

## **Expressions of Interest**

### **Develop, Pilot and Host Online tool**

#### **For the Environmental Credentials for Australian Beef project**

MLA is seeking Expressions of Interest from organisations / companies with the capability to develop, pilot and host the digital tool envisaged in the *Environmental Credentials for Australian Beef Project*.

#### **Project background and purpose**

Customers and other industry stakeholders (e.g. processors, wholesalers, beef customers) are increasingly looking for evidence of sustainable production. A challenge for beef producers is how to demonstrate their environmental performance and achieve recognition in the absence of an industry-wide measurement and monitoring system.

*The Environmental Credentials for Australian beef* project must develop a voluntary, environmental sustainability tool accessible to grass-fed beef producers wanting to measure and demonstrate their environmental credentials. This will allow producers to take advantage of emerging opportunities presented by markets and supply chains looking to access red meat with environmental credentials. Sharing credential information with markets will be voluntary. It is also envisaged that producers will be able to voluntarily benchmark their environmental performance.

It is envisaged the online tool will allow producers to demonstrate credentials in five environmental areas and include tree cover, ground cover, biodiversity, carbon balance and drought resilience. The tool must enable measurement and reporting of the credentials and provide pathways to learning resources. Learning resources, based on best practice programs and initiatives will be included to help producers improve their knowledge, apply practices on-farm and support a continual improvement philosophy.

*The Environmental Credentials for Australian beef* project is being delivered by a consortium led by Meat & Livestock Australia, with WWF-Australia and The University of Queensland as partners, and Pinion Advisory engaged as project coordinators.

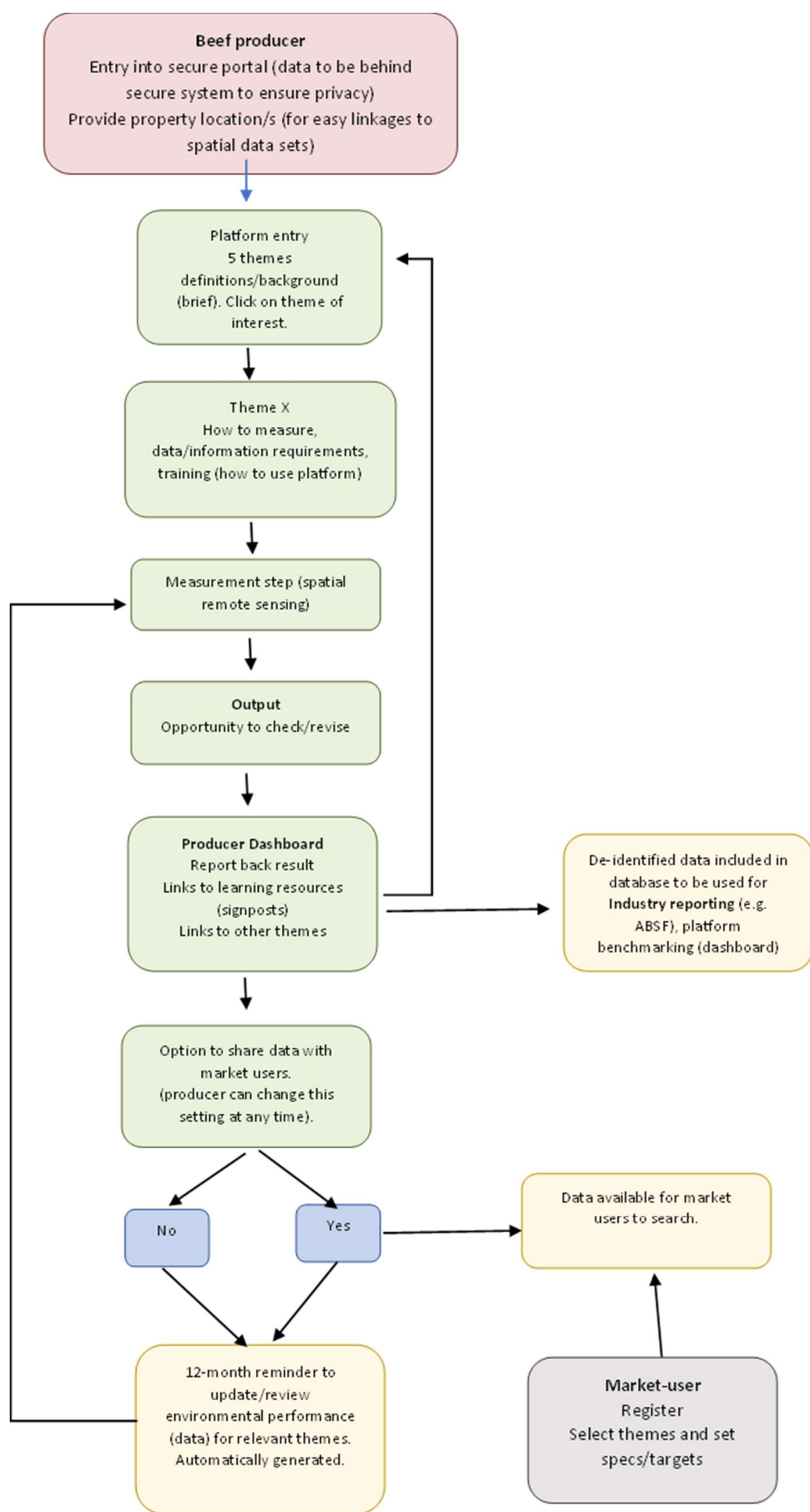
#### **The Opportunity**

MLA is seeking Expressions of Interest from organisations to develop, pilot and host the digital tool. A robust and consistent framework for measuring and monitoring environmental performance on-farm for grass-fed beef producers is currently being developed in collaboration with industry i.e. beef producers and value chain representatives. The main beneficiary and user of the system will be beef producers, however the primary target audience for the credential information generated from the tool will be markets. To enable industry uptake, the framework and a simple but robust verification system needs to be developed and made available to industry via a national online system.

*The environmental credentials for Australian beef* online tool must focus on measuring, monitoring and reporting core environmental performance data to enable producers to:

- benchmark their environmental performance and monitor over-time
- measure, monitor and verify environmental attributes to create environmental credentials
- voluntarily and confidentially share their environmental credentials with markets
- access learning resources

Where possible, the platform should use remote sensing options (e.g. satellite imagery) for measuring environmental performance. Producers must be in control of their own data, which is maintained as confidential, with sharing data a voluntary option. A schematic diagram of the envisaged process is provided below.



A key consideration of product design and functionality will be the linking and attribution of environmental performance monitoring and measurement data to land managed by individual beef businesses. This project needs to identify a solution to enable correct allocation of environmental performance to the appropriate user.

The product development component may require interaction and data sharing between multiple user groups including:

- Grass-fed beef producers
- Beef processors
- Beef Brand owners
- Financial institutions
- Third party, commercial providers e.g. remote sensing data providers, complimentary programs such as the National Biodiversity Stewardship program, or farm management software providers

**The responsibilities and obligations of the successful provider**

- The tool must be developed in line with the scope of the Consortium's original application to the governments National Landcare, Smart Farm Partnerships program. All relevant information will be made available for organisations progressing through to stage 2 of the tender process.
- The tool must be developed and with piloted producers by October 2022.
- The tool will be made freely available to beef producers.
- MLA will require access to data for industry reporting.
- Work with the co-ordination team to deliver on the project plan and ensure all government reporting is complete.

**What we can offer**

The Consortium tasked with delivering the project will provide:

- the environmental credentials framework, qualified and validated by beef producers
- co-ordination assistance
- support with access to networks and communication channels
- funding support

**Requirements for the tender**

This is a two-stage tender process; with the first stage being a expression of interest which will be followed by an opportunity for a briefing meeting to gather sufficient detail to support progression to stage 2.

In the concise expression of interest you should include your organisation's recent experience relevant to the scope of work.

Organisations progressing to stage 2 will prepare a document outlining their team composition, design plan, and project costing. A formal pitch will be made to the project team as part of the stage 2 application.

Adhering to agreed timing is essential for delivery of the work. A product suitable for piloting with beef producers must be available by October 2022.

Contracting: consultants will be contracted under standard MLA Umbrella IT Services Agreement terms. Changes to this contract template will not be accommodated.

IP: MLA owns all Background IP and IP arrangements will be made to enable to project to be completed.

#### **Indicative selection criteria for stage 2 of the tender process**

Applications will be reviewed by relevant MLA Program and Project Managers as well as external and independent reviewers as required.

Proposals will be scored against the selection criteria set out below. Final project approval will be subject to contractual agreement between the applicant/s and MLA.

Selection criteria:

1. Validity of methodology, outputs, and clarity of supporting background information
2. Value for money, including a reasonable and justified budget
3. Demonstrated experience in undertaking work of a similar nature, including a proven willingness to undertake stakeholder engagement with industry stakeholders, technical/subject matter expert experience and communication and/or writing skills.
4. Proposed methodology/ies, including:
  - Timetable of activities and achievements, including major stages and milestones
  - Reporting procedures

#### **Project management**

The project will be managed by MLA. The successful applicant will be guided by a project team consisting of MLA Project Managers and technical managers.

#### **Timelines**

Draft platform scope presented to project team	Mar 2022
Draft platform ready for testing	Jun 2022
Platform pilot phase 1 concludes	Jul 2022
Platform pilot phase 2 concludes	Dec 2022
Platform finalised	30 Mar 2023

**Expressions of interest must be received by 5pm (AEST), 26 November 2021. Please email to project manager Renelle Jeffrey ([rjeffrey@mla.com.au](mailto:rjeffrey@mla.com.au))**

MLA will acknowledge receipt of each application. Applicants will be advised in writing of the outcome of their tender application.