

PROJECT PHOENIX



# INTERNATIONAL OPTIONS TO INCENTIVISE THE NATIVE SEED SECTOR



PROJECT SUMMARY

JUNE 2021

*Across all of our Project Phoenix activities and actions we pay respect to the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands and waters on which we work. We honour the resilience and continuing connection to country, culture and community of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across Australia. We recognise the decisions we make today will impact the lives of generations to come.*

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## About the project

A range of constraints impede the capacity of the Australian seed sector to deliver large amounts of native seed for restoration projects.

National authorities have taken a range of actions in contributing to seed management for restoration projects in countries such as Germany and the US.

**Understanding what has been achieved successfully within other nations may provide insights into beneficial actions that could be undertaken by Australian authorities.**

## Scope

The scope of the project was to conduct a desktop review to identify, review and assess international frameworks, agreements and legislation (including noting any evaluations conducted and relevant findings) related to the native seed sector.



## Introduction

This project aimed to identify, review and assess international frameworks and legislation (including noting any evaluations conducted and relevant findings) related to the native seed sector.

**The purpose of the review is to identify international frameworks and legislation that might be applicable to Australia's native seed sector in terms of their ability to incentivise the seed sector.**



## Issues

The native seed sector is an emerging sector around the globe, spurred by an increased focus on conservation and restoration. Direct incentives or sector-specific frameworks were very rare prior to the year 2000. This is because the native seed sector was not highly visible prior to 2000.<sup>1</sup>

Indirect incentives, that is legislation that assisted conservation outcomes but was not aimed at such outcomes (such as the US Farm Bill), have been around for longer. However, they are typically only seen in the US and in the EU.

As a result, there is limited information available to inform this review. Although effort was taken to ensure all relevant source documents were identified, this report is likely a sub-set of all international frameworks and legislation. It is not a complete nor comprehensive report of every framework or piece of legislation that may be relevant to the native seed sector around the globe.

## Comments

Not applicable

## Key output

The key output from this activity is the report *International options to incentivise the Native Seed Sector*.

## Outcomes

The countries and regions where the native seed sector is more developed (and hence frameworks influencing the sector exist) include:

- US
- EU (including the UK as many frameworks were established prior to Brexit) and
- Brazil.

Other countries were also considered, such as Canada and South Africa.

We identified 29 frameworks across the globe, including six international agreements. We assessed ten as having direct relevance to the native seed sector. These were a mix of legislative and non-legislative frameworks administered by governments, consortia and not-for-profits.

Five of these were detailed in case studies and assessed for applicability to the Australian native seed sector. Refer to full report *International options to incentivise the Native Seed Sector* for the case studies.

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<sup>1</sup> Although issues pertaining to the natural environment, conservation and restoration were prevalent prior to 2000 there was not the same focus on such issues as there is now.



## Findings

There is a range of potential laws, rules and frameworks around the world that may impact on or incentivise (or disincentivise) the native seed sector.

Lessons learnt include:

- Indirect policy mechanisms may not be the most efficient or effective way to incentivise the sector.
- Direct policy mechanisms can incentivise the native seed sector but careful consideration is needed to align policies and agendas across national, state and local environments, to create unconflicted and appropriate incentives for the sector.
- Non-legislative frameworks are more easily adopted over international boundaries as they do not create adverse policy outcomes and are within the native seed sector's locus of control.
- Community-based partnership approaches are particularly relevant for Traditional Owner communities and offer broader social benefits.

## Evidence

Refer to full report *International options to incentivise the Native Seed Sector*.





# RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations have been made based on the lessons learnt from the case studies and the assessment for applicability to the Australian native seed sector.

The lessons learnt from the case studies are summarised in the [Findings](#) section above and are provided in detail at the conclusion of each case study contained within the full report *International options to incentivise the Native Seed Sector*.


The assessment of applicability to the Australian native seed sector indicates the suitability of each case study as low, medium or high.

- Two of the five case studies (Case Study 2 — US Native Seed Strategy and Case Study 5 — International standards for native seeds) were assessed as being highly suitable for the Australian context as they are non-legislative frameworks that are easily adaptable.
- Case Study 3 — Brazil Xingu Seed Network was considered to be of medium suitability. This is because the application is to tropical native seeds in Traditional Owner communities. While this is relevant to Australia, it would only incentivise part of the sector rather than the full sector.
- Case Study 1 — US Farm Bill and Case Study 3 — EU German native seed certification were considered low in suitability for Australia. This is because both of these case studies focus directly on legislation and the legislative environments in both the US and the EU are different to Australia.



Recommendations from this review are as follows:

## RECOMMENDATIONS

 <p>1</p>	<p><b>Use of direct policy, legislation or regulation to incentivise the native seed sector needs to be carefully considered with respect to the existing policy agenda and/or legislative framework at the national, state and local level.</b></p> <p>This will reduce the chance of inadvertent perverse outcomes (such as the potential for offsetting benefits or low additionality) (see Case Study 1 and Case Study 4).</p>
 <p>2</p>	<p><b>Targeted work in areas where there is a clear need for restoration and to increase social and economic outcomes for communities should be part of the Australian Native Seed Sector Strategy.</b></p> <p>These should be bottom up programs that are participatory in nature and modelled off international best practice (such as Case Study 3) and ideally incentivised through a direct policy agenda.</p>
 <p>3</p>	<p><b>When adopting non-legislative frameworks such as strategies or voluntary standards, consideration should be made for the following:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ownership of the framework (see Case Studies 2 and 5).</li> <li>● Commitment from those supporting the framework (see Case Studies 2 and 5).</li> <li>● Appropriate funding arrangements (see Case Study 2).</li> <li>● Comprehensive understanding of existing frameworks so as to reduce duplication and unnecessary work (see Case Study 5).</li> </ul>



## WANT TO KNOW MORE?

For further information read the full report *International options to incentivise the Native Seed Sector*.

### Related project

- *Successful international restoration systems*

This project contributes to the evidence base for a ten-year strategy to guide the native seed and landscape sector. The document, which is untitled until endorsement in September 2021, is referred to as the Strategy in all Project Phoenix publications.



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