



## Assessing your farm's sustainability: a bureaucratic burden or a chance to learn and earn?

**Henrik Moller**

*Centre for Sustainability, University of Otago*

Clutha Agricultural Development Board AGM, March 25<sup>th</sup> 2015

# People collaborate if they ...

- 🌀 are respected
- 🌀 are listened to
- 🌀 have their values accepted
- 🌀 are trusted with responsible and meaningful roles to set and achieve the goals
- 🌀 feel proud to belong or are members of the community/club/group

... willing participation is the key indicator of long term success





## Safe & Healthy Farms

Do you want a safe and healthy farming workplace?

Wouldn't you like to be sure that you are doing as much as can be expected to keep yourself and your staff safe in your farming workplace? [More...](#)

## Land & Enviro Planning

Do you want a farming environment to be proud of?

Of course you have a plan to minimise the environmental risks on your farm and to develop a clean and sustainable farming landscape. [More...](#)

## Projects & Demonstrations

Do you want science & innovation brought to the farm?

## Service to the Community

Do you need independent information and advice?

The AgBoard has a proud 20 year record of service to the Clutha district. Contact us for information about how we can help you. [More...](#)

## Introducing the AgBoard

The AgBoard is a farmer-governed, membership-based, not-for-profit organisation. For over 20 years we have provided leadership, information, and support for agricultural activity in the Clutha district and beyond.

We earn income from the management of projects and events, and from the sale of products. We organise project applications, and we are most welcome to take part in any aspect of the Board's work.

**Annual General Meeting**  
Wednesday 25 March 2015  
South Otago Town & Country Club Balclutha

**6.00 pm Annual General Meeting**  
▶ A review of the 2014 year  
▶ Election of the Executive – note two members this year are to retire by rotation and are standing again, there is at least one other available place to fill; the secretary before the meeting; please contact the Secretary for a nomination form.

▶ Open discussion on the immediate future for the AgBoard.  
**6.45 pm Guest Speaker**

## Chairman's Report

Your Ag Board during the last 12 months has still been active even without some of the major projects we have had in the past and the executive have still been meeting on a regular basis.

We have been unable to attract any significant new project funding in 2014. Our staff Malcolm and Graeme's contracts have been terminated so we could eliminate our major overhead and still remain financially viable. However, we have...



**AgBoard**  
CLUTHA AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT BOARD

**ANNUAL REPORT - MARCH 2015**

PO Box 149 Balclutha

[www.agboardnz.co.nz](http://www.agboardnz.co.nz)

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# What is the NZ Sustainability Dashboard?

- Online tool and network
- Mainly self-assessed KPIs reported annually
- Instant benchmarking
- Trend analysis, Targets, Trigger points
- Upscaling
- Automated reporting
- Cultural authenticity and sustainability credentials

# NZSD Main Industry Partners

## Wine partners



NEW ZEALAND WINE  
PURE DISCOVERY



## Maori partner



Te Rūnanga o NGĀI TAHU

## Forestry partners



ROTOMA NO.1  
INCORPORATION



## Organic partner



## Kiwifruit partners



Increasing Grower Profit



PlusGroup  
HORTICULTURE



TE AWANUI  
Ki Te Whai Ao

Trevelyan's  
pack and cool ltd

## Other Industry partners

Aquaculture  
New Zealand



ANZCO  
FOODS



Horticulture™ GOS  
New Zealand



# Turning compliance into a learning opportunity







NEW ZEALAND WINE  
PURE DISCOVERY

# WiSE

Wine industry  
Sustainability  
Engine

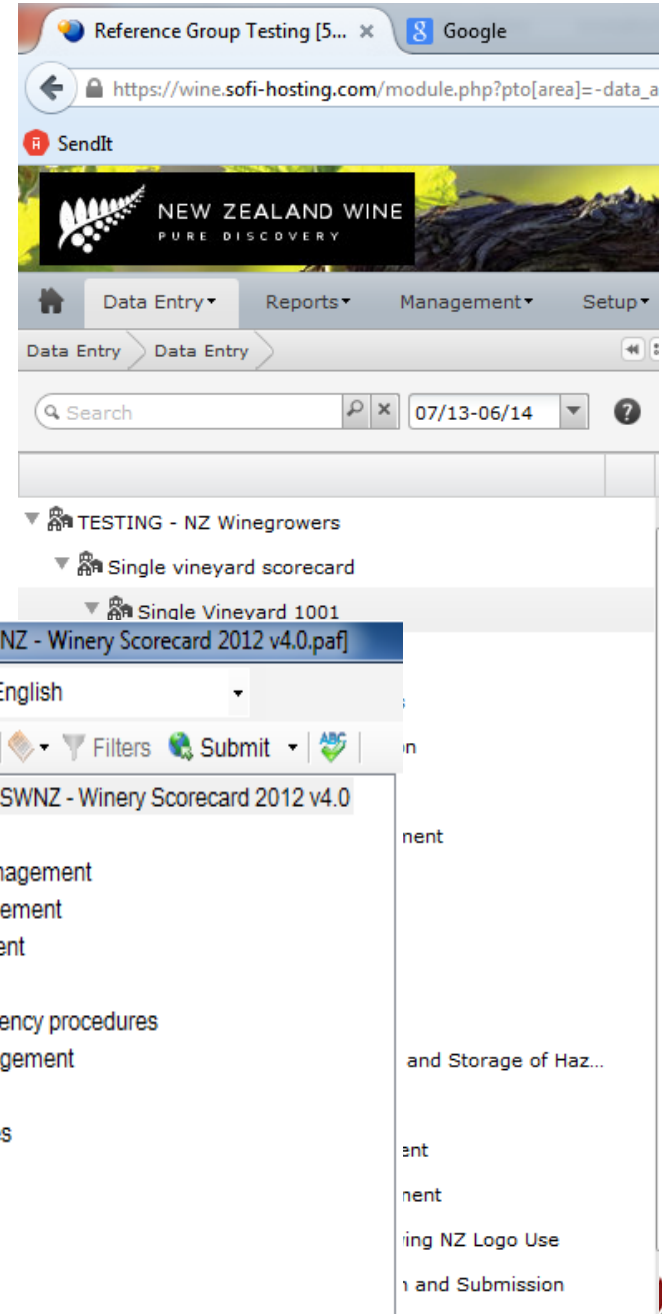




# Sustainable Wine New Zealand Scorecard

**2012**

- **1,196 vineyards**
  - **169 wineries**
  - **94% of production**
- .... a statistician's dream**





# Individualised Winery and Vineyard reports

eg. Winery water  
Use Reports

## Winery Water Report

### Winery Summary

Vintage	2013
Winery name	Winery A
Winery ID	Hidden
Winery type	Crush to bottling & Crush to finished wine
Winery size	200k - 1m L
Region	Hidden

### Our point of view:

Sector water use decreased from 2.6 L/L wine in 2011 to 2.2 L/L in 2013.

Large variations between wineries suggests opportunities for improvement.

An excellent best practice guide can be found at [www.waterwatch.org.nz/wiki/bin/view/Articles/WaterManagementinWineries.html](http://www.waterwatch.org.nz/wiki/bin/view/Articles/WaterManagementinWineries.html).

### 2 Number of Full Production Wineries

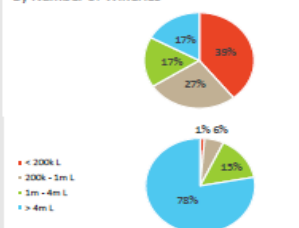
Wineries with recorded water use	121	
Total number of wineries	129	

### 3 Winery Comparisons by Production Type (Full Production) and Volume

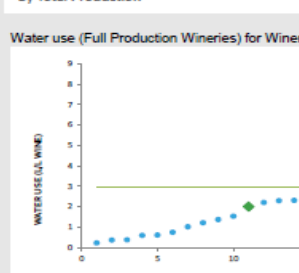
Your winery water use (L/L wine)	2.3	
Sector average water use for 200k - 1m L of production (L/L wine)	2.9	

### 4 Industry Description and Performance by Winery Size

#### By Number of Wineries



#### By Total Production



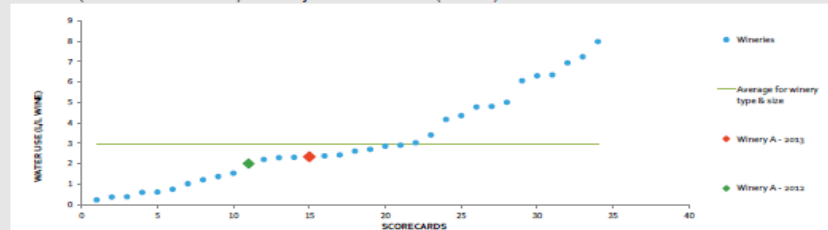
### 1 Quantity of production and winery water use

2013 Vintage	2012 Vintage
556 tonnes	611 tonnes
402,840 litres	440,000 litres
2013 Vintage	2012 Vintage
940	880
2.3	2.0
1,690	1,440
	kL or m <sup>3</sup> /year
	L/L wine
	Lt grapes

#### Full Production Wineries Water Use

< 200k L	200k - 1m L	1m - 4m L	> 4m L
L/L Wine	L/L Wine	L/L Wine	L/L Wine
4.2	3.0	2.5	2.0
L/L Grapes	L/L Grapes	L/L Grapes	L/L Grapes
3,150	2,340	2,000	1,580

#### Water use (Full Production Wineries) for Winery size of 200k - 1m L (L/L wine)



Prepared by:  
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AgLink & The AgriBusiness Group  
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# The New Zealand Sustainability Dashboard

Design & Construction:  
Guiding principles, challenges  
& opportunities



Define sustainability broadly:  
*'multifunctional agriculture' for us all*



# Four Pillars of the Sustainability Dashboard

## GOOD GOVERNANCE

Ensures sound decision-making and implementation

## ECONOMIC RESILIENCE

Sustains a well functioning and resilient economy

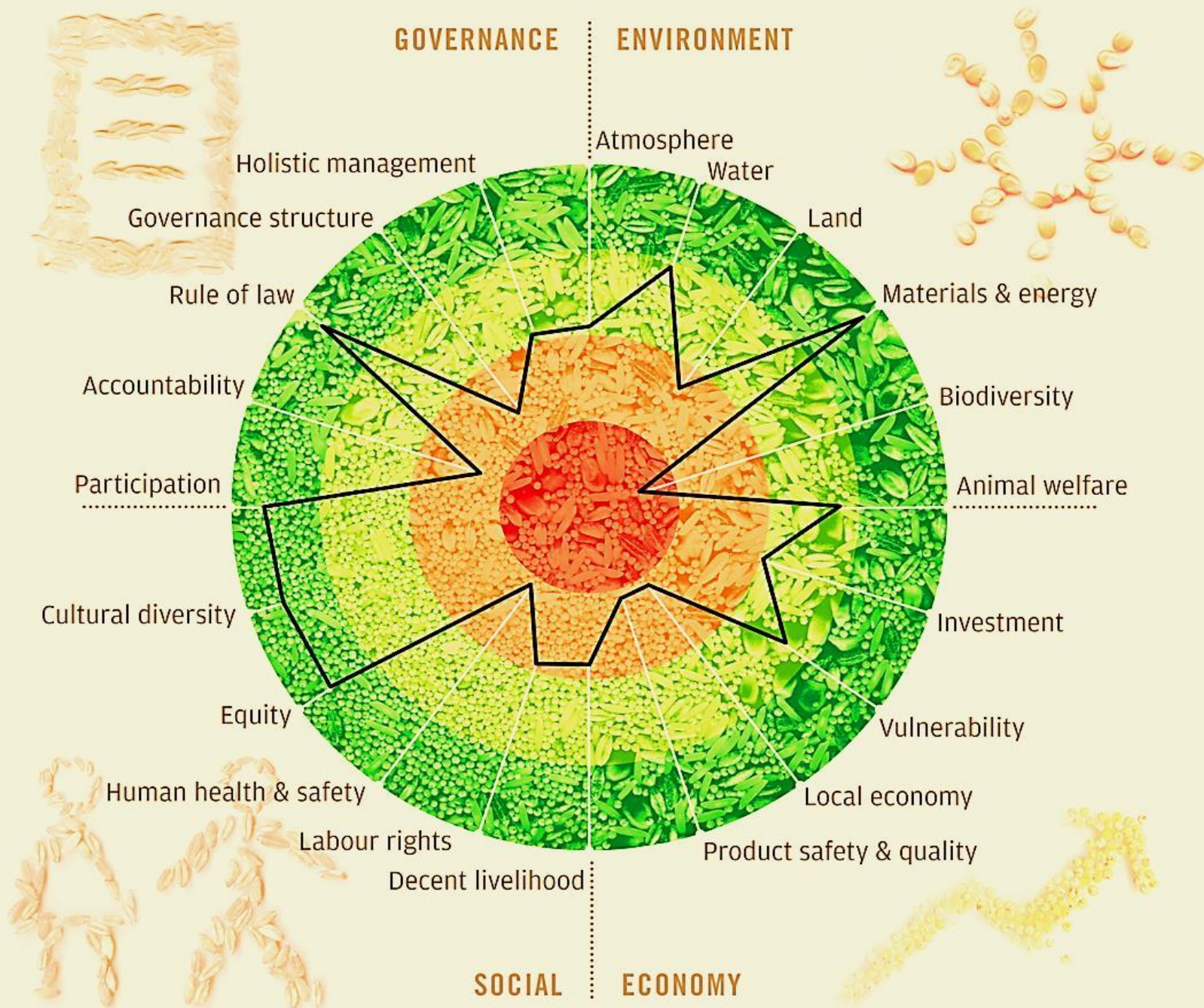
## AGRO-ENVIRONMENTAL INTEGRITY

Sustains natural capital, enhances natural heritage values and meets global environmental obligations

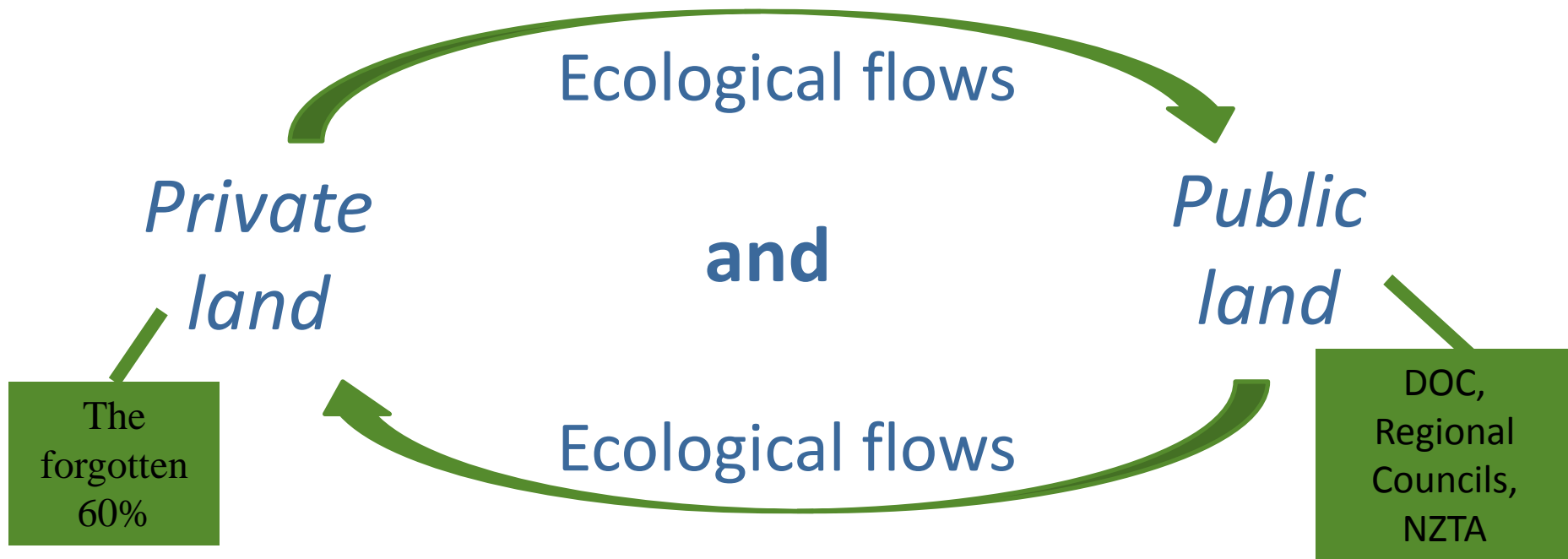
## SOCIAL WELL-BEING

Ensures livelihood opportunities and respects social and cultural principles of all society





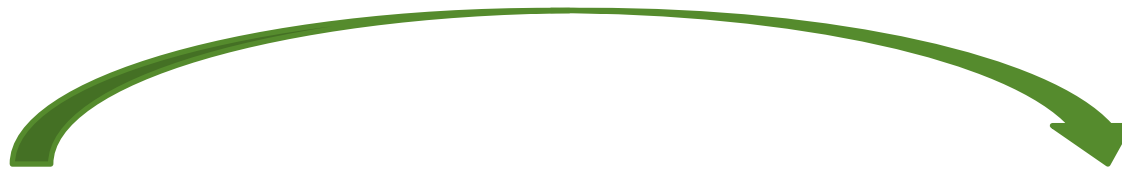
# Think holistically: Ecological landscapes matter



*Ki uta , ki tai ... from the mountains to the sea*

# Think holistically: Social-ecological systems matter

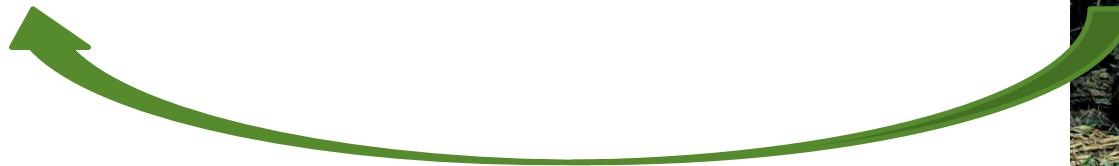
Social & economic flows



*Private  
land*

**and**

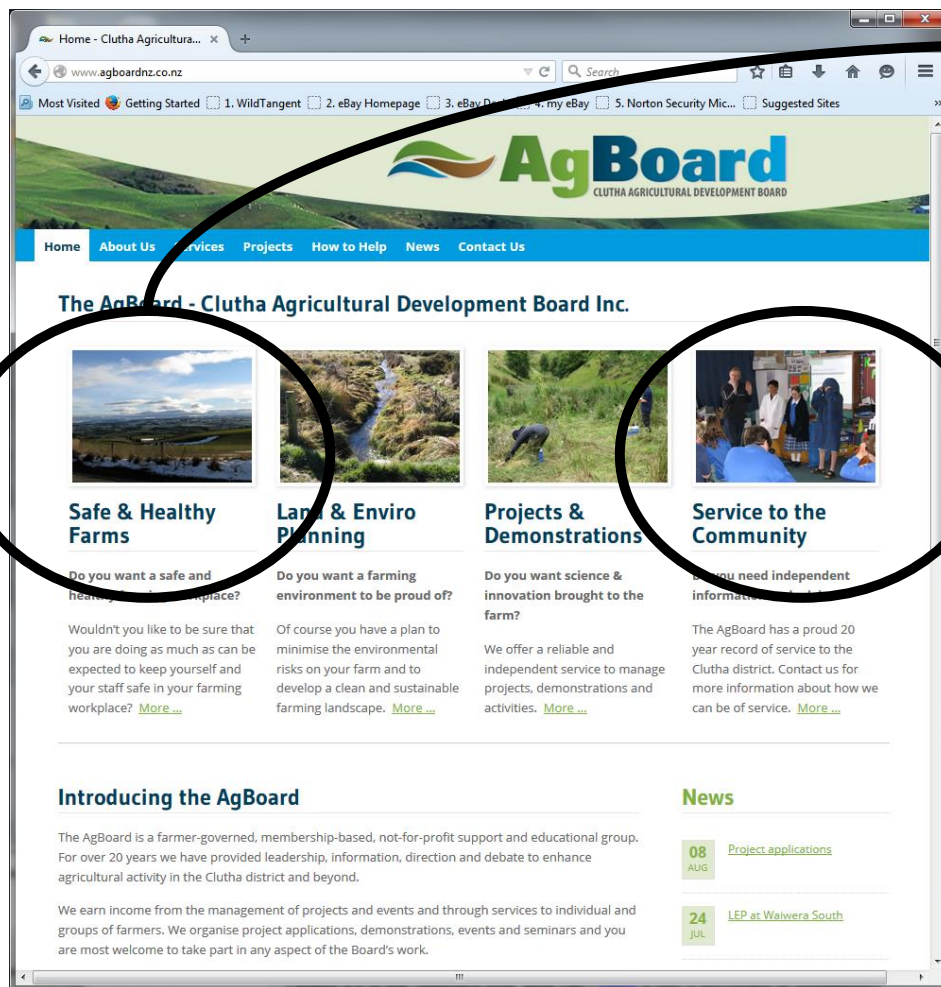
*Public  
land*



Social & economic flows



***Kia ora farmers, Take a bow!***



Keeping families safe

## Rural Community Resilience

*... sticking together*  
*... maintaining a pressence on the land*  
*... building "social capital"*



***Kā ora te whenua, kā ora te tangata***

*If the land is healthy, the people are healthy*

**and**


*If the people are healthy, the land will be healthy*

Monitoring must be linked to outcomes:  
*no measurement for measurement's sake!*



# Agro-environmental integrity

National outcome for NZ production lands

A pastoral landscape with rolling green hills under a hazy sky. In the middle ground, a single, dark, leafy tree stands prominently. The foreground is a lush green field filled with a large herd of sheep, appearing as small dark spots. The overall scene conveys a sense of rural tranquility and natural beauty.

**‘The state which sustains the full potential of land and its natural capital, ecosystem processes and services to efficiently and indefinitely produce healthy, high quality food and fibre, while enhancing natural heritage values and meeting global environmental change obligations.’**

# **Agro-environmental integrity**

National outcome for NZ production lands

Four critical components for achieving the national outcome:

**Natural capital of production landscapes is maintained**

**Resilience of New Zealand agriculture is secured for future use**

**Production landscapes contribute to national 'natural heritage' goals**

**New Zealand meets global environmental change obligations**



Ballancing breadth and depth:  
*drill down only where it counts the most*





# AGRO-ENVIRONMENTAL INTEGRITY

Overarching goal for NZ production lands

## OUTCOMES

*Critical components for achieving goals*

## OBJECTIVES

*Key factors contributing to targeted national outcomes*

### E1 NATURAL CAPITAL MAINTAINED

E1.1 Maintaining ecosystem processes

E1.2 Reducing agricultural pest threats

E1.3 Limiting environmental pollutants

### E2 RESILIENCE SECURED FOR FUTURE USE

E2.1 Minimising material & energy subsidies

E2.2 Buffering against socio-economic pressures and shocks

E2.3 Maintaining agro-biodiversity

### E3 CONTRIBUTED TO NATIONAL 'NATURAL HERITAGE' GOALS

E3.1 Improving ecosystem representation & composition

E3.2 Preventing extinctions & declines

E3.3 Reducing conservation pest threats

### E4 GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE OBLIGATIONS MET

E4.1 Reducing emissions

E4.2 Increasing carbon sequestration

## OUTCOMES

*Critical components for achieving goals*

## OBJECTIVES

*Key factors contributing to targeted national outcomes*

## INDICATORS

*Parameters that can be assessed in relation to an objective*

### E1 NATURAL CAPITAL MAINTAINED

**E1.1 Maintaining ecosystem  
processes**

**SOIL STATUS**

**WATER QUALITY & YIELD**

**LAND COVER**

**ECOSYSTEM DISRUPTION**

**POLLINATION**

**E1.2 Reducing agricultural pest  
threats**

**NEW AGRICULTURAL DISEASE, WEED &  
PEST SPECIES**

**AGRICULTURAL DISEASE, WEED & PEST  
DOMINANCE**

**E1.3 Limiting environmental  
pollutants**

**ENVIRONMENTAL RISK OF TOXINS**

**ECOSYSTEM LEVELS OF PERSISTENT  
TOXINS**



# AGRO-ENVIRONMENTAL INTEGRITY

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SOIL STATUS

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LAND COVER

ECOSYSTEM DISRUPTION

POLLINATION

E1.2 Reducing agricultural pest threats

NEW AGRICULTURAL DISEASE, WEED & PEST SPECIES

AGRICULTURAL DISEASE, WEED & PEST DOMINANCE

E1.3 Limiting environmental pollutants

ENVIRONMENTAL RISK OF TOXINS

ECOSYSTEM LEVELS OF PERSISTENT TOXINS

### E2 RESILIENCE SECURED FOR FUTURE USE

E2.1 Minimising material & energy subsidies

NON-RENEWABLE MATERIALS

ENERGY USE

E2.2 Buffering against socio-economic pressures and shocks

AGRO-ENVIRONMENTAL FINANCIAL RESOURCES

AGRO-ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE

E2.3 Maintaining agro-biodiversity

GENETIC STOCK

BENEFICIAL SPECIES STATUS

LANDSCAPE FUNCTIONAL HETEROGENEITY

### E3 CONTRIBUTED TO NATIONAL 'NATURAL HERITAGE' GOALS

E3.1 Improving ecosystem representation & composition

ECOSYSTEM REPRESENTATION & PROTECTION

ECOSYSTEM COMPOSITION

OCCUPANCY OF ENVIRONMENTAL RANGE

E3.2 Preventing extinctions & declines

STATUS OF THREATENED SPECIES

E3.3 Reducing conservation pest threats

NEW CONSERVATION WEED & PEST SPECIES

CONSERVATION WEED & PEST DOMINANCE

### E4 GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE OBLIGATIONS MET

E4.1 Reducing emissions

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

E4.2 Increasing carbon sequestration

CARBON STORAGE & FLUXES



## Project Manager's Report 1 January – 31 December 2014

### Californian thistle action

We have been able to keep an eye on the progress of the green thistle beetle (*Cassida rubiginosa*) released on up to a hundred sites around the country. Indications from Landcare Research are that it is having a considerable

therefore catch and spread but this is the next step we are considering with Landcare Research.

The CalTAG group which has been such a considerable focus for the attack on thistles for approx. 15 years has melted away. The Board Exec itself is likely to be the only one in any further project and business some members want to return to their own work and into some options.

### Seminars - "Harnessing the Power of microbes on the farm"

We were pleased to co-operate with BioBrew Ltd in April-May this year to present strong, science-based seminars to groups of farmers in Ashburton, Papakaio, Outram, Clydevale, Wyndham and Winton. They were led by Craig Bunt (Lincoln University) and Jacob Kleinmans (Pioneer) and generated good discussions about current and future uses of microbial input in farming. There was broad interest from dairy farmers, a goat farmer, sheep & beef farmers, calf rearers, horticulturalists as well as company reps and the tone of the 4 hour sessions was overwhelmingly positive.



Pioneer scientist Jacob Kleinmans presents to the seminar in May 2014.

Thanks to BioBrew Ltd and Pioneer for their support of our facilitation of these events. We believe that there is not enough discussion among farmers of the science especially behind new products and we were pleased to do this in these successful events.

### Food & Fibre Hemp

Alongside a small group of farmers in the Catlins, we grew a fourth crop of 'industrial hemp' (this is the internationally used name for *Cannabis sativa*). The crop was harvested in late October and the seed is now being processed. The new crop is being used for a range of products, including a new type of paper, a new type of fabric, and a new type of oil. The crop is also being used for a range of other products, including a new type of paper, a new type of fabric, and a new type of oil. The crop is also being used for a range of other products, including a new type of paper, a new type of fabric, and a new type of oil.

The real limitation to the necessary investment of time and money, is the ignorance and lack of imaginative in confusing this crop with its unsociable relation marijuana. The turning point was to be the well documented application A1039 to Food Standards Australia New Zealand to have hemp recognised as a 'novel food.' The scientists/ researchers at FSANZ recommended approval. In February 2015 we have learnt that the politicians (who have the last word) have denied the application.

### New AgBoard Website

<http://www.agboardnz.co.nz/>

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### Archives to the South Otago Museum

As part of our move from our office in August we needed a secure home for the files, books and records that we felt should not be just sent to the landfill. There is a lot of paper recording the early work of the local Strategic Planning Committee and AgBoard of the 1990s that is unlikely to be stored elsewhere. The AgBoard is an integral part of New Zealand's farming transition from the protected and heavily subsidised industry up to the mid 1980s to the more innovative and market-driven operation of today.

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We will have an annual list of all resources stored at the museum on our website soon and they will be available to view under conditions.

### Move from our Office

Graeme and I enjoyed being in our 'Arcade' office on the Main Street since February 2011. The financial position of the Board meant that we closed the office in August 2014.

Some of the most important records were disposed of and Malcolm was asked to move from a Home Office. This was the Executive prudently looking after funds but also maintaining lines of communication with members and the Board's historical partners and associates.

The website has become the necessary public face of our mobile 027 4703198 number remains and we have a new, web-based email of [info@agboardnz.co.nz](mailto:info@agboardnz.co.nz). The old db & adb2 emails are now dead.

**Effective and sound fertilizer use**

**E1.1 Maintaining ecosystem processes**

**E1.2 Reducing agricultural pest threats**

**E1.3 Limiting environmental pollutants**

**E2.3 Maintaining & enhancing agro-biodiversity**

# Bottom-up is best!

*... having growers in the drivers' seat is safer  
and more likely to bring change if needed  
... local tuning for sustainability*



#### Project Manager's Report - continued

##### Miscanthus – the 25 tonne grass

Michael Hurley presented to last year's AGM on *Miscanthus giganteus*, a perennial that grows from its rhizome each spring that can achieve a 3-4 metre height. USA yields are over 25 tonnes of biomass per annum and it grows in a variety of soil and climate types.



A *Miscanthus giganteus* rhizome

It is a possible supplementary feed option; it also has the required attributes for a thermal fuel and Michael explained how it could be a dedicated energy crop producing diesel fuel. Currently 400 farmers are growing 9,000 Ha of Miscanthus in England.

The AgBoard is keeping an eye on a 2 Ha trial plot of Miscanthus and is keen to take part in any work around this crop. There may be an exciting opportunity here for farmers in Clutha and beyond. We may get a group together in 2015 to explore the issues so let us know if you are interested.

##### Memberships

Our membership in 2014 stood at 147 (2013 – 153; 2012 – 173). The executive really appreciates this incredible support in difficult times. As long as we have a membership, we have a group. Although the times aren't rosy at the moment, we have more money in the bank than at a period in 2005 and just as many opportunities to be discovered and acted upon.

##### Conclusion

Your membership and your willingness to be involved will decide our future.

There is a lot of agriculture's money being spent on Grand Plans of a large national scale and we certainly hope they are successful. We continue to believe that as much change and progress will happen from small projects undertaken by local and neighbourhood groups. We still see no reason to stop trying to add value to the agricultural experience in the Clutha district in a way that no-one else is doing.

Are we on the right track or are we not? We hope many of you can come along to the AGM with positive suggestions.

All the best for your farming endeavours in 2015.

Malcolm Deverson

#### Ideas too good to extinguish . . .

The Board's executive has struggled financially through most of the last two or three years. One of the main reasons why the AgBoard has 'hung in there' and tried to continue 'business as usual' is that Board executive and staff especially had many 'irons in the fire' and many contacts that were still willing to share and work with us. Many ideas have simply not come to fruition recently. We still do not believe it is in the best interests of the district to give up on those ideas and options for the future that could bring funding into the district. Even without permanent staff in 2015, the executive can keep an eye on ideas like these:

- The Miscanthus story, which some of you heard at last year's AGM, is an interesting one. There are development opportunities here that Clutha could have a central role with.
- We have extensive experience with Health & Safety practices and policies on farm. We may be able to come up with a programme to support farmers with the new law coming out later this year. And we need to include mental health in many discussions (I am told there are more farmer suicides than there are deaths through lack of a helmet). Any course or programme would cost but if it was supported could be a win-win all round.
- Landcare Research may be interested in doing more work with us on pasture pests.
- Our autumn/winter neighbourhood-focussed field trips have proved popular in the past and we are planning a 2015 version. Remember the Milton Mine, Mutton, Minds and Mill tour, and the Catlins 4WD Foray?
- Is there work to do in that part of the country on tile drains and wetlands?
- We have had a contact recently that wants to discuss the management of willow tree plantations (a follow up on our project SFF 06/008).

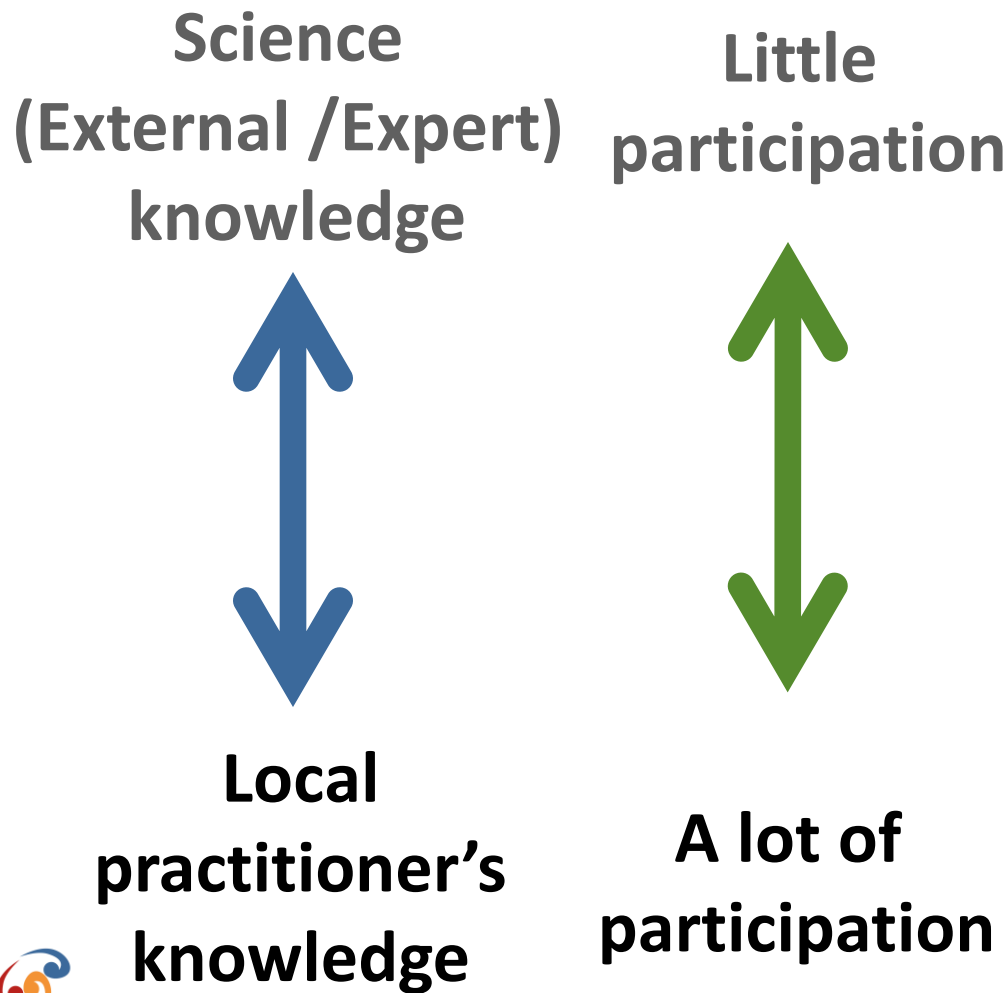
There's more but we've run out of space!  
And as an open, democratic, grassroots farmer-led organisation we are keen to pick up on **your** ideas too. Ideas for interesting projects, trials and activity that can happen here locally would be welcome.

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# Sharing Knowledge



# Make monitoring practical, or it simply won't happen:

*... farmers self measure most performance issues*

*... integrate monitoring with normal farming practices*

*... balance scientific rigor versus rigor mortis!*





# Learning for making better choices:

*... staying agile, adaptive and resilient*

*... lifting efficiency and performance*



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### Food & Fibre Hemp

Alongside a small group of farmers in the Catlins, we grew a fourth crop of 'industrial hemp' (this is the internationally used name but I think 'food & fibre hemp' would be more useful) in the 2013-14 summer. Despite trying some new ideas – such as a spray to reduce early weed competition and a more dense sowing rate – this was the least successful of the group's crops. It may well be a brilliant crop with many, many product uses and health benefits, but we believe there is still a lot of work to be done if this is to have any place in New Zealand's agricultural scene.

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### Effective and sound fertilizer use

At the start of 2014 we had the project "Demonstrate the benefits of optimum fertiliser use on pastures and monitor farmer uptake" under consideration by the Sustainable Farming Fund. We had supportive co-funders in B+LNZ FITT fund and Milburn Lime but the project was rejected by the SFF team.

The project would have enabled us to talk to farmers about optimum fertilising and demonstrate what the basic inputs of N, P, S, Lime and Mo can achieve. We may try again

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# Stay focussed but loose!

*... how are you tracking compared to your peers?*

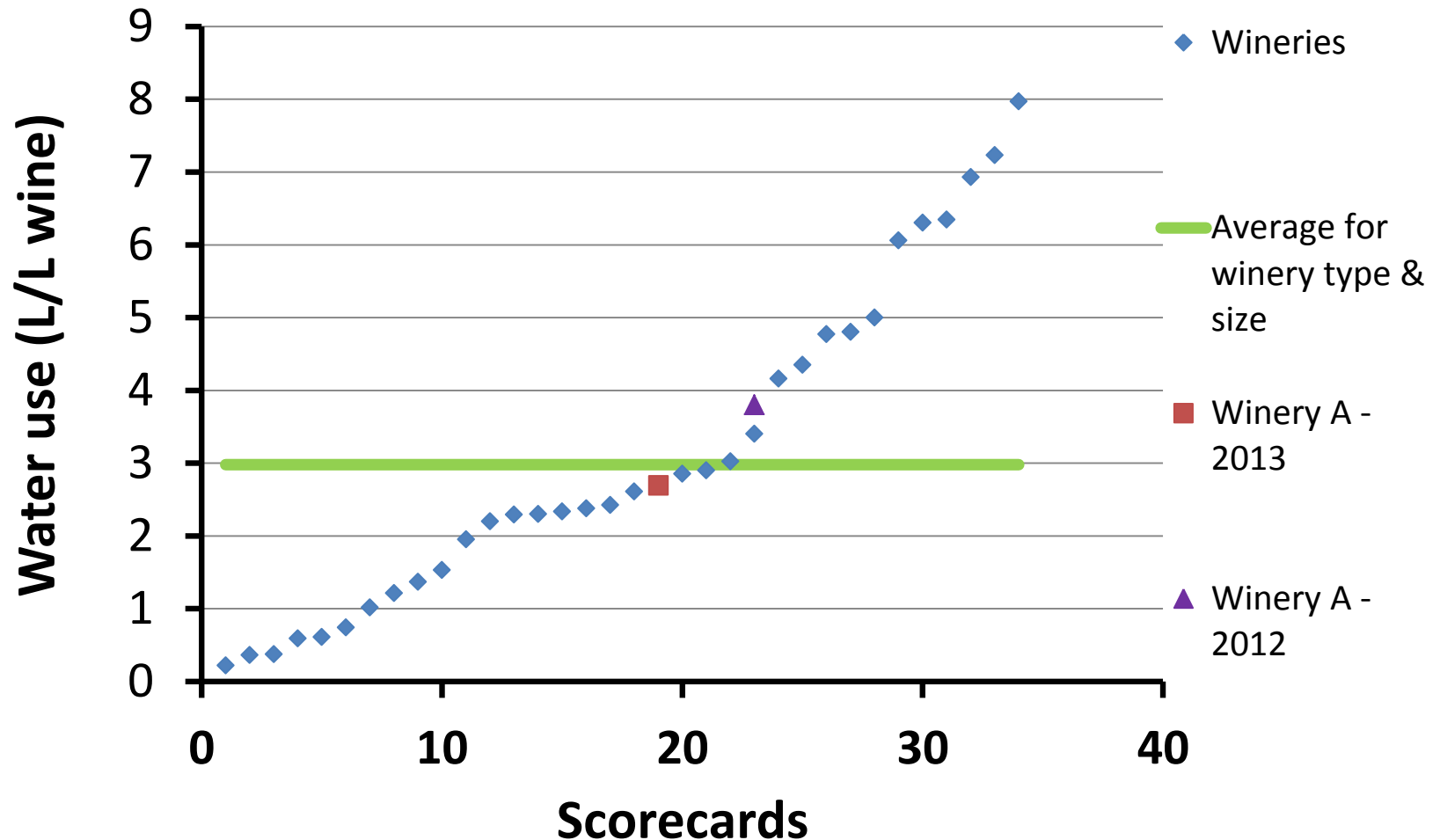
*.. up the vigilance at amber or red alerts*

*... what threats and opportunities are just over the horizon?*

*... decision-support tools for smart choices*



# Benchmarking: incentivising performance improvement and learning



# Set your game plan:

*Planning from an informed base*





with this idea. Our research consultant from Gore was able to point out to us paddock after paddock that he suspected lacked the appropriate fertilising elements and this will be costing farmers significant production year after year.

#### Sustainable Farming Fund's recent changes

The AgBoard has had a good relationship with MPI's Sustainable Farming Fund over many years. The Board was the recipient of three of the first thirteen successful applications in the fund's first year in 2000. We wrote a glowing report for the fund's 2013 survey of participants.

Unfortunately recent changes have not been to the advantage of the Board nor to farmers who want simple and effective ideas presented well to them in small groups preferably on-farm. The smaller under \$25k funding round has been abandoned. The February date and smaller scale was useful for small groups of farmers like us.

It appears to us that the Big Boys are using the fund to augment their considerable organisational funding – 4 projects in the recent round to FAR and at least two from offices at AgResearch. Previously project summaries were available on the SFF website but this is not the case now so working out what the projects are specifically doing and for whom is difficult.

We were also caught out in 2014 with closing date brought forward five weeks with no warning.

Having said all this we are still keen to pursue project ideas with MPI's SFF and with members' support will prepare applications for later in 2015.

#### Communications with Clutha Development Trust

Executive members from both groups met in March. This led to a request to the AgBoard to quote for the task of preparing an update to "Agricultural Statistics for the Clutha District." There is 2002 and 2007 data in our Agricultural Statistics documents and the inclusion of 2012 Agricultural Production Census data (released late 2013) would have given greater certainty to the sampling and estimations made by all agencies in the intervening years.

Unfortunately the CDT decided that they would not do this task. If it considered important enough in the future then the AgBoard has comprehensive databases to share and work from.

#### Community-good activities

We are no longer funded to pursue community-good activities but in 2014 we maintained a role in these areas:

- The Settlement Support Forum is an excellent initiative. The Board's early-days advice role is now complete and we wish them every success.
- Malcolm has attended the Mayors Taskforce for Jobs meetings. Farming jobs are not the choice of participants nor offered by the farming community. Farm worker issues, complex as they are, remain unresolved.
- Graeme continued his Ballance Farm Environment Award roles in 2014 with AgBoard support.
- We followed up with MPI on a potential biosecurity issue raised by a Catlins farmer – but there was no problem.
- Malcolm attended the March Gore meeting called by southern sheep breeders and sheep & deer farmers where 100 Invermay supporters had a heated discussion with AgResearch reps.

- We have been member of the Otago Chamber of Commerce and passed on information when relevant.
- We presented a submission to the draft Tourism Strategy of the Otago Regional Council in May, to make sure they had some kind of agricultural perspective.

#### Land and Environment Plans

Graeme arranged and ran three workshops in 2014 – at Lovells Flat, Owaka and Waiwera South and approx 50 farmers attended. Graeme is an accredited facilitator for this Beef + Lamb New Zealand programme to encourage farmers to consider relevant environmental issues for the farm and put in place systems to manage these. Plans will include water quality requirements but asks farmers to deal with all other environmental issues as well. With Graeme's departure from the area in March 2015, the AgBoard will now review the delivery of these courses.



Rob Schick from ORC helped at the LEP day at Waiwera South

#### Other significant contacts

- In February 2014 Malcolm took the opportunity of being in Taranaki to talk to Venture Taranaki about their hemp crop aspirations. Malcolm also appreciated a long discussion with Greg Flavall who has hemp interests here and in the USA.
- In December executive representatives talked to the new Clutha Council CEO Steve Hill. We made some points on behalf of our approx 150 members and in favour of our long-standing support for agricultural development in this district. Steve was kind enough to listen and we look forward to the next step in our support for council initiatives in the key area of development for this district – agriculture.

#### Health & Safety in Farming

All the statistics show farming as a very dangerous occupation. From 2009-2014 there were 93 deaths in Agriculture (cf. 29 in Forestry & Logging) and many more serious injuries. This means that ACC premiums are high. Do we just accept this and say "well, farming is bound to be dangerous and the nature of farmers is that they are bound to take risks?"

We think that at least a number of Clutha farmers will not think this is the ideal response. We understand farmers' reluctance to make this a priority with so many pressing issues in front of them. But we firmly believe that with the new Worksafe organisation set up and with the new Health & Safety in Employment law now due later in 2015, this is not something that can be put off for ever.

We have been trying to refine our plans to support farmers at reasonable cost and members will be informed about these plans in due course.

## Land and Environment Plans

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Sustainability is good business:  
*Securing economic resilience, premium  
prices and market access*



## 'Willingness to pay' for attribute as % of product price (Dairy products)

	China	India	UK
<b>Safety</b>	74%	73%	16%
<b>Animal Welfare</b>	26%	42%	17%
<b>Water</b>	16%	19%	3%
<b>GHG</b>	25%	38%	7%
<b>Biodiversity</b>	22%	27%	6%
<b>NZ Origin</b>	49%	10%	3%



# The Tower of Eco-babble?

... too many eco-labels?  
... what do they mean?  
... do people trust them?



Targetting quality rather than  
quantity is more sustainable:  
*... more than just improving efficiency*  
*... trusted evidence of ethical practice*





Link the “layers and players”:  
*... cross-scale bridging organisations*



# Multiple Layers and Players

**Growers**

**Sector**

**Communities**

**Policy Makers**

**NZ General Public**

**Exporter/Importers**

**Consumers**

Local relevance:  
learning and earning

Telling the local story  
around the product


Trust and  
transparency

Supportive policy:  
joining town and  
country

Ethical consumption ..  
driving sustainability from  
plate to the farm gate



# Conclusions & Discussion (1)

- 
- Do we need a Sustainability Dashboard for learning and earning in the pastoral sector?
- BioGro will build one for certified Organic dairy and sheep/beef farming
  - Farm<sup>IQ</sup>
  - Farmax
  - Fonterra
  - Beef+Lamb

# Conclusions & Discussion (2)

- 🌀 Promising progress has been made on four case studies to develop a NZSD
- 🌀 A regionally based Dashboard may have advantages? ... a Clutha Clone !?
- 🌀 Would a NZSD have helped the focus and viability of Clutha AgBoard?
- 🌀 Clutha AgBoard is making a much-needed contribution to learning, earning and sustainability!

#### Project Manager's Report - continued

##### Miscanthus – the 25 tonne grass

Michael Hurley presented to last year's AGM on *Miscanthus giganteus*, a perennial that grows from its rhizome each spring that can achieve a 3-4 metre height. USA yields are over 25 tonnes of biomass per annum and it grows in a variety of soil and climate types.



A *Miscanthus giganteus* rhizome

It is a possible supplementary feed option; it also has the required attributes for a thermal fuel and Michael explained how it could be a dedicated energy crop producing diesel fuel. Currently 400 farmers are growing 9,000 Ha of *Miscanthus* in England.

The AgBoard is keeping an eye on a 2 Ha trial plot of *Miscanthus* and is keen to take part in any work around this crop. There may be an exciting opportunity here for farmers in Clutha and beyond. We may get a group together in 2015 to explore the issues so let us know if you are interested.

##### Memberships

Our membership in 2014 stood at 147 (2013 – 153; 2012 – 173). The executive really appreciates this incredible support in difficult times. As long as we have a membership, we have a group. Although the times aren't rosy at the moment, we have more money in the bank than at a period in 2005 and just as many opportunities to be discovered and acted upon.

##### Conclusion

Your membership and willingness to be involved will decide our future.

There is a lot of agriculture's money being spent on Grand Plans of a large national scale and we certainly hope they are successful. We continue to believe that as much change and progress will happen from small projects undertaken by local and neighbourhood groups. We still see no reason to stop trying to add value to the agricultural experience in the Clutha district in a way that no-one else is doing.

Are we on the right track or are we not? We hope many of you came away along to the AGM with positive questions.

All the best for your farming endeavours in 2015.

Malcolm Deverson

##### Ideas too good to extinguish . . .

The Board's executive has struggled financially through most of the last two or three years. One of the main reasons why the AgBoard has 'hung in there' and tried to continue 'business as usual' is that Board executive and staff especially had many 'trons in the fire' and many contacts that were still willing to share and work with us. Many ideas have simply not come to fruition recently. We still do not believe it is in the best interests of the district to give up on those ideas and options for the future that could bring funding into the district. Even without permanent staff in 2015, the executive can keep an eye on ideas like these:

- The *Miscanthus* story, which some of you heard at last year's AGM, is an interesting one. There are development opportunities here that Clutha could have a central role with.
- We have extensive experience with Health & Safety practices and policies on farm. We may be able to come up with a programme to support farmers with the new law coming out later this year. And we need to include mental health in any discussions (I am told there are more farmer suicides than there are deaths through lack of a helmet). Any course or programme would cost but if it was supported could be a win-win all round.
- Landcare Research may be interested in doing more work with us on pasture pests.
- Our autumn/winter neighbourhood-focussed field trips have proved popular in the past and we are planning a 2015 version. Remember the Milton Mine, Mutton, Minds and Mill tour, and the Catlins 4WD Fiday?
- Is there work to do in this part of the country on tile drains and wetlands?
- Yes we have had a contact recently that wants to discuss the management of willow and poplars (a follow up on our project SFF 06/008).

There's more but we've run out of space!  
And as an open, democratic, grassroots farmer-led organisation we are keen to pick up on **your** ideas too. Ideas for interesting projects, trials and activity that can happen here locally would be welcome.

## Conclusion.

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# Thanks!

- NZ's Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (principle funder of NZ Sustainability dashboard project)
- NZ Wine, Zespri & kiwifruit Packhouses, BioGro, Ngāi Tahu
- Clutha Agriculture Development Board





# The New Zealand Sustainability Dashboard

For more information about the project:

See our website at:

[www.nzdashboard.org.nz](http://www.nzdashboard.org.nz)

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