

RECOGNITION FOR IMPROVED LAND MANAGEMENT

# Certified Land Management



## Enabling improvement

The Certified Land Management (CLM) program assists land managers to improve land and animal welfare management in ways that improve profitability, reduce risks and enables their achievements to be recognised and rewarded. This combination of improved productivity and recognition is unique to CLM.

Changing community and market expectations about how our food is produced presents opportunities for Australia's progressive land managers and farmers.

Those who take these opportunities will position themselves locally and globally as the preferred providers of food, fibre, landscape and biodiversity products. There is no better way to do this than by using the Certified Land Management (CLM) program.

With CLM, consumers and communities can confidently connect with improved land and animal welfare management.



## Relevant to all land managers

CLM operates across industries on a whole-of-farm and landscape-linked basis. This avoids the fragmentation and duplication of industry-by-industry approaches.

CLM applies across all land management systems. It is applicable for instance across set stocking or time controlled grazing and across conventional, conservation, organic, biological, natural sequence, key line or asset or resilience based land management. CLM avoids the prescription and fragmentation embedded in best management practice based approaches.

CLM provides ongoing support and benefits to land managers.

CLM was conceived and is managed by the independent not-for-profit Australian Land Management Group (ALMG).

## What land managers do

**Step 1.** Attend a **CLM Information Session**. While not essential, most land managers do this as they find the two-hour session a good opportunity for finding out more about CLM and how it might apply to their situation. It enables land managers to make an informed decision as to whether CLM is for them.

**Step 2.** Participate in a two-day **CLM Start Workshop**. The Start Workshop is made up of:

- > **A diagnostic** activity to identify opportunities to improve environmental and animal welfare management and productivity and profitability. To do this CLM trainers work with landholders using a specially designed web-based software package that complies with internationally recognised management processes.

- > **A response** activity to develop practical strategies to improve land management and animal welfare. This also is guided by a CLM trainer. Each landholder develops a CLM Management Plan customised for their particular needs and capabilities. The emphasis at this point is on soil and plant function and/or biodiversity. These issues are basic to production and conservation. Technical specialists are available to help landholders develop, implement and monitor these strategies. These are very informative and rewarding sessions. For instance, we have an alliance with SystemAg Consulting to understand and improve soil and plant function with significant productivity and environmental benefits. The emphasis here is on getting tangible outcomes-better production, better environments, better recognition.

Immediately after the CLM Start Workshop landholders begin to **implement** their CLM Management Plan. In part this involves soil and possibly plant monitoring.

**Step 3.** Participate in a one-day **CLM Review Workshop** about six months after the CLM Start Workshop. After this, the Review Workshop is done once every three years or more frequently if requested by landholders. The purpose of the Review Workshop is to refine and add to the original CLM Management Plan and to ensure the land manager complies with the ALMG process requirements for certification.

**Step 4** Having an on-farm inspection at about the time of each Review Workshop to check progress in implementing the CLM Management Plan.

At any time after the Start Workshop there will be the opportunity for **Focus Field Days** to improve knowledge and skills on topics of relevance to particular ALMG Landholder Groups.

## Certification

To obtain certification, an accredited ALMG auditor assesses an annual landholder report and the outcomes of the CLM Review Activity. Based on this, CLM certification can be awarded.

The CLM certificate verifies that the land manager is continuously improving environmental and animal welfare outcomes and that the management system:

- > operates across all activities operating on the land for which the certificate applies
- > takes account of landscape-wide environmental considerations
- > provides support for biodiversity conservation, and
- > complies with the internationally accepted ISO14001 management standard





## What ALMG does at what cost

The benefits of doing CLM need to outweigh the costs. On one hand the benefits come from the review, planning and implementation steps and on the other from the certification itself. Our experience to date indicates that benefits come from improved property management, reduced risk, better access to project funding, interaction with like-minded landholders and from improved self-satisfaction and community recognition. Over time we seek improved market access and price benefits.

The CLM Start and Review Workshops cover:

- > Use of the CLM system and the myEMS web-based management software
- > Use of an extensive bank of environmental and animal welfare information
- > Search of relevant legislation using the legislative tool in the myEMS software
- > Four days of input from an accredited trainer and inputs from an approved technical adviser
- > Use of a computer training facility if required
- > Provision of a monitoring manual and various support documents
- > Certification and a CLM gate sign

The CLM Workshop Fee covers the cost to landholders from the beginning of the CLM Start Workshop to the end of the first Review Workshop. This fee varies greatly depending on the number of landholders involved, location and the extent of technical advice. However \$1,250 plus GST per business would be a ball-park figure for a group of 6 to 10 landholders.

In each calendar year after the first Review Workshop there is an annual CLM Service Fee currently set at \$300 plus GST per business. This fee covers continued use of the CLM system and the myEMS web-based management software, an annual audit, the audit being on-farm at least once every 3 years, a Review Workshop once every three years and receipt of the ALMG VOICES newsletter and the CLM landholder Peaks & Troughs newsletter. The ALMG newsletters highlight ALMG activities, environmental and animal welfare information and the activities of CLM landholders.

Subject to there being an acceptable audit there is an annual Certification Fee graded according to the gross value of production from the land for which the certification applies. There is a minimum certification fee of \$150 grading up to, for instance, \$500 for a gross income of between \$500,000 and \$1 million. This fee reflects the value of the certification and covers work undertaken by ALMG to:

- > Market CLM to improve the number of participating landholders and hence potentially the benefits to all participating landholders
- > Work with public and private sector organizations and individuals who might partner with CLM landholders

Costs to participating landholders are subject to periodic review by the ALMG Board. Costs to landholders do not include all ALMG overheads these being substantially supported by Elders, an ALM Group Foundation Partner.

## Benefits

CLM delivers a range of benefits to landholders, NRM and industry organisations, operators along product chains and to the community more broadly.

**For landholders.** The power of the CLM approach comes from; learning with other landholders about how to increase the all-important plant-soil interaction, using specially designed software to help identify risks and opportunities, and from the unique advantage of being able to deliver certification based on internationally recognised standards. The result is that not only is there an enhanced capacity to improve productivity, risk management and environmental outcomes but to do it in a way that could lead to additional benefits coming from, for instance, improved self esteem, community recognition, product differentiation, market access and support from catchment/natural resource management agencies.

CLM can help landholders reduce legal risks and insurance and finance costs. Significant social and business benefits flow from family and business partners working together and with other landholders. In the longer term CLM reduces the risk of having multiple systems imposed by wholesalers and retailers and/or by regionally or catchment management/natural resource management agencies.

**For NRM and industry organisations.** The key benefits of CLM for NRM and industry organisations come from having landholders explicitly contributing to meeting landscape and industry wide priorities and strategies, through sharing the cost of promoting environmental improvement and through reduction in the overhead, administrative and auditing costs of standalone short-term project based programs. CLM produces verified outcomes so industry can substantiate claims of 'green'.

**For participants along product chains.** Product chain participants benefit from product differentiation, from avoiding the costs of having multiple industry/product certification systems and from reduced kick-back from consumers confused by and sceptical of environmental claims.

**For the community.** The community benefits because of the increased effectiveness and efficiency of expenditure on improving land and animal welfare management. Because CLM focuses on improving the impacts of land managers, it avoids the treadmill inherent in remedial programs.

# Achievements

**Benefits delivered.** Landholders tell us that the CLM benefits are diverse and of varying importance.

Participating landholders list the following benefits:

- > Improved land management leading to improved production and conservation
- > Lower input costs due to better management and monitoring
- > Lower insurance and financing costs
- > Marketing benefits, in terms of access, information flow and price premium
- > Improved access to NRM funding
- > Enhanced capacity to negotiate for instance with mining companies
- > Strengthened self esteem
- > Reduced risk of chemical spills and associated accidents
- > Opportunity to share experiences with other landholders and with ALM Group accredited trainers and auditors
- > Improved communication within the business, particularly important for larger operators

**Recognition.** Just some of our achievements to date include:

- > Continuing, strong and essential support from our Foundation Partner, Elders Ltd and preferential funding support for landholders with CLM from the Queensland Murray-Darling Committee Inc.
- > Substantial financial support from the giant textile corporations, Onward Kashiya (Japan) and Cheil Industries (South Korea) facilitated through Australian Wool Innovation Ltd.
- > Price support for wool growers with CLM from The Merino Company (TMC)
- > An award for excellence in NRM training from the South Australia FarmBis program
- > A CLM landholder receiving the 2008 national Landcare landholder award.
- > A CLM landholder winning the national EMS award in 2009.
- > An event in 2009 to profile CLM hosted by the Queensland Governor, The Hon. Penelope Wensley AC.

There is more work to be done to reward improving land management. No other land management system however goes anywhere near the track record that CLM has in the breadth and depth of recognition and reward.

## The way forward

The way forward was well articulated by David Crombie in his November 2010 farewell address as President National Farmers' Federation:

*'Our biggest task is to maintain the trust of the wider community. Trust in the quality of our food and fibre and trust in the ethics and the integrity of how we produce it. I see a future where our farmers will be valued for their production of food and respected for their environmental delivery.'*

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