

Partnering for impact



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**Melinda Cox, North Coast LLS
Business Development Officer**

In 2021 North Coast Local Land Services (LLS) formed a partnership with Greening Australia to undertake an environmental plantings carbon farming pilot project.

The goal of the pilot was to test the effectiveness of partnering with a private sector carbon project provider to streamline landowner participation in the carbon market, support small scale abatement and generate premium carbon credits with quadruple bottom line outcomes.

North Coast LLS used spatial datasets to target and engage landowners where high carbon sequestration yields overlapped landscape restoration priority areas. Greening Australia supported LLS to prepare forward abatement estimates and financial models for individuals, as well as an aggregation. LLS acted as the intermediary between the landowner and Greening Australia, strategically identifying premium abatement opportunities in the landscape and providing customised, independent and plain English advice regarding carbon and farm operations.

WHAT DID NORTH COAST LLS LEARN THROUGH THE PILOT?

The targeted engagement approach worked. Twenty-eight landholders, covering an area of 590 hectares have signed up to the pilot — well over the target goal of 500 hectares. This commitment is expected to deliver over 260,000 tonnes of carbon abatement over the life of the project.

Of particular importance to the regional NRM body, is the co-benefits that will be delivered through the pilot- including employment, landscape and conservation outcomes. North Coast LLS Business Development Officer Melinda Cox commented:

“If it all goes ahead, the co-benefits will be amazing — we will have great working on Country and Aboriginal employment outcomes, significant water quality improvements [for] one of the local government water catchments, there is going to be amazing connectivity and buffering of protected area estates, plus five or six threatened species and two threatened ecological communities that we are hoping to buffer and enhance”.

LLS also found that time-poor landowners appreciated being approached by an independent local body who could help them understand the suite of carbon opportunities for their land, and customise carbon market information to their needs.

Overall, the public-private sector partnership model was a success LLS found the approach effective in facilitating and streamlining participation — provided partnership opportunities are openly invited and assessed based on merit.

In summary, carbon farming partnerships between project developers and regional NRM bodies can:

- Help farmers and the agricultural sector to transition to a decarbonised economy.
- Diversify and boost farm and regional scale economies.
- Ensure local carbon farming projects also create co-benefits, including increasing the scale and speed of landscape health outcomes.
- Provide business development opportunities to maintain NRM body currency and relevancy.

LEARN MORE

➔ View North Coast LLS Business Development Officer Melinda Cox talking about the pilot here: <https://youtu.be/0pQu3YfIKQ> link or contact or Louise Orr louise.orr@lls.nsw.gov.au