Global Farm Metric
A common language for measuring on-farm sustainability

www.globalfarmmetric.org
The challenge

Over half of our habitable land is now farmed to feed a global food production system and supply chain. What happens on these farms will determine our future health, biodiversity and climate.

However, there are barriers that prevent farmers from becoming a driver of positive change.

There is no common way to measure the impact of farming and land-use from a whole-farm perspective.

This makes it hard for farmers to know the impact they are having on their land and therefore how to make improvements.

Environmental, social and economic impacts are often considered in isolation, giving rise to unintended consequences. The pursuit of a single outcome in isolation, such as carbon reduction or biodiversity gain, can come at a cost to other parts of the system.

Lack of a global framework has hindered the creation of a common language that can give farmers, government, the public, food companies and the financial sector access to a reliable baseline of on-farm data.

We urgently need farmers to measure their whole-farm impacts in a rigorous and consistent way to accelerate the transition to more sustainable food and farming systems.
A whole-farm framework

The Global Farm Metric is a common framework to assess whole-farm sustainability that draws on environmental, social and economic data from the farm. It provides a single set of categories, indicators and measures that can be applied to all farming systems and landscapes.

The framework is formed of 11 categories of sustainability, each containing three indicators (see opposite). This provides a complete view of the farm’s impacts, so none are considered in isolation and farmers are better equipped to mitigate negative impacts can be mitigated.

The data collected establishes a baseline that identifies key impact areas and the public goods being delivered. This can be used to inform farming practices and monitor change.

**The framework has been created and tested by farmers, making it practical and feasible to use.**
The Global Farm Metric recognises the diversity of all farming systems, capturing only the most relevant environmental, social and economic data. It is built on robust scientific evidence verified by experts in the farming and research community.

Outcomes based

The Global Farm Metric assesses sustainability beyond farming methods alone. It extends the scope of assessment to more accurately identify environmental, social and economic outcomes. This enables monitoring of progress towards positive change and Sustainable Development Goals at a local, national and international scale.

Achieving our climate goals is dependent on everyone being able to do better.
A common language

The Global Farm Metric is a coalition of over 50 partners, including farming and environment groups, certifiers, food companies, financial services and government.*

Together we have created a common language that can align existing frameworks and connect all food system stakeholders around the world.

This common language enables farmers to understand their whole-farm impacts and benchmark their progress; governments to consistently measure, monitor and support the delivery of public goods; the financial and food industry to invest more sustainably; and the public to make more informed choices.

The Global Farm Metric is not a new certification, audit or assurance scheme. It is to be adopted by everyone and embedded into existing schemes, specialist tools and reporting systems that measure on-farm impacts.

The Global Farm Metric maps onto the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It is relevant to and supportive of 16 of the 17 SDGs, and 94 of the 169 SDG targets.

This collective action can drive positive change to accelerate the transition towards more sustainable food and farming systems.

*Please see page 11 for more on our coalition.
Driving change

The Global Farm Metric drives positive action using more than knowledge alone. It enables shared understanding, a supporting policy and economic environment, public awareness, and consumer demand.

For farmers to be a driver of positive change, they must be rewarded for improving their sustainability. By providing a whole-farm framework to understand, monitor and reduce impacts, farmers can evidence and improve the production of nutritious food, growth of natural capital and delivery of public goods. This data can be used to support consistent sourcing and investment by the financial industry and food businesses, as well as establish a baseline of data to inform direct payment schemes.

For citizens to mobilise consumer power, we need consistent and comparable information. A common language enables transparency and accountability across the supply chain. It can be used on food labelling to inform consumer choice by raising awareness of whole-farm sustainability.

For farming to be part of the solution, governments must create an enabling policy environment and monitor progress at farm level.

A baseline of on-farm data can be aggregated to track change at a local, national and international scale. This can provide information to monitor progress towards sustainability goals and provide data for evidence-based agriculture and trade policy.

Features of the GFM

- **WHOLE-FARM**
  - Measures environmental, social and economic impacts
- **COMMON LANGUAGE**
  - A baseline of data for all food and farming stakeholders
- **DRIVES CHANGE**
  - Enables collective action for nature, climate and health
- **INDEPENDENT**
  - Enables transparency and accountability
- **INCLUSIVE**
  - Open source and applicable to all farming systems and landscapes
- **EVIDENCE & OUTCOMES BASED**
  - Grounded in data and built on scientific evidence
- **PRACTICAL**
  - Developed by farmers, for farmers
- **ALIGNED**
  - Compatible with other frameworks

Measuring on-farm sustainability
The Global Farm Metric is a growing coalition of organisations from across the global food and farming sector. We are working together to establish a common language and framework for on-farm sustainability. These are some of the organisations that have been driving the conversation.
Get involved

To join a trial, join the coalition, use the framework or find out more, contact: info@globalfarmmetric.org

You can also visit the website: www.globalfarmmetric.org

Find us on social media: @GFMCoalition
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