



South Australian Community Landcare Plan 2014-2019

The Community Landcare Plan
for South Australia 2014-2019
proposes a shared vision
for Community Landcare
and is a call to action
for the wider community.



Landcare
Association of
South Australia

www.landcaresa.asn.au



Children, the future of Australia, learn from their mentors.



The **Landcare Association of South Australia** seeks your comments and suggestions on how this plan can be improved and implemented. Consultation with the SA community was widespread, but not comprehensive, so if we missed you we look forward to your comments in the spirit of continuous improvement.

Please visit www.landcaresa.asn.au for a copy of this plan.

Funded by the Australian Government National Landcare Programme through the National Landcare Network.

Continuing themes for landcare in South Australia



Disclaimer

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Prepared by Dr Patrick J O'Connor, NRM. Designed by Anita Gibbs Design.

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Foreword



We take pride and pleasure in providing you with this document – a State Community Landcare Plan. We anticipate that this document will assist the community to improve engagement in natural resource management.

This is an “**enabling**” document to take the invitation from the State NRM Plan to develop the concept of placing the “**Community at the centre of natural resource management**”.

We encourage you to assist us to implement the **Action Plan** and ensure that all sectors of our community recognise that they are cause but also the solution through good natural resource management – Landcare is for everyone.

In 2014 we have celebrated the 25th Anniversary of Landcare as a national program and we feel proud that with this Community Landcare Plan we will be able to continue the good work of the Landcare Movement for the next 25 years.

The Actions strongly reinforce the fact that this is a collaborative process with partnerships and that the community and government cannot undertake natural resource management without working together.

We would like to thank the National Landcare Network for their support in preparing this Plan with financial support from the Australian Government through the National Landcare Programme.

We encourage you to contribute to the implementation of Action Plan and support Community Landcare in South Australia.

Gerry Butler
Chairman,
Landcare Association of SA Inc

23 December 2014

Aboriginal acknowledgement

Purpose of the Community Landcare Plan for South Australia

The Community Landcare Plan for South Australia acknowledges the important and significant connection of South Australia's Aboriginal peoples and their cultural obligation, affiliation and cultural responsibility for all lands and waters across South Australia.

The importance of this respectful relationship of understanding is principally acknowledged between the traditional owners and current landholders.

The Aboriginal peoples' unique connection to country, land and waters across South Australia through the creation of stories, family ties and kinship includes the responsibility of protecting important places of cultural and spiritual significance and maintaining traditional practices, where practicable, and increases responsibility to caring for their country by all.

It is recognised that these matters are most important to maintaining the overall wellbeing of South Australia's Aboriginal peoples today, and the valuable contribution that they make to South Australian Community Landcare and natural resource management.

The Community Landcare Plan aims to provide guidance on engagement with all stakeholders in natural resource management, with co-operation at State, Regional, Local and Individual levels, recognising that the starting point for natural resource management is 'people'.

The benefits of a cooperative action of this kind is as much social and economic as is biophysical, which is to be sustained and enhanced through:

- Recognition of the culture and history of Community Landcare
- Good governance
- Acknowledgement and fostering of relationships and partnerships
- Connection to broader NRM objectives for South Australia
- Actions to engage and support Community Landcare volunteers, groups and networks.

The plan provides a meeting point for the many people and organisations which make Community Landcare an essential component of natural resource management in South Australia.



Community Landcare in South Australia

“Landcare – not an organisation but a community of interest”

WHAT IS COMMUNITY LANDCARE?

Community Landcare is a community of interest centred on a philosophy for action. The Australian Framework for Landcare (Australian Framework for Landcare Reference Group, 2010) describes Landcare as:

- **An ethic** – a philosophy, influencing the way people live and work in the landscape while caring for the land (soil, water and biota)
- **A movement** – local community action founded on stewardship and volunteerism, putting the philosophy into practice
- **A model** – a range of knowledge generation, sharing and support mechanisms including groups, networks (from district to national levels), facilitators and coordinators, government and non-government policies, structures, programs and partnerships influencing broad-scale community participation in sustainable resource management

WHAT DOES COMMUNITY LANDCARE DO?

- Fosters community self-determination
- Stimulates voluntary participation in learning about and taking action to address local environmental and sustainable production issues
- Facilitates the adoption of changed practices
- Builds community capacity and contributes to the social fabric of communities by enhancing resilience and cohesiveness
- Brings local expertise and knowledge to the challenge of sustainable management of landscapes
- Raises public awareness and understanding of natural resource management issues
- Highlights issues and advocates for Landcare members, groups and partners
- Engages and networks interested individuals and groups towards common goals
- Directly contributes to sustainable natural resource management through actions including:
 - Revegetation of areas to protect land capability, biodiversity, water quality
 - Control of pest plants and animals

- Management of threats to native vegetation and species, including threatened species and ecological communities
- Protection of wetlands and riparian and coastal environments
- Improvement of soil health and productivity
- Promotion of sustainable agriculture
- Monitoring natural resource condition and trend

WHO IS COMMUNITY LANDCARE?

Community Landcare in South Australia involves many groups and individuals working in a wide range of environments on multiple issues. Members of Landcare, Catchment, Coastcare, Bushcare, Farming Systems Groups, Friends of, and Local Action Planning groups all contribute to Community Landcare. Many other groups including school, youth, service, environmental NGOs and Natural Resource Management Groups contribute to Community Landcare by their intentions and actions.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF COMMUNITY LANDCARE IN THE CONTEMPORARY NRM SETTING¹?

- Environmental and agricultural sustainable outcomes
- Educational outcomes (learning, awareness and practice change)
- Increased social networking and participation – community health and wellbeing (social – community health and wellbeing)
- Enhanced social capacity and cohesion, stronger local governance, the increased recognition of women in rural communities, and self-empowerment and fulfilment (social – political and social capital)
- Increased economic return through access to labour, equipment, expertise and training, financial assistance, and increased farming profitability (economic)
- Maintained, increased or established cultural connections (cultural)
- Promotes the formation of networks, that allow communities to support each other (resilience)
- Ability to record statistics for evaluating project results

1. From the Report for the Australian Landcare Council – Multiple Benefits of Landcare (2014)

Relationships & Partnerships

The formation and maintenance of relationships and partnerships to work across social, environmental and economic domains is fundamental to the Community Landcare model of influence and action.

This underpins the success and efficiency in finding and using resources, as well as working with volunteers, land managers, government agency staff, technical experts, researchers, companies, industry groups, NGOs, local people, Aboriginal people and groups.

The ethic of Community Landcare is to co-operate to achieve objectives of partner organisations and agencies, and to support communication to decision makers and planners.

Relationships and partnerships are critical to overcoming barriers to conservation and sustainable natural resource management such as shared public and private costs and benefits. Relationships and partnerships are also necessary for achieving lasting change at local, landscape, regional, State and National levels. Additional benefits of collaboration and partnership with Community Landcare is the movement's wide geographic reach and strength in rural communities and the historical and technical knowledge and information held by Community Landcare participants.

HOW COMMUNITY LANDCARE CAN WORK WITH PARTNERS

In both agricultural practice and environmental management, Community Landcare groups and networks act as points of information dissemination, demonstration, discussion and learning.

Community Landcare groups and networks are often self-starting and have a grass-roots legitimacy that top-down approaches cannot match, with the ability to help partners find each other and establish productive relationships.

The dissemination of knowledge and information and uptake of new practices occurs through access to trusted sources of information, trials and demonstrations of success and communication of benefits. Community Landcare can work with partners to link attitudes for sustainable resource use to behaviour which improves the health and halts the decline of our natural resource base.



Relationship of Community Landcare in South Australia to government agencies, NRM bodies, individuals and organisations



Governance



Community Landcare in South Australia is governed by documents and arrangements which ensure relationships and partnerships are respected and that the Community Landcare movement remains adaptable to changing government policy, programs and funding.

Governance guidance comes from:

- The Australian Framework for Landcare²
- The Statement of Common Purpose³
- The Landcare Association of South Australia Constitution.

The Landcare Association of South Australia is the peak organising body for Community Landcare in South Australia and is a member of the National Landcare Network.

The proposed State Landcare Coordinator provides executive support to the Landcare Association of South Australia, providing officer-level engagement with partner organisations and linking Community Landcare to other organisations and opportunities.

Regional Landcare Facilitators have a role in upholding the Landcare ethic in regional Landcare and NRM and facilitating relationships and projects with a particular focus on sustainable agriculture, which enhance the sustainable management of South Australia's natural resources.

2. The Australian Framework for Landcare (2010) Australian framework for Landcare Reference Group

3. The Statement of Common Purpose: *Landcare communities and regional NRM organisations working together in changing landscapes* (2012) National Landcare Network and the National NRM Regions' Working Group

4. Modified from 'Our Place, Our Future': The State Natural Resources Management Plan for South Australia 2012 – 2017 (2012) South Australian Government: www.environment.sa.gov.au/about-us/our-progress/nrm-guide-overview

Community Landcare contributions to NRM Business Improvement

Community Landcare represents a broad range of actions by individuals, groups, bodies and partnerships with an interest in natural resource management, which align with the NRM Business Improvement Guide set out in the South Australian Natural Resources Management Plan. The table below shows how active Community Landcare initiatives contribute to key elements of NRM Business Improvement.

	Contribution of Community Landcare	NRM Business Improvement ⁴
Leadership	Community Landcare is the nursery of NRM leadership and Landcare volunteers contribute to the work of agencies and boards to ensure South Australia has an effective NRM system with competent boards, appropriate governance, clear policies and agreed priorities.	Strong leadership and sound governance practices are present at all layers (institutional, community groups and individuals) to drive arrangements, create the right settings and model behaviours.
Collection and use of knowledge	Community Landcare groups and volunteers operate at the local and regional levels of practical NRM knowledge collection and use and contribute this knowledge to partners and planning. Community Landcare incorporates best available knowledge into education and training at operational and planning scales across South Australia.	The best available knowledge and science is used to inform decisions in a structured and transparent manner, and information is managed to meet user needs and satisfy accountability requirements.
Optimal scale and practicality	Community Landcare volunteers and organisations bring the local and regional short- and long-term perspective to NRM decision making and practical action.	Natural resource issues are managed at the optimal spatial, temporal and institutional scale to maximise effective contribution to broader goals, deliver integrated outcomes and prevent or minimise adverse consequences.
Opportunities for collaboration	Community Landcare is a 'community of interest' built on the collaboration of organisations and individuals from local to national scales by addressing community interests in NRM.	To maximise gains, share or minimise costs or deliver multiple benefits, collaboration with other parties is explored and pursued wherever possible.
Community engagement	Community Landcare provides group and network structures to engage the community in knowledge and skills training and practical action which equips individuals to contribute to planning, implementation and learning from NRM contributions. This engagement in turn allows resources to be shared in projects, e.g. machinery, equipment, funds and labour.	The community is meaningfully engaged in the planning, implementation and review of natural resource management strategies and the achievement of identified goals and targets.
Risk management	Community Landcare groups and networks assess and manage risks at the local and regional scale. Increased community ownership of problems provides early warning and intervention and localises motivation to succeed in controlling adverse impacts.	Risks and impacts are considered and managed to maximise efficiency and effectiveness, ensure success and avoid, minimise and control adverse impacts.
Monitoring, evaluation and adaptive management	Community Landcare volunteers are engaged in the measurement and evaluation of program performance and natural resource condition and trends at local and regional scales of operation over long time scales.	Progress towards goals and targets is measured and demonstrated by means of regular monitoring, evaluation and reporting of organisational and project performance. These results are used to guide improved practice.

The Community Landcare Action Plan

The Community Landcare Action Plan aims to contribute to improving sustainable production and resources managed by forming and activating resilient Landcare Groups and Networks within South Australia, by forming partnerships and collaborations with stakeholders in resource management, by engaging with the wider Landcare and NRM movement at Regional and State levels, and by connecting Landcare activities and programs across South Australia to enhance communication and learning.

ACTIVE AND RESILIENT LANDCARE GROUPS AND NETWORKS

- Continuously engage with groups to maintain and build their capacity through understanding of their needs, strategies, plans, programs, personnel, skills and other resources
- Encourage and facilitate access to training and equipment, and to volunteer and leadership development opportunities
- Promote the benefits of participation in all aspects of Landcare to groups and individuals to support recruitment, participation and innovation
- Facilitate establishment of new groups, Regional Landcare Networks and volunteer recruitment approaches which identify, connect with and retain volunteers
- Support retention of and access to knowledge, skills, stories and data to achieve and measure success
- Coordinate support for common needs of groups (e.g. communication, insurance, policy development)
- Provide representation of interests and issues for Community groups in local, regional, State and Federal forums

COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIPS WITH STAKEHOLDERS

- Present the value proposition of Community Landcare to stakeholders and partners to inform their planning and investment decisions
- Promote the cross-sectoral capacity of Landcare to make linkages between NRM and production groups for regional and local projects
- Develop Statements of Common Purpose with Regional NRM Boards, production groups and peak environment groups to enhance involvement of Community Landcare in NRM decision making
- Communicate the success of partnerships involving Landcare and articulate the drivers of change which Landcare is best situated to address

ENGAGEMENT WITH LANDCARE AT STATE AND REGIONAL LEVELS

- Promote the Landcare ethic at state, regional & local levels through group support and participation initiatives with landowners, school and youth groups and volunteers
- Promote Landcare networks, groups and individuals and their understanding, knowledge, skills, contributions and achievements
- Partner with the State Government Volunteer Support Unit to provide support to Landcare groups and volunteers
- Connect State NRM planning and investment to Landcare groups and projects at regional and local levels

CONNECTION OF LANDCARE ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMS ACROSS SOUTH AUSTRALIA

- Encourage and promote partnerships between Landcare groups, production groups, NGOs, regional NRM bodies and government agencies
- Encourage and facilitate sharing of knowledge and skills between groups
- Recognise and celebrate achievement and best practice by Landcare groups and individuals
- Facilitate regional Landcare Forums and a biennial State Landcare Conference to connect and engage the community in best practice and Landcare-oriented programs





Mr Gerry Butler
Chairman, Landcare Association of South Australia

PO Box 2019
Magill North
South Australia 5072
Mobile 0407 972 149
gbutler@landcaresa.asn.au

www.landcaresa.asn.au