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Media Release

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Drought resilience 'knowledge network' kicks off

A drought resilience 'knowledge network' kicks off today, charged with shaping transformational measures that will help local producers and their communities to adapt to a variable environment.

The South-West WA Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hub (SW WA Hub) has appointed Regional Node Leads and Regional Advisory Committees (RAC) in four agro-ecological zones to help it deliver on its aim of increasing the uptake of drought resilience practices and technologies.

Led by the Grower Group Alliance (GGA), the SW WA Hub is one of eight Hubs established around the country through the Australian Government's \$5 billion Future Drought Fund (FDF).

Regional Node Leads and RAC members for the Southern Rangelands region have their online 'kick off' meeting today. Meetings for the Hub's Mid West and Gascoyne Coastal, South West and Wheatbelt regions will follow soon.

"The GGA, through the SW WA Hub, is in a unique and potentially catalytic position to drive investment from the ground up and to be at the forefront of innovation and adoption," SW WA Hub Director Mark Holland said.

"Our four RACs, collectively comprising about 40 individuals, and the eight Regional Node Leads, will help us to identify priorities and co-design activities that reflect the needs of producers and their communities.

"The committees and Node Leads represent a broad cross section of the South-West WA agricultural industry, including pastoralism in the north and east, through to the grain and livestock industries of the Wheatbelt, interspersed with horticulture, viticulture and dairy on the coastal plains and in the south west."

Regional Node Leads include grower groups and natural resource management groups and, through nominated managers, will help link the Hub to end users by gathering and sharing knowledge, coordinating local activities and supporting Hub activities.

These roles are aligned with Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development office locations in the area covered by the Hub.

Regional Advisory Committees comprise skills-based representatives of agricultural industries for each agro-ecological zone.



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Through their knowledge and expertise, they will provide guidance to the SW WA Hub on priority issues impacting the drought and climate resilience of farming systems, their industries and communities.

A First Nations Advisory Body will also be appointed by the SW WA Hub in coming months.

Mr Holland said the initiatives built on industry collaboration through the Hub's engagement with more than 50 Hub Consortium Partners, which are providing cash and in-kind co-contributions worth several million dollars, as well as with other stakeholders.

"Our activities and focus on collaboration are already paying off for WA agriculture," he said.

"The GGA and the Hub have in recent months played a critical role in assisting other organisations with applications for Australian Government grants, including through the Future Drought Fund.

"This has helped to ensure that drought resilience investments, worth several million dollars, have hit the ground in WA in recent months.

"These projects include the collaborative \$4 million WaterSmart Dams and WA projects newly announced under the Australian Government's Drought Resilient Soils and Landscapes Grants program."

The Regional Node Leads and Regional Advisory Committee members are listed on the 'Drought Hub' page of the GGA website at <https://www.gga.org.au>.

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Caption: Mark Holland, Director of the South-West WA Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hub, says Regional Node Leads and Regional Advisory Committees will help the Hub deliver on its aim of providing networks for researchers, farmers, communities, First Nations people and other stakeholders to work together to enhance drought resilient practices.

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