SoilsforLife

Growing Momentum

Rising Stakes

IMPACT REPORT | 2025/26

Our **vision**

A world where healthy soils and functional landscapes sustain thriving regional communities, a secure supply of nutritious food and resilient agricultural enterprises for generations to come.





Our **mission**

To inspire and support a critical mass of Australian farmers and producers to adopt approaches to agriculture that regenerate soils and landscapes.



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From the **CEO**

On some fronts, the news this year has been dire. Extreme heat and bushfires in southern Australia, major flooding and cyclones across the north, huge spikes in fuel and fertiliser prices due to conflict in the Middle East. Globally, a similar picture, most recently with unprecedented drought and fires across Europe. It's a perfect storm.

This might already feel like the new normal, but the impacts on agriculture are real. This volatility puts huge pressure on farming businesses trying to produce a consistent supply of food and other primary products, and make a decent living from it. And it puts global food security at risk.

This is why I believe so strongly in prioritising maximum farm and food system resilience over maximum efficiency or output levels. This might mean lower production levels in boom years, but more stable and consistent production levels in average and poor years. This in turn makes farm businesses and our food system as a whole less vulnerable to complete crashes caused by weather or market volatility.

And on this front, I am feeling hopeful.



In the face of these disruptions, many of the producers we work with are seeing the benefits of adopting regenerative practices. Having moved away from synthetic fertilisers, they've escaped the worst of the fertiliser crisis. Having built plant diversity and soil water-holding capacity, their crops and pastures have been better able to cope with extreme weather.

We continue to work hard to share what innovative farmers are learning with those who are newly curious. We're seeing more producers attending our events, using our guides, listening to our podcasts and taking advantage of opportunities we create for them to connect with peers. And they're telling us that it's helping them build confidence and take steps towards practice change.

What we're seeing in Australia reflects what our international partners are seeing around the world: an increasing recognition that agriculture working hand-in-hand with natural systems is the best strategy to create resilient agricultural enterprises and healthy, thriving farming families and regional communities.

As our team has grown to meet the increased need, I am proud that our dedication remains unchanged – to centering farmer perspectives, to producing high-quality and credible work and to prioritising relationships and inclusiveness in everything we do.

I hope you enjoy these highlights of our year's work, and look forward to working with you in the year to come.

Eli Court, CEO

Impact by the numbers

64% — **64% of farmers** reported that our resources made them feel better equipped to implement practices that promote soil and landscape regeneration.

8 & 2 — **8 case studies and 2 practice guides published**, giving farmers practical, evidence-based resources to draw on as they explore regenerative practices.

97% — **97% of participants** in our dairy field day said they were **likely to begin experimenting** with a practice such as multispecies cropping, biological fertiliser or soil monitoring.

40,000 — **40,000 unique views of our resources**, as more farmers turn to our case studies, guides and podcasts in their farming journey.

21 — **21 opportunities for farmers to take part in media, conferences and other public-facing activities**, helping put farmer voices at the centre of the regenerative conversation.

34,000 — **34,000 podcast listens from 12,000 listeners**, as our podcast continues to grow as a trusted source of insight for farmers exploring regenerative practices.

130 — **More than 130 media mentions** with an estimated reach of over 1 million people, putting regenerative agriculture in front of a growing national audience.

2,000 — 2,000 farmers directly engaged in our activities, from paddock walks and field days to podcasts, guides and online events.

Our **people**

This year saw a changing of the guard, with our long-standing Chair Alasdair MacLeod stepping down after more than a decade on the board and more than six years as Chair. We are deeply appreciative of Alasdair's dedicated service and his critical contribution to getting our organisation to where we are today.

We're also thrilled to welcome our new Chair, Victorian producer Olivia Lawson, as well as two new appointments to our board, Victorian farmer Grant Sims and independent advisor Chris Murphy.

Our expanded team brings together soil science, regenerative agronomy, agroecology, social science, communications, agricultural extension and project and organisational management. We pride ourselves on being open-minded and inclusive, and on being experts in supporting farmers with credible, accessible and low- or zero-cost resources and support that enable them to engage with the complexity of regenerative soil and land management without becoming overwhelmed.

We work alongside a diverse range of partners and supporters, and greatly appreciate their generosity, trust, collaboration and shared vision, without which our work would not be possible. We are also grateful to our Farmer Advisory Panel, a group of highly experienced producers from around the country who are committed to our vision and convene quarterly to provide input and feedback to inform our work.

Our **team**



Eli Court
Chief Executive Officer



Jono Forrest
Partnerships & Strategic Projects Manager



Dr Kate Johnston
Farm Stories Manager



Madison Roland-Evans
Research & Engagement Officer



Chris Wieffering
Digital Resources & Design Manager



Jen Sheridan
Strategic Communications Manager



Dr Esty Yanco
Operations & Partnerships Manager



Courtney Young
Farmer Learning Manager



Kylie Beale
Research & Communications Officer



Kim Deans
Agroecologist



Jalen Green
Administration Officer



Tahlia Kinrade
Senior Project Manager



Kate Matthews
Applied Land & Soils Specialist

Our **board**



Olivia Lawson
Chair



Amanda Roughan
Deputy Chair



Pip Band



Justin Borevitz



Chris Murphy



Carmel Onions



Grant Sims

Our **strategy**

This was the final year of our 2023–26 Strategic Plan, which expanded and diversified our work beyond our historic focus on developing case studies that raised awareness about soil and regenerative agriculture. It guided our new workstreams focused on practical guidance resources, training and peer learning programs and soil monitoring, and our expansion from a focus on livestock to a deep dive into broadacre cropping.

In June 2026 we launched our new strategy. Having learned over the past three years how to support newly curious farmers to move from curiosity to confidence, the 2026–29 Strategic Plan addresses the challenge of how to help more farmers, faster – reaching the critical mass our mission calls for – without simply scaling up our activity at the same rate. Our approach is to focus on strategies that multiply our impact beyond the farmers we work with directly.

The **five pillars of work** that support our approach.

1. Mainstreaming regenerative approaches to agriculture

2. Building farmer skills, knowledge, tools and resources

3. Strengthening regenerative agricultural communities

4. Amplifying farmer perspectives across the food & agriculture system

5. Maintaining a high-functioning organisation set up to deliver great work

Find out more in our **Strategic Plan**

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‘Having supply companies or outside experts being involved in those peer-to-peer groups can be disruptive because you feel like oh, they’ve got an agenda or they’re trying to sell me something. That’s what I like about Soils for Life, you’re not. It’s how do we empower, educate and inform people.’

Nicole Masters, Agroecologist

Our **audience**

In 2025/26, we worked directly with about 2,000 farmers around Australia, and indirectly with many thousands more.

Based on our most recent audience survey, our audience comes from every state and territory, with a weighting towards New South Wales (41%), Victoria (23%), Queensland (15%) and Western Australia (12%). Over 60% of our audience are farmers, with a further 5% interested in getting into farming. The remainder work with farmers as industry representatives, provide products, services or support to farmers or work in a relevant area of research or government policy.

Within our farmer audience, the vast majority (84%) graze livestock and a quarter (25%) grow crops, with a diverse range of agricultural land uses represented throughout. Around half (51%) reported that they have **'well-established'** regenerative practices, while the majority of others are **'actively exploring'** (16%) or **'beginning to implement'** (30%).

Curiosity to confidence

Supporting our farmer audience at every stage



16% * of our farmer audience are **actively exploring**

We offer **ideas** and **inspiration**

“ ‘I connect to the wonderful farmers in your stories. They are inspirational, gutsy and build the layers for change.’

30% * of our farmer audience are **beginning to implement**

We offer **practical knowledge** and **support**

“ ‘Distilling the evidence-based science into practical applications.’

51% * of our farmer audience are **well-established**

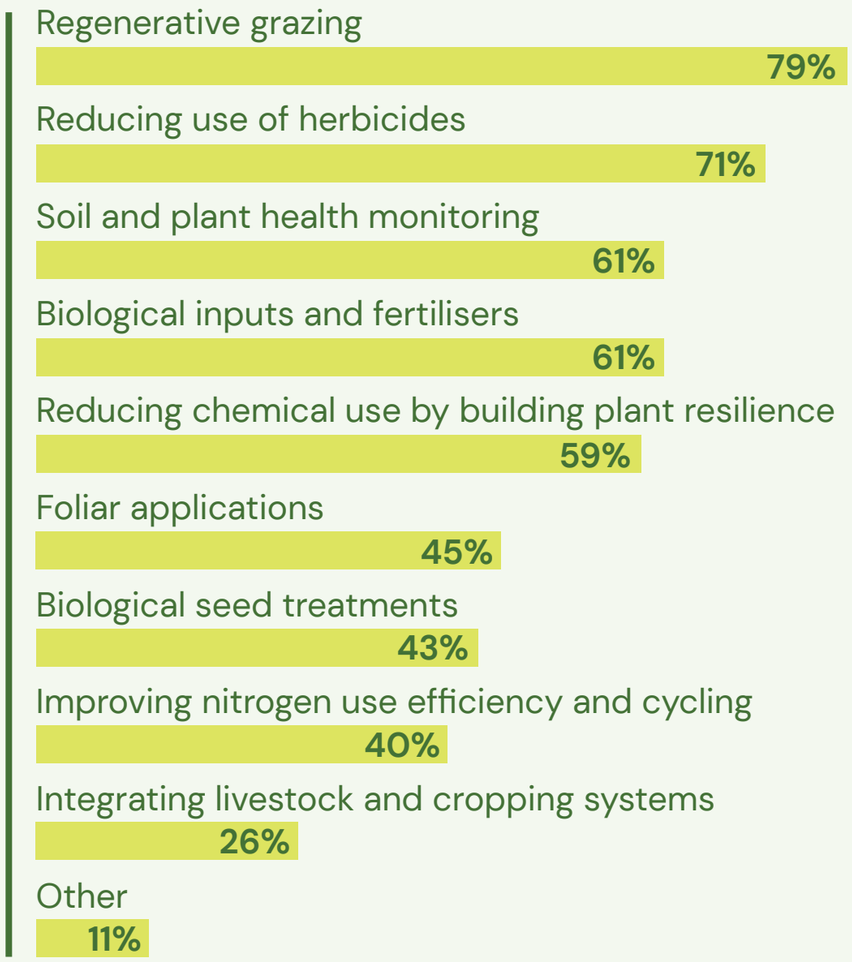
We offer **leadership development**

“ ‘Connects like-minded people with relevant, up-to-date knowledge.’

*Percentage of farmers surveyed (n = 163) by how established their regenerative practices are.
Source: 2026 Soils for Life audience survey.

Common practices implemented

Based on 2026 Soils for Life audience survey



Highlights from the year

Centering farmer voices for system influence

The perspectives of farmers who are regenerating soils and landscapes are often missing from policy, industry and research discussions and the public conversation. This year highlighted the impact that can be made when we create opportunities for leading farmers to enter these discussions.

In addition to sharing 15 farmer stories through our case studies and practice guides and profiling 9 farmers on our podcast over the last year, we have been constantly scanning for opportunities to put them forward for wider reach.

We created **21 opportunities for farmers** to take part in media, conferences and other public-facing activities.



Dairy farmer **Kate Mirams** on ABC Landline.

In May, with the nitrogen fertiliser crisis hitting hard and the public narrative focused on alternative sources of synthetic fertiliser supply, we supported dairy farmer Kate Mirams and crop grower Grant Sims to appear in an **ABC Landline** episode alongside our CEO Eli Court. They explained how building plant diversity and soil health, as well as using biological inputs, could reduce reliance on imported synthetic fertiliser, saving money and improving food security and farm resilience at the source.

Holistic case studies that share the stories, knowledge and experience of farmers who are implementing regenerative approaches remain at the centre of our work.



David and Robbie Curtis

David and Robbie Curtis bought Bellevue in 1985, when it was heavily cleared and unproductive. Now joined by their daughter Sophie, they run the Bellevue Dorper Stud and went certified organic in 2016 to stop putting chemicals into the food system. They believe 'where we produce food should be the healthiest place to live'.



Carol and Brian Fitzpatrick

Carol and Brian Fitzpatrick farm 2,700 ha in Waitchie, Victoria, growing dryland wheat, barley, peas and lentils. Driven by Carol's interest in organic gardening, they've taken a 'biological' approach to cropping: brewing their own biofertilisers, using biological seed treatments and eliminating insecticides and fungicides.



Tom Robinson

Tom Robinson and his wife Cassi run Robinson Farms near Hoyleton, South Australia, where Tom's parents were early zero-till adopters in the 1990s. Seeing cracks in their high-input system, they moved out of continuous cropping, introduced livestock and now rely on foliar applications and extensive soil and plant monitoring to build resilience.

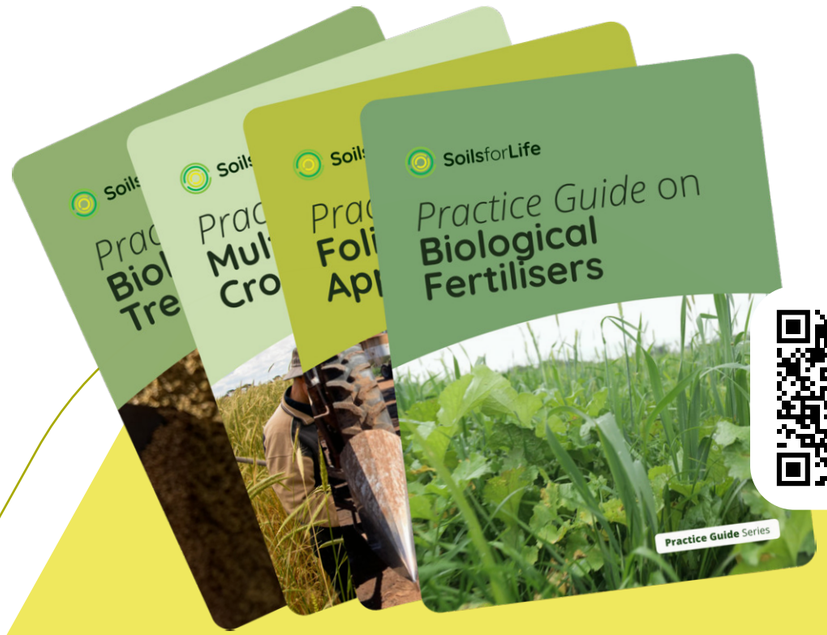
Resilient **cropping**

Growing broadacre crops can be hard on the soil and landscape, with typically high levels of inputs and low levels of diversity. Cropping enterprises have generally been pushed towards larger scale – enabled by high-cost machinery – and lower margins, but often high risk, especially with increasingly volatile weather and market conditions.

In 2025/26 we wrapped up our two-year **Cropping Resilience project**, which developed resources, built knowledge and capacity amongst growers wanting to build greater soil health and resilience into their landscapes and expanded their support networks.

The project engaged over 1,100 farmers directly, 143 of whom took part in in-depth peer discussion groups. We developed 10 practical guides on regenerative cropping practices such as multispecies cropping, biological inputs and nitrogen efficiency, featuring over 30 growers from around the country. These guides and case studies combined have received more than 44,000 views.

We have now successfully secured funding to extend this work through a new project, **Cropping Communities**, which will translate the Cropping Resilience resources into an on-ground program that will train up more than 80 growers around the country and engage many more through field days and online sessions.



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‘Just starting to gain knowledge in this area and found this [guide] to be of great benefit. The information is inspiring.’

‘Great work. Wish I had landed on the site when I started this journey.’

‘These guides are such a fantastic well-thought-out resource, thank you!’

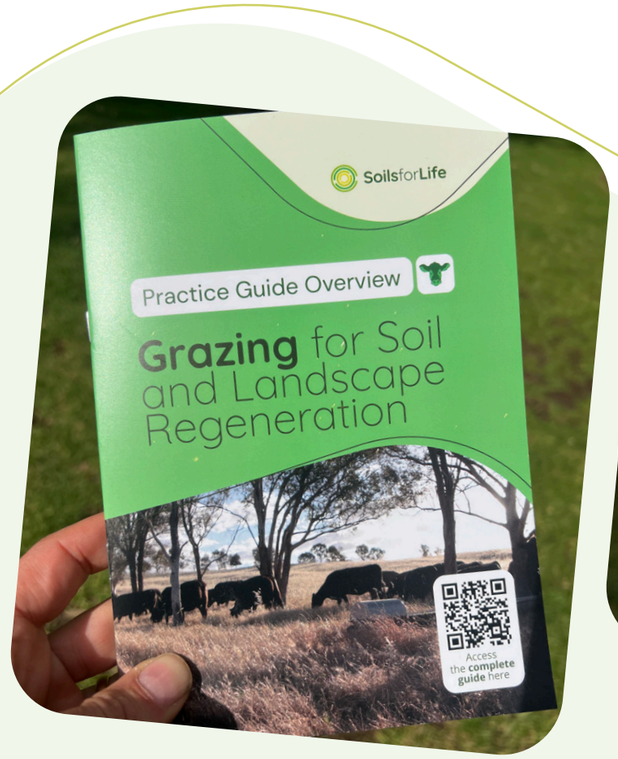
Feedback from users of the guides

Grazing for soil and landscape health

Regenerative grazing is well established in Australia as a concept, and there are many world-leading examples of graziers who have demonstrated the financial and ecological advantages of practices such as holistic planned grazing, ecological monitoring to inform paddock recovery periods and increased livestock density.

But only a fraction of graziers are implementing these practices, and information and support are mostly not available through mainstream institutions. We partnered with Australia's most respected regenerative grazing educators and training institutions to produce a freely available introductory Guide to Grazing for Soil and Landscape Regeneration, including examples from five graziers in different contexts around the country.

The guide was released in May 2026 at a field day at case study farmer Nick Austin's farm in New South Wales and has already been viewed more than 1,000 times, with numerous requests for printed copies from extension agents nationwide. We're now rolling out a national roadshow of field days at the other case study farms, publishing podcast interviews with partners and case study graziers and exploring opportunities to integrate the content into mainstream training and educational programs.





'For many years, good information on regenerative grazing has been scattered and hard to find. Soils for Life's Grazing Guide brings together insight from leading educators with the real, on-the-ground experience of graziers from around Australia practising these techniques. I believe it will become the go-to resource for anyone curious about this style of grazing. I only wish it had been around when I started my regenerative journey 16 years ago.'

Nick Austin, Grazier, Mundarlo, NSW

'The Soils for Life Grazing Guide gives a clear and concise overview of regenerative grazing practices and importantly includes real-life case studies of what is working for individual producers on their properties as well as acknowledging that every situation, every farmer and every season is different. I believe it will ignite the curiosity in graziers to try something different.'

Brian Wehlburg, Holistic Management educator



Project **supporters**

Thanks to Judi Earl (Agricultural Information and Monitoring Services), Helen Lewis (Australian Holistic Management Cooperative), David McLean (RCS), Grahame Rees (KLR Marketing) and Brian Wehlburg (Inside Outside Management) for their input and guidance.

Climate-resilient **dairies and orchards**

This year we have continued to diversify into new sectors, aiming to demonstrate that soil and landscape regeneration can be achieved across all of Australian agriculture.

Our **Dairy Resilience** project kicked off in March 2026 with a field day attended by more than 50 farmers and advisers at Kate Mirams and Peter Neaves' dairy farm in Victoria, which received widespread positive coverage in local, national and industry media. The program is now well under way, with demonstration sites in development, 5 podcasts released with over 5,000 listens, a series of online **Dairy Convos** with farmers and specialists attended by over 100 people and a **Shifting Gears** online program in progress to train 19 advisers to dairy farmers around the country.

From curious to champion

How we support dairy farmers at every stage



The **Orchard Resilience** project, which focuses on fruit and nut tree growers, launched in early 2026 with a series of **Orchard Convos** attracting 100 participants and 4 podcasts that have received over 3,700 listens. We're supporting a diverse group of regional partners across the country to kick off their regional programs, with the northern NSW peer group having started in February.

The project involves a partnership with First Nations-led native foods social enterprise Native Foodways. We recognise Soils for Life has limited experience working with First Nations communities, so we are approaching this partnership as an exciting opportunity to learn more about how to build meaningful relationships and mutually beneficial partnerships with Indigenous people, farmers, organisations and communities.



Project **partners**

Partners for Dairy Resilience are Cradle Coast NRM, South Gippsland Landcare Network, Lower Blackwood LCDC and Maffra and Districts Landcare Network. For Orchard Resilience, partners are RegenWA, NRM South, Native Foodways, Cape York NRM, NRM North, Soilcare Inc., Terrain NRM and Gulf Savannah NRM. Both projects are supported by the Australian Government through funding from the Climate-Smart Agriculture Program under the Natural Heritage Trust.

Collaboration and partnerships



Kate Mirams
Dairy farmer
Gippsland, VIC

Dairy as a whole has been slow to pick up regenerative agriculture practices. It has been a lonely space. For years we've been the only dairy farmer in the room. Soils for Life, in finding what's working and who is doing the work, elevating the voices of farmers who are making a start, and bringing the science and resources to dairy, is really making an impact.

> Their culture of respecting, enabling and inspiring at all levels of industry is incredibly powerful.

Working with the Soils for Life team on the case study, podcast and presentations, I felt invited, respected and held. It has been a privilege to share the deep personal work of regenerating ourselves as we work towards regenerating our landscape and our communities.



Mark Tupman
Agricultural consultant
and educator

There is a real need for more research, education and networking to help farmers to viably move towards agriculture that regenerates the health of our productive landscapes.

One organisation that has been consistently doing just that is Soils for Life. They continually strive to offer the highest quality, and most useful, services and resources possible.

> I have both contributed to and benefited from the vast amount of support Soils for Life gives to the farming sector.

I greatly enjoy being involved in their programs and appreciate the means and opportunities they provide for all of us.

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Tim Sides
Director, Department of
Agriculture, Fisheries
and Forestry

Your work has made a meaningful contribution to supporting increased adoption of drought resilience practices … Challenges encountered during delivery led to improved program design, more effective peer learning formats and extension approaches aligned with producer preferences and learning needs.

> Overall, an excellent project that achieved amazing and enduring outcomes.



Prof Felice Jacka OAM
Founder, Food & Mood Centre
Deakin University

It's widely accepted that even a small shift in production models can be the driver of the recovery of our planet, but these small steps can seem like giant leaps for generational production organisations.

The work Soils for Life is undertaking is pivotal in highlighting modern regenerative methodology and its implementation in real farming operations all over Australia.

> Giving generational farmers the opportunity to deep dive into these case studies is inspirational and makes the transition realistic with absolute transparency and honesty from the case study participants with detail never before discussed.

Soils for Life has also created a community where there wasn't: online discussion groups, formal field days and facilitating incredible connections in an industry where geography and working hours prohibit collaboration.



Cassie Wright
South Gippsland
Landcare Network

It's been fantastic to join Soils for Life in the national Dairy Resilience project.

> They have helped us connect with like-minded individuals and organisations around the country, supporting us learning from each other and working towards a common outcome.

We've also valued the technical support Soils for Life has provided, such as from soil scientists, which has taken our demonstration site monitoring methodology and data analysis to the next level.

It's been a great opportunity to expand our work at a dairy farm demonstration site, monitoring the transition to regenerative management. Plus sharing the story with local dairy farmers, and helping them consider how to apply similar approaches on their farms through a peer-to-peer learning program.



Julie Ballentine
Crop grower
Banana, QLD

The tools and information Soils for Life provides through case studies, on-farm field days and podcasts are of exceptional quality.

Their collaborative work with other organisations has extended their impact both geographically across Australia and across the agricultural sector.

Soils for Life is for everyone who cares about the land and wants to see positive change.



'Soils for Life has championed regenerative agriculture in a way that provides in-depth information alongside practical application, and our business has benefited greatly from the work they do.'

Julie Ballentine, Crop grower, Banana, QLD

Making our work **possible**

We are proud to collaborate with a diverse range of partners and supporters, including individuals, community organisations, government agencies, businesses and industry groups. We greatly appreciate their generosity, trust, collaboration and shared vision, without which our work would not be possible.

Transformational donors

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CRC for High Performance Soils
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Gulf Savannah NRM
Healthy Land and Water
Lower Blackwood LCDC
Macintyre Ag Alliance
Maffra and Districts Landcare Network
Mulloon Institute
Native Foodways
Northern Sustainable Soils
NRM North
NRM South
RegenWA
Soilcare Inc.
South Gippsland Landcare Network
Terrain NRM
Upper Barwon Landcare Network

Preferred legal service providers

Coulter Legal
MinterEllison

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Donate today

Our work is made possible thanks to the generosity of donors. A gift to Soils for Life allows us to **help more farmers** to become **better stewards of the land.**

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What **we do**

Soils for Life is an independent, non-profit organisation that works to support Australian farmers to regenerate soils, for resilient people, communities, businesses and landscapes.

Download this report

To download this report, head to
soilsforlife.org.au/impact

Soils for Life acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Australia and their continuing connection to land, sea, environment, water and community.

We pay our respect to the Traditional Custodians, their culture, and Elders both past and present. We recognise and value Indigenous knowledge systems, and the imperative to listen to and work with Traditional Owners as we collectively learn how to heal Country.

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