



Limestone Coast Regional Landscape Plan 2026-31

Foreword

Since the launch of the first Limestone Coast Regional Landscape Plan in 2021, the Limestone Coast Landscape Board has worked closely with the community, listening to local voices and responding to shared priorities. Our planning and investment decisions are shaped by this engagement, guided by the best available science, and aligned with local, state, and federal government strategies.

The Limestone Coast remains a region of extraordinary natural beauty and productivity. From the Coorong to the Blue Lake, our landscapes support thriving agricultural and forestry sectors that contribute billions to South Australia's economy. These industries, and the communities that depend on them, rely on the health of our land, water and ecosystems.

We face challenges, particularly as the impacts of climate change become more visible. Rising temperatures and declining rainfall threaten our natural assets and challenge our productive industries. But with challenge comes opportunity. This strategic plan outlines our commitment to ecological restoration, feral deer eradication and the review and amendment of water allocation plans, actions that secure our region's future. Limestone Coast Landscape Board members and staff are committed to working with the local community, to ensure their voices are heard and represented.

Review of the plan

In accordance with Section 48 of the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019*, we have reviewed the 2021–2026 Regional Landscape Plan. Consultation with our Governing Body, staff, partners and stakeholders confirmed that the original plan remains fit for purpose. While each part of the Limestone Coast has unique needs, this plan brings them together under a shared vision for a resilient and thriving landscape. We are proud to present this updated strategic plan, grounded in community, informed by science and focused on the future.



Dr. Penny Schulz

Chair, Limestone Coast Landscape Board

Minister's endorsement

I, the Honourable Emily Bourke MLC, Minister for Climate, Environment and Water, after taking into account and in accordance with the requirements of Section 50 of the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019* hereby approve the Regional Landscape Plan for the Limestone Coast Landscape Board for 2026-31.



Emily Bourke MLC

Minister for Climate, Environment and Water





First Nations in the landscape plan

Lartara-Wirkeri Cultural Governance is a contemporary application of a historic First Nations governance process. It has three distinct steps that are uniquely individual but operate in a continual cycle of communication and improvement.

The three steps are:



People come together out of respect to talk about whom, how and what. This is a time for acknowledging ancestors, recognising differences and developing agreed pathways that can be progressed.



People have agreed expectations and responsibilities from Ceremony and Talk. Everyone knows and undertakes what they have agreed on.



People can only achieve this stage once they have been successful with the first two stages. Song and Dance is about celebrating the success of working together as a community to achieve the desired and agreed upon outcome. It is a time for learning from successes and paying cultural/spiritual respect.



Through consultation the Limestone Coast Landscape Board has incorporated Lartara-Wirkeri Cultural Governance, developed with the South East Aboriginal Focus Group, in our regional landscape plan. It is a statement of our commitment to First Nations people and organisations. We will walk together to manage our landscape. The Limestone Coast Landscape Board respects, honours and acknowledges the origins of Lartara-Wirkeri Cultural Governance and its importance to the South East Aboriginal Focus Group and First Nations people across Australia.

The Limestone Coast Landscape Board seeks shared learning, shared outcomes, transparency and evaluation of our effectiveness in walking together with First Nations people and organisations.

We will celebrate when First Nations voices are a part of making decisions in the management of their landscape and employment in caring for Country actions are embedded across our work.

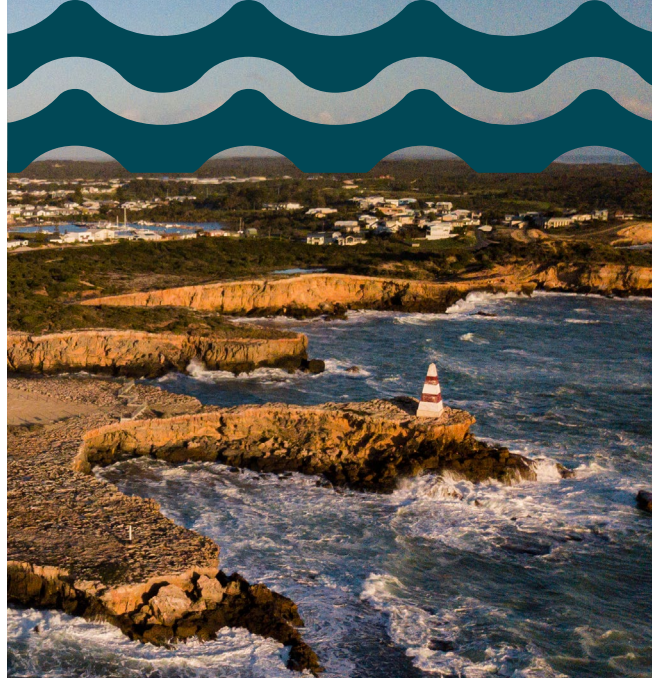
The Limestone Coast Landscape Board acknowledges Aboriginal people as the First People and Nations of the ancestral lands and waters of the Limestone Coast. We acknowledge Elders past, present and future and we respect the deep feelings of attachment and relationships of Aboriginal People to Country including the language groups: Meintangk, Potaruwutij, Bunganditj, Tatiara/Ngarkat, Tanganekald (Southern Clans) and Ngarrindjeri, and we commit to working together to look after our landscape.

Our Limestone Coast

Our work sits at the intersection of a number of challenges and opportunities, supporting sustainable primary production, protecting biodiversity, and managing water and land resources in ways that strengthen our region into the future.

Global and national shifts, like the transition to green energy, demand for critical minerals, and advances in agricultural technology and artificial intelligence, are influencing land use, resource management and market dynamics. Locally, we're seeing new pests, changing farming practices and growing pressure on natural systems.

Through strategic planning, partnerships and targeted investment, we help the region adapt to change, respond to emerging threats and unlock new possibilities for conservation and productivity – together.



The Limestone Coast landscape region



Hectares of land
2,781,800



Kilometres of coastline
400



Hectares of wetlands
208,708¹



Population 75,000
Local jobs 36,300



Hectares of native vegetation cover
647,280



Wetlands of international importance (Ramsar)
3



Gross Regional Product
\$5.7 billion



Hectares susceptible to rapid soil acidification
637,000²



Threatened species
10



Largest industries by employment
Agriculture, forestry and fishing

Reference: Limestone Coast and Murraylands and Riverland .idcommunity economic profiles.

¹ Limestone Coast Landscape Board Drainage and Wetlands Strategy 2019

² 'Managing Soil Acidity: Status of soil acidity and liming in South Australia' Brian Hughes, PIRSA and Giles Forward, DEW.

Climate change

Our landscape is changing. Climate pressures, including rising temperatures, reduced rainfall, and more frequent extreme weather events, are reshaping our environment, industries and communities. Increasingly seen as a climate refuge, the region is attracting new investment and population growth, while also facing risks such as bushfires, water scarcity, erosion of coastline, damage to coastal infrastructure, and emerging biosecurity threats.

We are committed to considering the impacts of climate change in all our work and to reducing our own carbon emissions through implementation of the Carbon Management Strategy and development of the Carbon Management Plan. Long term climate projections for the Limestone Coast indicate:



Less rainfall during the cool season



Average temperatures will continue to increase in all seasons



Mean sea level will continue to rise and height of extreme sea-level events will also increase



Rainfall will remain unchanged in the warm season

More hot days and warm spells



Fewer frosts



Heavy rainfall intensity is projected to increase



A harsher fire-weather climate in the future

Reference: CSIRO and Bureau of Meteorology, Climate Change in Australia website ([http:// www.climatechangeinaustralia.gov.au/](http://www.climatechangeinaustralia.gov.au/))

Landscape management in the Limestone Coast

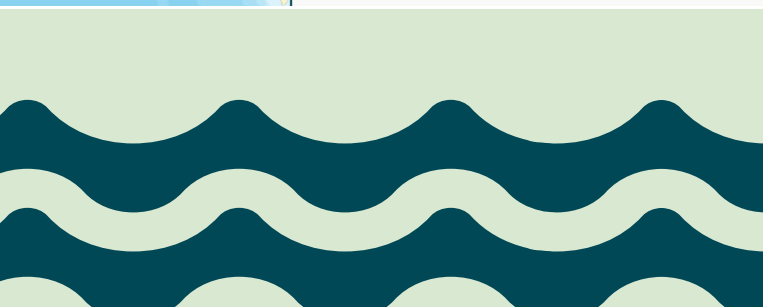
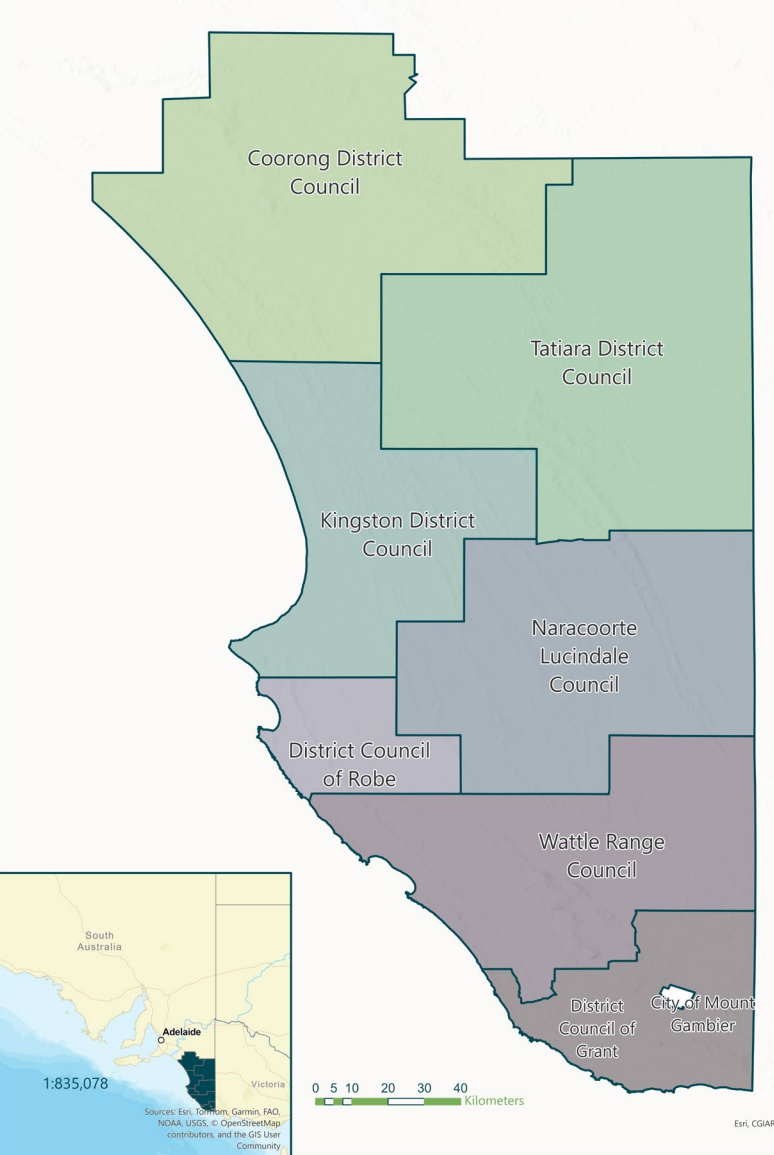
The Limestone Coast Regional Landscape Plan is our blueprint for investing in the region's landscape and working with our partners and communities. Funded through water and landscape levies, the plan enables us to deliver grants, and tailored services and advice. It sets our foundation for partnering with industry, local government, community groups and other statutory authorities. It guides how we seek new investment from state and federal governments, philanthropic organisations and private funders.



Our priorities remain unchanged. While gains have been made in all areas, there is still much to be done to build on this momentum with our partners and communities. We recognise that landscape management is a shared responsibility. This plan reflects our commitment to collaboration, inviting others to see themselves in the work, contribute their expertise and invest in solutions that benefit the region.

We develop our regional landscape plan under the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019*, ensuring it aligns with broader strategies like the State Landscape Strategy. Our plan shapes the development of key policies and strategies, including our Pest Management Strategy, water allocation plans, and [annual business plan](#), and will soon guide the creation of a Natural Resource Management Plan. Together, these documents outline how we manage the landscape and natural resources sustainably and deliver outcomes that matter.

Understanding our impact across the region is complex. Measuring our progress through the regional landscape plan and annual business plan helps us assess what's working well, where we can improve and informs future planning. In addition to monitoring our activities and outputs, we draw on insights from State of the Environment report cards and the feedback we receive from partners and community. Specific output measures are detailed in individual project and program plans. All these elements are coordinated within an integrated monitoring and evaluation framework that supports reporting, tracks our progress against regional, state and national priorities, and provides a basis for sound decision-making.



Our priorities are interconnected.

Our work consistently delivers against multiple priorities, reinforcing the value of coordinated and landscape-scale investment and action.



Conserving and enhancing our region's biodiversity



Protecting and balancing our region's water resources



Educating and partnering to sustainably manage our landscapes



Working collaboratively to manage pest plants and animals



Growing sustainable primary production

Our priorities

PRIORITY

Protecting and balancing our region's water resources



We're working to balance water resources across all needs, including water for productive use, the environment and First Nations water rights. By listening to science and community voices, we're shaping a future where every drop counts. Together, we can ensure our water resources continue to support life, livelihoods and landscape for generations to come.



Water is one of our region's most valuable assets. Protecting it is a shared responsibility. While legislation guides water policy, it is a collective effort that will secure its future. Extensive changes to the landscape have enabled productive industries to thrive, but they've also altered natural systems. With a drying climate and growing demand, we now face the challenge and opportunity of managing water differently.

Wetlands now cover just a small part of the region, creating an imperative to restore ecosystems, protect cultural values and enhance the resilience of our landscape. Holding water in the landscape is increasingly seen as essential for the environment, primary production and community wellbeing.



We are committed to:

- Making every drop count towards a water secure future.
- Leading an integrated approach to water resource management that supports sustainable primary production, a healthy landscape and biodiversity.
- Partnering on research, on ground works and policy development.
- Providing stakeholders and community the opportunity to inform changes in water resource management.
- Transparent decision making based on the best available science and all the values dependent on our water resources.



Examples of projects delivering this priority:



Save our springs: Karst springs and alkaline fens restoration: South of Mount Gambier, a threatened wetland is being restored. The project focuses on modifying artificial drainage to hold water in the landscape. We walk alongside Burrandies Aboriginal Corporation in the delivery of this important work.



Water policy: We lead an integrated approach to water resource management. We work towards this outcome through partnerships, research, on ground works and policy development. We review and amend five water allocation plans, ensuring water resources are managed for economic, environmental, cultural and social outcomes.



PRIORITY

Conserving and enhancing our region's biodiversity



We're working to support healthy, biodiverse landscapes where soil, native plants and animals and people thrive. This includes protecting threatened species and ecosystems, and promoting sustainable practices in farming, water use and pest management. Our role is to provide advice, education and funding support, while building strong partnerships with land managers and First Nations organisations. By actively protecting boorte (First Nations of the South East) and ngatji (Ngarrindjeri), totems or culturally significant animals, we honour cultural rights and strengthen environmental outcomes. Our approach is grounded in collaboration, respect and practical support. Together, we can protect the biodiversity that sustains our economy, culture and way of life.



The Limestone Coast's rich biodiversity, from paddock trees to internationally recognised wetlands and dynamic coastlines, is deeply valued by our community. These natural assets are integral to our environment, and support the region's clean and safe brand, helping secure global markets for primary producers and attracting nature-based tourism.



We are committed to:

- Increasing biodiversity connectivity across the landscape.
- Providing advice to land managers to conserve and enhance biodiversity on private land.
- Protecting biodiversity through integrated landscape management that supports resilient ecosystems, and productive land.
- Using the best available science and innovation to improve biodiversity outcomes.
- Partnering to protect boorte (First Nations of the South East) and ngatji (Ngarrindjeri) totems such as the South-eastern Red-tailed Black Cockatoo.
- Creating accessible opportunities for people to learn, connect and take action for biodiversity.



Examples of projects delivering this priority:



Paddock Trees Project: Addressing the decline of paddock trees across the Limestone Coast through education, technical support and financial assistance for landholders. Existing trees will be protected and the next generation of paddock trees established.



Habitat Conservation Grants: An annual grant program supporting landholders to deliver conservation projects on private land with co-benefits for primary production. Funded activities include planting shelterbelts, fencing remnant vegetation and protecting wetlands.



PRIORITY

Educating and partnering to sustainably manage our landscape



We partner and collaborate broadly across the region to maximise scale, impact and deliver co-benefits across the landscape. Strong relationships are central to avoiding duplication and ensuring effective resourcing. We create opportunities for shared learning and coordinated action that strengthens community engagement and delivers lasting environmental and production outcomes.



Young people are vital to the region's future. We create opportunities for them to engage with nature and primary production, help them find their voice and contribute to shaping the region's direction. We work closely with educators, students and community to build capacity and encourage positive change. We also play a key role in building strong relationships with First Nations organisations and communities and value their deep cultural knowledge and connection to Country.

The Limestone Coast is a region of rich cultural, environmental and economic value. While past land management has achieved strong results, we still face challenges from ongoing and future change. Meeting these challenges means giving people the skills, knowledge and support to manage the landscape and natural resources sustainably.



We are committed to:

- Growing a community that is connected to and inspired by the natural world.
- Providing meaningful and accessible learning experiences that inspire action for our landscape.
- Walking alongside First Nations in the management of the landscape.
- Supporting grassroots action for our landscape.
- Promoting awareness and understanding of sustainable primary production.



Examples of projects delivering this priority:



Limestone Coast Youth Environment Council and Young Environmental Leaders: Students with a passion for the environment are developing leadership skills and deepening their connection to Country. Through hands-on learning and community engagement, they're building knowledge, confidence and strong relationships with people and place.



Grassroots Grants: Annual funding to support local action that delivers projects with sustainability, environmental and community benefits.



PRIORITY

Working collaboratively to manage pest plants and animals



Our team works in partnership with landholders and local and state government. We deliver coordinated, landscape-scale pest management that protects biodiversity, agricultural productivity and community values. Through strategic collaboration and evidence-based approaches, we focus on prevention, rapid response and integrated control. We work across public and private land. By providing technical expertise, resources, and access to incentive programs, we empower landholders to adopt best practice methods and participate in region-wide initiatives.



Pest plants and animals pose a serious threat to the health of our landscape, primary productivity and the cultural and social values we share. In the Limestone Coast, where primary production is a key part of the regional economy, pests can have significant economic impact through direct and indirect costs associated with control. Our collaborative pest plant and animal work contributes to protecting biodiversity and preserves environmental, economic and cultural values through targeted, practical actions that protect the whole region.



We are committed to:

- Managing pests at the regional scale to protect primary production and biodiversity.
- Providing practical tools and tailored, expert advice to landholders to enable best practice, on ground action to manage pest plants and animals.
- Developing partnerships and coordinating efforts to reduce the impact of pest plants and animals at the largest scale possible to benefit primary production and the environment.
- Rapidly responding to prevent new pests arriving in the region.



Examples of projects delivering this priority:



Feral Deer Eradication Program: Feral deer are increasingly impacting primary production, communities and the environment across the Limestone Coast. Through our Feral Deer Eradication Program we are working together to achieve a feral deer-free Limestone Coast.



Priority pest species: These projects implement the Pest Plant and Animal Strategy and respond to local priorities for each Local Government Area. We strategically target established pest species and prevent the introduction of new pests. We support and encourage stakeholders to do proactive pest control.



PRIORITY

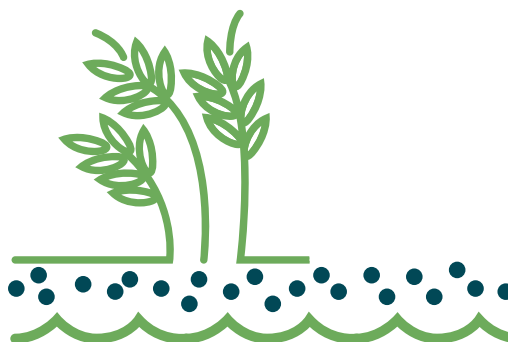
Growing sustainable primary production



Our role is to empower land managers with the tools and knowledge they need. We listen to our primary producers, share knowledge and create opportunities for learning. We build strong networks, focusing on science-based solutions to help producers become more efficient, profitable and environmentally responsible. Whether it's soil, climate or carbon science, education and practice change are key to long-term success. We're committed to working alongside other agencies to complement, not duplicate efforts, ensuring landholders have access to the best available support.



As global demand for food, wine and fibre grows, Australia is well-positioned to lead in sustainable production. With a \$5.7 billion economy rooted in primary production, the Limestone Coast has a vital role to play.

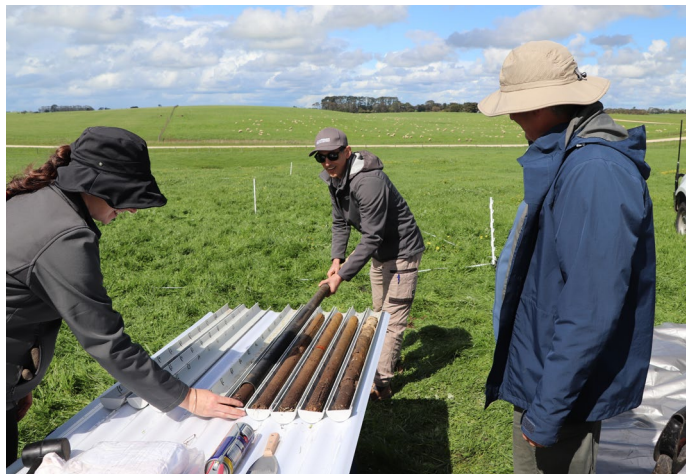


We are committed to:

- Supporting agriculture and forestry that protects water resources, enhances biodiversity and helps mitigate climate challenges.
- Increasing knowledge of systems-based approaches that recognise the interconnection between people, animals, plants, water and the shared landscape.
- Working alongside the primary production community, focusing efforts where knowledge gaps can be filled and the greatest sustainability outcomes achieved.
- Promoting awareness and understanding of on-farm water security and innovative technologies and supporting landholders to improve water efficiency.
- Supporting land managers to improve soil health.



Examples of projects delivering this priority:



National Soil Monitoring Program: Monitoring nationally agreed soil health indicators to understand soil condition and trends across the Limestone Coast. The data will support land managers to make evidence based decisions that improve soil health.



Carbon Farming Outreach Project: Supporting farmers and land managers to understand carbon and emissions, and build resilience through informed decision-making. The project empowers stakeholders to adopt carbon farming and low-emissions technologies and practices.





The Limestone Coast Landscape Board delivers projects through funding from landscape and water levies, and the South Australian and Australian governments.



Government of South Australia
Limestone Coast Landscape Board

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