



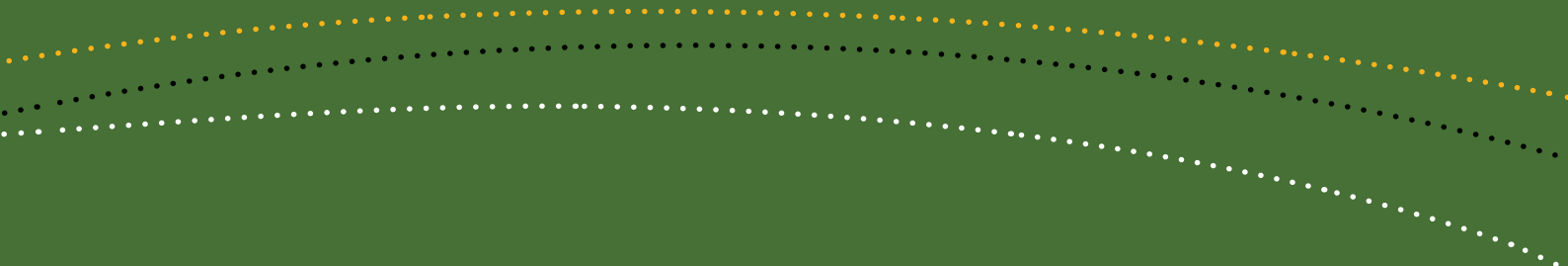
Australian Government
**Department of Sustainability, Environment,
Water, Population and Communities**



CARING
FOR
OUR
COUNTRY



One Land – Many Stories: Prospectus of Investment





Australian Government



CARING
FOR
OUR
COUNTRY

One Land – Many Stories: Prospectus of Investment 2013 — 2014



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MINISTER'S FOREWORD

I am pleased to introduce the first national biodiversity investment prospectus, *One Land – Many Stories: Prospectus of Investment*.

This prospectus presents my vision of how we can best protect Australia's valuable environmental places.

It provides a framework for Australian Government investment in biodiversity and how we can deliver real outcomes for the environment.

This Prospectus provides a single location where you can learn about the Australian Government's biodiversity priorities and the ways in which we can work together to invest for the future.

Importantly, Australia's urban rivers, coastal and marine environments provide essential ecosystem services that support local communities and their economies. To ensure the ongoing wellbeing of these communities, it is important that our urban and coastal waterways are protected.

Human activities have significant impacts on coastal and urban environments, including on the health of rivers and adjoining urban waterways and estuaries.

Our investment will target urban waterways affected by runoff and discharges from areas in and around capital cities and high growth population centres in the coastal zone.

We want to start working to make sure our urban rivers look like rivers not drains.

You can't look after the oceans without caring for the rivers that flow into them.

Through the first five years of Caring for our Country, the Australian Government has invested approximately \$2 billion to secure real improvements in Australia's environment.

Through Caring for our Country, the Gillard Government is investing in a healthy and more resilient environment by supporting volunteers, farmers and community groups to make a real difference to their local area

From July 2013, Caring for our Country will be delivered through two specific streams – one dedicated to sustainable environment, and the other to sustainable agriculture.

Separate but complementary streams will allow focussed delivery of our priorities and ensure effective integration with the policies and programs in the government's broader sustainability agenda.

Together, the two streams of Caring for our Country will invest another \$2.2 billion over five years, from 2013–2018.

Some elements of Caring for our Country: Sustainable Environment stream will be familiar while some have been redesigned with the help of information received through the Caring for our Country Review and consultation on the new program design.



In 2011, the Australian Government announced the establishment of the Land Sector Package as part of Australia's Clean Energy Future plan. We will invest up to \$1.7 billion over six years, to reward land holders who reduce greenhouse gases and store carbon through plantings. The investment will also contribute to restoring and managing Australia's biodiversity.

We will continue to roll out the Land Sector Package over the next four years through an integrated set of landscape-scale investments that recognise the opportunities for linking carbon benefits with other biodiversity conservation benefits.

The following pages tell a story about how we can support the environments that support us. This story will help us to make sure that our working landscapes are managed sustainably; our oceans are protected; the values of internationally significant areas are restored; and the environment of our cities and coastal zones is restored and maintained, so they continue to be healthy places to live, long into the future.

The Prospectus is part of the Australian Government's broader sustainability and biodiversity platforms. My vision for biodiversity investment is one in which we take up the opportunities we have right now for conservation and natural resource management in a changing climate and one which values the connection of people to the environments they inhabit.

I look forward to continuing to work with you to protect Australia's environment, our natural and cultural icons and our productive landscapes.

The Hon Tony Burke MP

MINISTER FOR SUSTAINABILITY,
ENVIRONMENT, WATER, POPULATION
AND COMMUNITIES





THE PROSPECTUS

The national biodiversity conservation prospectus, *One Land – Many Stories: Prospectus of Investment* (the Prospectus), presents the Australian Government's vision for conserving and managing Australia's valuable and most vulnerable environments.

Australia's biodiversity is important globally and nationally because of its uniqueness and richness. It has developed largely in isolation over many millions of years, making this continent one of the most biologically diverse parts of the planet. Between seven and ten per cent of all plant and animal species on Earth occur only in Australia. Australia's land and seascapes also feature an extraordinary diversity of unique ecosystems and significant cultural heritage.

Conserving biodiversity is an essential part of safeguarding the biological life support systems on Earth, including the oxygen we need to breathe, clean water to drink, fertile soil for food production and physical materials for shelter and fuel.

The Australian Government recognises the need for more systemic and enduring approaches to conservation and improving natural resource management. This is reflected in a range of government policies and programs, including *Australia's Biodiversity Conservation Strategy* (Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council, NRMCC, 2010), the *National Wildlife Corridors Plan*, *Australia's Native Vegetation*

Framework (COAG Standing Council on Environment and Water) and, more broadly, the Australian Government's water reform and climate change initiatives.

This Prospectus provides an overarching framework of the Australian Government's priorities for funding conservation and improving natural resource management in 2013–14. This Prospectus articulates the places (target areas), national priorities (investment themes) and the available grant funding to guide the development of project proposals in the 2013–14 round of biodiversity conservation and natural resource management investment across the Australian Government environment portfolio.

The Australian Government recognises that a diverse range of responses are required to meet the challenges and opportunities posed by improving conservation and natural resource management outcomes. Regional difference also impacts on the reality of the challenges and opportunities that each community faces and the particular responses required. For these reasons, the government will be investing in our environmental future through a range of programs.

This document provides information in one place about the range of grant programs available so that applicants can assess the program/s that are the most appropriate to support their conservation and natural resource management activities.



This Prospectus is supported by a series of grants program guidelines. The guidelines outline the specific requirements of each program and provide information to applicants about how to apply. Proponents should refer to guidelines for information about specific programs. Information on the guidelines will be available at www.nrm.gov.au/funding/ or www.environment.gov.au/cleanenergyfuture/biodiversity-fund/index.html.

How the Australian Government is investing in conservation and natural resource management

Land Sector Package

The Australian Government's **Land Sector Package** of the **Clean Energy Future plan**, creates economic rewards for land holders who reduce pollution or store carbon, protects biodiverse carbon stores and secures environmental outcomes from carbon farming.

Of the seven Land Sector Package measures, the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (SEWPaC) is responsible for delivering the following four:

- **The Biodiversity Fund**, which provides support for Australia's land managers to improve landscape resilience, protect biodiversity and increase carbon stores on their land
- **Indigenous Carbon Farming Fund**, which provides assistance to Indigenous Australians to participate in the carbon market



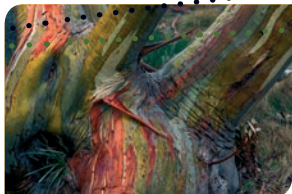
Lake Placid, Barron Gorge National Park.
Photo: John Baker

- **Regional Natural Resource Management Planning for Climate Change Fund**, which supports regional organisations to update existing regional natural resource management plans to help identify where in the landscape biodiversity and carbon abatement activities should be undertaken
- **Land Sector Carbon and Biodiversity Board**, which oversees implementation of the Land Sector Package.

The remaining three measures are administered by the Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency or the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry:

- An ongoing **Carbon Farming Futures program** for research, development, on-farm trials and extension to help farmers and land managers take action on the land to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and / or increase carbon sequestered





in the landscape, including support for conservation tillage equipment — is led by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

- The **Carbon Farming Initiative Non-Kyoto Carbon Fund** to purchase Carbon Farming Initiative credits that are not Kyoto-eligible and cannot be used by liable entities under the carbon pricing mechanism — is led by the Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency
- A **Carbon Farming Skills** program to establish a new qualification in carbon farming and an accreditation scheme for carbon service providers— is led by the Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency.

Caring for our Country

Caring for our Country aims to help Australians sustainably manage the environment and productive lands through two streams.

Sustainable Environment stream

- **Community Environment Grants** for local groups to take action to conserve and protect their natural environment
- **Environmental Stewardship Program** using a market-based approach to protect threatened ecological communities on private land



Peppermint box woodland on private land. *Photo: Andrew Tatnell*



- **Reef Rescue** providing assistance to farmers and land managers in the Great Barrier Reef catchments to reduce nutrient runoff, pesticides and sediment from agricultural lands (delivered with the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry)
- **Regional Delivery** for the identified regional natural resource management organisations (delivered with the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry)
- **Target Area Grants** for medium to large-scale projects to deliver against the three strategic objectives of the Sustainable Environment stream of the second phase of Caring for our Country, including funding opportunities for protecting urban waterways and coastal environments
- **Working on Country** supporting local Indigenous communities to manage their land and seas and providing opportunities for Indigenous employment
- **Indigenous Protected Areas** program provides support for Indigenous communities to increase and manage Indigenous Protected Areas.

Commonwealth Marine Reserves

Sixteen November 2012 marked the proclamation of 2.3 million square kilometres of new marine reserves. With a total of 3.1 million square kilometres, Australia now has the largest system of marine reserves in the world.

The network of marine reserves has been established to permanently protect Australia's precious marine environments. It will ensure that Australia's diverse marine environments, and the life they support, remain healthy, productive and resilient for future generations.

Recognising the importance of supporting the commercial fishing industry to adjust to the extensive new marine reserve network, a significant component of funding for the National Reserve System under the Sustainable Environment stream of Caring for our Country will be committed to the Fisheries Adjustment Assistance Package to be delivered from early 2013–14.

The Australian Government will also invest in activities that support implementation of Marine Bioregional Plans and the marine reserve network.

More information on Commonwealth marine reserves and the Fisheries Adjustment Assistance Package is available at: www.environment.gov.au/marinereserves/index.html



Sustainable Agriculture stream

A separate Sustainable Agriculture stream of the second phase of Caring for our Country will be administered by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. The Caring for our Country Sustainable Agriculture stream will focus on food security, sustainable management of natural resources and addressing key issues that impact on agricultural production such as weed and pest management. It will also invest in building the capacity of the natural resource management community to ensure that it continues to deliver successful outcomes for sustainable agriculture and healthy, productive landscapes.

The Caring for our Country Sustainable Agriculture stream is not covered in this Prospectus. For more information on the Caring for our Country Sustainable Agriculture stream visit: www.nrm.gov.au

How it will work

Figure 1 outlines the framework for Australian Government investment in biodiversity conservation and natural resource management in 2013–14, including an overview of the strategic objectives of the Land Sector Package and Caring for our Country's Sustainable Environment stream. Further information can be found in Section 2.



Figure 1: An overview of the focus and funding components of this Prospectusⁱ.

ⁱ Regional Delivery and Reef Rescue will also be supported by the Caring for our Country Sustainable Agriculture stream.





Section 1:

**FRAMEWORK FOR
THE AUSTRALIAN
GOVERNMENT'S
INVESTMENT IN
CONSERVATION AND
NATURAL RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT**





Keeping our environments healthy and productive

Australia has an enviable diversity of environments, from the desert systems of the arid interior to the rainforests of the tropical north, from the temperate kelp beds off Tasmania to the extensive corals of the Great Barrier Reef, from the globally recognised biodiversity hotspot in the South west corner of Western Australia to the majestic wilderness of the Kimberley. Our environments support a vast array of animals, plants and ecosystems — Australia is thought to have 566 398 species of the estimated 11 million species worldwide (Chapman, 2009). Australia is also home to many World Heritage sites of outstanding universal cultural and natural values.

Australia's natural and productive environments are valuable. Australia's capital base (by volume) is more or less evenly spread between our produced capital (\$4.2billion) and our natural capital (\$4.7billion) (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2012).

We know that many of our precious environments have become degraded over time and that we continue to place pressures on Australia's unique environment. Our challenge is to ensure that our environmental assets are maintained in a healthy condition and are managed sustainably for current and future generations of Australians.

Keeping our environmental assets healthy is not a simple task. It requires a range of responses that meets the needs of particular land and seascapes, and species of plant

and animal. Identifying the best management approaches to keep our environment healthy has been, and will continue to be, a continuous process for managers of Australia's natural resources, including governments.

Early approaches focused on local scale protection of a single threatened species or the isolated management of a single weed. As our knowledge has improved, government policies and landholder and community action have adjusted to more effectively provide the scale of response and management approach needed.



Dissecting seeds as part of native seed production project. *Photo: Andrew Tatnell*



We have come to recognise that we need a range of responses – from local actions to deal with community concerns through to integrated conservation and natural resource management at the landscape-scale with a strong focus on managing entire ecosystems. Along the way we have further sharpened our focus on the need to address critical pressures at the right spatial and time scales, particularly in relation to the anticipated impacts of climate change.



Agriculture of Northern Queensland.
Photo: Andy Heaney

Managing at the landscape-scale

The 2011 State of the Environment Report (State of the Environment Committee, 2011) identified three principal drivers of environmental change in Australia as being climate change, population growth and economic growth. These drivers result in a range of interacting pressures on our environment that can operate at large scales, for example across entire regions, river catchments or stretches of coastline or seabed. It will be important to address all three of these drivers if pressures on biodiversity are to be reduced to desirable levels.

To mitigate the degree and potential impact of these drivers, Australia is moving toward an integrated landscape-scale approach to conservation and natural resource management. Landscape-scale conservation and management involves strategic planning and implementation of actions that address ecological, economic and social pressures on the environment across time and space. For example, increasing population and economic growth are coupled with continuing pressures to intensify land uses around our cities and coastline. Thus we need to constantly adapt how we manage the environment sustainably over the same scales as these pressures.

Landscape-scale planning and management will help 'address risk, uncertainties and trade-offs between biodiversity conservation and other objectives for land use, and make it possible to manage strategically rather than reactively' (State of the Environment Committee, 2011). This will enable a more sustainable approach to land use change, including the protection of valuable environmental areas over the long term, maintaining habitat connectivity at a national scale, and building resilience of both communities and ecosystems.





Securing a sustainable environment

To better manage our common interest in keeping our environments healthy and productive, governments have agreed to a range of intersecting policy platforms. These include *Australia's Biodiversity Conservation Strategy 2010–2030* (NRMMC, 2010), *Australia's Native Vegetation Framework* (COAG Standing Council on Environment and Water) and the *Strategy for Australia's National Reserve System 2009–2030* (NRMMC, 2009). More recently, the *National Wildlife Corridors Plan* was released to lay the foundation for a new, collaborative, landscape-scale approach to conserving biodiversity through connecting our landscapes and strengthening the resilience of our biodiversity.

Together, the range of biodiversity conservation policies articulate the case for why all governments, industries and the wider community should take care of the environment.

We are also increasingly looking for ways to break down the separation that can arise between different 'sectors' of conservation and natural resource management, to improve integration between activities focusing on biodiversity and complementary areas of activity driven by initiatives such as *Water for the Future* and the *Clean Energy Future* plan.

National Wildlife Corridors Plan

The *National Wildlife Corridors Plan* is the Australian Government's approach to restoring and managing ecological connections in the Australian landscape. It recognises that connectivity is a fundamental requirement of healthy, productive landscapes.

The *National Wildlife Corridors Plan* will support the progressive development of a national network of wildlife corridors at different scales and across different land tenures. This network will retain and restore connectivity between natural patches of habitat, waterways and other landscape features across public and private lands, through our cities and towns, and between our national parks. Each of the programs outlined in this Prospectus will contribute to the landscape-scale connectivity required to implement the *National Wildlife Corridors Plan*. This is the next step in developing a purposeful and systematic approach to landscape-scale conservation.

More information on the *National Wildlife Corridors Plan* is available at: www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/wildlife-corridors/index.html



Turning policies into action

It is clear that the Australian Government needs to think purposefully about its role in sustainably managing our environment into the future.

The Australian Government tackles Australia's environmental challenges through a range of policy mechanisms. These include implementing our international environmental treaty obligations by protecting matters of national environmental significance through the legislative framework of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (the EPBC Act).

The Australian Government is actively involved in managing Commonwealth areas of the National Reserve System and Commonwealth marine reserves, including iconic areas such as Kakadu and the Great Barrier Reef. The Australian Government also has a major stake, through the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder, in environmental watering to aid the ecological recovery of riverine and wetland communities in the Murray-Darling Basin.

Science, knowledge and environmental information management are key aspects of improved access to high quality information to assist decision-making, to account for changes in the environment and understand how decisions impact on the environment, economy and society. Improving the quality and coverage of Australia's environmental knowledge is being led by the Australian Government through initiatives such as the National Plan for Environmental Information and the National Environmental Research Program.

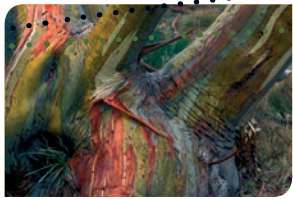
As Antarctica grows in national and global importance, the Australian Government continues research in the Southern Ocean, the Antarctic and the subantarctic. This work addresses critical issues such as climate change, the human footprint on Antarctica and the increasing demands for food security caused by human population growth, continuing a long and internationally respected role in management and research linked to this special environment.

To complement this mix of policy, regulatory, knowledge and management responses, the Australian Government will continue to support community, Indigenous, environment and Landcare groups, and landholders through investments to undertake biodiversity conservation and natural resource management.

The Australian Government's Clean Energy Future plan confirms the contribution Australia's land sector can make to reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases and to building and conserving carbon. The Land Sector Package of the Clean Energy Future plan provides a set of investments that recognise the opportunities for linking carbon benefits with other biodiversity conservation benefits.

The Land Sector Package of investment supports the large scale restoration of native vegetation through environmental plantings where habitat has been previously cleared or become degraded. This reflects a long-term commitment to replacing the lost natural capital needed to keep our environments healthy and resilient.





The Australian Government will invest more than \$2.2 billion over five years, from July 2013 to June 2018, to continue Caring for our Country. Caring for our Country will remain the Australian Government's flagship investment to protect and sustainably manage our high conservation value terrestrial, aquatic and marine habitats and our endangered species and ecological communities. These are the nation's most valuable and vulnerable conservation assets.

Investments will operate on a range of scales as appropriate, from local habitats and single species to entire ecosystems across land and seascapes. These investments will also continue to build the capacity needed locally to effectively address the complex mix of environmental pressures facing Australia's landscapes.

Just as a range of on-ground actions is required to address the diversity of Australian environments, a range of integrated and coordinated program responses is required to support these actions. Through the delivery of the Land Sector Package and continuation of Caring for our Country, the Australian Government is making the substantial investment more than \$3 billion of public funds to tackle major environmental challenges and opportunities facing Australia.

The Land Sector Package and Caring for our Country initiative will provide a range of separate but flexible and complementary approaches to address critical environmental challenges. Together, these investments represent an unprecedented opportunity to tackle the critical pressures on Australia's many environments.

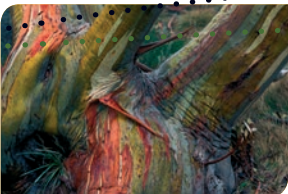
Getting measurable results

In the delivery of this Prospectus, the Australian Government remains committed to implementing a simplified program monitoring and reporting framework.

It is highlighted throughout Australia's *State of the Environment Report 2011* (State of the Environment Committee, 2011) that effective environmental management requires adequate information. The Australian Government agrees that there is also a compelling case for greater collaboration in gathering and managing information across the Australian Government and with other governments and natural resource managers to better support natural resource management.

By strengthening scientific approaches and information gathering and analysis, policy and program design can be better supported.





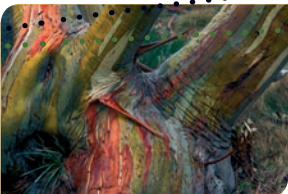
Section 2:

FUNDING AND GUIDELINES



NSW Catchment Management Authority member with landowner on property helping to protect box gum grassy woodland. *Photo: Andrew Tatnell*





Guidelines

This Prospectus is supported by a series of grants program guidelines. The guidelines outline the specific requirements of each program and provide information on how to apply for relevant grants. Applicants

should refer to guidelines for information about specific programs. Information on the guidelines will be found at the following websites as they are released—guidelines may be released at differing times.

Land Sector Package

- Biodiversity Fund: www.environment.gov.au/cleanenergyfuture/biodiversity-fund/
- Regional Natural Resource Management Planning for Climate Change Fund (Stream 1): www.environment.gov.au/cleanenergyfuture/regional-fund/
- Indigenous Carbon Farming Fund—Capacity Building and Business Support stream: www.environment.gov.au/cleanenergyfuture/icff/

Caring for our Country

- Community Environment Grants
- Environmental Stewardship Program
- Reef Rescue
- Regional Delivery
- Target Area Grants for medium to large-scale projects
- Working on Country

www.nrm.gov.au/funding/

Land Sector Package

The Land Sector Package is part of the Australian Government's Clean Energy Future plan to reduce carbon pollution and respond to a changing climate. Of the seven Land Sector Package measures, SEWPaC administers four measures including, the Land Sector Carbon and Biodiversity Board

which oversees implementation of the Land Sector Package. The remaining Land Sector Package measures are administered by the Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency or the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.



Funding is available for the following components of the Land Sector Package:

Biodiversity Fund

The Biodiversity Fund invests in helping a range of stakeholders to store carbon, enhance biodiversity and build greater environmental resilience across the Australian landscape.

To do this, it will fund eligible activities which restore, manage and better protect and connect biodiversity on public and private land. The Biodiversity Fund will provide support to establish new biodiverse carbon stores or better manage carbon stores of existing native habitat, including through the use of Carbon Farming Initiative-approved methodologies (Australian Government, Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency, 2012).

Regional Natural Resource Management Planning for Climate Change Fund (Stream 1)

The Regional Natural Resource Management Planning for Climate Change Fund (Stream 1) is providing assistance to the identified regional natural resource management organisations to incorporate climate change mitigation and adaptation approaches into existing regional natural resource management plans.

The Fund commenced in 2012–13 and is available to regional natural resource management organisations across Australia.

Planning under the Fund will be underpinned by the *Principles for the Regional NRM Planning for Climate Change Fund*

(SEWPaC, 2012). These principles have been developed in consultation with key stakeholders, and are designed to guide regional natural resource management planning processes in a nationally consistent way.

Indigenous Carbon Farming Fund—Capacity Building and Business Support

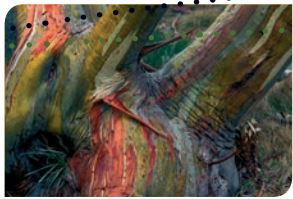
The Indigenous Carbon Farming Fund—Capacity Building and Business Support stream is for Indigenous organisations and individuals to access the knowledge and information necessary to help participation in the Carbon Farming Initiative, and gain expert and legal advice to help develop governance and contractual arrangement for carbon farming projects.

The Fund commences in 2012–13 and is available to eligible Indigenous organisations and Indigenous individuals interested in exploring opportunities under the Carbon Farming Initiative or in progressing carbon farming businesses.

Caring for our Country

Caring for our Country is an ongoing Australian Government initiative that seeks to achieve an environment that is healthier, better protected, well managed, resilient and provides essential ecosystem services in a changing climate. Information collected from the Caring for our Country Review and the consultation on the second phase of the program, has assisted in the new program design.





Under the first phase of Caring for our Country 2008–2013, the Australian Government invested over \$2 billion in projects to protect and build resilience into our environment. The Australian Government has committed more than \$2.2 billion to the second phase of Caring for our Country 2013–18, which will continue to support land managers, community groups including Indigenous groups, industry and local environment groups.

From July 2013, the initiative will be focused under two streams—a Sustainable Environment stream and a Sustainable Agriculture stream.

The Sustainable Environment stream will support work that contributes to the Australian Government's broader objectives for improved environmental outcomes at land, seascape and ecosystem scales.

The Australian Government will continue to invest in the protection and management of nationally significant flora and fauna, ecological communities, ecosystem and, land and seascapes to meet legislated responsibilities.

Funding is available for the following components of Caring for our Country:

Community Environment Grants

Community Environment Grants are small grants for groups to take action to conserve and protect their local natural environment.

Environmental Stewardship Program

The Environmental Stewardship Program aims to maintain and improve the condition and extent of targeted ecological communities that are identified as matters of national environmental significance under the EPBC Act. Eligible private land managers can apply to provide a range of agreed management activities to protect, rehabilitate and improve particular ecological communities. Eligible land managers include farmers, Indigenous communities, and other managers of private freehold and leasehold land.

Reef Rescue

Reef Rescue is a component of Caring for our Country. The Reef Rescue coordinated approach to environmental management is built on transparent and consistent targets. It will give this World Heritage icon the best chance of responding to the pressures of climate change and unsustainable land use.

Reef Rescue will continue to help farmers in the Great Barrier Reef catchment to improve farming practices to reduce sediment and nutrient run-off, and improve the quality of water entering the Great Barrier Reef Lagoon. Reef Rescue is delivered with the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

Regional delivery for natural resource management organisations

Funding is provided for the identified regional natural resource management organisations to deliver natural resource management outcomes across Australia. Regional funding is delivered with the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.



Great Barrier Reef, QLD. *Photo: GBRMPA*

Target Area Grants for medium to large-scale projects

The Target Area Grants for medium to large-scale projects is a competitive investment process to deliver against the three strategic objectives of the Sustainable Environment stream of Caring for our Country, including funding opportunities for protecting urban waterways and coastal environments.

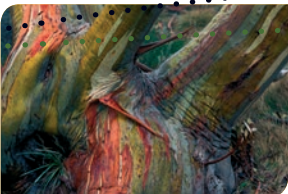
Working on Country

The Australian Government's Working on Country program recognises that protecting and conserving the environment is a shared responsibility and provides sustainable employment for Indigenous people.



River bank protection and regeneration of native vegetation, Northern Rivers NSW. *Photo: Dragi Markovic*





Working on Country builds on Indigenous ecological knowledge to protect and manage land and sea country. Almost 700 Indigenous rangers across more than 90 ranger teams are employed across Australia to deliver environmental outcomes.

Indigenous Protected Areas

An Indigenous Protected Area is an area of dedicated Indigenous land or sea where traditional owners have entered into an

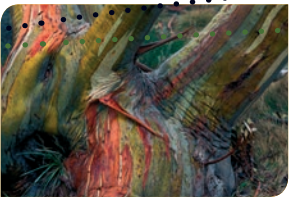
agreement with the Australian Government to promote biodiversity and cultural resource conservation.

There are now 51 declared Indigenous Protected Areas covering 36 million hectares and more than 40 consultation projects across Australia. Each declared Indigenous Protected Area is actively managed by its Indigenous owners, who protect their land's plants, animals and cultural sites.



Trail leading to rock art sites on Banjul Bay, WA Photo: Dragi Markovic





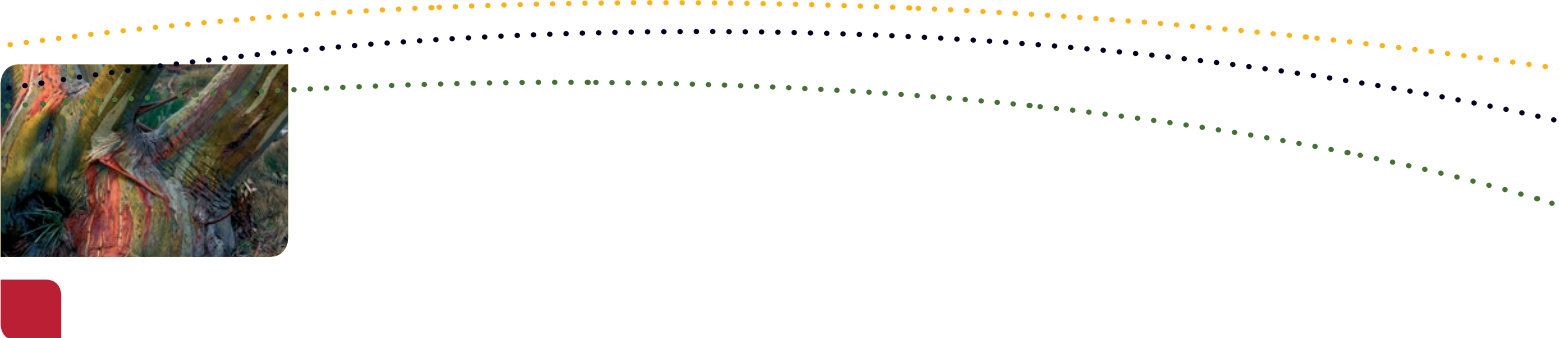
Section 3:

INVESTMENT THEMES



Murrays Beach, Booderee National Park. *Photo: Director of National Parks*





Investment themes are noted under each of the Target Areas in Section 4 of this Prospectus. Investment themes reflect Australian Government's conservation policy, matters of environmental significance and/or actions which need to be taken to ensure Australia meets its international obligations. For further information on priorities for investment under these themes please see the relevant guidelines.

Land Sector Package, Biodiversity Fund

Biodiversity Fund projects will provide significant opportunities for landscape resilience and make a considerable contribution to Australia's transition to a clean energy future through:

- improved connectivity within the landscape
- revegetation, and management and enhancement of existing biodiverse carbon stores across significant tracts of land
- enhanced biodiversity conservation outcomes for key areas of high conservation value, for example by restoring and connecting areas of remnant vegetation adjacent to key assets such as Ramsar sites, World Heritage Areas and National Reserve System areas;
- long-term management of the land, providing longevity of outcomes for biodiversity conservation.

The three investment themes of the Biodiversity Fund will work together to address the pressures identified in the *State of the Environment Report 2011* (State of

the Environment Committee, 2011) such as clearing and fragmentation of native ecosystems, invasive species and pathogens, inappropriate fire regimes and grazing pressure.



Bird habitat within farmland, TAS. Photo: Rob Blakers

Biodiverse plantings

Funding will help land managers and organisations, working in partnership, to expand native habitat at the landscape-scale, particularly to enable connectivity to other well managed land, including protected and high value areas.

Increasing the extent of native ecosystems and connectivity, through biodiverse plantings, builds more resilient and better functioning landscapes.

The Australian Government is particularly interested in project activities that include:

- biodiverse plantings that re-establish and re-connect well functioning native ecosystems
- revegetation to improve ecological linkages between remnant native vegetation



- establishing and restoring native wetland and waterway habitats as aquatic corridors, particularly on riparian lands that are cleared or predominantly occupied by non-native vegetation.

For more information on this investment theme, see the Biodiversity Fund program guidelines which will be available at www.environment.gov.au/cleanenergyfuture/biodiversity-fund.

Protecting and enhancing existing vegetation

Funding will support land managers and organisations, working in partnership, to protect, manage and enhance existing native vegetation, at the landscape-scale, in and adjacent to high conservation areas, for its carbon storage and biodiversity benefits.

Improving the condition of native habitats supports the transition from degraded to healthy ecosystems, which helps to build resilient and better connected landscapes.

Through the Biodiversity Fund, the Australian Government is particularly interested in project activities that:

- integrate native vegetation restoration projects across terrestrial, wetland and riparian habitats in connected landscapes

- enhance the condition of native vegetation in areas adjacent to high value areas, including through the use of approved Carbon Farming Initiative methodologies such as savanna burning
- build the capacity of individuals and organisations to support ongoing ecological management.

For more information on this investment theme, see the Biodiversity Fund program guidelines at: www.environment.gov.au/cleanenergyfuture/biodiversity-fund.

Managing invasive species in a connected landscape

Managing threats to biodiversity is fundamental to protecting the health and resilience of our native ecosystems.

Through the Biodiversity Fund, the Australian Government supports activities that control the spread of invasive species through connected landscapes. The government is particularly interested in project activities that reduce and prevent the spread of invasive species into new habitats, including corridors, national parks and other areas of high biodiversity and carbon value.

For more information on this investment theme, see the Biodiversity Fund program guidelines at www.environment.gov.au/cleanenergyfuture/biodiversity-fund.



Caring for our Country

The Caring for our Country Sustainable Environment stream will focus on three strategic objectives. Table 1 provides an

overview of how the strategic objectives link to the Sustainable Environment stream investment themes over the next five years.

Table 1: Overview of the Caring for our Country Sustainable Environment stream strategic objectives and investment themes

Sustainable Environment stream Strategic Objectives	Investment themes
Maintenance of ecosystem services, including ecological and cultural values, now and into the future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting the Great Barrier Reef • Conserving and protecting species and ecosystems (matters of national environmental significance) • Restoring and maintaining urban waterways and coastal environments • Building natural resource management community skills, knowledge and engagement
Protection of our conservation estate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building the National Reserve System • Protecting Ramsar sites and values • Protecting World Heritage sites' outstanding universal value and integrity • Building natural resource management community skills, knowledge and engagement
Enhanced capacity of Indigenous communities to conserve and protect natural resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Indigenous peoples capacity for natural resource management • Building natural resource management community skills, knowledge and engagement



Building natural resource management community skills, knowledge and engagement

Community groups and organisations make a valuable contribution to the health and resilience of our environment.

The Caring for our Country Sustainable Environment stream will continue to build community capacity and connection with the environment by focusing on community skills, knowledge and engagement across each of the Caring for our Country strategic objectives and investment themes. Emphasis will be given to providing communities with the information and social infrastructure to sustainably manage their local environment.

This approach is consistent with the Australian Government's broader agenda for environmental sustainability and aligns with a Priority for Action in *Australia's Biodiversity Conservation Strategy 2010–2030* (NRMCC 2010), which is to engage more Australians—whether individuals or private organisations—to participate in biodiversity conservation.

Maintenance of ecosystem services, including ecological and cultural values, now and into the future

A wide range of ecosystem services, such as the maintenance of water quality and flows, benefit our whole community. Support will be provided to mitigate the impacts of land use on our urban waterways and coastal habitats by restoring the health and resilience of ecosystems.

Related investment themes

Protecting the Great Barrier Reef



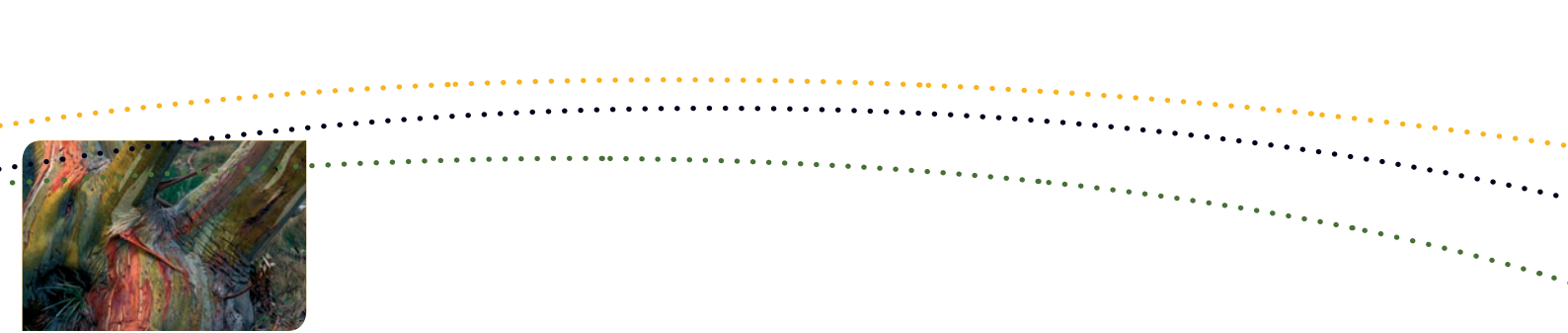
The *State of the Environment Report 2011* (State of the Environment Committee, 2011) identifies that climate change and ocean acidification and their interaction with other pressures is increasingly threatening Australia's tropical coral reefs, including the Great Barrier Reef.

The health and resilience of this important area will be improved through continued focus on whole-of-ecosystem, integrated approaches such as those previously adopted in the Great Barrier Reef.



The world's most extensive and diverse seagrass meadows, WA. Photo: John Cleary (CALM)





Conserving and protecting species and ecosystems (matters of national environmental significance)

The Australian Government is investing in conserving and protecting species and ecosystems to safeguard the services derived from our ecosystems and to care for our biodiversity.

Biodiversity is the variety of all life forms on Earth — the different plants, animals and micro-organisms and the ecosystems, or communities, of which they are a part.

The *State of the Environment Report 2011* (State of the Environment Committee, 2011) report found that Australia's biodiversity is in decline. The most significant past and present pressures on Australia's biodiversity include clearing and fragmentation of native ecosystems, invasive species and pathogens, inappropriate fire regimes, grazing pressure and changed hydrology (State of the Environment Committee, 2011).

Through investment in activities to protect and restore nationally significant species, ecological communities and ecosystems recognised under the EPBC Act or mitigate key threatening processes, Caring for our Country is helping to mitigate the pressures placed on our valuable ecosystems and unique species.

Investment under the Conserving and protecting species and ecosystems (matters of national environmental significance) theme will also make a positive contribution to meeting Australia's international commitments to conserve biodiversity and Australia's extraordinarily diverse natural heritage.

Australians value the natural environment as it is integral to our health, social and emotional well being. We value it for the benefits that it provides to us in the form of the oxygen we breathe, clean water, fertile soils and the food, fuels and other natural products we consume. The natural environment, including the biodiversity which is so integral to the environment, also provides cultural benefits such as recreation, spiritual and aesthetic values and a sense of place. These benefits from biodiversity and the natural environment are collectively called ecosystem services.



Photo: Department of Fisheries



Restoring and maintaining urban waterways and coastal environments

Australia's urban and coastal environments provide essential ecosystem services that support local communities and their economies, such as clean air and recreational places. The *National Wildlife Corridors Plan* recognises that urban and peri-urban wildlife corridors, which can connect towns, suburbs, parks and reserve lands, can lead to raised awareness and greater engagement of diverse communities in conservation and management activities.

The *State of the Environment Report 2011* (State of the Environment Committee, 2011) stated that, while some progress has been made, further work is required to address the pressures of climate change, increasing populations and economic development on Australia's coastal and urban environments.

Increased levels of nutrients and sediments in our inland and marine waters, urban expansion, changed water regimes, the spread of exotic weeds and pests, modification of coastal habitats and increasing marine debris have had a detrimental effect on our urban waterways and coastal environments.

The Australian Government will continue to invest in activities to further restore and maintain Australia's urban waterways and coastal environments.

Protection of our conservation estate

Investment through this objective will contribute to protecting and conserving biodiversity through strategic land and

seascape conservation and restoration initiatives. We will continue our focus on protecting examples of all extant terrestrial native ecosystems.

The values of nationally and internationally significant places, such as our World Heritage listed areas and Ramsar-listed wetlands, will be managed in a way that meets Australia's international obligations to protect native species and ecological communities, cultural heritage and cultural diversity.



Cobourg Peninsula Aboriginal Land & Wildlife Sanctuary, NT. Photo: Michelle McAulay


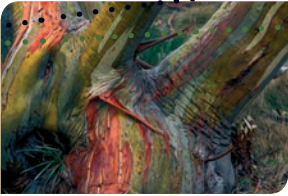
Related investment themes

Building the National Reserve System

The National Reserve System is Australia's network of parks, reserves and protected areas, conserving examples of our unique landscapes, plants and animals for future generations. Based on a scientific framework, it is the nation's natural safety net against our biggest environmental challenges – climate change and declining water resources.

The establishment of a well-managed protected area system contributes to the Australian Government meeting international





obligations under the 1992 *Convention on Biological Diversity* – a treaty that links sustainable economic development with the preservation of ecosystems, species and genetic resources.

The Australian Government remains committed to contributing to the network of parks, reserves and protected areas that comprise the National Reserve System.

Our vast ocean area supports one of the greatest arrays of marine biodiversity on Earth and is home to many species not found anywhere else in the world, yet many of our marine ecosystems are poorly understood.

Through the second phase of Caring for our Country, National Reserve System investments will place a greater emphasis on supporting the implementation and management of marine reserves in Commonwealth waters and the implementation of bioregional plans to improve the resilience of marine ecosystems.

Protecting Ramsar sites and values

Ramsar-listed wetlands are internationally important sites for flora, fauna and the ecological communities they support. They are listed under the Ramsar Convention and identified as having national environmental significance in the EPBC Act. They are also identified as an important foundation stone for building landscape connectivity in the *National Wildlife Corridors Plan*.

Wetlands provide us with many cultural, social and economic ecosystem services. Wetlands provide recreational opportunities; they protect shores from wave actions and

reduce the impacts of floods and other extreme weather events on built infrastructure and agricultural lands; they provide critically important commercial and recreational fish nurseries; and they filter and moderate water flows from upstream or adjacent landscapes and land uses, reducing turbidity and sediment and removing excess nutrients and other pollutants.

The *State of the Environment Report 2011* (State of the Environment Committee, 2011) report found that most of the ongoing impacts on Australia's inland water environments result from our historical legacy of land use change, pest and weed introductions, and water resource development.

Caring for our Country will continue to fund activities that address identified key threats to the ecological character of priority Ramsar-listed wetlands. Investment under this theme will also help meet Australia's commitments under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.

Protecting World Heritage sites' outstanding universal value and integrity

The values of a declared World Heritage site are a matter of national environmental significance under the EPBC Act. The Act contains management principles for Australian World Heritage sites that ensure that the prime purpose of their management is in accordance with the World Heritage Convention commitment to identify, protect, conserve, present, transmit to future generations and, if appropriate, rehabilitate the outstanding universal value of the property.



The State of the Environment 2011 (State of the Environment Committee, 2011) report found that the three most significant factors affecting World Heritage sites in Australia are invasive and alien species or hyper abundant species; climate change and severe weather events; and, social or cultural impacts (including changes in traditional ways of life, as well as the impacts of tourism).

Caring for our Country will continue to fund activities that promote, protect, enhance and restore the outstanding universal value and integrity of World Heritage listed sites to meet Australia's commitments under the international World Heritage Convention.

Enhanced capacity of Indigenous communities to conserve and protect natural resources

We will build on our partnerships with Indigenous people and communities so they have the opportunity to participate fully in land and sea management, drawing on the significant and unique knowledge, skills, and responsibilities that are held by Indigenous people.

Related investment themes

Building Indigenous people's capacity for natural resource management

Indigenous people and communities have cared for this continent for millennia, and since European settlement have continued to be involved in managing natural and cultural landscapes.

Closing the Gap on Indigenous Disadvantage (Closing the Gap) is a commitment by all

Australian governments to improve the lives of Indigenous Australians and in particular provide a better future for Indigenous children.

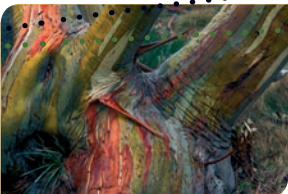
The natural resource management sector attracts strong Indigenous participation and has significant potential to further expand Indigenous involvement and build the capacity of emerging Indigenous natural resource managers. Investment in Indigenous natural and cultural resource management has realised significant environmental outcomes to date. Further investment in building the capacity of Indigenous participants in this sector will strengthen the foundation for enduring environmental and cultural outcomes in the longer-term and will facilitate broader social and economic development outcomes.

Natural resource management programs contribute to the Closing the Gap goal which the Australian Government is working towards with the state and territory governments, businesses, not-for-profit organisations, Indigenous people and the wider community.

Under Caring for our Country, the Working on Country and Indigenous Protected Area programs support Indigenous people to contribute to the Australian Government's commitment to Closing the Gap. The programs are making a contribution against the economic participation building block of the commitment. The programs deliver significant environmental outcomes and employment opportunities across Australia.

Indigenous people will have ongoing access to opportunities for education, training,





employment and business relating to natural resource management, including through the continuation of the successful Working on Country and Indigenous Protected Areas programs.

The Caring for our Country Sustainable Environment stream will also continue to build Indigenous peoples' capacity for natural resource management across the other Caring for our Country strategic objectives and investment themes.



Warru Ranger taking measurements of wild warru (*Petrogale lateralis*). Photo: Jasmina Muhic





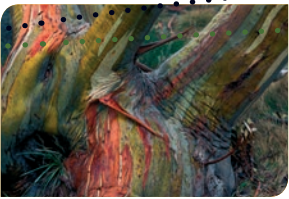
Section 4:

TARGET AREAS



Kangaroo Paw. *Photo: Arthur Mostead*





Target areas

In recognition of their high levels of vulnerability and importance, the Land Sector Package and the Caring for our Country Sustainable Environment stream will focus investments in critical areas of our environment. These are known as Target Areas.

- National focus
- The Central Australian Connection
- Cape York
- The Kimberley
- Tasmania
- South-west Western Australia
- South Australia-Victoria Connection

- Greater Border Ranges Region
- Urban waterways and coastal environments
- The National Reserve System
- The Great Barrier Reef.

Please note:

- the investment priorities are subject to competitive grant processes and funded projects may be delivered over a number of years
- each program has different target areas, not all areas are included in both the Caring for our Country Sustainable Environment stream and the Land Sector Package.



National focus

The story so far

The Australian Government seeks to engage communities across Australia in natural resource management and encourage investment in increasing and improving biodiverse carbon stores.

During the first phase of Caring for our Country, regional natural resource management organisations, covering the entirety of Australia, worked in partnership with farmers, landholders, community groups, non-government organisations, Indigenous organisations, governments, business and industry groups to achieve the Australian Government's outcomes at a regional scale.

The review of the first phase of Caring for our Country found that delivery of funding by regional natural resource management organisations was successful in delivering Australian Government natural resource management priorities, developing partnerships across a range of scales, engaging the community and building natural resource management skills and knowledge.

Opportunities for community groups to contribute to natural resource management across Australia were also made available through Community Action Grants, the small grants component of Caring for our Country during the first phase.

Indigenous communities also play an important role in protecting and conserving biodiversity across Australia. Through the Working on Country and Indigenous



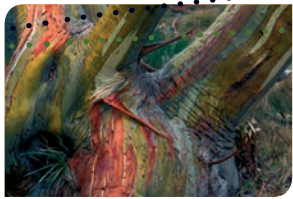
Planted forest strip comprising wholly native species, TAS. *Photo: Rob Blakers*

Protected Area programs under the first phase of Caring for our Country, the Australian Government helped Indigenous communities to protect biodiversity and their significant cultural values for future generations. At the same time, this support has provided significant health, education, economic and social benefits.

Through the first phase of Caring for our Country, the Australian Government provided additional support through medium to large grants across Australia to achieve an environment that is healthier, better protected, well managed, resilient, and provides essential ecosystem services in a changing climate. Funding was provided to a range of stakeholders across the country through the annual open call investment process.

The Biodiversity Fund has also invested in a broad range of biodiversity projects, from fire management in the Northern Territory and





Western Australia, to revegetation, restoration and invasive species projects in Tasmania, Queensland (including Cape York), New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia. These projects will increase and improve biodiverse carbon stores across the country, reduce threats to biodiversity and improve the resilience of natural ecosystems.

How has national funding changed?

This section of the Prospectus provides an overarching view of the Australian Government's national focus and priorities for funding biodiversity conservation and natural resource management over the next year.

Previous Caring for our Country funding rounds have been available to a wide variety of groups for differing funding amounts. Likewise, the first investment round of the Biodiversity Fund was deliberately broad in its reach.

The Biodiversity Fund is currently trialling a targeted investment approach in northern Australia. As outlined in the Prospectus, from July 2013, the investment focus of the Sustainable Environment stream of the second phase of Caring for our Country and Round Two of the Land Sector Package Biodiversity Fund will be refined. Funding for medium to large grants through the Sustainable Environment stream and Biodiversity Fund will extend this targeted approach to a number of priority areas across the country.

Conservation and protection of the environment at a local level will continue to be a high priority for the Australian Government, as will the development of community skills,

knowledge and engagement in biodiversity conservation and natural resource management.

Funding for projects across Australia will continue to be available for conservation and natural resource management at a local level through the Caring for our Country Regional Delivery and Community Environment Grants components. As environmental pressures continue, regional natural resource management organisations and community groups will offer on-ground knowledge and connections to support national objectives.

Funding will be provided, in conjunction with the Sustainable Agriculture stream, for regional natural resource management organisations to continue to deliver on Australian Government outcomes in collaboration with regional communities and Indigenous people.

The Australian Government will continue to provide funding through Community Environment Grants to allow community groups to take action in the conservation and protection of their natural environment. These grants will also support groups to develop the required skills, knowledge and capacity to continue to actively manage their environment.

The Australian Government will provide ongoing support to the Working on Country program. This will include an expansion of ranger positions in the Northern Territory as a component of the government's Northern Territory Stronger Futures Package.

The Australian Government will provide ongoing support for Indigenous communities



to expand and manage Indigenous Protected Areas. Indigenous Protected Areas are part of Australia's network of protected areas, contributing to national and international biodiversity objectives.

The government will also maintain obligations to the management principles for Australian World Heritage sites to ensure that the prime purpose of their management is in accordance with the World Heritage Convention commitment to identify, protect, conserve, present, transmit to future generations and, if appropriate, rehabilitate the outstanding universal value of the property. The government will directly negotiate with relevant World Heritage property managers for funding for existing commitments, such as the management of the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area and the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area, and to cover certain costs for World Heritage site Executive Officers and Advisory Committees.

The Environmental Stewardship Program will continue its commitment to maintain and improve the condition and extent of targeted matters of national environmental significance under the EPBC Act.

Additionally, while welcoming Carbon Farming Initiative projects within Target Areas, the Biodiversity Fund has a continued interest in individuals or groups working outside of the Target Areas that are looking to enhance the biodiversity outcomes of their Carbon Farming Initiative project.

Regional natural resource management organisations are also being supported to update existing regional natural resource

management plans to guide planning for climate change impacts on the land and to maximise the environmental benefits of carbon farming projects. From 2012, Stream 1 of the Regional Natural Resource Management Planning for Climate Change Fund will complement the Carbon Farming Initiative and the Biodiversity Fund through planning to help guide the types and locations of activities under these programs.

The Indigenous Carbon Farming Fund will support the greater participation of Indigenous land managers in the Carbon Farming Initiative over the next five years. Indigenous organisations can apply for funds to build capacity and support businesses to assess, establish or participate in carbon farming projects.

Our investment strategy

Investment Themes National Focus

Biodiversity Fund: Biodiverse plantings, Protecting and enhancing existing vegetation, Managing invasive species in a connected landscape.

Caring for our Country: Protecting the Great Barrier Reef, Conserving and protecting species and ecosystems, Restoring and maintaining urban waterways and coastal environments, Building natural resource management community skills, knowledge and engagement, Protecting Ramsar sites and values, Protecting World Heritage sites, Building Indigenous people's capacity for natural resource management.





Peppermint box woodland, SA. *Photo: Andrew Tatnell*

The following indicates the funding grants relevant to this Target Area. A summary of the relevant programs and grants is in Section 2. Further information on these grants will be available in the guidelines at the Caring for our Country website at: www.nrm.gov.au or by calling: 1800 552 008 — and for the Land Sector Package at the following website: www.environment.gov.au/cleanenergyfuture/land-sector/index.html or by calling: 1800 008 678.

- **Land Sector Package – Biodiversity Fund**
- **Land Sector Package – Regional Natural Resource Management Planning for Climate Change Fund (Stream 1)**
- **Land Sector Package – Indigenous Carbon Farming Fund**
- **Caring for our Country – Community Environment Grants**
- **Caring for our Country – Environmental Stewardship**
- **Caring for our Country – Regional Funding**
- **Caring for our Country – Working on Countryⁱ**
- **Caring for our Country – Indigenous Protected Areasⁱ**

ⁱ continued funding for existing projects nationally



Central Australian Connection

The Central Australian Connection stretches 2 800 kilometres from Arnhem Land coastal waters in the north and Wilpena Pound and Pualco Range Conservation Park to the south.

The Central Australian Connection contains a considerable diversity of unique species and ecosystems including vast coastal stretches, wetlands, grasslands and, in the wide open spaces of the arid centre, unique ranges, waterholes and inland catchments.

The Central Australian Connection has three distinct climate zones.

The story so far

Parts of Australia's great outback, stretching from the tropics of Arnhem Land and Kakadu through the arid centre to the more temperate climate of South Australia, has suffered disconnection over the past 220 years.

Just as connections from north to south were established by Indigenous people and then through the transcontinental railway, we can reconnect our biodiversity.



The main land tenures within the Central Australian Connection are Indigenous-held lands, conservation estate and pastoral leases. Most of the Northern Territory coastline is owned and managed by Indigenous people.

The National Reserve System is highly represented in the Northern Territory including Litchfield, Gregory, Nitmiluk and West MacDonnell National Parks. The South Australian area includes Flinders Ranges, Vulkathunha-Gammon Ranges, Lake Eyre and Witjira National Parks. Kakadu and Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Parks are jointly

managed with traditional owners. Important bird areas include the internationally recognised Kakadu and Lake Eyre sites. The Northern Territory has a relatively intact environment but the protection of plants and animals varies across the landscape, with only around 19 per cent of its landscapes protected by national parks and reserves. Many endangered plants and animals are found outside these protected areas and additional measures are required to protect biodiversity in these areas. In the arid parts of Australia, there have been substantial losses of small and medium-sized mammals.

The likely main drivers of the mammal decline in northern Australia include inappropriate fire regimes and predation by feral cats. Cane toads are also implicated, particularly in the recent catastrophic decline of the Northern Quoll (*Dasyurus hallucatus*). Impacts are also associated with vegetation changes, including the introduction of weeds, associated with the pastoral industry. Disease could also be a factor, but the evidence is inconclusive.





The Australian Government recognises that managing our native plants and animals requires continental approaches implemented at a landscape-scale. This approach is outlined in the *National Wildlife Corridors Plan*.

Our achievements so far

The Australian Government supports Indigenous communities to manage Indigenous Protected Areas for conservation as part of Australia's National Reserve System. For example, the declaration of the Southern Tanami Indigenous Protected Area in the Northern Territory, at 10.16 million hectares, is the largest protected area on Australian land.

Other Australian Government investments in the region include:

- investment in Indigenous rangers under the Working on Country program, which has delivered over 300 jobs along the Central Australian Connection and resulted in improved environmental outcomes across land and seascapes and the transfer of Indigenous ecological knowledge
- Caring for our Country National Reserve System investments in the Northern Territory at Fish River Station (a 178 116 hectare property on the Daly River 150 kilometres south of Darwin)
- 59 projects protecting over 750 000 hectares aimed at reducing threats to native habitat and vegetation
- support for management of the coastal and marine environments including coastal clean-ups and turtle and dugong management

- supporting collaborative rangeland management and capacity to monitor change through the collection and synthesis of scientifically rigorous data and information across the rangelands (which comprise 80 per cent of mainland Australia) through the Australian Collaborative Rangelands Information System
- a range of Biodiversity Fund projects to restore and re-establish connectivity, reduce the impacts of invasive species and stock, establish native seed banks and improve biodiversity benefits in the Top End, Central Australia and South Australia.



West Macdonnell Ranges, NT. Photo: John Baker

But there is still more to be done

The coordination and management of natural resources throughout the arid lands and rangelands of northern and southern Australia is vital.



The Australian Government is committed to retaining, restoring and facilitating active management of wildlife corridors and natural patterns of vegetation, waterways and other landscape features across the region and between our national parks.

Under the Caring for our Country Sustainable Environment stream, and the Biodiversity Fund, the Australian Government will support:

- continued efforts for advancing landscape-scale wildlife corridors
- reduction of key threatening processes through coordinated weed and pest management programs (including through training and employment for Indigenous work crews)
- management of land and sea country, including the development and implementation of management plans that complement and support corridor and natural resource management regional plans in the protection and management of biodiversity
- establishment of up to 38 new Indigenous ranger jobs under Working on Country in the Northern Territory
- collaborative approaches to restoring and establishing habitat connectivity at the landscape-scale
- building carbon stores and benefiting biodiversity through the use of appropriate fire regimes, including through the use of Indigenous ecological knowledge, to prevent late dry season fires.

Our investment strategy

Investment Themes Central Australian Connection

Biodiversity Fund: Biodiverse plantings, Protecting and enhancing existing vegetation, Managing invasive species in a connected landscape.

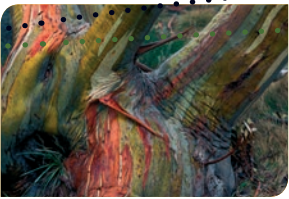
Caring for our Country: Conserving and protecting species and ecosystem, Restoring and maintaining urban waterways and coastal environments, Building natural resource management community skills, knowledge and engagement, Protecting Ramsar sites and values, Protecting World Heritage sites', Building Indigenous people's capacity for natural resource management.



Looking towards Wilpena from saddle (Flinder Ranges).

Photo: Leslie William Hosking





The following indicates the funding grants relevant to this Target Area. A summary of the relevant programs and grants is in Section 2. Further information on these grants will be available in the guidelines at the Caring for our Country website at: www.nrm.com.au or by calling: 1800 552 008 — and for the Land Sector Package at the following website www.environment.gov.au/cleanenergyfuture/land-sector/index.html or by calling: 1800 008 678.

- **Land Sector Package – Biodiversity Fund**
- **Land Sector Package – Indigenous Carbon Farming Fund**
- **Caring for our Country – Community Environment Grants**
- **Caring for our Country – Regional Delivery**
- **Caring for our Country – Target Area Grants**
- **Caring for our Country – Expansion of Working on Country in the Northern Territory**
- **Caring for our Country – Working on Countryⁱ**
- **Caring for our Country – Indigenous Protected Areasⁱ**

ⁱ continued funding for existing projects nationally



Cape York

Cape York Peninsula covers an area of 137 000 square kilometres and a vast coastline that contains a suite of exceptional environmental values, with relatively intact and extensive coastal dune fields, wetlands, rainforest, heathlands, river systems, sea country and coastal islands. The area supports high levels of endemic biodiversity.

The Cape York climate is monsoonal, with distinct wet and dry seasons.

The story so far

Cape York Peninsula is one of those special areas in Australia containing exceptional environmental and cultural assets and which is still in a relatively pristine state. The region holds one of the last remaining large tracts of high-integrity tropical savanna in the world, as well as rainforests and wetlands rich in biodiversity and tropical heathlands rare on a global scale.

The main land tenures are pastoral leases, Indigenous held lands and protected areas. Indigenous ecological knowledge informs environmental management across many areas. The major economic activities in the region include mining, the largest sector, together with grazing, fishing, horticulture and tourism.

The key environmental threats in the region are invasive weeds and feral animals, particularly pigs and cattle. Inappropriate burning regimes which are not tailored to good ecosystem outcomes are also of major concern.

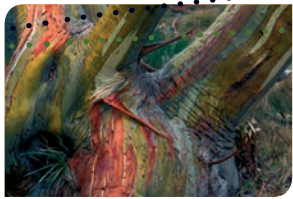
Our achievements so far

To date, the Australian Government's focus has been on investments to reduce the impacts of broad scale threats such as weeds and feral animals, as well as addressing the damaging effects of widespread late dry-season fires. Significant advances have also been made in building Indigenous capacity, particularly through the support of Indigenous management of marine turtles and dugong (*Dugong dugon*). This has empowered a number of communities to take an active part in sustainable land and sea management, planning and on the ground activities including in some of the more remote areas of the Cape.

The Australian Government has also invested in a range of activities in the Cape York region including:

- supporting projects aimed at improving the status of threatened species, such as through the safeguarding of nest-sites of marine turtles and the protection of values of the Northern Holroyd Plain which is a 'high ecological value aquatic ecosystem'





- the strategic acquisition of land parcels of high priority for protecting matters of national environmental significance, which augment the National Reserve System and are consistent with a future World Heritage nomination in terms of values and connectivity
- Biodiversity Fund projects connecting wildlife corridors and reducing the impacts of invasive species through control and management programs, including in conjunction with Indigenous land managers.

There are currently over 120 Indigenous rangers supported under the Working on Country program to manage significant environmental and cultural values of land and sea country across Cape York, including management of four declared Indigenous Protected Areas.

But there is still more to be done

Cape York contains values which are not only of national significance but also, in the case of the wet tropics, of World Heritage class. While much has been achieved to protect these values, it is necessary to maintain pressure on weed and feral animal populations to safeguard existing investments, push back containment lines and address emerging threats. A renewed focus on building Peninsula-wide partnerships, for example to foster appropriate and integrated approaches to seasonal burning, will also be a priority.

With the likely prospect of a renewed focus on economic development on Cape York it will be important to ensure that the special



Cooktown-Daintree-Windsor Tableland Area, QLD.
Photo: Kerry Trapnell

values of the Cape are protected for future generations. The Australian Government is committed to providing support for the following activities:

- strategic weed control and containment for weeds of national significance and regionally significant invasive species
- ongoing feral pig and feral cattle control
- targeted threatened species protection
- improved mapping and protection of threatened ecological communities



- on-going protection of the Northern Holroyd Plain Aggregation wetland area
- promotion and implementation of sustainable fire regimes tailored to different ecosystems including through the use of savanna burning, where appropriate, as part of projects to protect and manage carbon stores and benefit biodiversity
- capacity building in natural resource management, particularly for Indigenous land and sea managers
- continuation of the recording and practical application of Indigenous ecological knowledge
- promotion of sustainable tourism
- efforts to protect remnant vegetation and advance landscape-scale wildlife corridors.

Our investment strategy

Investment Themes Cape York

Caring for our Country: Protecting the Great Barrier Reef, Conserving and protecting species and ecosystem, Restoring and maintaining urban waterways and coastal environments, Building natural resource management community skills, knowledge and engagement. Protecting Ramsar sites and values, Protecting World Heritage sites, Building Indigenous people's capacity for natural resource management.

The following indicates the funding grants relevant to this Target Area. A summary of the relevant programs and grants is in Section 2. Further information on these grants will be available in the guidelines at the Caring for our Country website at: www.nrm.gov.au or by calling: 1800 552 008.

- **Land Sector Package – Indigenous Carbon Farming Fund**
- **Caring for our Country – Community Environment Grants**
- **Caring for our Country – Reef Rescue**
- **Caring for our Country – Regional Delivery**
- **Caring for our Country – Target Area Grants**
- **Caring for our Country – Working on Countryⁱ**
- **Caring for our Country – Indigenous Protected Areasⁱ**

ⁱ continued funding for existing projects nationally





Kimberley

The Kimberley area of Western Australia includes more than 42 million hectares of land and an extensive coastline.

The region is dominated by grassland with scattered Eucalypts. Isolated rainforest pockets still exist within ancient rock formations and large rivers fed by summer monsoons. The remoteness and undeveloped nature of large areas of the Kimberley make it an area of high biodiversity values.

The Kimberley climate is a tropical monsoon climate with a distinct dry season and a dramatic wet season.

The story so far

The Kimberley is a region of outstanding natural and cultural significance, with many unique ecosystems, dramatic and beautiful landscapes and a strong Indigenous culture. It is important that the high conservation value landscapes of the Kimberley are managed for their conservation.

The population of the Kimberley is approximately 41 000, the majority living around Broome, Derby, and Kununurra.

Nearly 50 per cent of the Kimberley's population is Indigenous, with strong connections to country. The geological formations, rivers and the environment are important to the continuing practices of the Kimberley Indigenous people and their Indigenous ecological knowledge is invaluable to better management. Currently, a quarter of the pastoral leases in the area are owned by Indigenous people.

The region retains extensive areas of native vegetation and other habitats supporting important biodiversity. Pastoral and other



Picaninny Gorge Walk, Purnululu National Park.
Photo: Rod Hartvigsen



leases cover about half of the Kimberley. About 5 per cent of the region is in national parks and conservation reserves, 25 per cent is unallocated Crown land and 12 per cent is in Aboriginal reserves. Both the natural and cultural values of the area have been recognised through the incorporation of the west Kimberley onto the National Heritage List in 2011.

Issues impacting the region include: fire management, loss of habitat, invasive animals and plants including weeds of national significance, ongoing development pressure and management of marine turtle and dugong.

Our achievements so far

The Australian Government, through Caring for our Country including the Working on Country program, has focused on improving the sustainable livelihoods of people in the Kimberley. Indigenous people living on country have a critical role to play in managing cultural and natural resources.

While a low population distribution has resulted in limited capacity and less opportunity for local community engagement in natural resource management almost 60 full and part-time Indigenous rangers and more than 200 casually employed Indigenous rangers are supported through the Working on Country program to manage the significant environmental and cultural values of land and sea country across the Kimberley.



Spinifex regrowth after the EcoFire. Areas are burned on a regular basis to promote a strong regrowth.

Photo: Dragi Markovic

The Australian Government has also invested in a range of activities in the Kimberley with important environmental outcomes. These activities include:

- efforts to reduce the effect of late season fires on millions of hectares through sustainable fire management practices, benefiting threatened species such as the Gouldian Finch (*Erythrura gouldiae*) and the vine thicket ecological community
- efforts to reduce critical threats to Ramsar wetlands and the unique values of the Purnululu World Heritage Area
- efforts to reduce the speed of cane toads (*Bufo marinus*) spreading into the Kimberley
- work to prevent weeds of national significance spreading into new areas of native vegetation
- work to improve connectivity and native vegetation condition across the landscape. This work is providing opportunities through the Biodiversity Fund to enhance the environmental outcomes of carbon farming initiative projects.





But there is still more to be done

This region is under pressure from more intensive land uses, inappropriate fire regimes, invasive species and climate change.

The size and remoteness of the Kimberley means there is still much to learn about its ecology and effort needs to be maintained to better understand and document natural values and how they are informed by Indigenous ecological knowledge. The success of Indigenous ranger programs suggests this is a good model for future activities to tackle threats to the Kimberley region's environmental values.

Future action needs to enhance the ecological resilience of the Kimberley through activities that include:

- strategic fire management approaches that use Indigenous ecological knowledge to sustainably and appropriately manage fire at a landscape-scale
- continued efforts to protect remnant vegetation and advance landscape-scale wildlife corridors
- protecting the ecological and cultural values of waterways, wetlands and coastal environments
- maintenance of the region's National Heritage and World Heritage listed places
- establishing invasive species control programs, including managing weeds and introduced vertebrate pests, to reduce threats to biodiversity
- protection of threatened species.

Our investment strategy:

Investment Themes Kimberley

Caring for our Country: Conserving and protecting species and ecosystem, Restoring and maintaining urban waterways and coastal environments, Building natural resource management community skills, knowledge and engagement. Protecting Ramsar sites and values, Protecting World Heritage sites, Building Indigenous peoples capacity for natural resource management.



Domes walk, Purnululu National Park.

Photo: Rod Hartvigsen

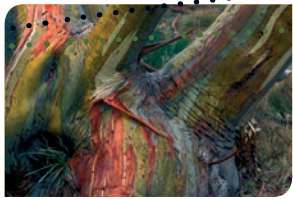


The following indicates the funding grants relevant to this Target Area. A summary of the relevant programs and grants is in Section 2. Further information on these grants will be available in the guidelines at the Caring for our Country website at: www.nrm.gov.au or by calling: 1800 552 008.

- **Land Sector Package – Indigenous Carbon Farming Fund**
- **Caring for our Country – Community Environment Grants**
- **Caring for our Country – Regional Delivery**
- **Caring for our Country – Target Area Grants**
- **Caring for our Country – Working on Countryⁱ**
- **Caring for our Country – Indigenous Protected Areasⁱ**

ⁱ continued funding for existing projects nationally





Tasmania

Tasmania is home to some of the richest natural environments, from prime agricultural land to rugged mountainous areas. The north west of Tasmania is renowned for its sea life, wildlife, crags and beaches and for its pristine wilderness.

Tasmania offers a huge variety of landscapes and environmental experiences. Its ancient origins and evolutionary development mean that many of its natural elements are significant globally and have world heritage status.

Tasmania has a cool temperate climate with four distinct seasons.

The Target Area encompasses Macquarie Island located about half-way between New Zealand and Antarctica. The island has an area of 128 square kilometres.

The story so far

Tasmania has the most regional and dispersed population of any state in Australia, with almost 60 per cent of the population living outside the capital city Hobart.

Tasmania has significant environmental values. With 45 per cent of its land committed to national parks or conservation reserves and eight declared Indigenous Protected Areas. Tasmania also has 89 wetlands listed in the Directory of Important Wetlands in Australia (Australian Government, Department of the Environment and Heritage, 2006). Invasive species and pathogens are the most significant threat to the Tasmanian environment including foxes and the facial tumour disease in the Tasmanian devil (*Sarcophilus harrisi*). Other threatening processes include changes in fire regimes, increasing fragmentation and loss of remnant vegetation.

Our achievements so far

The Australian Government invested \$66.2 million in Tasmania during the first five years of Caring for our Country. This investment has been highly successful in addressing environmental issues of critical importance to Tasmania and has leveraged significant contributions from state government and the general community.

In addition to funds allocated to regional natural resource management organisations, over 110 projects have contributed to Caring for our Country targets and actively engaged more than 32 000 people in on-ground works to improve the natural environment. Projects have also been funded through round one of the Biodiversity Fund.

Australian Government projects have included:

- management activities in World Heritage Areas



- additions to the National Reserve System through the Tasmanian Protected Areas on Private Land Program
- invasive species eradication programs
- coastal hotspots, Ramsar wetlands and community engagement
- improving connectivity of native vegetation and biodiversity protection through new plantings and restoration works, which in turn assists landscape resilience to climate change
- providing opportunities to enhance the biodiversity outcomes of the Australian Government's Carbon Farming Initiative projects
- management of Indigenous Protected Areas by Indigenous land and sea managers.

Currently 13 Indigenous land and sea managers, funded through Working on Country, contribute to the management of the significant natural and cultural values of Tasmania's environment.

But there is still more to be done

Of prime importance is the continuation of the highly successful Australian Government and state government collaborative efforts in the areas of World Heritage management, fox eradication and Tasmanian devil protection, all of which are of national and international significance.

Approximately 45.8 per cent (3.1 million hectares) of Tasmania's total landmass



Tasmanian Devils. Photo: Dave Watts

is covered by native forest, and much of this forest has high environmental values. Conversion of native forest to plantation was reduced in 2007–08, but decreases in area and condition of native forest continue due to other pressures.

Potential opportunities for future action include:

- support for threatened species such as Swift Parrots (*Lathamus discolor*)
- investment in multi-species landscape-scale planning for threatened species conservation
- re-establishing and restoring habitat to establish and maintain connectivity, through plantings and restoration works, including in riparian and wetland areas
- management of land and sea country, including development and implementation of management plans that complement and support corridor and natural resource management regional plans in the protection and management of biodiversity.





Our investment strategy

Investment Themes Tasmania

Biodiversity Fund: Biodiverse plantings, Protecting and enhancing existing vegetation, Managing invasive species in a connected landscape.

Caring for our Country: Conserving and protecting species and ecosystem, Restoring and maintaining urban waterways and coastal environments, Building natural resource management community skills, knowledge and engagement, Protecting Ramsar sites and values, Protecting World Heritage sites, Building Indigenous people's capacity for natural resource management.

The following indicates the funding grants relevant to this Target Area. A summary of the relevant programs and grants is in Section 2. Further information on these grants will be available in the guidelines at the Caring for our Country website at: www.nrm.gov.au — or by calling: 1800 552 008 and for the Land Sector Package at the following website: www.environment.gov.au/cleanenergyfuture/land-sector/index.html or by calling: 1800 008 678.

- Land Sector Package – Biodiversity Fundⁱⁱ
- Land Sector Package – Indigenous Carbon Farming Fund
- Caring for our Country – Community Environment Grants
- Caring for our Country – Regional Delivery
- Caring for our Country – Target Area Grants
- Caring for our Country – Working on Countryⁱ
- Caring for our Country – Indigenous Protected Areasⁱ



South West Tasmania. Photo: P Matthews

ⁱ continued funding for existing projects nationally

ⁱⁱ Excluding Macquarie Island.



South-West Western Australia

The south-west of Western Australia is geologically ancient and renowned for the diversity and its flora. There are over 5 000 known plant species in the area and large numbers of these are globally unique. It includes unique vegetation assemblages that range from majestic karri and jarrah forests, to granite outcrops with significant Aboriginal cultural importance, to species rich heathlands and the world's largest intact temperate woodlands.

South-west Western Australia has a Mediterranean climate, with dry summers and wet winters.

The story so far

South-west Western Australia is a global biodiversity hotspot due to its extraordinarily high number of globally unique (endemic) native species as well as the high level of biodiversity threats. The area has developed a range of unique plants and animals owing to its relative isolation from other biodiverse areas because of surrounding desert barriers.

While known for its diverse flora, the region also has many unique vertebrate fauna species with more than 70 per cent of all native frog species and freshwater fish species being endemic to the area. It is also acknowledged globally as a significant bird area with 13 endemic bird species. The region contains numerous naturally saline, saline and freshwater nationally important wetlands with eight being internationally recognised Ramsar wetlands.

There are also a number of Indigenous communities who are actively managing their traditional country through a range of natural resource management and tourism initiatives.

The exceptional biodiversity values of the region are under serious threat from a legacy of large scale land clearing, changed hydrology leading to either salinity or overuse of groundwater; the impacts of Phytophthora dieback (*Phytophthora cinnamomi*) weeds and feral pests; land development and urbanisation; changed fire regimes; and climate change.



Cape Le Grand National Park, looking out to the Bay of Isles – Esperance. Photo: Paul Bowers





Our achievements so far

The Australian Government has funded the development of a Strategic Framework for Biodiversity Conservation in the south-west Australia Eco-region (Witham, 2012). This framework brings together significant layers of scientific data and the collective knowledge of over 100 biodiversity experts. The Australian Government has also funded activities to:

- improve the habitat of threatened ecological communities
- reduce threats to Ramsar wetlands and critical aquatic habitats
- reduce the impact of rabbits and feral pigs on more than 200 threatened species populations
- establish thousands of hectares of newly covenanted native habitat
- tackle weeds of national significance spreading into new areas of native vegetation
- improve the connectivity of native vegetation through new plantings and restoration activities, which in turn improves resilience to climate change
- enhance the biodiversity outcomes of Carbon Farming Initiative projects.

But there is still more to be done

With significant historic native vegetation clearing, biodiversity in the region is under significant stress. The region was one of the first areas in the world to scientifically document climate change and is also



Poison Creek – Cape Arid National Park 120km east of Esperance. *Photo: Paul Bowers*

predicted to suffer significantly from the impact of increasing extremes of temperature and reduced rainfall.

Climate change will exacerbate the cumulative threats already affecting biodiversity in the region. The problems caused by compounding threats mean we must undertake biodiversity conservation management more strategically and collaboratively across the region.

The region needs to work towards integrated biodiversity management that:

- continues efforts for advancing landscape-scale wildlife corridors
- manages remnant vegetation so the mounting threats do not erode their habitat values
- restores habitat and connectivity (particularly for threatened species) through plantings and restoration works
- undertakes strategic plantings of large trees that will provide hollows for endemic bird and mammal species into the future



- establishes invasive species control and management programs to reduce the impacts upon native flora and fauna
- reduces the spread of Phytophthora dieback disease threatening many species and habitats
- maintains the ecological and cultural values of waterways, wetlands and coastal environments
- addresses the threats of declining water quality and rising salinity
- allows for the management of land and sea country, including the development and implementation of management plans that complement and support corridor and natural resource management regional plans in the protection and management of biodiversity.

Our investment strategy:

Investment Themes South-West Western Australia

Biodiversity Fund: Biodiverse plantings, Protecting and enhancing existing vegetation, Managing invasive species in a connected landscape.

Caring for our Country: Conserving and protecting species and ecosystem, Restoring and maintaining urban waterways and coastal environments, Building natural resource management community skills, knowledge and engagement, Protecting Ramsar sites and values, Building Indigenous people's capacity for natural resource management.

The following indicates the funding grants relevant to this Target Area. A summary of the relevant programs and grants is in Section 2. Further information on these grants will be available in the guidelines at the Caring for our Country website at: www.nrm.gov.au or by calling: 1800 552 008 — and for the Land Sector Package at the following website: www.environment.gov.au/cleanenergyfuture/land-sector/index.html or by calling: 1800 008 678.

- **Land Sector Package – Biodiversity Fund**
- **Land Sector Package – Indigenous Carbon Farming Fund**
- **Caring for our Country – Community Environment Grants**
- **Caring for our Country – Regional Delivery**
- **Caring for our Country – Target Area Grants**





South Australia-Victoria Connection

South-east South Australia includes parts of the Murray Mallee and Murray Lakes and Coorong sub-regions, as well as the Naracoorte Coastal Plain.

South-west Victoria includes the Wimmera, Glenelg Hopkins, Mallee and Corangamite Natural Resource Management areas.

The area has a temperate climate.

The story so far

The South-east South Australia region contains many unique landforms (such as Blue Lake) and has two World Heritage listed sites (Naracoorte Caves and the Australian Fossil Mammal Site). The extensive underground aquifers are the primary source of water for irrigation, industry, stock and domestic uses. Although 13 per cent of native vegetation cover remains, the species of flora and fauna are highly diverse, with 79 nationally-listed threatened plant and animal species and 64 migratory species. The region contains the Ramsar-listed Bool and Hacks Lagoons and a large portion of the Coorong and Lower Lakes. In addition, there are 13 nationally important wetlands, two high ecological value aquatic ecosystems, and the marine waters which are some of the most productive along the southern Australian coast. Key regional industries include agriculture (cropping/grazing, dairy, viticulture, potatoes), forestry, fishing/aquaculture, manufacturing, retail and tourism.

South-west Victoria is an area of high species diversity that ranges from highly productive volcanic soils across grasslands



Peppermint box woodland on private land.

Photo: Andrew Tatnell

to less productive dryland areas on flat plains. The Victorian Volcanic Plain is an area acknowledged as having a high biodiversity values as it provides habitat to 65 threatened species and includes nationally and internationally important wetlands and endemic native orchids (Creighton & Sattler, 2002). The degradation of vegetation and habitat, predation by foxes and cats, changing fire regimes, weed invasion and the total grazing pressure of domestic stock, kangaroos and feral rabbits all pose major threats to this region's biodiversity.



Our achievements so far

Funding to date has focused on projects, including regional investments and competitive projects, to deliver outcomes across a range of landscapes. Initiatives in South-west Victoria include:

- enhancing the protection and conservation of threatened species and communities through weed and pest control and other relevant activities
 - linking remnant vegetation communities through landscape-scale conservation
 - increasing carbon storage through the planted biolinks
 - improving the skills and knowledge of the community to undertake on-ground natural resource management activities
 - building partnerships with Indigenous organisations to increase opportunities for involvement in natural resource management
 - almost 40 Indigenous rangers are currently funded through Working on Country to undertake environmental activities that support the conservation of important ecosystems in the region.
- enhance connectivity and corridors for native fauna and flora
 - protect and increase native vegetation through planting, restoration and carbon capture activities, including in wetlands and along riparian corridors
 - reduce the impacts of feral pests to improve the functioning of habitat areas.

In 2011–2012, round one of the Biodiversity Fund funded a range of large and small projects across both south-east South Australia and south-west Victoria. That round focussed on a broad range of projects, from small-scale to large-scale, from individual properties to multiple locations. These projects will:



Implementation officer with Eastern Hills and Murray Plains Catchment Group and the Principle Project Officer - Biodiversity, from SA MDB NRM Board with some Kangaroo Grass (*Themeda triandra*) in an Iron grass area.

Photo: Andrew Tatnell





But there is still more to be done

Further work is needed in this region to reconnect degraded areas including through the development and implementation of management plans that complement and support corridors including, activities to:

- reduce the impact of invasive plant and animal species on biodiversity as well as of live-stock
- establish appropriate fire regimes for the benefit of native species
- expand healthy habitats with new plantings.
- undertake new environmental plantings, as well as revegetate degraded areas with additional plantings and associated restorative works
- reduce the impact of stock upon native vegetation and manage invasive species, a principal threat to much of the unique native fauna and flora in this region, as well as apply more appropriate fire regimes to reduce the likelihood of destructively hot fires.

Our investment strategy

Investment Themes South Australia- Victoria Connection

Biodiversity Fund: Biodiverse plantings, Protecting and enhancing existing vegetation, Managing invasive species in a connected landscape.

The following indicates the funding grants relevant to this Target Area. A summary of the relevant programs and grants is in Section 2. Further information on these grants will be available in the guidelines at the Caring for our Country website at: www.nrm.gov.au or by calling: 1800 552 008 — and for the Land Sector Package at the following website: www.environment.gov.au/cleanenergyfuture/land-sector/index.html or by calling: 1800 008 678.

- **Land Sector Package – Biodiversity Fund**
- **Land Sector Package – Indigenous Carbon Farming Fund**
- **Caring for our Country – Community Environment Grants**
- **Caring for our Country – Regional Delivery**
- **Caring for our Country – Working on Countryⁱ**
- **Caring for our Country – Indigenous Protected Areasⁱ**

ⁱ continued funding for existing projects nationally



Greater Border Ranges Region

This region encompasses the natural resource management regions of Northern Rivers and south-east Queensland. The area includes the Border Ranges North and South biodiversity hotspot and the World Heritage listed Gondwana Rainforests of Australia.

The area has an ambient sub-tropical maritime climate on the coast but greater variations in temperature inland.

The Target Area encompasses Lord Howe Island located in the Tasman Sea between Australia and New Zealand. The island has an area of 14.55 square kilometres.

The story so far

The Greater Border Ranges region is an area of high endemism and richness for many species. The region also includes nationally recognised biodiversity hotspots, that is, a land area with a large number of globally unique (endemic) native species. The area has strong cultural significance to the local Indigenous people.

Border Ranges North and South is a sub-tropical and temperate hotspot which is one of the most biologically diverse areas in New South Wales and southern Queensland. The region's diverse habitats support a large variety of rare and threatened fauna including the Richmond Birdwing Butterfly (*Ornithoptera richmondia*), Fleay's Frog (*Mixophyes fleayi*), Hastings River Mouse (*Pseudomys oralis*), Long-nosed Potoroo (*Potorous tridactylus*), Spotted-tailed Quoll (*Dasyurus maculates*), Eastern Bristlebird (*Dasyornis brachypterus*), Rufous Scrubbird (*Trichornis rufescens*) and the critically endangered Coxen's Fig-parrot (*Cyclopsitta diophthalma coxeni*). Rainforests in south-east Queensland also support a rich variety

of primitive plant species, many of them similar to fossils from the Gondwana period.

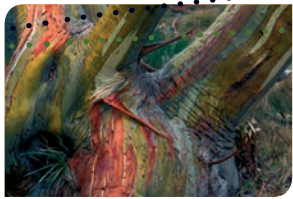
The qualities that make this region a biodiversity hotspot are under threat. Changes in land use have fragmented the original vegetation, particularly on lowland areas, encouraging weed invasion and putting at risk woodland and grassland birds and the natural water cycle. Inappropriate fire regimes and predation by feral animals, in particular pigs, cats and foxes, pose additional threats to local biodiversity. Weeds, fire and recreational use also put significant strain on the region's natural environment.



Border Ranges Region, Kyogle, NSW.

Photo: John Houldsworth





Our achievements so far

A range of small and large projects have been funded through round one of the Biodiversity Fund in the Northern Rivers, and south-east Queensland natural resource management regions. These projects will:

- enhance connectivity and corridors for native fauna and flora
- protect and increase native vegetation through planting, restoration and carbon capture activities, including in rainforest, wetlands and along riparian corridors
- reduce the impacts of feral pests to improve habitat for native species.

A number of projects have been funded under the first phase of the Caring for our Country initiative in the Northern Rivers, and South-east Queensland natural resource management regions. These projects have been managed by various government and non-government organisations and will increase the area of native habitat and vegetation managed to reduce critical threats to biodiversity and to enhance the condition, connectivity and resilience of habitats and landscapes.

Significant funds have been allocated from 2011 to 2014 to help eradicate weeds from Lord Howe Island and \$4.5 million has been provided to protect World Heritage values from introduced rodents.

But there is still more to be done

Further work is needed in this region to reconnect degraded areas and reduce the impact of invasive plant and animal species and live stock. Work is also needed to establish appropriate fire regimes for the benefit of native species and expand healthy habitat with new plantings.

In particular, the 2013–14 round of the Biodiversity Fund will support:

- new environmental plantings, as well as revegetation of degraded areas with additional plantings and associated restorative works
- activities to reduce the impact of land use pressures upon native vegetation and manage invasive species, which are a principal threat to much of the unique native fauna and flora in this region
- help apply more appropriate fire regimes to reduce the likelihood of destructively hot fires.

Our investment strategy

Investment Themes Greater Border Ranges Region

Biodiversity Fund: Biodiverse plantings, Protecting and enhancing existing vegetation, Managing invasive species in a connected landscape.



Border Ranges Region, Kyogle, NSW.
Photo: John Houldsworth

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- **Land Sector Package – Biodiversity Fund**
- **Land Sector Package – Indigenous Carbon Farming Fund**
- **Caring for our Country – Community Environment Grants**
- **Caring for our Country – Regional Delivery**
- **Caring for our Country – Working on Countryⁱ**
- **Caring for our Country – Indigenous Protected Areasⁱ**

ⁱ continued funding for existing projects nationally





Urban Waterways and Coastal Environments

The story so far

Australia's urban waterways and coastal environments provide essential ecosystem services that support local communities and economies. Protecting the environmental values of our urban waterways and coastal environments is essential for the ongoing economic and social wellbeing of our urban and coastal communities, particularly those experiencing high growth.

Enjoying the beach is a classic feature of Australian culture and we need to take action to ensure that future generations have the opportunity to enjoy our iconic coastlines. As the most heavily settled area, our coastal environment is subject to a range of pressures, including urban expansion and the cumulative effects of small developments. Climate change will also have a major impact on our coasts.

Many of Australia's cities and towns are built on a river, with implications for the management and health of rivers. Urban streams and estuaries (i.e. those affected by runoff and discharges from urban areas) are an important subset of Australia's waterways.

Urban centres are also where the majority of Australians live and our activities in and around urban waterways have significant impacts on our coastal and marine environments. Investing in activities to protect and restore our urban waterways will



Soldier crabs, Gumma Indigenous Protected Area, NSW. Photo: Chels Marshall

contribute to the resilience of our coastal and marine environments to environmental pressures as well as improve the liveability of our cities.

Urban and coastal environments continue to be of importance to Indigenous people and contain many areas of significance that are under threat. Indigenous people will continue to have an important role to play in the protection of their land, sea and river country.



Our achievements so far

The Australian Government has made significant investments in protecting our urban waterways and coastal environments, for example:

- funding for improved water management actions to support healthy rivers in urban environments and secure water resources for future generations
- the first phase of Caring for our Country, engage over 4 000 community groups in the Coastcare program to help protect their local beaches. Through Coastcare 56 projects were funded to protect over 207 000 hectares of wetlands through on-ground activities carried out by land managers, Indigenous and community groups and volunteers
- the development of a Marine Threat Abatement Plan under the EPBC Act to provide a framework for implementing a range of measures to reduce debris in our marine environment and on our beaches
- Biodiversity Fund projects that restore peri-urban riparian habitats, with subsequent improvements in water quality and biodiversity benefits.



Dhimurru, NT. Photo: Lisa Roeger

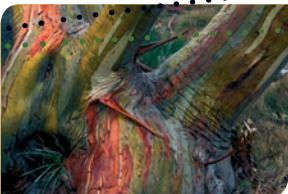
But there is still more to be done

As indicated in the *State of the Environment Report* (State of the Environment Committee, 2011) there is still work to be done to protect our urban and coastal environments. The report highlights that further work is required to address pressures associated with climate change, increasing populations and economic development. These pressures include nutrients and sediments in inland and marine waters, urban expansion, changed water regimes, the spread of exotic weeds and pests, modification of coastal habitats and increasing marine debris. The Report also identifies the need for improved information on the species and ecosystems being affected, and those species and ecosystems likely to be affected by human activities. It highlights that these pressures are affecting the liveability of our cities and towns.

The Australian Government will continue to invest in activities that further protect Australia's urban (capital cities and high growth coastal areas) waterways and coastal environments including:

- working with local governments, regional natural resource management organisations and relevant industries to reduce pollution entering into waterways
- supporting the trial, testing and piloting of innovative river and wetland health technologies
- implementing urban ecosystem improvements such as constructed wetlands, bio-retention basins, sediment basins, infiltration systems and buffer strips





- restoring riverbank vegetation and remediating other natural systems to reduce runoff in coastal catchments
- supporting local communities to manage, protect and restore urban waterways and coastal biodiversity and habitats and improve the connectivity of fragmented ecosystems
- implementing projects that reduce degradation and restore habitat around urban waterways to protect near-shore waters from runoff and other pollutants
- developing and implementing more targeted water quality improvement Plans in high priority urban catchments
- supporting activities to reduce land based sources of marine debris in our urban coastal communities
- the management of land and sea country, including the development and implementation of management plans that complement and support corridor and natural resource management regional plans in the protection and management of biodiversity.

For investment in the Great Barrier Reef catchments refer to the Great Barrier Reef Target Area.

Our investment strategy

Investment Themes Urban Waterways and Coastal Environments

Biodiversity Fund: Biodiverse plantings, Protecting and enhancing existing vegetation, Managing invasive species in a connected landscape.

Caring for our Country: Conserving and protecting species and ecosystem, Restoring and maintaining urban waterways and coastal environments, Building natural resource management community skills, knowledge and engagement, Protecting World Heritage sites, Protecting Ramsar sites and values, Building Indigenous people's capacity for natural resource management.



Photo: Geoff Comfort



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Coral Cod, Great Barrier Reef, QLD. *Photo: GBRMPA*

- **Land Sector Package – Biodiversity Fund**
- **Land Sector Package – Indigenous Carbon Farming Fund**
- **Caring for our Country – Community Environment Grants**
- **Caring for our Country – Regional Delivery**
- **Caring for our Country – Target Area Grants**
- **Caring for our Country – Working on Countryⁱ**
- **Caring for our Country – Indigenous Protected Areasⁱ**

ⁱ continued funding for existing projects nationally





The National Reserve System

Australia's evolving National Reserve System, with its network of protected areas, is conserving our biodiversity and protecting our ecosystems.

The terrestrial component of the National Reserve System includes more than 9700 protected areas covering 13.4 per cent of the country – over 103 million hectares. It is made up of Commonwealth, state and territory reserves, Indigenous lands and protected areas run by non-profit conservation organisations, through to ecosystems protected by farmers on their private working properties.

The Australian Government has also established a representative network of marine reserves to ensure that Australia's diverse marine environment, and the life it supports, remain healthy, productive and resilient for future generations.

The story so far

Establishing a well-managed, comprehensive, adequate and representative protected area system meets an important international obligation under the 1992 *Convention on Biological Diversity*.

The National Reserve System—Australia's network of parks, reserves and protected areas—is a vital part of our national effort to conserve biodiversity and protect our ecosystems. It protects examples of Australia's distinctive landscapes, plants and animals for future generations and is often referred to as nature's safety net in the face of climate change.

As part of Australia's National Reserve System, the Australian Government also supports Indigenous communities to manage Indigenous Protected Areas so their country is protected for the benefit of all Australians.

Australia is considered a world leader in jointly managing protected areas with the



Red Hermit Crab. Photo: Fusion Films

land's Indigenous traditional owners. The first joint management arrangement was made with the traditional owners of Kakadu National Park, who lease the land to the Australian Government. Uluru–Kata Tjuta National Park and Booderee National Park are also jointly managed.

As identified in the *National Wildlife Corridors Plan*, the National Reserve System is an



important foundation stone of biodiversity conservation and the development of a network of wildlife corridors in Australia.

As a developed nation with a maritime area larger than the continent itself, Australia also has a special responsibility to the conservation and management of our marine and coastal environments and our living marine resources. Our vast ocean area supports one of the greatest arrays of marine biodiversity on Earth.

Australia's oceans contain more than 4000 species of fish and tens of thousands of species of invertebrates, plants and micro-organisms and are of significant cultural importance to Indigenous people. From the spectacular coral reefs of Australia's tropical north to the majestic kelp forests of the temperate south, the number of newly discovered species tends to increase with each scientific survey. Our marine environment is host to many species found nowhere else in the world.

Research and conservation efforts in Australia, so far, have primarily focussed on terrestrial biodiversity. We know much more about wildlife on land than we do about what lives in our oceans. Many marine ecosystems are also poorly understood, although information on marine species and their habitats is improving.

Our achievements so far

As part of phase one of Caring for our Country, the Australian Government invested \$180 million to accelerate the development of the National Reserve System. As a result

of this investment the terrestrial component of the National Reserve System is strongly on track to expand to 125 million hectares by 2013, with close to 18 million hectares added by mid 2012.


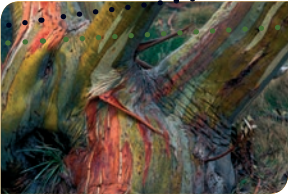
- Over 70 properties totalling 2.3 million hectares in area have been added to the National Reserve System to protect and conserve Australia's unique ecosystems.
- The declaration of 26 new Indigenous Protected Areas by Indigenous traditional owners has added 15.6 million hectares to the National Reserve System, significantly increasing protection of under-represented bioregions. There are now 51 declared Indigenous Protected Areas across the country.



Humpback whale tail. *Photo: Tony Howard*

Australia's National Reserve System also encompasses the Australian Government's network of marine reserves. These reserves have been established to protect representative examples of the diverse ecosystems and habitats found in Australia's marine environment, and the life they support.





On 16 November 2012 the Australian Government announced the proclamation of an extensive system of marine reserves in the Coral Sea and in the North-west, South-west and Temperate East marine regions. The new marine reserves take the overall size of the Commonwealth marine reserves network to 3.1 million square kilometres, by far the largest system of marine protected areas in the world.

Australia's marine reserves system was an important outcome of the Marine Bioregional Planning Program. The other key outcome of the program was the development and adoption of Marine Bioregional Plans which are focussed on the full range of environmental issues facing Australia's oceans and on improving the management of whole marine ecosystems, including the interactions of people and industry with marine environments and species. The Plans, which were adopted in August 2012 to guide decision-making under the EPBC Act, provide a comprehensive guide to the conservation values of the offshore marine environment and to the pressures on these values.

But there is still more to be done

The Australian Government remains committed to the network of parks, reserves and protected areas that form the National Reserve System. The strong progress towards achieving a comprehensive terrestrial National Reserve System under the first phase of Caring for our Country means that the priorities for investment through Caring for our Country can now shift, from

2013–14, to place a greater emphasis on establishing and managing the marine component of the National Reserve System.

The Marine Bioregional Plans for each of Australia's major marine regions identify a range of priorities and actions required to improve management of the offshore marine environment. While the overall condition of Australia's marine environment is good, there are existing pressures on the oceans caused by human activities. The ocean climate is also changing and our understanding of major aspects of our unique marine biodiversity (and how it will be impacted by these changes) is limited.

Recognising the importance of supporting the commercial fishing industry to adjust to the extensive new marine reserve network, a significant component of funding for the National Reserve System under the Caring for our Country initiative will be committed to a commercial fishing industry adjustment package which will be delivered from 2013–14.

The Australian Government will additionally invest in activities that support implementation of Marine Bioregional Plans and the marine reserve network including for:

- the implementation of statutory reserve management plans
- addressing priority strategies and actions in the Marine Bioregional Plans.

Caring for our Country will continue its support for Indigenous communities to increase and manage Indigenous Protected Areas.



Limited funding may be available for expanding the terrestrial component of the National Reserve System for projects which strongly meet the objectives and priorities set out within this prospectus, although there will not be a specific allocation of program funding for this component.

For more information on the terrestrial National Reserve System go to the following website: www.nrm.gov.au/about/caring/priorities/nrs.html

For more information on the Indigenous Protected Areas go to the following website: www.environment.gov.au/indigenous/ipa/index.html

For more information on Commonwealth Marine Reserves and Marine Bioregional Plans go to the following website: www.environment.gov.au/coasts/index.html.

Investment Themes National Reserve System

Caring for our Country: Building the National Reserve System, Building natural resource management community skills, knowledge and engagement, Building Indigenous people's capacity for natural resource management.





The Great Barrier Reef

The Great Barrier Reef is the largest and best known coral reef ecosystem in the world. It spans 2 300 kilometres of the Queensland coastline and comprises almost 3 000 coral reefs – representing around 10 per cent of global coral reef area.

The story so far

In recognition of the need to protect this Australian icon, the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1995* (Commonwealth), established the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority. The Great Barrier Reef was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1981 after meeting all four World Heritage natural criteria.

The Great Barrier Reef is estimated to support more than 54 000 jobs and provide more than \$5 billion annually to the Australian economy, primarily through tourism. The Great Barrier Reef is ‘sea country’ for around 70 Traditional Owner groups who have strong connections to the reef through cultural and traditional uses. In recognition of its social, economic and cultural value, the Great Barrier Reef was listed as a matter of national environmental significance under the EPBC Act in 2009.

Coral reefs in the Great Barrier Reef have already been significantly impacted by crown of thorns starfish outbreaks, cyclones, bleaching events and floods. In recent years seagrasses have been impacted by major floods. In the future, the Great Barrier Reef ecosystem will be affected by climate change, with coral reefs being most vulnerable to increasing sea surface temperature and acidity (De’ath, Fabricuis, Sweatman, & Puotinen, 2012).



Great Barrier Reef, QLD. Photo: GBRMPA

Our achievements so far

To increase the resilience of the Great Barrier Reef to the impacts of climate change, the Australian Government is working with key stakeholders to reduce the impacts of stressors, such as exposure to increased levels of sediments, nutrients and pesticides



from agricultural runoff which impact on the health and resilience of inshore reefs and seagrasses.

Through the Caring for our Country — Reef Rescue program, the Australian Government has invested \$200 million over five years to assist over 2 300 land managers improve the quality of water leaving their properties. The Australian Government is also investing \$12.5 million over four years in research to identify new methods to increase the resilience of the Great Barrier Reef to climate change.

Through the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Zoning Plan 2003, 33 per cent of the Marine Park is conserved in highly protected zones. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, working jointly with the Queensland Government, enforces the Zoning Plan and manages all uses of the Marine Park, including commercial, cultural and recreational. Australian Government funding for Marine Park management is approximately \$17 million per year. Through Caring for our Country a further \$8 million over two years (2012–13 and 2013—14) is being invested through the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, Reef Guardians program to engage the Reef community in stewardship activities to enhance protection of the reef.

Under Caring for our Country almost \$7 million is being invested in supporting the management of marine turtle and dugong by Indigenous communities in Queensland.

The Australian Government is currently working with the Queensland Government to undertake Strategic Assessments of

the Great Barrier Reef and its catchments under the EPBC Act. The outcomes of these assessments will guide future policy and programs for the long-term protection of the Great Barrier Reef against a broad range of potential stressors.

But there is still more to be done

The Great Barrier Reef continues to suffer from development pressure and the impacts of climate change. Further improvements in land management practices will continue to increase the health and resilience of the Great Barrier Reef. The Australian Government through both the Caring for our Country Sustainable Agriculture stream and Sustainable Environment stream has extended the Reef Rescue program for another five years to meet these pressures. Investments will be prioritised based on a review of previous Reef Rescue investments, and will be informed by the most up-to-date reef water quality science and input from experts in the field.

Reef Rescue will invest in a range of activities to increase the health and resilience of the Great Barrier Reef, including:

- providing of training and extension services, and water quality grants to agricultural land managers to accelerate the adoption of improved land management practices
- monitoring and reporting of the outcomes of Reef Rescue investments
- research to develop new technologies to improve the health and resilience of the Great Barrier Reef



- systems repair activities, including restoration of wetlands, mangroves and riverbank vegetation that play a vital role in filtering water running into the Great Barrier Reef and provide valuable habitats to support biodiversity
- measures that improve the quality of water run-off from urban and industrial lands.

The Australian Government will continue to work with existing Reef Rescue delivery partners including Indigenous people and invite proposals from new partners.

Our investment strategy

Investment Themes Great Barrier Reef

Biodiversity Fund: Biodiverse plantings, Protecting and enhancing existing vegetation, Managing invasive species in a connected landscape

Caring for our Country: Protecting the Great Barrier Reef, Conserving and protecting species and ecosystem, Restoring and maintaining urban waterways and coastal environments, Building natural resource management community skills, knowledge and engagement, Protecting World Heritage sites, Building Indigenous people's capacity for natural resource management.



Fish of the Great Barrier Reef. Photo: Andy Heaney

The following indicates the funding grants relevant to this Target Area. A summary of the relevant programs and grants is in Section 2. Further information on these grants will be available in the guidelines at the Caring for our Country website at: www.nrm.gov.au or by calling: 1800 552 008 — and for the Land Sector Package at the following website: www.environment.gov.au/cleanenergyfuture/land-sector/index.html or by calling: 1800 008 678.

- **Land Sector Package – Biodiversity Fund**
- **Caring for our Country – Community Environment Grants**
- **Caring for our Country – Reef Rescue**
- **Caring for our Country – Regional Delivery**
- **Caring for our Country – Working on Countryⁱ**
- **Caring for our Country – Indigenous Protected Areasⁱ**

ⁱ continued funding for existing projects nationally





Section 5:

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION





Contacts

Land Sector Package

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This publication is available at: www.environment.gov.au/prospectus



Glossary

Term	Definition
Biodiversity Fund	The Biodiversity Fund is a program which funds land managers to store carbon, enhance biodiversity and build greater environmental resilience across the Australian landscape. For more information see: www.environment.gov.au/cleanenergyfuture/biodiversity-fund/index.html . The Biodiversity Fund is one of the Land Sector Package measures of the Clean Energy Future plan.
Buffer strips	A protective barrier around a core habitat area that does not necessarily provide core habitat.
Caring for our Country	An Australian Government funding program that supports communities to manage and protect the environment. Its goal is to promote an environment that is healthier, better protected, well managed, resilient, and provides ecosystem services in a changing climate. Funding is available to regional natural resource management groups, local, state and territory governments, Indigenous groups, industry bodies, land managers, farmers, Landcare groups and communities. For more information see: www.nrm.gov.au .
Community Environment Grants	Community Environment Grants are part of the Australian Government's Caring for our Country program. Small grants are available to help community to help community groups and organisations to contribute to the sustainable management of Australia's environment and natural resources through the Sustainable Agriculture and Sustainable Environment streams of the second phase of Caring for our Country. For more information see: www.nrm.gov.au .
Connectivity	The location and spatial distribution of natural areas in the landscape to provide species and populations with access to resources (food, breeding sites and shelter), increase habitat availability and facilitate population processes (dispersal, migration, expansion and contraction) and enable ecological processes (evolution, water, fire and nutrients).



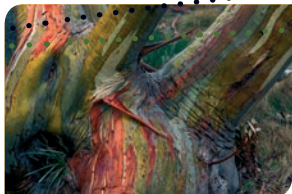


Conservation estate	A clearly defined geographical space, recognised, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values.
Ecosystem Services	The benefits essential to human survival and wellbeing that natural ecosystems provide through their structures and functional processes.
Endemism	Having a natural distribution confined to a particular geographic region.
EPBC Act	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> The Australian Government's primary legislation to protect and conserve biodiversity. For more information see www.environment.gov.au/epbc/index.html .
Fragmentation	The isolation, breaking up, or reduction in size of habitats or vegetation.
Habitat refuges	An area that has or will escape changes occurring elsewhere and continues to provide suitable habitat.
Indigenous Protected Areas	Reserves contributing to the National Reserve System that are dedicated and managed by Indigenous people. For more information see: www.environment.gov.au/indigenous/ipa/ .
Invasive Species	A species introduced from outside Australia and which threatens valued environmental, agricultural, marine or social resources by the damage it causes.
Investment Themes	The Australian Government's priorities for investment in Australia's most environmentally significant places.
Key threatening processes	A process that threatens or may threaten the survival, abundance or evolutionary development of a native species or ecological community. For more information see: www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/threatened/ktp.html .



Land Sector Package	<p>The Australian Government's Land Sector Package of the Clean Energy Future plan, includes seven measures: the Biodiversity Fund, Indigenous Carbon Farming Fund, Regional Planning for Natural Resource Management Climate Change Fund, Land Sector Carbon and Biodiversity Board, the Carbon Farming Futures program for research, the Carbon Farming Initiative Non-Kyoto Carbon Fund, Carbon Farming Initiative and the Carbon Farming Skills program.</p> <p>For more information see: http://www.cleanenergyfuture.gov.au/clean-energy-future/land-use/</p>
Land and sea country	<p>In Indigenous contexts, country is used to refer to land and seas associated with a particular Indigenous group that has a traditional association with that land or sea in the form of interests, responsibilities and traditional connection.</p>
National Heritage Listed	<p>Sites listed on the National Heritage List.</p> <p>For more information see: www.environment.gov.au/heritage/places/national/index.html.</p>
National Plan for Environmental Information	<p>An Australian Government initiative to coordinate and prioritise its use of environmental information.</p> <p>For more information see: www.bom.gov.au/inside/eiab/NPEI.shtml.</p>
National Reserve System	<p>Australia's network of protected areas that conserve examples of our unique landscapes, native plants and animals for future generations. The National Reserve System includes more than 9000 protected areas. It is made up of national parks, Indigenous lands, reserves run by non-profit conservation organisations, and ecosystems protected by landholders on private properties.</p>
National Wildlife Corridors Plan	<p>The National Wildlife Corridors Plan lays the foundation for a new, collaborative, whole-of-landscape approach to biodiversity conservation that is based on voluntary cooperation and the existing efforts of communities, landholders, governments and industry.</p> <p>For more information see: www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/wildlife-corridors/index.html.</p>
Peri-urban	<p>Landscapes found at the expanding margin of urban areas. They may have characteristics both of urban areas and rural areas.</p>





Regional natural resource management organisation	Natural resource management (NRM) regions are based on catchments or bioregions. The Australian Government, in association with state and territory governments, identified regions covering all of Australia. Regional NRM organisations have formed a partnership with the Australian Government to deliver integrated Caring for our Country projects at the regional level.
Remnant vegetation or native habitat	Native vegetation or habitat that has not been cleared.
Resilience	An ecosystem's capacity to adapt to changes and disturbances, yet retain its basic function and structures.
Riparian	Any land which adjoins, directly influences, or is influenced by a body of water. The body of water could be a creek or stream (even if it flows only occasionally), a river, a lake, or a wetland.
Strategic Objectives	The strategic objectives of investment under the Sustainable Environment stream of the second phase of Caring for our Country.
Sustainable Agriculture stream	The Sustainable Agriculture stream of the second phase of Caring for our Country investment.
Sustainable Environment stream	The Sustainable Environment stream of the second phase of Caring for our Country investment.
Target Areas	The Australian Government's Target Areas of investment in biodiversity conservation, as defined in the Prospectus.
Target Area Grants for medium to large-scale projects	Grants process to deliver against the three strategic objectives of the Sustainable Environment stream of the second phase of Caring for our Country.
Threat Abatement Plan	Threat abatement plans provide for the research, management, and any other actions necessary to reduce the impact of a listed key threatening process on native species and ecological communities. For more information see: www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/threatened/tap.html
Urban waterways	Urban waterways: Includes streams, rivers, wetlands and estuaries located in and around capital cities and high growth population centres within the coastal zone.
Wildlife corridor ('corridor')	Connections across the landscape and between habitat patches that are used by all living things. Corridors allow the movement of organisms seeking resources and breeding opportunities; facilitate the distribution of species, for example, seeking suitable climatic conditions; and support ongoing ecological processes that underpin healthy environments.



Working on Country	<p>A component of the Caring for Our Country program. It supports projects that incorporate Indigenous traditional knowledge in managing and protecting land and sea country. The initiative includes an Indigenous Ranger Program, currently employing over 680 people in managing land to protect its environmental values.</p> <p>For more information see: www.environment.gov.au/indigenous/workingoncountry/index.html</p>
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