

Hello and welcome to our latest eNews, 'Sustainability Bites'

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# Sustainability Bites

## SAI Platform Australia

#5  
November 2018

### Hello and welcome

Welcome to our fifth e-newsletter *Sustainability Bites*. The Sustainable Agriculture Initiative (SAI) Platform Australia brings together agricultural organisations that operate in Australia and seek to collaborate on sustainability initiatives.

These initiatives help to ensure our food remains among the best in the world, and our agricultural practices are able to increasingly provide for future generations.

*Sustainability bites* will update you on what's happening in sustainable agriculture. [We're also on twitter](#), so follow us for the latest.

That's it for now,

Jack Holden  
SAI Platform Australia President

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## Stories from SAI Australia





## SAI Members and Supporters meet to tackle sustainability challenges

SAI Platform Australia Members and Supporters met in Melbourne at the Melbourne Business School in November to advance their understanding of sustainability challenges and improve their ability to tackle those challenges.

The meeting featured a Forum with the University of Melbourne Faculty of Veterinary and Agricultural Sciences and the Melbourne Business School (see photos above and item below). The meeting included the Annual General Meeting of the Platform - congratulations to the following Office Bearers and Committee who were elected:

President: Jack Holden (Fonterra)

Vice- President: Julia Seddon (Inghams)

Treasurer: Heidi Hansen (Tassal)

Secretary: Selwyn Heilbron

Committee members: Helen Dornom (Dairy Australia), Michael Anderson (Goodman Fielder), Christine Kelly (Nufarm).

The meeting also featured the following:

- An update on our Collaborative projects underway or planned - see more about this below
- A session on steps to deepen our Chapter's engagement with the Global Platform
- Our standing item Roundtable on sustainability issues facing members, which is a key learning opportunity for our members.



## Sustainable Business Forum

The Platform held a Sustainable Business Forum with University of Melbourne Faculty of Veterinary and Agricultural Sciences and Melbourne Business School at the Melbourne Business School 200 Leicester Street, Carlton.

Around 40 guests were invited to take their seats by Julia Seddon from SAI Platform and Inghams who welcomed everyone and introduced the Forum, the theme being: The unique role of business in addressing sustainable agriculture challenges into the future. Julia spoke about what SAI Platform is all about: collaboration, learning and projects across the supply chain, and introduced the speakers.

Professor Richard Eckard, Faculty of Veterinary and Agricultural Sciences, University of Melbourne; Director, Primary Industries Climate Challenges Centre spoke about the key scientific issues for sustainable agriculture production systems, and the roles of sustainable intensification under climate change.

A copy of Richard's comprehensive presentation will be available in the members only area of the Platform website.

Jack Holden, SAI Platform and Fonterra presented on Fonterra's initiatives in addressing sustainability challenges and bringing about change, focussing on incentives for farmer suppliers introduced by Fonterra to encourage change, and the new Unilever ice-cream being promoted as using sustainable cream.

Assoc. Prof Vivek Chaurhri, Academic Director, Executive MBA Programs, Melbourne Business School provided a thought-provoking talk on strategic approach to sustainability in business and what needs to be done in future, focussing on the role played by technology, markets, governments in developing sustainable solutions.

Assoc. Prof Gregory Harper, Business Development Director, Faculty of Veterinary and Agricultural Sciences, University of Melbourne thanked everyone and overviewed the event.

It was agreed following the event that the Platform would engage with the University and the Business School in developing collaborative project initiatives.

A video recording was made of the Forum and this will be available soon.

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## Members leading the way



### **SAI Collaborative Projects Underway**

SAI Platform Australia members have collaborating on a number of projects as part of the Platform's Plan for 2018 and more are planned for 2019.

One of these is an investigation into economic sustainability which is focusing on the concept of eco-system services. In many countries, there are agri-environmental (or ecosystem) services programs that use public funds to pay for the external public impacts generated by agriculture. These are not subsidies like payments that support farmers incomes through higher prices for farm products. While the farmer gets paid for these services the whole supply chain beyond the farm gate benefits from the positive externalities generated (or negative externalities avoided). The Platform has advancing understanding of this concept through the networks of its members. Watch out for further developments in this space.

Another project concerns nutrition and sustainability. Sustainability is increasingly being incorporated into nutritional Guidelines with major implications for food producers. Our next General Meeting will focus on this development and its potential impact on our members with an invited expert's presentation and analysis.

Other projects include: compliance with modern slavery legislation; recognition of farmers' sustainability initiatives by finance service providers; and consistency of the SAI Platform Guidelines on sustainable supply chains with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.



### Members and Supporters Sustainability Initiatives

Our member **Mars Petcare's** sustainable wheat initiative offers drought-stricken farmers new insights. Record-breaking is one word to describe the current drought in Australia. Last September was the driest on record. For farmers in the state of New South Wales, the wheat crop is forecast to produce less than a third of the average annual yield. It's the toughest cropping season for many years. It was against this backdrop that Mars Petcare accepted the invitation to present its Australian Cool Farm Initiative at the Riverine Plains open day in September. Riverine Plains is a farmer association in north-east Victoria and southern New South Wales, Australia. Around 90 farmers attended the open day, held on a farm in Victoria that's home to test plots for productivity improvement.

Juliette Caulkins, Mars Petcare Global Senior Sustainable Sourcing Manager, and Cassie Scheffe, Cool Farm Initiative Soil Scientist, presented the project. "We explained how the initiative can help wheat farmers improve farm soil health through better data," says Juliette. "Healthier soil increases productivity and crop resilience. But it also captures carbon, which lowers greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Together with Sarah Heazlewood, Mars Petcare APAC Grains Sourcing Manager, Juliette and Cassie spoke with farmers. They discussed farming challenges and how the Cool Farm Initiative can help. Next, Cassie will visit interested farms to showcase the project. "Last year, we successfully completed a project demonstration pilot. Now it's time to get more farmers involved. That's why we attended the open day," summarizes Juliette. "Farmers are pleased to see companies acknowledging their difficulties. Mars stands out because the Cool Farm Initiative benefits farmers with better scientific farm data as well as helping the company achieve its Sustainable in a Generation targets.



### Members reports on sustainability

- Our member Australian Eggs and the CSIRO released the CSIRO Australian Egg Industry Community Research Report. The report has been prepared by the CSIRO as a key input to the development of the Australian Eggs Sustainability Framework. The report is available for download [here](#). Australian Eggs will now review the findings in the CSIRO report and progress the development of the Sustainability Framework which is expected to be released in February.
- Our member Tassal has just released its latest Sustainability Report. You can find a copy [here](#).
- Our member Nufarm has just released its latest Sustainability

Report. You can find a copy [here](#).

## SAI Global

The SAI Platform Australia is part of the global [SAI Platform](#) with a rich tradition of [supporting sustainable agriculture](#). A number of our global activities are coming up.

### What's happening around the world?

- SAI Platform's 2019 Annual Event will take place in the Midwest, US (location To be confirmed). This 'must attend' event will include learning and sharing opportunities, offering an exciting menu of insightful field trips, interactive conference, SAI Platform showcase, engaging networking, and concluding with our General Assembly. Watch out for more details on the programme, logistics and registrations soon.
- SAI Platform is holding a two-day interactive Crops Workshop in the USA addressing local sustainability needs while sharing and learning about the advantages of using SAI Platform's Farm Sustainability Assessment and Spotlight collaboration tools (see Events below).

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## Events

### SAI Platform Crops Workshop

31 January-1 February 2019

Dallas, Texas

[See info here](#)

### SAI Platform Annual Event

26-29 June 2019

Midwest USA (location to be confirmed)

[See info here](#)

### Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems Summit

26-28 September 2019

Berlin, Germany

[See info here](#)

***For more information about the Platform or to inquire about membership see our website:***

[SAI Platform Australia](#)



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