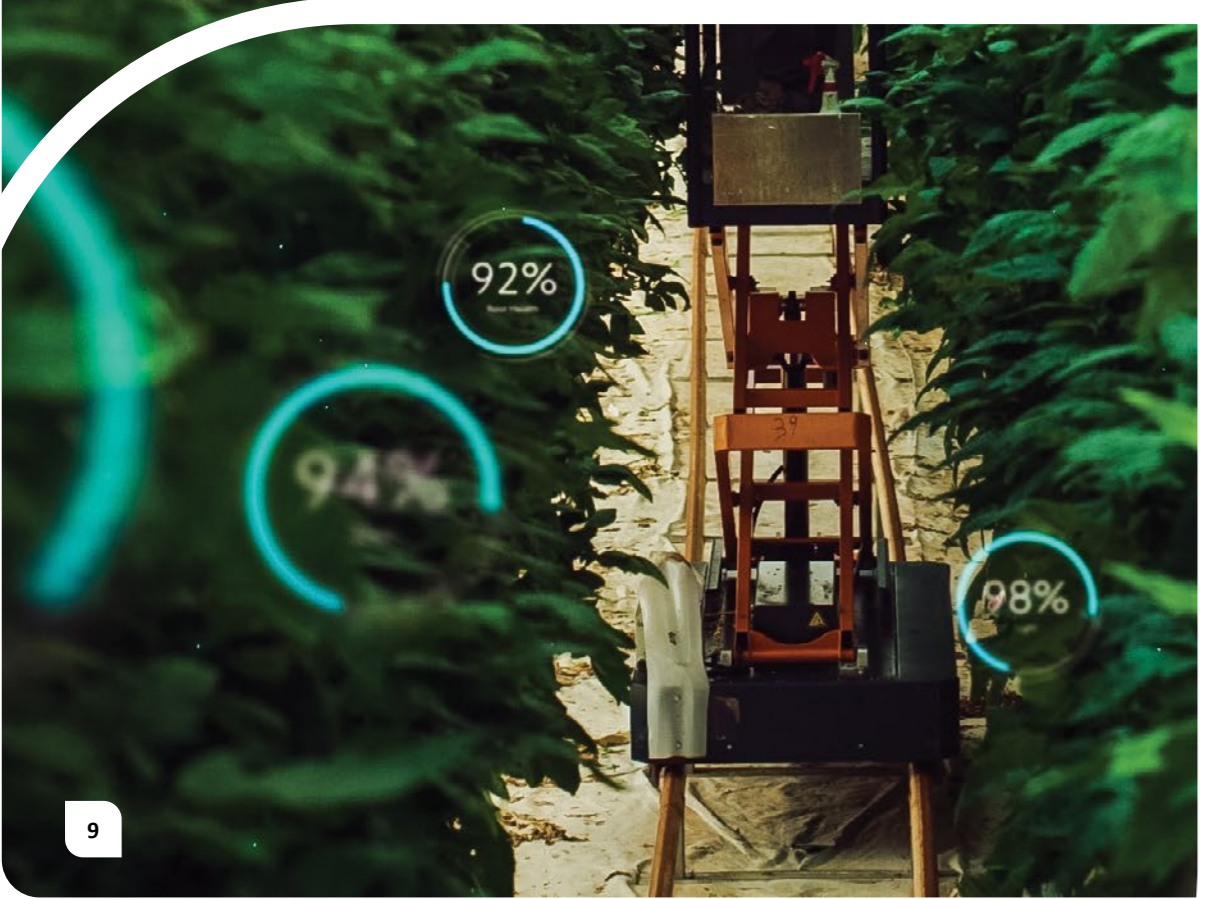


Overseas agriculture counsellor network

The department's agriculture counsellors play a vital role in advancing Australia's trade and market access priorities by promoting our agricultural interests and building strong connections with government and industry stakeholders in international agricultural markets.

Our counsellors are stationed in 16 key locations across the world. They work to increase, improve and maintain market access for Australian agricultural, fisheries and forestry exports, and work bilaterally and multilaterally building positive partnerships to achieve Australia's international trade objectives.

Counsellors, supported by technical experts in Australia, inform and support industry-led efforts to take advantage of trade opportunities, including establishing new markets and pathways, as well as responding rapidly to resolve any issues with existing markets as they arise. A recent independent review of the counsellor network found that industry stakeholders were overwhelmingly supportive of the network and recognised its essential and valuable contribution to Australia's agricultural and food export sectors.



Our role

Our vision, purpose and strategic intent define our role and approach to delivery.

Our department is the lead agency for the agricultural, fisheries and forestry industries in Australia. Our work is central to the health and prosperity of the nation. Our policies and services span and protect the entire supply chain, helping to grow Australia's economy and enable the Australian agricultural sector to produce high-quality, more sustainable products for consumption within Australia and overseas.

We are a national regulator with portfolio responsibilities that include biosecurity and trade. We work in partnership with all levels of government and with local communities. We have scientific and technical expertise, connections with domestic and international stakeholders and important partnerships across the private sector, from small agricultural businesses to multinational enterprises.

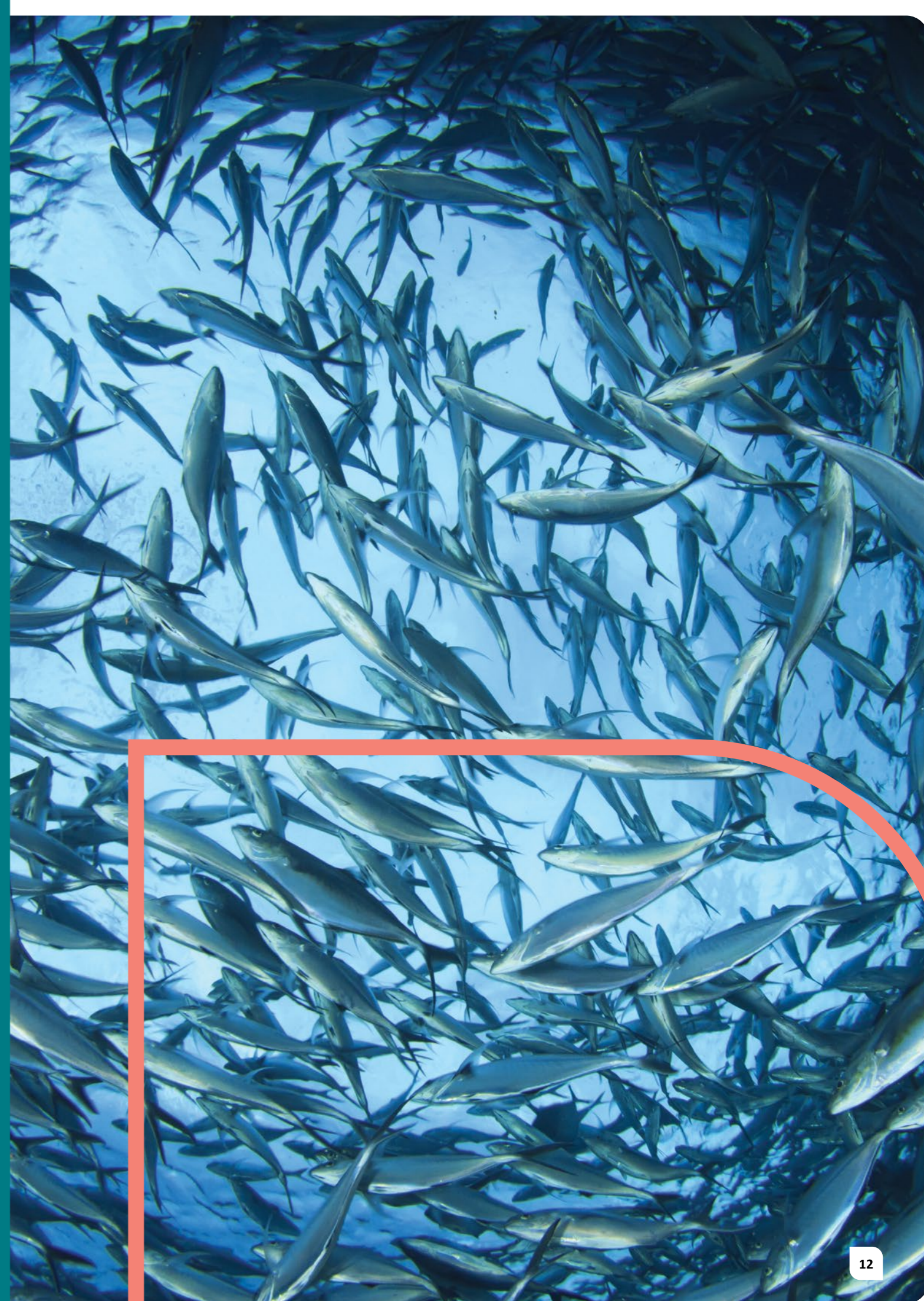
Working together to achieve our vision

We cannot alone meet the challenges of the future and deliver a sustainable and more prosperous Australia. To succeed we must work with the agricultural, fisheries and forestry industries, engaging internationally and drawing on the values and experience of First Nations peoples. We must work in partnership with Australian Government agencies, state, territory and local governments, private and philanthropic sectors, research and academic entities, and communities, particularly in rural and regional Australia.

We work with our portfolio agencies to develop and implement effective policies and provide confidence in regulations relating to biosecurity, resource management, trade and the health and safety of people, animals and the environment.

We build on the knowledge and innovation of Australian farmers and landholders. We work with regional natural resource management groups, non-government organisations, scientists, environmental groups and across the private sector to address some of our greatest challenges, including sustainable resource management. We conduct and use innovative research and technology to build an evidence-driven information base and encourage information sharing. These partnerships are central to our efforts to ensure industries are competitive and sustainable.

We work bilaterally with trading partners to negotiate requirements that enable the efficient international trade of food and fibre products. We work in partnership with our agricultural sector to ensure Australia achieves its full potential as a world-leading, climate-smart producer and exporter.



Supporting the supply chain

Our department plays a vital role supporting export controls and providing the facilitation and regulation services required to export goods from Australia. To support Australia as a trading nation, our department works to maintain our pest- and disease-free status, provide assurance to our trading partners and contribute to inclusive and sustainable economic growth by:

Protecting animal and human health



Regulating plant- and animal-related imports and exports



Growing access to valuable export markets



Helping to meet consumer and regulatory demands



Supporting a strong agricultural workforce

Promoting our climate and sustainability credentials



Supporting the inbound tourism industry

Protecting biosecurity to support production and food security



Providing assistance

for exporting unique Australian products such as First Nations bushfoods as new products to new markets



Our work

Our role as the lead Commonwealth agency for the food and fibre industries in Australia drives how we undertake our work.

Growing Australia together

Our international trading partners are a key element of achieving growth in the agricultural, fisheries and forestry industries. A growing, global, digitally connected middle class presents opportunities for expanding trade, as does meeting and influencing consumer preferences for high-quality, premium food and fibre products. Australian industry is well-placed to capitalise on future opportunities in both domestic and international markets.

Australia's position as a trusted and reliable trading partner is contingent on improving our agricultural sustainability credentials. We work closely with farmers, land managers, First Nations groups, industry and rural communities to support sustainable agriculture and best practice land management.

We regulate within complex global and domestic supply chains. This demands highly integrated data and digital services that generate efficiencies and speed to market. Our export regulatory framework is designed to help trade, providing a transparent and predictable environment for businesses involved in international trade. Cutting red tape leads to more efficient access to information and benefits for exporters, and allows Australia to maintain its competitive edge by building better market intelligence.

We work in close partnership with the agricultural, fisheries and forestry industries to innovate and maintain our international leadership. Adaptation to climatic changes requires continued investment in research and development. Governments, investors and consumers globally are increasingly demanding sustainability credentials in food systems. Australian industries' sustainability credentials will be important to agriculture, fisheries and forestry's continued success and helping the sector achieve a net worth of \$100 billion by 2030.

Addressing resilience and sustainability in partnership

Climate change will affect all industries, particularly those parts of the Australian economy dependent on natural resources, such as agriculture, fisheries and forestry. Adaptation, innovation, and land, water and sea management practices adopted by industry play an important role in building resilience and mitigating the physical impacts of climate change. Australia's farmers, agribusinesses and rural communities face many risks, including droughts, pests and diseases and market disruptions. We work with these industries to manage programs and services that help Australia's producers and their communities prepare for, manage and recover from climate-related events. For example, the Future Drought Fund makes \$100 million available each year to build drought resilience, working with a variety of stakeholders to create change at the farm, community and regional level.

Opportunities to accelerate productivity growth will be important to ensure farmers stay competitive, while adapting to future challenges. This includes continued investment in research and development and practices to help agriculture thrive in a changing climate, along with the uptake of new technologies by farms.

We help provide agricultural communities with the resources they need to connect, protect and drought-proof their environment or infrastructure, and provide essential mental health support.

Working together to support biosecurity

Globalisation has opened doors to growth and opportunity for Australia, but it has also brought more exotic pests and diseases to our doorstep. Australia's biosecurity system is our defence against these threats.

We follow the World Health Organization's One Health approach to sustainably balance and optimise the health of people, animals and ecosystems. We apply this approach to the control of zoonoses – diseases that can pass from animals to humans. Zoonoses include rabies, highly pathogenic avian influenza and COVID-19.

A resilient biosecurity system is central to maintaining our Australian way of life, our environment and our agricultural sector. Risks to biosecurity are becoming more complex and varied. We work together with industry, states and territories, research institutions and other key stakeholders such as the World Organisation for Animal Health, to address the threats to our natural and productive ecosystems. This will help us to achieve our shared vision of a connected, resilient and national biosecurity system for Australia.

Our biosecurity work is also underpinned by a strong science capability. We employ the largest cohort of biosecurity diagnosticians in Australia, encompassing entomology, plant pathology, botany, molecular biology and aquatic biology. We are committed to a risk-based biosecurity system that effectively, efficiently and sustainably protects Australia's health, economic, environmental and national security interests.



Our people: One DAFF

We can only perform our departmental role and activities with the support of our people. As One DAFF, we work together as an integrated whole. We deliver policy, regulation and operations domestically and internationally, maintaining and growing overseas markets.

Our Core 4 values

Our values are embedded in departmental culture, defining the quality of our workforce, and consistently reflected and delivered through our activities. With a diverse and dispersed workforce, we focus on collaboration and the One DAFF approach to our work.

We champion the Australian Public Service Values of being impartial, committed to service, accountable, respectful and ethical. We build on these through our own Core 4 values to ensure a shared understanding of how we work within the department and with our diverse stakeholders and partners to achieve our purpose and objectives.

Our Core 4 values are:



Working together

We look after each other, work as a team and actively engage and collaborate with internal and external stakeholders.



Courage

We innovate, engage with risk and identify and learn from our mistakes.



Diversity

We are inclusive and listen to and draw on expertise.



Excellence

We accept personal responsibility for our work and use data and research to make well-informed decisions.

To deliver on our strategic intent, we are undertaking a transformation program to update and uplift our leadership and culture, capabilities, collaboration, delivery, people and resourcing. This program will ensure that the objectives of the department are forward-facing and aligned to deliver on our new operating model. We will work as One DAFF to grow Australia together.





Spotlights 3

Frontline workers at Australian ports

More than 900 DAFF staff are stationed at Australia's airports, seaports and mail centres across Australia to facilitate the departure of Australian agricultural, food and fibre exports or check incoming consignments for biosecurity risks. They are supported by around 900 technical and policy officers.

Our frontline staff are vital to ensuring the Australian agricultural, fisheries and forestry industries are strong and our environment and heritage are safeguarded from invasive pests and diseases.

Frontline staff are supported by modern technology and our world-class detector dog program, which for over 3 decades has played a key role in strengthening our biosecurity system.

As trade and the number of international travellers increase, the role of our biosecurity teams at airports, seaports and mail pathways becomes even more critical.



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