



EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Assessment of the Carbon Regulatory Framework for North Queensland's Plantation and Farm Forestry industry.

Key EOI Information

The North Queensland Regional Forestry Hub is seeking Expressions of Interest (EOI) from individuals and organisations interests in assisting Hub members undertake an assessment of the Emissions Reduction Fund's Regulatory Framework for North Queensland's Forestry industry

If you believe that your expertise satisfies the requirements outlined in this document, please complete, and submit an Expression of Interest (EOI).

Closing date for the EOI submission: 25/07/2022

Email your EOI to: Hulton King – Hub Manager h.king@nqfh.com.au

Once submitted, your EOI will be considered by the Hub Committee. If the proposal is deemed acceptable for consideration, a Hub representative will contact you to discuss your proposal.

1. Introduction

The Queensland forest and timber industry makes a significant economic contribution to the State, supporting more than 25,000 direct and indirect jobs, as well as contributing more than \$3.2 billion to the state economy. Many of these jobs are in rural and regional areas across the State.

In September 2018, the Australian Government launched the National Forest Industries Plan: Growing a Better Australia – A Billion Trees for Jobs and Growth. The Plan outlines the Commonwealth Government's strategy to drive growth in the renewable timber and wood fibre industry. It supports the sustainable forest industries as long-term growth engines for regional Australia. The Plan ambitiously aims to deliver a billion new trees over the next decade (including 400,000 new hectares of plantations nationally) to meet a projected fourfold increase in global demand for timber and wood fibre products by 2050. This translates to planting the right trees, at the right scale, in the right places. The Federal Government has subsequently funded Hubs in Southwest Western Australia, South Australia, and Victoria (The Green Triangle); North and Northwest Tasmania; Northeast New South Wales; Central West New South Wales; Southwest Slopes New South Wales; Gippsland Victoria; Southeast Queensland; and North Queensland.

The North Queensland Regional Forestry Hub is assessing priority issues to determine the technical issues, needs and opportunities to progress growth. The Hub is seeking to fund projects that will help grow our forest industry through improved investor returns, smarter management and utilisation of

forestry resources, traditional owner engagement, as well as a renewed community understanding and engagement in forestry.

2. Project Justification

Queensland is home to 41% of Australia's forests. The state has the most forested land area in the country, with 52.5 million hectares of native forests and 233,000 hectares of plantations. Most of Queensland's timber comes from mature softwood plantations dominated by exotic pine and native hoop pine.¹ Across Northern Australia you can find approximately 15,000ha of softwood (mainly *Pinus caribaea*) plantation in Far North Queensland (e.g. around Mareeba), approximately 1,500ha of teak (*Tectona grandis*) plantation (Qld), approximately 13,000ha of African mahogany (*Khaya senegalensis*) plantations (NT) and an estimated 500ha of red mahogany (*Eucalyptus pellita*) plantations, all intended primarily for higher-value, solid wood products.²

The Queensland timber industry recognises that a well-managed plantation forestry and farm forestry projects registered under the Emission Reduction Fund's Carbon Farming Initiative could assist the industry in meeting projected fourfold increase in demand for timber and wood fibre products by 2050.

The Hub is seeking an assessment of the regulatory barriers and opportunities for plantation forestry in North Queensland to access carbon markets via the Emission Reduction Fund (ERF) carbon farming methodologies and activities.

By developing a guidance framework, the Hub will be able to provide clarity to industry stakeholders regarding current ERF project options and obligations. Various regulatory thresholds and barriers for entry, as well as projected returns and management obligations are currently not well understood across the Hub Region's industry stakeholders.

3. Project Scope

This project is intended to investigate the barriers and opportunities within the ERF regulatory framework for registering plantation and farm forestry projects under the relevant ERF and Carbon Farming Initiative (CFI) methodologies, for both existing and future potential plantation forestry investment in the Hub Region.

The Hub is seeking a Report and associated Factsheets across bioregions to assist Hub stakeholders in utilising ERF carbon farming opportunities when developing and managing their forestry resources. The report should consider the options and pathways for both large-scale commercial plantations, as well as smaller private landholders, looking to establish ERF projects for new or established plantation activities.

In addition to the barriers and opportunities for entry, the framework should include future obligations and timelines pertaining to the management of plantation forestry activities, in line with all regulatory requirements.

¹ Timber Queensland

² CRCNA - Northern forestry and forest products situational analysis <https://crcna.com.au/file-download/download/public/400>

4. Methodology

The project/s in scope should identify and discuss the following key components when developing the Report and associated Guidance Document:

Report:

1. The existing opportunities and barriers for incorporating ERF plantation or farm forestry projects on both private and leasehold property within the Hub Region, including (but not limited to):
 - Legislative and regulatory barriers under the ERF framework for new plantation investment, and at other levels of government (Federal, State, Local), including:
 - rules and requirements under the ERF (e.g. cleared land eligibility, definition of forest, the so called 600mm 'water rule');
 - state level vegetation management requirements (e.g. Queensland *Vegetation Management Act 1999*);
 - reporting obligations under all levels of government related to the ERF management (e.g., Clean Energy Regulator);
 - Relationship to state or local carbon farming schemes, such as the Queensland Land Restoration Fund (LRF);
 - Requirements and obligations under FullCAM³.
 - A list of all existing ERF/CFI plantation and farm forestry projects (including carbon offset revegetation projects and their attributes) in the Hub region.
 - A list of all current ERF methodologies relevant and applicable to plantation forestry and farm forestry activities for wood production in the Hub region.
 - Assistance schemes and programs that could complement the carbon regulatory framework for new plantation and farm forestry investment within the Hub region (e.g. newly announced federal subsidy scheme for plantation establishment costs).
2. Identification of future potential ERF plantation or farm forestry projects on both private and leasehold property within the Hub Region, if certain barriers identified in component 1 of the report (above) are mitigated or removed.

Guidance Documents:

3. Factsheets concisely summarising the identified barriers and opportunities for ERF plantation forestry project or farm forestry projects, respectively.

The project is expected to be completed using a combination of desk research and in-person or remote stakeholder consultation. All three project components (described above) could be delivered as part of a single consulting project or as separate projects by various consultants.

LGAs covered by the Hub include:

Aurukun Shire Council	Hinchinbrook Shire Council	Northern Peninsula Area Regional Council
Burdekin Shire Council	Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council	Pormpuraaw Aboriginal Shire Council
Burke Shire Council		
Cairns Regional Council		

³ <https://www.industry.gov.au/data-and-publications/full-carbon-accounting-model-fullcam>

Carpentaria Shire Council	Kowanyama Aboriginal Shire Council	Richmond Shire Council
Cassowary Coast Regional Council	Lockhart River Aboriginal Shire Council	Tablelands Regional Council
Charters Towers Regional Cook Shire Council	McKinlay Shire Council	Torres Shire Council
Croydon Shire Council	Mackay Regional Council	Torres Strait Island Regional Council
Doomadgee Aboriginal Shire Council	Mapoon Aboriginal Shire Council	Townsville City Council
Douglas Shire Council	Mapoon Aboriginal Shire Council	Whitsunday Regional Council
Etheridge Shire Council	Mareeba Shire Council	Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council
Flinders Shire Council	Mornington Shire Council	Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council
	Napranum Aboriginal Shire Council	

Consultation with businesses, state and municipal governments, and other relevant stakeholders, as well as local communities, is required for the project. Stakeholder interviews and/or consultation workshops must be done at least once during the report development process.

5. Project Deliverables

Key deliverables include the completion of the following at the satisfaction of the Hub Committee:

- Detailed project plan, including stakeholder identification and consultation methodology is completed by applicant
- Final report and associated factsheets finalised and presented to the Hub Committee before project completion.

6. Project Timeline

The project is scheduled to being in July/Aug, and be completed within 3 months.

7. Indicative Budget

This project comes with a **\$50,000** indicative budget cutoff for all applications.

8. Selection Criteria

The Hub will select the successful applicant for the report based on evaluation of all submitted proposals against the following criteria.

CRITERIA 1: Capabilities and expertise in producing technical reports

To address this selection criterion, the expression of interest should describe the following:

- Applicant's ability to produce high quality technical reports (e.g. related experience preparing reports for alternate clients)

- Contact details of two previous clients for which the applicant has produced similar reports, including company position, telephone, and email address, that the Hub can contact as referees
- Examples of any publicly or commercially available reports that the applicant has produced

CRITERIA 2: Capabilities and expertise in working across Carbon Markets and/or projects under the ERF.

To address this selection criterion, the expression of interest should describe the following:

- Applicant's experience, skills and capabilities relating to the project's scoping requirements identified in Item 3 above
- Examples of any publicly available reports that the applicant has produced related Carbon Markets and Projects under the ERF.

CRITERIA 3: Knowledge and experience of the project team members in the forestry sector or close associated sectors (research and education, agriculture) and the profile of the key point of contact and project team

To address this selection criterion, the expression of interest should provide the following:

- An overview of the applicant's organisation and business operations
- An overview of the proposed project team
- A brief description of each project team member's professional experience; highlighting their relevant experience and capabilities in relation to the project requirements
- A key point of contact for the Hub who will act as the project manager for the project

CRITERIA 4: Total cost and cost structure (against the identified deliverables)

To address this selection criterion, the expression of interest should provide the following:

- Total cost that will be charged, inclusive and exclusive of GST, for completing the project
- Break down of cost structure against key project deliverables

The Hub may additionally request candidates to engage in interviews and/or to present their plans formally as part of the selection process.

CRITERIA 5: Proposed methodology to achieve the scope of works

To address this selection criterion, the expression of interest should provide the following:

- An outline of the proposed methodology and/or approaches to be adopted to achieve the scope of works and deliverables, including an outline of a project plan, the factors they believe will be critical to the success of the project, as well as their design methods and approaches to the management of challenges and risks.

9. EOI Terms and Conditions

EOI Terms and Conditions

1. A party seeking to express interest in applying for this must do so by submitting a completed EOI form, addressing criteria 1-5, sent to the listed address, no later than the closing date and time, stated in the EOI.
2. Each party who submits an EOI Form agrees to be bound by the terms and conditions set out in this information package.
3. Within the EOI Form, all prices must be stated inclusive of Goods and Services Tax (GST).
4. Each EOI submission will constitute a legally binding offer by the submitting party to produce a Report(s), and in accordance with the terms of, the completed EOI Form.
5. The NQFHub is not bound to accept any EOI submission.
6. In circumstances where an applicant, within its EOI submission, offers to produce one or more Reports, the price offered for each Report constitutes a separate offer capable of acceptance by the Hub unless the price is specifically noted as being part of a discount package.
7. EOIs may be submitted by any person or entity, including:
 - 7.1. Not-for-profit community groups.
 - 7.2. Commercial organisations; and
 - 7.3. Private Individuals.
8. All queries regarding this EOI process must be directed to the Hub General Manager
9. Prospective parties must bear their own costs and expenses relating to their participation in this EOI process.
10. During the assessment process, applicants may be contacted by the Hub to provide further information about the application. Failure to provide any requested information in a timely manner may result in the application being rejected.
11. The form of agreement which will come into place on acceptance of the successful tender response.
12. The invoice shall be sent, within 30 days of the end of the Contract to the Hub Manger. h.king@nqfh.com.au quoting the Contract name. The NQFHub Inc undertakes to pay correctly submitted invoices within 30 days of receipt. The NQFHub Inc shall not be responsible for any delay in payment caused by an incomplete or illegible invoice. Administration Expressions of interest must be submitted by 25/07/2022. Late applications will not be considered.

Notification of Outcome

It is currently anticipated that the Hub will advise the successful party (or parties) that their EOI submission has been accepted by no later than close of business 25/07/2022.

A successful party must, upon notice by the Hub that its offer(s) has been accepted, return to the Hub a duly signed agreement within 7 days.

Confidentiality

The Hub will use and disclose the information provided by applicants for the purposes of discharging their functions under this Information Package and otherwise for the purposes of developing and delivering the Reports and related uses.

Publicity of Successful Applicants

There may be a public announcement of successful applicants. Prior to each announcement, successful applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application. The public announcement may include details of successful applicants, the nature of the Report and timing schedules.

Disclaimer

Although care has been taken in the preparation of this document, no warranty, express or implied, is given by the Hub as to the accuracy or completeness of the information it contains. The Hub accepts no responsibility for any loss or damage that may arise from anything contained in or omitted from or that may arise from the use of this document, and any person relying on this document and the information it contains does so at their own risk absolutely.

The Hub does not accept liability or responsibility for any loss incurred by any applicant that is in any way related to this EOI process or related to production of Assessment Reports pursuant to this EOI.

Attachment 1: EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FORM

Assessment of the Carbon Regulatory Framework for North Queensland's Plantation and Farm Forestry industry.

PART A: Applicant Details

Lead Organisation Name	
Address	
Primary Contact Name	
Position Title	
Telephone	
Email	

Part B: Selection Criteria

CRITERIA 1: Capabilities and expertise in producing technical reports

To address this selection criterion, the expression of interest should describe the following:

- Applicant's ability to produce high quality technical reports (e.g. related experience preparing reports for alternate clients)
- Contact details of two previous clients for which the applicant has produced similar reports, including company position, telephone and email address, that the Hub can contact as referees
- Examples of any publicly available reports that the applicant has produced

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CRITERIA 2: Capabilities and expertise in ERF regulatory frameworks, involved in the registering of plantation forestry projects, and/or farm forestry projects under the relevant ERF Carbon Farming Initiative methodologies.

To address this selection criterion, the expression of interest should describe the following:

- Applicant’s experience, skills and capabilities relating to the project’s scoping requirements identified in Item 3 above
- Examples of any publicly available reports that the applicant has produced relevant to ERF Carbon Farming Initiatives

CRITERIA 3: Key point of contact and project team

To address this selection criterion, the expression of interest should provide the following:

- An overview of the applicant’s organisation and business operations
- An overview of the proposed project team
- A brief description of each project team member’s professional experience; highlighting their relevant experience and capabilities in relation to the project requirements
- A key point of contact for the Hub who will act as the project manager for the project

CRITERIA 4: Total cost and cost structure

To address this selection criterion, the expression of interest should provide the following:

- Total cost that will be charged, inclusive and exclusive of GST, for completing the project
- Break-down of cost structure against key project deliverables

CRITERIA 5: Proposed methodology to achieve the scope of works

To address this selection criterion, the expression of interest should provide the following:

- An outline of the proposed methodology and/or approaches to be adopted to achieve the scope of works and deliverables, including an outline of a project plan, the factors they believe will be critical to the success of the project, as well as their design methods and approaches to the management of challenges and risks.