

The Emissions Reduction Fund now has new methods available for carbon farming projects.

Following public consultation, 10 Carbon Farming Initiative methods transitioned to the Emissions Reduction Fund on 1 July 2015. These methods have been updated to ensure they are consistent with the Emissions Reduction Fund legislation, easy to use and streamlined.

There has been no reduction in the scope of activities eligible under the Emissions Reduction Fund as a result of the transition process: an increasing range of methods are now available to capture emissions reduction opportunities across the economy.

Details of the transitioned and revoked methods are available on the Department of the Environment website.

One new method that is available for use and of interest to Wheatbelt farmers is estimating sequestration of carbon in soil using default values method. A model-based soil carbon project stores carbon in soils on agricultural land by introducing specific management actions that increase inputs of carbon to the soil, reduce loss of carbon from the soil, or both.

The method requires at least one of the following specific land management actions to be undertaken:

- sustainable intensification, requiring management actions such as nutrient management, new irrigation, managing soil acidity or pasture renovation
- stubble retention, where crop residue that was previously removed through burning or baling is retained in field, and
- conversion to pasture, where land under continuous cropping is permanently converted to pasture.

The model-based soil carbon method is an alternative to the sequestering carbon in soils in grazing systems method, which applies to projects in grazing systems where changes in soil carbon stocks are estimated through direct measurement. The model-based soil carbon method estimates changes in soil carbon on agricultural land using default soil carbon enhancement values that were derived from FullCAM modelling and are provided in the CFI Mapping Tool. Together the two methods offer participants the option to select the approach that best suits the circumstances of their project.

For more information on these methods and how to participate in carbon farming come and see Jo at the Wheatbelt NRM and WANTFA kitchen table in the Dyson Jones Wool & Technology Pavilion