

NEW ZEALAND SUSTAINABILITY DASHBOARD – facilitating unified monitoring and learning for sustainable agriculture in New Zealand

Practical tools for sustainability assessment, auditing, reporting and learning

In partnership with the country's agricultural industry sectors, the *New Zealand Sustainability Dashboard* project will build online user-friendly tools for sustainability assessment and reporting. These tools will assist that:



- **Overseas consumers can benchmark and verify the sustainability credentials of New Zealand exported goods** through reference to monitoring results linked to internationally recognised sustainability frameworks and indicators.
- **Farmers, growers and primary sectors meet local regulatory demands** through the monitoring and reporting of Key Performance Indicators relevant to New Zealand industry, society, ecology and land care.
- **Farmers and growers can enhance management decision making, and improve overall sustainability,** through the monitoring of Key Performance Indicators relating to the sustainability of their business.

Why is the tool needed?

As the current lack of co-ordination between sectors, regulators and markets in the development or operation of sustainability assessments means:

- Expensive duplication in sustainability assessment programmes;
- Limited sharing of experiences and best practices between sectors;
- A lack of consistency in use of Key Performance Indicators;
- An absence of systems for making outcomes transparent to consumers, regulators and industry.

Delivering multiple benefits to multiple partners simultaneously

These tools will be useful to not only **growers and industry representatives**, but also to **agricultural regulators and policymakers** at regional and national government levels. The dashboard tools and enhanced information flows will help producers to optimise their overall farm performance including productivity/profitability while protecting environmental and social values. Through **greater transparency**, the project should garner support from the wider New Zealand society by verification and regular reporting of standardised sustainability criteria.





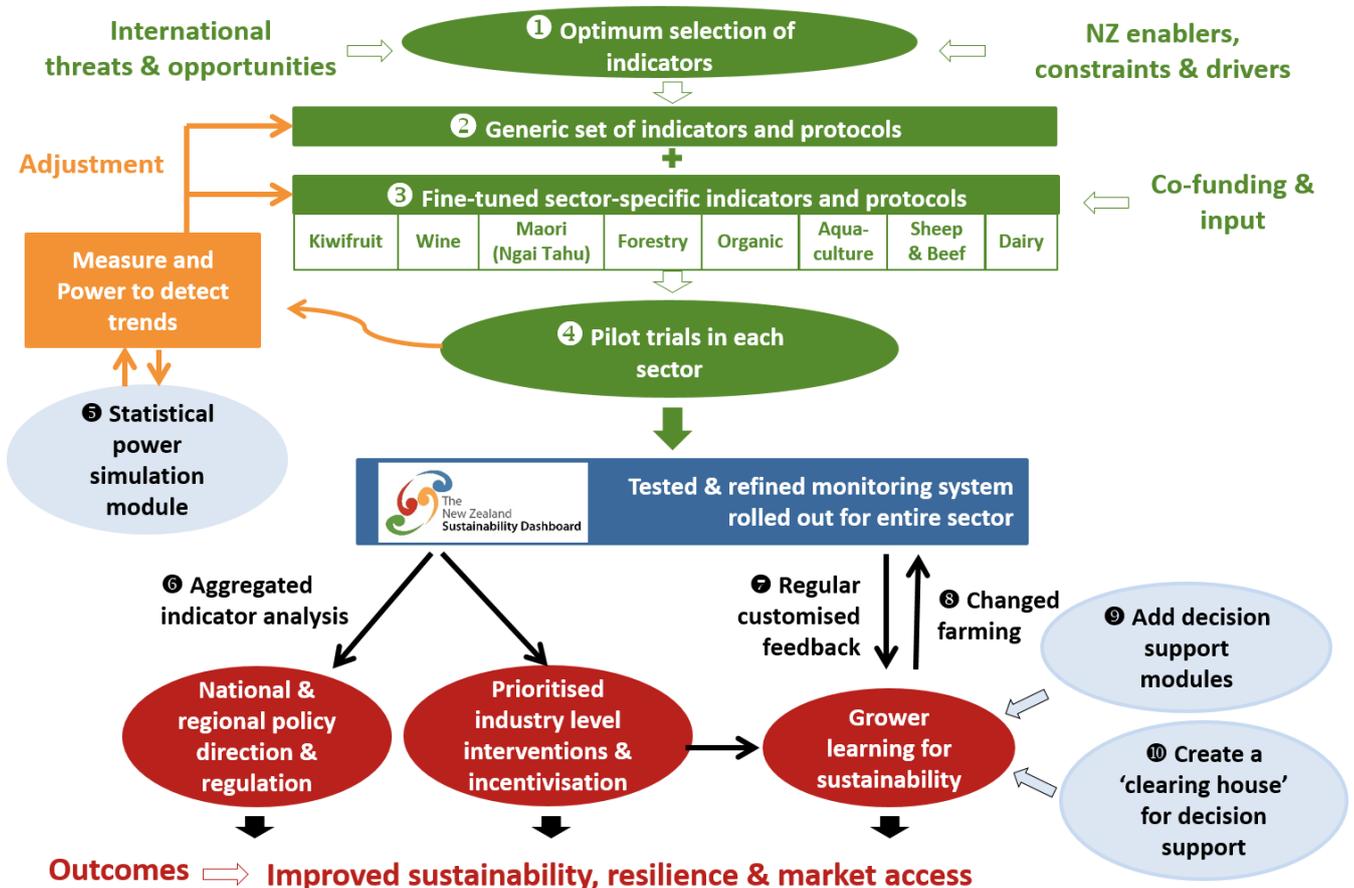
Ensuring the tool is more than a new set of indicators

The **New Zealand Sustainability Dashboard's development plan** (see below) is designed to:

- Integrate existing knowledge, while also facilitating the rapid generation and incorporation of new Key Performance Indicators and guidance on changes to farm management.
- Provide a staged development process that reflects best practice for tool development, with strong co-funding from industry partners.
- Ensure that its value is optimised to meet the needs of a wide range of potential users, both on and off-farm, as well as the expectations of external stakeholders that will use the outputs from the tool.



Sustainability Framework and Monitoring



- Steps 1 and 2 are focusing on the framework development.
- Step 5 is focussing on reliability of the system.
- Steps 3 and 4 are the application at the sector level.
- Step 6 is focussing on providing added-value at the national level, through all sectors.
- Steps 7, 8, 9 and 10 are mostly focussing on learning tools for end-users/farmers and per sector.



Who is involved?

This six-year research programme, which started in October 2012, builds on a core of existing capability and knowledge of the **Agriculture Research Group On Sustainability (ARGOS)**, supplemented by additional specialist researchers and their international networks.



It involves more than 15 researcher partners from about 10 local research organisations or companies, bringing together skills in economics, social science, ecology, Maori cultural science, engineering and agribusiness.



Who is funding?

It is funded by the **Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment** as well as **more than 10 industry partners**, primarily from the kiwifruit, winegrowing, organics and forestry sectors.



For more information: www.nzdashboard.org.nz

The full Project Description is available in the [Research Report 13/01](#).

Project contacts

- Programme Leader: Jon Manhire, The AgriBusiness Group (jon@agribusinessgroup.com)
- Science Leader: Prof. Henrik Moller, CSAFE (henrik.moller@otago.ac.nz)
- Project Manager: Isabelle Le Quellec, The AgriBusiness Group (isabelle@agribusinessgroup.com)