



Management
Managing good assets with good people



## Principle 1: Lay solid foundations for management and oversight:

A listed entity should clearly delineate the respective roles and responsibilities of its board and management and regularly review their performance.

- **1.1** The responsible entity of an externally managed listed entity should disclose:
  - a. the arrangements between the responsible entity and the listed entity for managing the affairs of the listed entity; and
  - b. the role and responsibility of the board of the responsible entity for overseeing those arrangements.
- **1.2** A listed entity should:
  - a. Undertake appropriate checks before appointing a director or senior executive or putting someone forward for election as a director; and
  - b. Provide security holders with all material information in its possession relevant to a decision on whether or not to elect or re-elect a director.
- **1.3** A listed entity should have a written agreement with each director and senior executive setting out the terms of their appointment.



The business of the Fund is managed by RFM as the responsible entity of the Fund. The arrangements as between the Responsible Entity and the Fund are governed by the Constitution of the Fund and the Corporations Act. The conduct of the Board of RFM as responsible entity when managing the affairs of the Fund are outlined in the Corporate Governance Charter.

As outlined in the Corporate Governance Charter, the Board has delegated responsibility for the day-to-day management of the Fund to the Managing Director of the Responsible Entity. This involves monitoring senior management's implementation of the company's strategy.

The Constitution of the Fund is available by contacting the Responsible Entity. The Corporate Governance Charter is available on the Fund's website.

**1.2** As an externally managed scheme, recommendation 1.2 does not apply to the Fund.

Prior to an appointment, all appropriate checks are completed for potential Directors and senior managers, which include police, bankruptcy and reference checks, assessment of employment history, experience, education, directorships and unitholdings.

**1.3** As an externally managed scheme, recommendation 1.3 does not apply to the Fund.

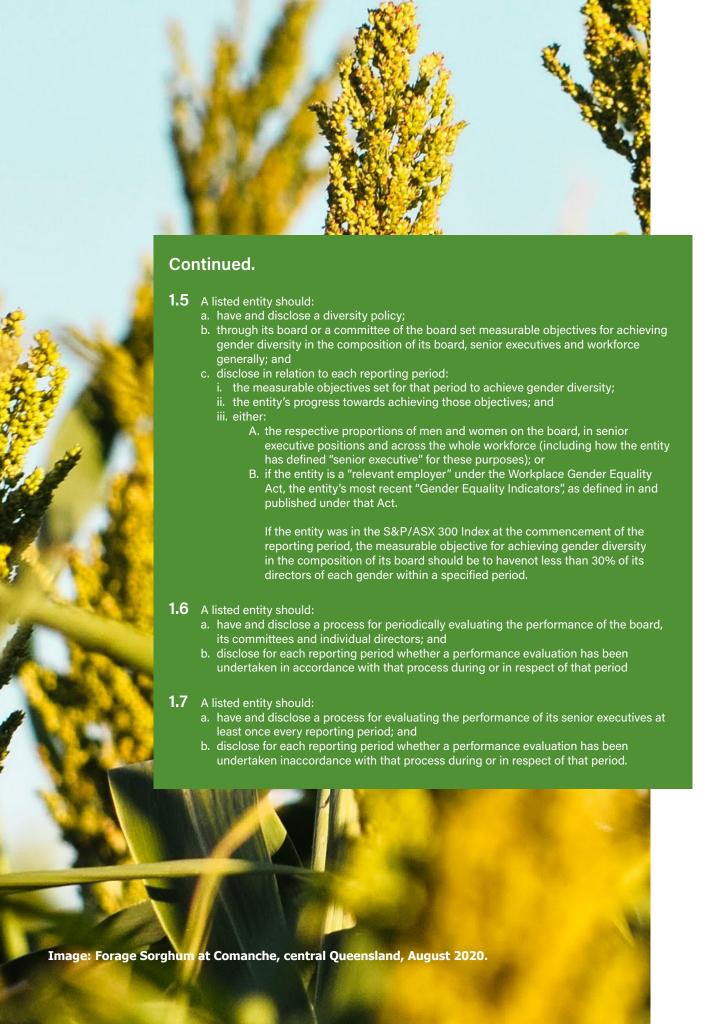
All directors of the Responsible Entity receive letters of appointment setting out the key terms and conditions of their appointment.

All senior managers of the Responsible Entity enter into an employment agreement setting out the key terms and conditions of their employment including a position description, duties, rights, responsibilities, remuneration and entitlements on termination.

**1.4** As an externally managed scheme, recommendation 1.4 does not apply to the Fund.

The Company Secretary of the Responsible Entity is accountable to the Board, through the Chair, on all matters to do with the proper functioning of the Board.





**1.5** As an externally managed scheme, recommendation 1.5 does not apply to the Fund.

The Responsible Entity has a Diversity Policy, which is approved by the Board.

The Fund recognises that its employees are one of its greatest assets and has employed a range of employees with skills and capabilities. This ensures the ongoing strength, continuity and stability of the Responsible Entity. The Diversity Policy provides the framework that actively manages and encourages diversity and inclusion and attracts a diverse pool of suitably skilled candidates.

The Diversity Policy is located on the Corporate Governance page of the Responsible Entity's website.

Due to the size of the Responsible Entity's Board and its senior management team, and the limited turnover of personnel at this level, it does not set quantitative gender diversity objectives. The Responsible Entity will endeavour to maintain, or improve, the current level of gender diversity of the Board and senior management when vacancies arise.

The Board is looking to increase the composition of the Responsible Entity's Board and has set internal objectives to accomplish gender diversity.

As at 30 June 2021, the Responsible Entity's senior management team included three female managers (out of a total of 15 senior managers) Of the 137 staff members RFM and associated entitles employ, 26% are female.

The Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 (Cth) (WGE Act) applies to RFM as the Responsible Entity and its associated entities, together employing more than 100 employees in Australia. The annual compliance report has been submitted, and RFM is awaiting the final compliance approval.

**1.6** As an externally managed scheme, recommendation 1.6 does not apply to the Fund.

The performance of the Board, its Committees and individual Directors as outlined in the Corporate Governance Charter (located on the Corporate Governance page of Responsible Entity's website) is reviewed annually.

Performance feedback has been provided to all Directors this financial year.

**1.7** As an externally managed scheme, recommendation 1.7 does not apply to the Fund.

RFM has a Performance Management Policy that provides guidelines to review the performance of senior managers. Managing the performance of our people is critical to our success and in most cases, we choose to do this informally through regular one-on-one discussions between employees and their manager, or formally where one or the other party prefer this approach. Performance feedback has been provided to all senior managers this financial year.

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**2.1** As an externally managed scheme, recommendation 2.1 does not apply to the Fund.

The Responsible Entity has not established a Nomination Committee. Due to the size of the Board and the nature of the business, the Board has determined this oversight should be managed by the Board.

External advice is sought from senior consultants including specialist tax, legal or business advisers when required

**2.2** As an externally managed scheme, recommendation 2.2 does not apply to the Fund.

The qualifications, experience and skills of the Board is listed on the Responsible Entity's website.

2.3 The Board comprises of four members, three of whom are independent non-executive directors.

Director	Commencement	Independent
David Anthony Bryant Managing Director	17 February 1997	No
Leslie Guy Julian Paynter Chairman Non-Executive Director	15 April 2010*	Yes
Michael Carroll Non-Executive Director	15 April 2010*	Yes
Julian James Widdup Non-Executive Director	15 February 2017	Yes

\* Both Mr Paynter and Mr Carroll have more than ten years of service as Directors of the Responsible Entity. It remains the Board's opinion that both Mr Paynter and Mr Carroll have an independence of mind and a strong element of objectivity regarding the affairs of RFM and the Fund. All members of the Board advocate their professional views as part of robust discussions.

The Directors Report, listed in the Annual Report and located on the Responsible Entity's website, has further details of each Director's background, qualifications, expertise and interests in the Fund.

**2.4** As an externally managed scheme, recommendation 2.4 does not apply to the Fund.

The Board currently consists of a majority of independent Directors.

**2.5** As an externally managed scheme, recommendation 2.5 does not apply to the Fund.

The chair of the Board is responsible for the Board's leadership, organisation and conduct.

The chair, Mr Leslie Guy Julian Paynter is considered independent as defined in the Corporate Governance Charter.

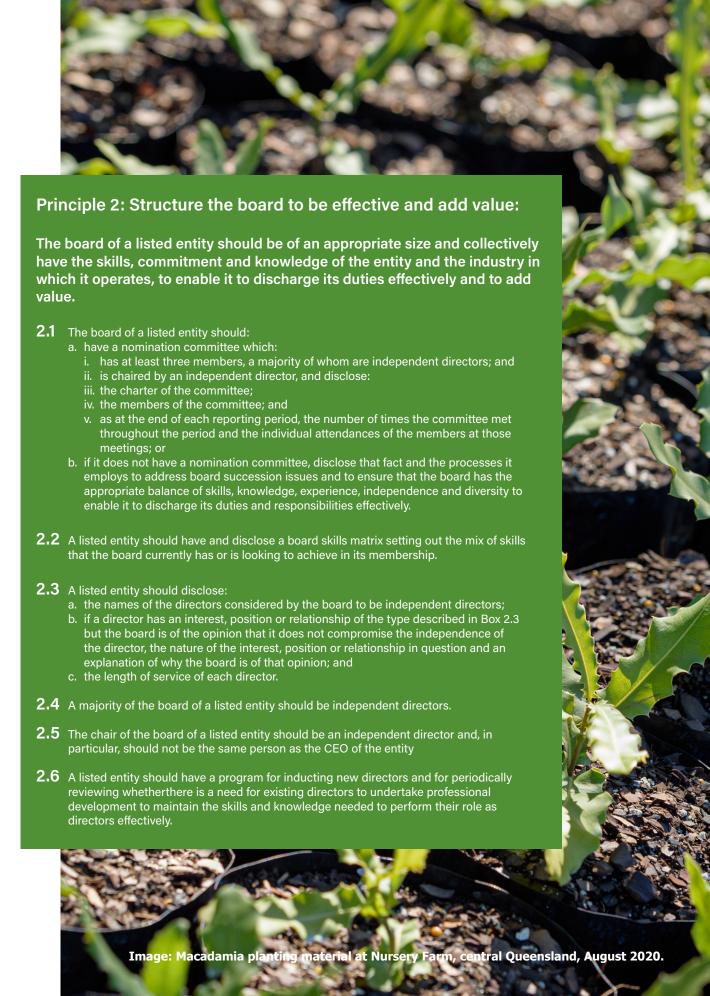
**2.6** As an externally managed scheme, recommendation 2.6 does not apply to the Fund.

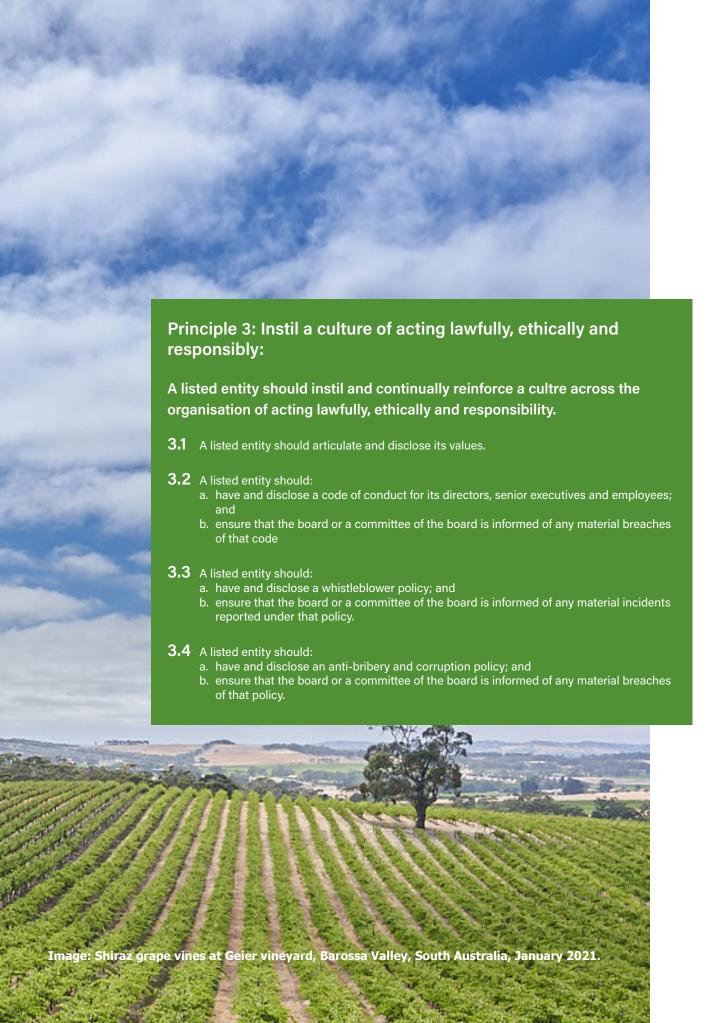
All new Directors are selected and appointed in accordance with the Corporate Governance Charter.

New Directors are provided with an induction relevant to the Responsible Entity and are provided opportunities to extend their skills and knowledge, either informal or formally.









**3.1** The Responsible Entity's motto is 'Managing good assets with good people.' The Responsible Entity's objectives with regard to the Fund are to operate profitably, maximise investor return and identify opportunities for growth.

The Responsible Entity's values presented in its Code of Conduct underpins its culture and reputation.

- It sets expectations for employees to act honestly, ethically, in good faith and in the best interests
  of the Responsible Entity and its managed entities.
- Employees have a duty to use due care and diligence and must not make improper use of information acquired.
- · Personal interests are not to conflict with the interests of RFM or the Fund's Unitholders.
- Employees must adhere to the continuous disclosure protocol and privacy principle adopted by RFM.
- Employees are not to engage in conduct likely to bring discredit upon RFM and not knowingly breach any law under which RFM operates.
- **3.2** The Responsible Entity has implemented a Directors' Code of Conduct (Code). The Code seeks to give directors guidance on how best to perform their duties, meet their obligations and understand RFM's corporate governance practices.

The Code focuses on the directors' obligations to comply with codes and law, general duties and application of business judgement, including personal interests and conflicts, conduct, and complaints.

The Corporate Governance Charter incorporating the Directors' Code of Conduct is available on the Responsible Entity's website.

The Responsible Entity has a general Code of Conduct that is applicable to Directors and all staff including senior managers.

The Responsible Entity has a very robust structure for reporting material breaches of both the Code and the general Code of Conduct. The Company Secretary advises the Board and the Internal Compliance Committee of any such breaches.

3.3 The Responsible Entity has an established Whistleblower Policy. All corporate employees were provided with compliance training of the updated Whistleblower Policy this Financial Year.

The Responsible Entity has a very robust structure for reporting incidents under the Whistleblower Policy. The Company Secretary will advise the Board of any material incidents. The Internal Compliance Committee would be advised at their quarterly meetings.

The Whistleblower Policy is available on the Responsible Entity's website.

**3.4** The Responsible Entity has an established Anti-Bribery and Corruption Policy.

The Responsible Entity has a very robust structure for reporting breaches of the Anti-Bribery and Corruption Policy. The Company Secretary will advise the Board of any material breaches. The Internal Compliance Committee would be advised at their quarterly meetings.

The Anti-Bribery and Corruption Policy is available on the Responsible Entity's website.

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**4.1** The Board has an established Audit Committee with the purpose of assisting the Board with integrity of financial reporting, controls and independence of the Fund's external auditors.

The Audit Committee is comprised of three members, all of whom are independent non-executive Directors. Michael Carroll is the Chair of the Audit Committee and an independent Director of the Board. Qualifications and experience of the Audit Committee members is located on the Corporate Governance page of the Responsible Entity's website.

The Audit Committee has a formal charter that details its roles, responsibilities and its obligations. The Audit Committee charter is included in the Corporate Governance Charter, located on the Corporate Governance page of the Responsible Entity's website.

Two meetings of the Audit Committee were held in relation to the accounts during the Financial Year. Both meetings were attended by all Audit Committee members.

The Audit Committee will routinely invite other individuals to attend meetings, including senior management of the Responsible Entity and the Auditor of the Fund. The Audit Committee and invitees review the financial reports and provide commentary to the Board as required.

- **4.2** The CFO and Managing Director each declared in writing to the Board for both the half-year and full-financial year financial statements, that the declarations provided under sections 286 and 295(3)(b) of the Corporations Act, have been properly maintained, comply with accounting standards, give a true and fair view of the financial position and performance of the Fund with the opinion formed on the basis of a sound risk management and internal control system.
- **4.3** The Fund's corporate reporting was reviewed by external auditors appointed by the Responsible Entity, who attended both Audit Committee meetings this Financial Year.



**4.2** The board of a listed entity should, before it approves the entity's financial statements for a financial period, receive from its CEO and CFO a declaration that, in their opinion, the financial records of the entity have been properly maintained and that the financial statements comply with the appropriate accounting standards and give a true and fair view of the financial position and performance of the entity and that the opinion has been formed on the basis of a sound system of risk management and internal control which is operating effectively.

**4.3** A listed entity should disclose its process to verify the integrity of any periodic corporate report it releases to the market that is not audited or reviewed by an external auditor.

Image: Full water stor

age, Lynora Downs, centra

sland, March 2021.





**5.1** The Fund is committed to promoting a fair market in the Fund's units, honest management, and timely, full and fair disclosure to ensure the Fund meets its disclosure obligations under the Corporations Act and ASX Listing Rules.

The Responsible Entity has adopted a Continuous Disclosure Policy that applies to all Directors and employees of the Responsible Entity. The policy underlines the Board's commitment to ensure that Unitholders are provided with accurate and timely information about the Fund's activities.

Responsibility for compliance with the Continuous Disclosure Policy lies with the Company Secretary. The policy is located on the Corporate Governance page of the Responsible Entity's website.

- **5.2** The Board receives notification of all Fund market announcements once released on the ASX Market Announcement Platform.
- **5.3** Any new or substantive investor or analyst presentations were released on the ASX Market Announcement Platform ahead of the scheduled presentation.

The announcements released this Financial Year can be viewed at www.asx.com.au.

6.1 The Responsible Entity aims to provide timely, accurate and accessible information of a consistently high standard to the Fund's Unitholders via the Responsible Entity's website. This forms an important part of the Responsible Entity's communications with the Fund's Unitholders.

The Responsible Entity has an established Publication Policy in line with the continuous disclosure requirements listed in the Corporations Act and ASX Listing Rules.

Located in the Responsible Entity's website is a:

- 'News and Media' section where the Fund's ASX announcement are found;
- 'Investor Information' section where the distributions, financial statement, investor presentation, newsletters and annual reports are located; and
- 'Corporate governance' section where the corporate governance related policies are located, for Unitholders to access.
- **6.2** Every Financial Year, the Responsible Entity releases full year and half year financial statements, which are accompanied by an investor webinar and presentation. This webinar provides investors with the opportunity to communicate with and ask questions of, the Responsible Entity's senior management.

Such a forum can also be utilised for other significant transactions, such as an entitlement offer or ahead of a Unitholder meeting.

In addition, Unitholders are encouraged to contact the Responsible Entity using any of the following methods:

Email: investorservices@ruralfunds.com.au

Website: https://ruralfunds.com.au/contact-us/

Phone: 1800 026 665

Or in person by visiting the Responsible Entity's office.

- **6.3** As an externally managed scheme, the Fund does not hold periodic meetings. When Unitholder meetings are required, web-conferencing and/or a teleconferencing facility for remote Unitholders are used. Unitholders who are unable to attend meetings, are able to vote via proxy, in accordance with the Fund's constitution.
- **6.4** The Fund's constitution provides extraordinary resolutions and any other properly demanded resolutions, directed by the chair of any Unitholders' meeting, are to be decided by a poll.
- **6.5** Boardroom, the Fund's registry service provider, provides the option for Unitholders to receive their communications electronically.

The Responsible Entity encourages all investors to communicate electronically and provides regular opportunities to opt in to this methods.







7.1 The Responsible Entity has not established a Risk Committee. Due to the size of the Board and the nature of the business, the Board has determined that risk oversight should be managed by the Board. The Board has ultimate responsibility for overseeing the risk management framework and for approving and monitoring compliance with the framework. The Board receives regular reports on all material business risks in relation to the Fund, including a report on all risks rated extreme or high. The ongoing management of identified risks is undertaken by the relevant managers of each business area, who report to the Board on the effectiveness of mitigation measures.

The Responsible Entity has established a Risk Management Policy that documents the oversight and management of material business risks. It ensures that risks are identified and assessed, and that measures to monitor and manage each of the material risks are implemented.

The Risk Management Policy is located on the Corporate Governance page of the Responsible Entity's website.

**7.2** The Responsible Entity's risk management framework is reviewed annually. During this Financial Year, an annual risk review was performed.

The risk review consisted of re-evaluating all risks and re-assessing whether the existing risk rating is appropriate.

7.3 The Responsible Entity has an Internal Compliance Committee that assists the Board in evaluating the risk management framework and material business risks on an ongoing basis. While not an internal audit committee, the Internal Compliance Committee reports to the Board quarterly and may make recommendations to the Board for changes to processes and systems to ensure compliance with legal and regulatory requirements.

During the Financial Year, the Internal Compliance Committee comprised of senior managers and specialised staff in their field.

The Committee includes:

- Company Secretary (Chair)
- Chief Financial Officer
- National Manager Human Resources
- Assistant Manager Compliance and Risk
- Senior Fund Administrator

Additionally, senior managers are routinely invited to attend the Internal Compliance Committee meetings.

This broad representation ensures the Internal Compliance Committee is fully informed of governance, risk and internal control processes across the Fund and associated RFM entities.

7.4 The Responsible Entity for the Fund has Board endorsed Environmental, Social and Governance statements listed in the Environmental, Social and Governance section of the Responsible Entity's website.

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- The Responsible Entity has adopted the ASX's alternative Principle 8 recommendation for externally managed entities and provides the following details governing the remuneration to the Responsible Manager:
  - Fund Management Fee up to 1.0% p.a. of the adjusted gross asset value of the Fund
  - Asset Management Fee up to 1.0% p.a. of the adjusted gross asset value of the Fund
  - Termination Fee 1.5% of the adjusted gross asset value of the Fund.

The fees listed above represent the maximum allowed under the Fund's Constitution.

At present, the Responsible Entity charges total fees (fund management and asset management fees) of 1.05% of the adjusted gross asset value of the Fund.

**9** Recommendations 9.1, 9.2 and 9.3 do not apply to the Fund.



## **Principle 8: Remunerate fairly and responsibly:**

A listed entity should pay director remuneration sufficient to attract and retain high quality directors and design its executive remuneration to attract, retain and motivate high quality senior executives and to align their interest with the creation of value for security holders and with the entity's values and risk appetite.

8.1, 8.2, 8.3 An externally managed listed entity should clearly disclose the terms governing the remuneration of the manager.

## Additional recommendations that apply only in certain cases.

- 9.1 A listed entity with a director who does not speak the language in which board or security holder meetings are held or key corporate documents are written should disclose the processes it has in place to ensure the director understands and can contribute to the discussions at those meetings and understands and can discharge their obligations in relation to those documents.
- **9.2** A listed entity established outside Australia should ensure that meetings of security holders are held at a reasonable place and time.
- **9.3** A listed entity established outside Australia, and an externally managed listed entity that has an AGM, should ensure that its external auditor attends its AGM and is available to answer questions from security holders relevant to the audit.





