



Working with nature

A landholder's guide to environmental assets and accounting

Environmental assets and ecosystem services

Environmental assets are the natural capital “stocks” on your land — including soil, freshwater, vegetation, and fauna. These assets underpin agricultural productivity, biodiversity, and resilience.

From these assets, flow ecosystem services — the free benefits we receive from nature. These include:

- **Supporting services:** soil formation, photosynthesis, biodiversity, habitat
- **Provisioning services:** clean water, food, fibre, timber
- **Regulating services:** clean air, flood control, carbon storage, pollination
- **Cultural services:** recreation, aesthetics, cultural and educational values

Healthy ecosystems deliver these services consistently and sustainably—but to protect, improve, and benefit from them, they need to be recognised, measured, and reported. Without clear data, it's difficult for landholders to show environmental improvements, attract investment, or access new markets.

This is where natural capital accounting comes in. Natural capital accounting and related

tools provide a credible way to quantify the condition of your natural assets, demonstrate environmental stewardship, and engage with emerging opportunities like biodiversity credits, carbon markets, and sustainability frameworks.



Natural Capital Accounting

Natural capital accounting is the process of systematically measuring and reporting the condition of your environmental assets—such as soil, vegetation, water, and biodiversity—using scientifically credible frameworks. It helps landholders understand how their land is functioning, track changes over time, and demonstrate environmental stewardship in a way that is trusted by markets, investors, and regulators.



Two leading approaches support this process:

Accounting for Nature® Framework

The Accounting for Nature® framework is a scientifically robust method for assessing and reporting the ecological condition of natural assets. Developed by the Wentworth Group of Concerned Scientists, this framework uses a standardised metric called the Environmental Condition Index (ECI), which allows landholders to measure environmental improvements over time.

Key features:

- Focuses on condition, rather than quantity alone
- Provides independent certification of environmental performance
- Suitable for farm-scale, project, or landscape assessments

System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA)

The SEEA is a United Nations-endorsed framework that integrates environmental data with national economic accounts. Unlike Accounting for Nature, SEEA places a monetary value on the ecosystem services provided by natural assets, such as water purification, carbon sequestration, or pollination.

Key features:

- Helps governments and industries understand the economic value of ecosystems
- Supports large-scale policy-making and environmental investment
- Can inform sustainability reporting and land use decisions

Together, these tools give landholders the ability to:

- Track changes in the condition of natural capital
- Support participation in carbon and biodiversity markets
- Strengthen ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) reporting
- Demonstrate environmental outcomes with confidence and credibility

Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) Reporting

Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) reporting is a growing requirement in agriculture, finance, and supply chains. It refers to the process of disclosing how your farming operations impact the environment, contribute to society, and are managed responsibly. ESG performance is increasingly used by investors, markets, and consumers to assess sustainability and long-term value.

For landholders, ESG reporting provides a way to demonstrate good stewardship and meet the expectations of sustainability-driven buyers and programs.

Key ESG components include:

- Environmental: Measures such as biodiversity, soil health, emissions, water use, and land condition
- Social: Contributions to local communities, employment, cultural values, and engagement
- Governance: Transparent decision-making, risk management, ethical land management practices



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With natural capital accounting as a foundation, ESG reporting becomes more robust and aligned with global expectations—opening doors to certification schemes, sustainability-linked finance, and environmental market participation.

NaturePlus™

NaturePlus™ is an emerging biodiversity credit system designed to reward landholders for on-ground conservation and restoration efforts. It provides a practical way for farmers and land managers to be recognised, and potentially paid, for protecting and improving native vegetation and habitat.

Credits are generated through verified actions that enhance biodiversity on the land, such as restoring degraded areas, conserving remnant vegetation, or improving habitat for native species. These credits can be sold or used to demonstrate sustainability performance in reporting frameworks.

NaturePlus™ is underpinned by Accounting for Nature® science and standards, ensuring that each credit reflects real, measurable improvements in environmental condition.

Key features:

- 1 NaturePlus™ Credit = 1 hectare of actively managed biodiversity outcomes
- Developed by GreenCollar and administered by Accounting for Nature®
- Currently in pilot stage, with programs operating Australia-wide
- Supports participation in emerging biodiversity markets and sustainability initiatives

NaturePlus™ offers landholders a new pathway to generate income, enhance environmental stewardship, and engage with market-based conservation opportunities.

Want to learn more?

Watch our webinar featuring experts from ECOTEC and Envirodynamics to learn about environmental accounting tools, real-world case studies, and how to apply these frameworks to your property.

Visit: <https://bit.ly/naturalcapitalwebinar>



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