

Conserving Nature

2012–2020

A strategy for establishing a system of protected areas in South Australia



Department of
Environment and
Natural Resources



Government
of South Australia

www.environment.sa.gov.au

Foreword



South Australia has a proud tradition of establishing parks and reserves dating back to 1891 when Belair National Park was created. The protected area system now encompasses public, private and Aboriginal lands covering almost 29% of the State.

Our protected areas are the centrepiece for nature conservation efforts in South Australia. They are now firmly recognised as forming the core areas in a broader landscape-scale approach for biodiversity conservation, and are pivotal in the Government's *No Species Loss* and *NatureLinks* programs.

Parks and reserves also safeguard essential ecosystem services such as clean air, soil and water; provide social benefits such as tourism and recreation opportunities; and for Aboriginal people, can help to maintain connections to the land.

Conserving Nature articulates a strategic framework for the establishment of protected areas on public and private land in South Australia.

In setting the priority areas and policy directions for establishing parks and reserves, this strategy will be of interest to many people.

Conserving Nature reinforces our collective commitment to establishing protected areas on public and private land as one of the main tools for conserving biodiversity and protecting natural systems against the impacts of climate change.

I commend this document to you as we continue to build a great system of parks and reserves in South Australia.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Caica'.

Hon PAUL CAICA MP

Minister for Sustainability,
Environment and Conservation



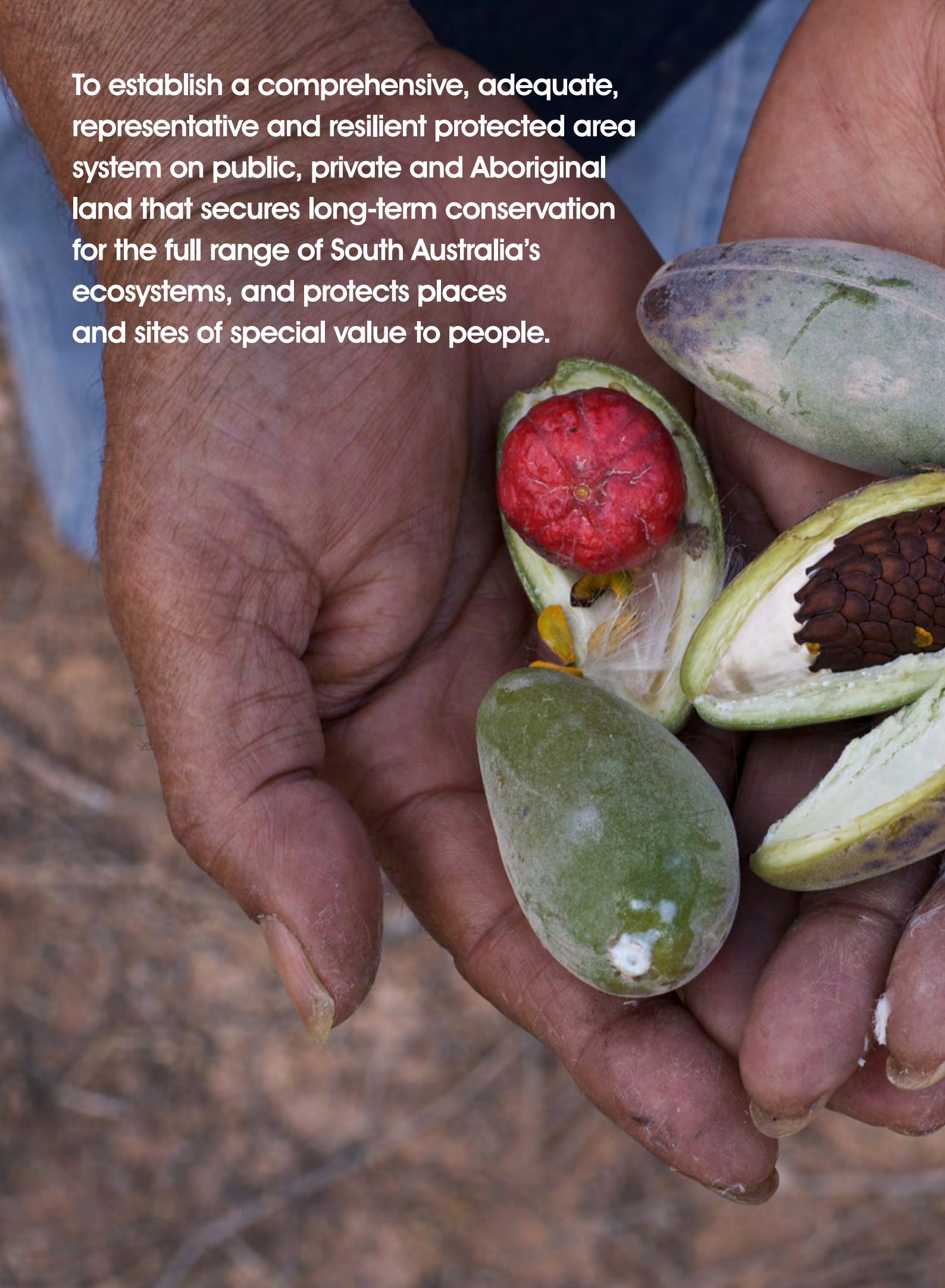


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To establish a comprehensive, adequate, representative and resilient protected area system on public, private and Aboriginal land that secures long-term conservation for the full range of South Australia's ecosystems, and protects places and sites of special value to people.





Introduction

Conserving Nature: A strategy for establishing a system of protected areas in South Australia provides strategic direction for creating the State's terrestrial and inland aquatic protected area system for the conservation of nature on public, private and Aboriginal land. It will guide and assist decision-making by the State Government, non-government organisations and others about where to establish new protected areas – or add to existing protected areas – so they achieve the best conservation and community outcomes.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources is the lead agency with responsibility for establishing and managing protected areas in South Australia. The Department has developed the strategy in consultation with other agencies and non-government and industry organisations that also have an interest in protected areas.

The strategy does not provide directions for how protected areas should be managed. The ongoing management of protected areas will be the responsibility of individual protected area managers. How they manage their property is their decision, provided it is consistent with the overall purpose of protected areas and the agreed management objectives for the individual property.

The overall goal of *Conserving Nature* is:

To establish a comprehensive, adequate, representative and resilient protected area system on public, private and Aboriginal land that secures long-term conservation for the full range of South Australia's ecosystems and protects places and sites of special value to people.

To achieve this goal, the strategy sets three major objectives. These are to: (1) conserve the full range of ecosystems; (2) build the capacity of natural systems to adapt to climate change and other stressors; and (3) protect places of special meaning for people.

The strategy aligns with and supports Australia's commitment as a signatory to the *United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity*. The Convention is supported by a Programme of Works on Protected Areas that sets out global targets within which Parties to the Convention may develop national and regional targets and activities. In this context, *Conserving Nature* represents the State's commitment towards achieving the goal and targets of the National Reserve System as outlined in *Australia's Strategy for the National Reserve System 2009-2030*.

The strategy will play an important role in the successful delivery of major State Government biodiversity initiatives including *No Species Loss: A Nature Conservation Strategy for South Australia 2007-2017* and its associated target in *South Australia's Strategic Plan (SASP)* (69 – Lose no species). It will also contribute to the goals and objectives of the *State Natural Resources Management Plan*, *People and Parks: A Visitor Strategy for South Australia's National Parks, Marine Parks and Reserves* and *Tackling Climate Change: South Australia's Greenhouse Strategy 2007-2017*.

Marine parks are not covered by this strategy – the *Blueprint for South Australia's Representative System of Marine Protected Areas* sets the strategic directions for establishing marine parks in South Australian waters. However, in establishing terrestrial protected areas it is important to take into account the critical ecosystem processes that link marine and terrestrial environments. To this end, the principles that guide *Conserving Nature* complement the principles that guide establishing marine parks.

Conserving Nature is divided into four main sections:

- **Setting the Context** describes the purpose and values of protected areas and outlines relevant international and national planning and policy frameworks.
- **South Australia's Protected Area System** provides an overview of the current protected area system and identifies gaps.
- **The Strategy** describes the three major objectives and their underlying strategies that will guide decision-making about where to establish protected areas in the future.
- **Implementation and Review** describes how *Conserving Nature* will be implemented and its progress tracked.



Guiding principles for establishing protected areas

The following principles will guide the ongoing establishment of protected areas to achieve the overall goal of *Conserving Nature*:

1. The protected area system should be comprehensive, adequate and representative of the full range of South Australia's biodiversity.
2. Protected areas should be established to secure the long-term protection of South Australia's biodiversity and the natural systems and processes that are essential for clean air, water and soil.
3. Protected areas should also be established to protect places and sites of special value to people, including sites of scientific, cultural and spiritual value.
4. Large protected areas are more effective for conserving biodiversity than small ones, however a range of protected area sizes may be necessary to adequately represent the full range of South Australia's ecosystems.
5. Resilience of protected areas to climate change and other stressors will be enhanced by connectivity tools such as ecological corridors between protected areas and adjacent landscapes of conservation value.
6. The reserve management category assigned to a protected area should reflect the protected area's purpose and the values that are being protected.
7. Protected areas should be managed to maintain and enhance their values, and be managed as an integral part of the broader socio-economic and cultural landscape.

Components of South Australia's Protected Area System

South Australia's protected area system occurs on public and private land. It consists of:

Protected areas on public land

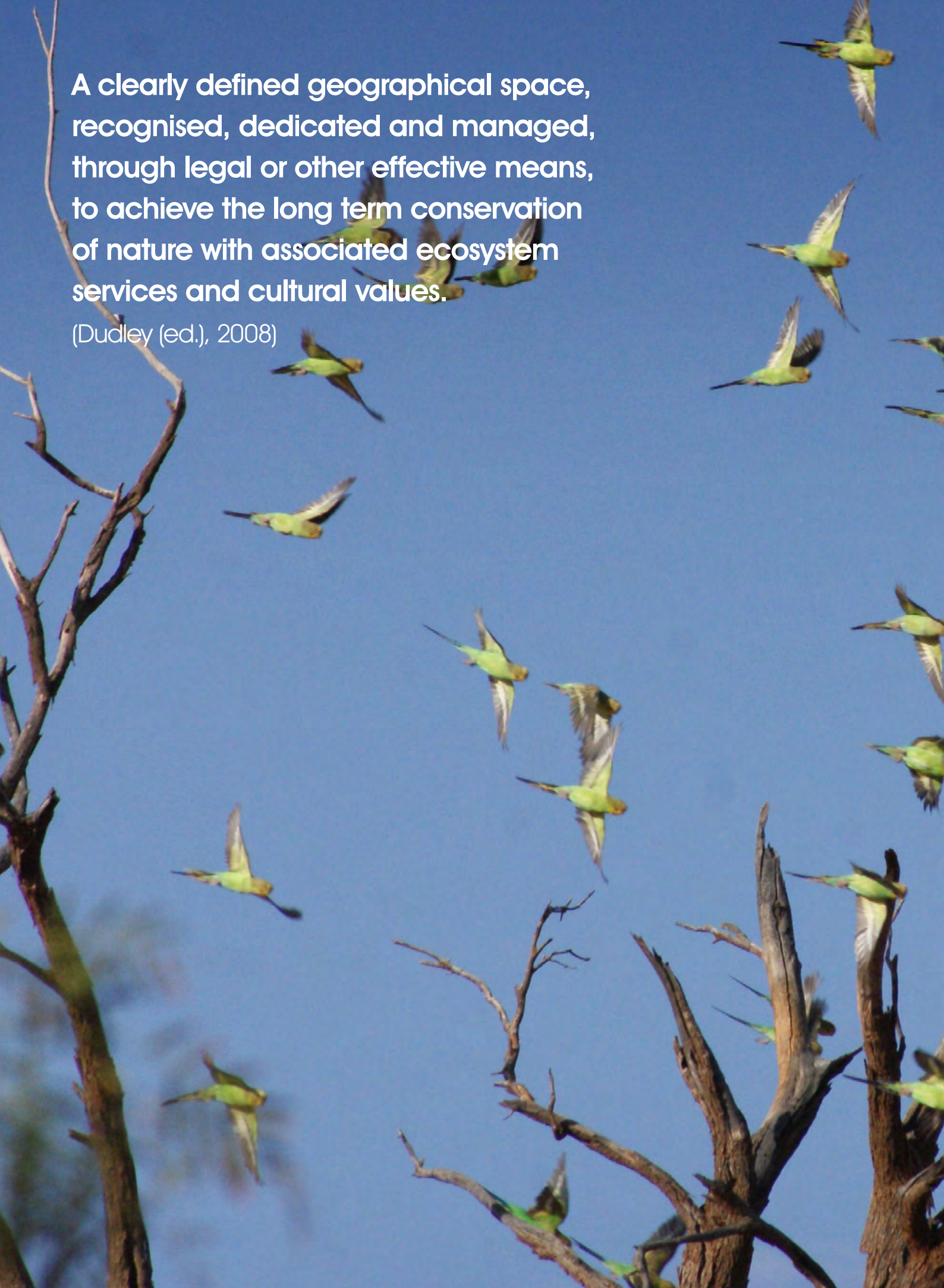
- National Parks, Conservation Parks, Recreation Parks, Game Reserves and Regional Reserves under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972*
- Wilderness Protection Areas under the *Wilderness Protection Act 1992*
- Conservation Reserves under the *Crown Land Management Act 2009*
- Native Forest Reserves under the *Forestry Act 1950*

Protected areas on private land

- Vegetation Heritage Agreements under the *Native Vegetation Act 1991*
- Co-managed Parks on Aboriginal-owned land under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972*
- Sanctuaries under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972*
- Indigenous Protected Areas managed under agreement with the Australian Government
- Arkaroola Protection Area under the *Arkaroola Protection Act 2012*
- *For more information on the protected area system see Section 3 and Appendix 1.*

**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.**

(Dudley (ed.), 2008)





Setting the context

What is a protected area?

The term 'protected area' is used internationally to embrace a wide variety of types of parks and reserves. It is used to distinguish land managed specifically for conservation from other types of land management where there is an incidental or subsidiary outcome for conservation – even where there is a strong commitment to sustainable land management.

Throughout the world, protected areas occur on public, private, indigenous, and leasehold lands. The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) defines a protected area as:

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.
(Dudley (ed.), 2008)

There are a range of protected area types in South Australia with different management objectives, ranging from strictly protected wilderness protection areas, to regional reserves that permit exploration, mining and grazing. However, they are all established and managed as protected areas and share in common the primary management objective of conserving biodiversity.

Benefits of protected areas

Protected areas cover around 12 per cent of the world's land surface (Dudley (ed.), 2008). In many places, protected areas safeguard the only remaining intact and functioning natural ecosystems. Their role will become even more important as population growth, the unsustainable use of natural resources, increasing patterns of consumption, and the impacts of climate change place increasing pressure on natural systems.

Protected areas provide safe havens for species by protecting vital habitats. They also form the core of a broader landscape-scale approach to conserving biodiversity, which scientists now recognise is the best way to increase the resilience of natural systems to climate change and its associated threats and disturbances.

As a consequence of their role in protecting healthy, functioning ecosystems, protected areas provide people with essential ecosystem services such as clean air, soil and water. Managing intact or restored natural systems as carbon sinks and as resources for adaptation to climate change is recognised increasingly as a necessary and relatively cost-efficient strategy. Protected areas will therefore play an essential role in the global response to climate change through capturing and storing carbon; protecting against the impacts of increasingly variable climatic extremes such as floods and storm surges; and providing essential services that will help people to adapt (Stolton & Dudley (eds), 2010).

While protected areas are widely known for their role in protecting biodiversity, they also provide significant economic, social and cultural benefits to people. In fact, today's protected areas have their roots in 19th century North America where 'National Parks' were established specifically for the benefit and enjoyment of people, a philosophy that is reflected in the objectives of South Australia's *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972*.

Benefits and values of protected areas

- Safeguard natural systems that provide people with essential services such as clean air, soil and water
- Provide significant benefits to primary industries by protecting habitat that support native insects that pollinate crops; and birds and bats that control pests and vermin
- Protect resources for scientific research and education
- Protect species that have pharmaceutical and biotechnological potential
- Provide areas for recreation and tourism
- Provide direct and indirect economic benefits to regional communities through employment and the provision of services associated with the recreation and tourism industries
- Help to maintain Aboriginal connections to the land by protecting culturally significant places, sites and objects
- Protect significant historical sites and buildings
- Improve physical health by providing inspiring places for exercise
- Provide communities and families with open spaces for socialising and relaxing
- Enhance mental health and well-being by providing quiet spaces for contemplation.





Policy and planning frameworks

International

As a signatory to the *International Convention on Biological Diversity* (CBD) the Australian Government is committed to establishing and managing a system of protected areas to conserve biodiversity and is committed to developing guidelines for their selection, establishment and management.

Parties to the CBD have agreed that efforts to develop and maintain their national protected area systems are central to their strategy of implementing the CBD.

IUCN has developed protected area management categories as a global framework for categorising the variety of protected area management types. It is an internationally accepted framework that defines six different types of protected areas according to their management purpose; these protected area categories range from strict nature reserves to protected areas with sustainable use of natural resources. Australia's and South Australia's protected areas can be classified according to IUCN's framework.

National Reserve System

Australia's protected areas collectively contribute to the National Reserve System (NRS). This includes more than 9,000 protected areas on public and private lands that cover over 11% of the country. The NRS represents the collective efforts of all jurisdictions, the Australian Government, non-government organisations, Aboriginal and other land owners to provide long-term protection for Australia's biodiversity.

Australia's Strategy for the National Reserve System 2009-2030 (DEWHA, 2009) guides the development and delivery of the NRS in accordance with Australia's obligations under the CBD. *Conserving Nature* articulates the South Australian Government's commitment to the national strategy.

Australia's Strategy sets four targets for the NRS to include:

- Examples of at least 80 per cent of the number of regional ecosystems in each **IBRA bioregion** by 2015 (priority will be given to IBRA bioregions with less than 10% protection in the NRS)
- Examples of at least 80 per cent of the number of regional ecosystems in each **IBRA subregion** by 2025
- Critical habitats and core areas important for the long-term survival of rare, migratory, threatened or other priority species and ecological communities by 2030
- Critical areas to ensure the viability, resilience and integrity of ecosystem function in response to a changing climate by 2030.

Goal of the National Reserve System

The goal of the NRS is “To develop and effectively manage a comprehensive, adequate and representative [CAR] national system of protected areas, as the primary means for securing long-term protection for Australia's terrestrial biodiversity.”

- **Comprehensive** refers to the aim of including samples of the full range of regional ecosystems within and across each IBRA bioregion
- **Adequate** refers to how much of each regional ecosystem should be protected to provide ecological viability and the integrity of populations, species and ecological communities at a bioregional scale
- **Representative** refers to ensuring that the full variability of biodiversity is protected to insure against catastrophic local events such as fire or disease

For more information go to www.environment.gov.au/parks/nrs/

What is the Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation of Australia (IBRA)?

The Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation of Australia (IBRA) divides Australia into 85 distinct bioregions. Bioregions are large, geographically distinct areas of land with common characteristics such as geology, landform patterns, climate, ecological features and plant and animal communities.

The 85 IBRA bioregions are further divided into 403 IBRA subregions that provide a finer scale break-up of the landscape. Regional ecosystems represent a finer-scale break up again and, nationally, number in their thousands.

IBRA bioregions and subregions comprise the National Reserve System's planning framework. They are the fundamental tool for assessing the conservation status of regional ecosystems and for setting targets and priorities to increase their protection. In building the NRS, the top priority is the protection of IBRA bioregions that are currently poorly reserved or not protected at all.

South Australia has 17 IBRA bioregions, four of which are unique to the State, and 56 IBRA subregions, 20 of which are unique.

For more information on IBRA go to www.environment.gov.au/parks/nrs/science/

NatureLinks

NatureLinks provides the overarching vision for Government, community organisations, landholders and local communities to build on South Australia's network of protected areas by restoring and sustainably managing the surrounding landscape.

This broader landscape approach is required to ensure that nature is resilient to changes and disturbances, particularly as the impacts of climate change unfold.

The *NatureLinks* program aims to: protect and restore biodiversity at a landscape scale; coordinate conservation efforts across private and public land; and improve the resilience of social and ecological systems to enable them to adapt to change.

The five biodiversity corridors are East meets West; Flinders – Olary; Cape Borda to Barossa; River Murray – South East; and Arid Lands. Each *NatureLinks* corridor has a plan to set the vision and direction for implementation.

Figure 2 shows the location of each *NatureLinks* corridor in relation to existing protected areas.

In addition to increasing representation of IBRA bioregions that are not adequately represented in the protected area system, the priority areas to establish protected areas in South Australia are within the *NatureLinks* corridors – this will be a major contributor to the landscape-scale conservation activities within the corridors.





South Australia's Protected Area System

South Australia's protected area system is made up of protected areas on public, private and Aboriginal lands, and covers around 28.6 per cent of the State (Figure 1). It conserves most of the remaining native vegetation in the State's agricultural zone and large areas of native vegetation in the pastoral region.

Appendix 1 provides more detail on the protected area system including the various types of protected area, their primary purpose, and the legislation under which they are established.

Protected areas on public land

The majority of the State's protected area system consists of protected areas on public land. These cover approximately 19 per cent of the State (Appendix 1).

Four pieces of legislation provide for the establishment of protected areas on public land:

- *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972*
- *Wilderness Protection Act 1992*
- *Crown Land Management Act 2009*
- *Forestry Act 1950*.



Protected areas are established based on an assessment of: (i) the values that are to be conserved; and (ii) the appropriate uses of the land (e.g. nature-based tourism). While the purpose of a protected area will have the conservation of biodiversity as a primary management objective, there may be secondary purposes and acceptable resource uses (e.g. ongoing mineral exploration access) that influence which type of protected area it becomes.

South Australia has developed a progressive model for sharing management responsibility for parks with Aboriginal people through co-management arrangements over National Parks and Conservation Parks.

Protected areas on private land

There is increasing recognition of the role of private protected areas in complementing the government system of protected areas. Protected areas on private land contribute to the development of a comprehensive, adequate and representative reserve system and assist in establishing biodiversity corridors, ecological networks and buffer zones as part of a landscape-scale approach to addressing threats such as habitat fragmentation.

South Australia has a long history of protected areas on private land. These cover approximately 6.7 per cent of the State including 1,450 Heritage Agreements under the *Native Vegetation Act 1991*. The other types of private protected areas in South Australia are established under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972*, for example, co-managed parks over Aboriginal-owned land, and Sanctuaries to protect wildlife on private land. These three are the current mechanisms available for creating a protected area on private land.

South Australia's protected area system also includes Indigenous Protected Areas, which are created through an agreement between the owners and the Australian Government. Although Indigenous Protected Areas do not have formal legal protection they are included in the National Reserve System. *Conserving Nature* supports their establishment in South Australia.

There is now a greater emphasis by non-government organisations on establishing larger private protected areas, particularly in the arid region where large, intact systems exist. This strategy recognises that modern and effective legal and policy mechanisms are required to support the establishment and management of new protected areas on private land.

Gaps in protection of bioregions

The fundamental tool for assessing the effectiveness of the National Reserve System, of which South Australia's protected area system is a part, is the area of each IBRA bioregion and subregion that is formally protected.

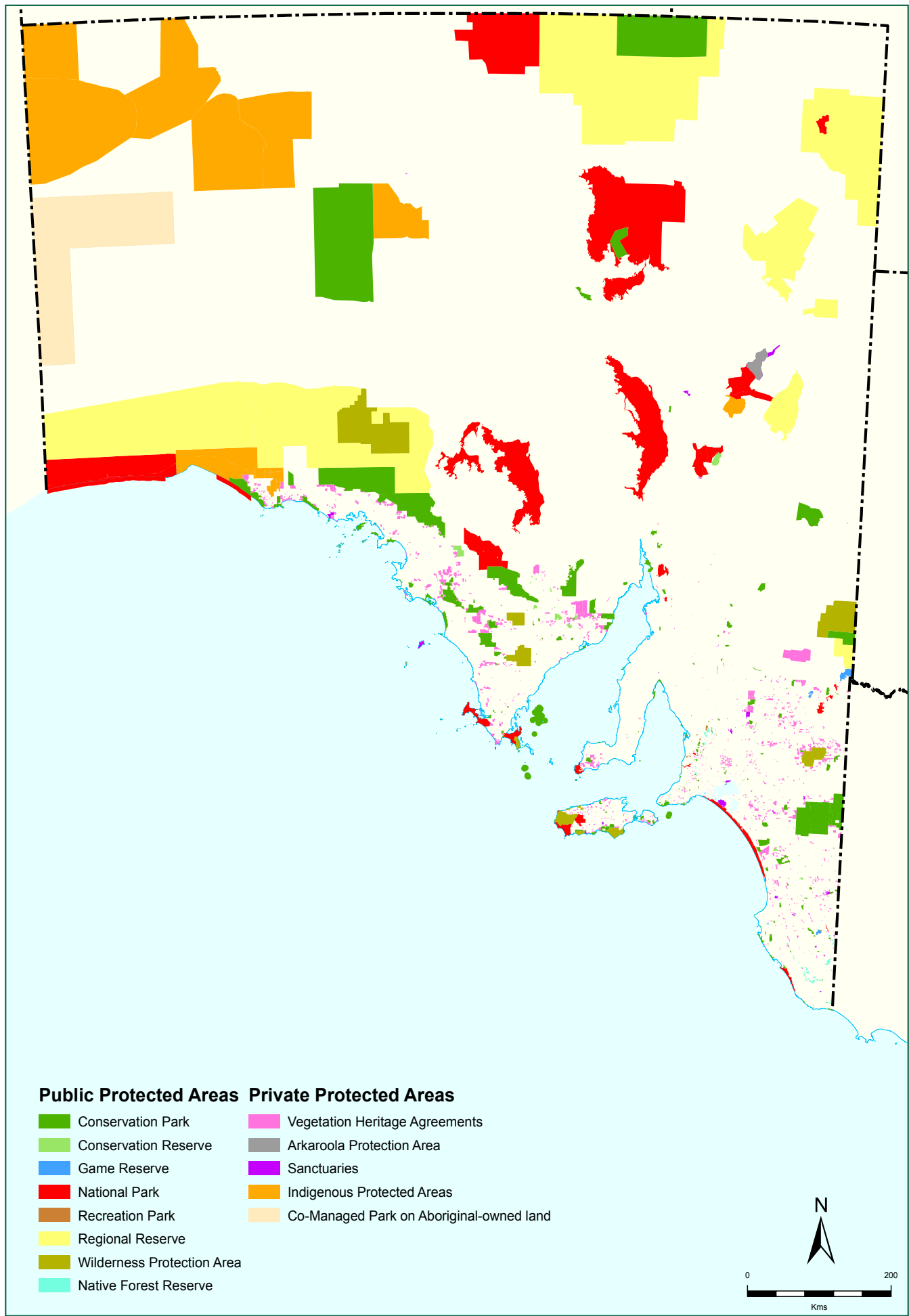
While there are adequate levels of protection for some IBRA bioregions and subregions that occur in South Australia, others are poorly protected. These represent gaps in the protected area system. The conservation status of all IBRA bioregions and subregions in South Australia is shown in Figures A1 and A2 (Appendix 2).

Six of the 17 IBRA bioregions that occur in South Australia have less than 10 per cent of their area protected within the State; one of these, the Flinders Lofty Block, is unique to South Australia and another, the Stony Plains, has most of its area within the State's borders (Figure A3).

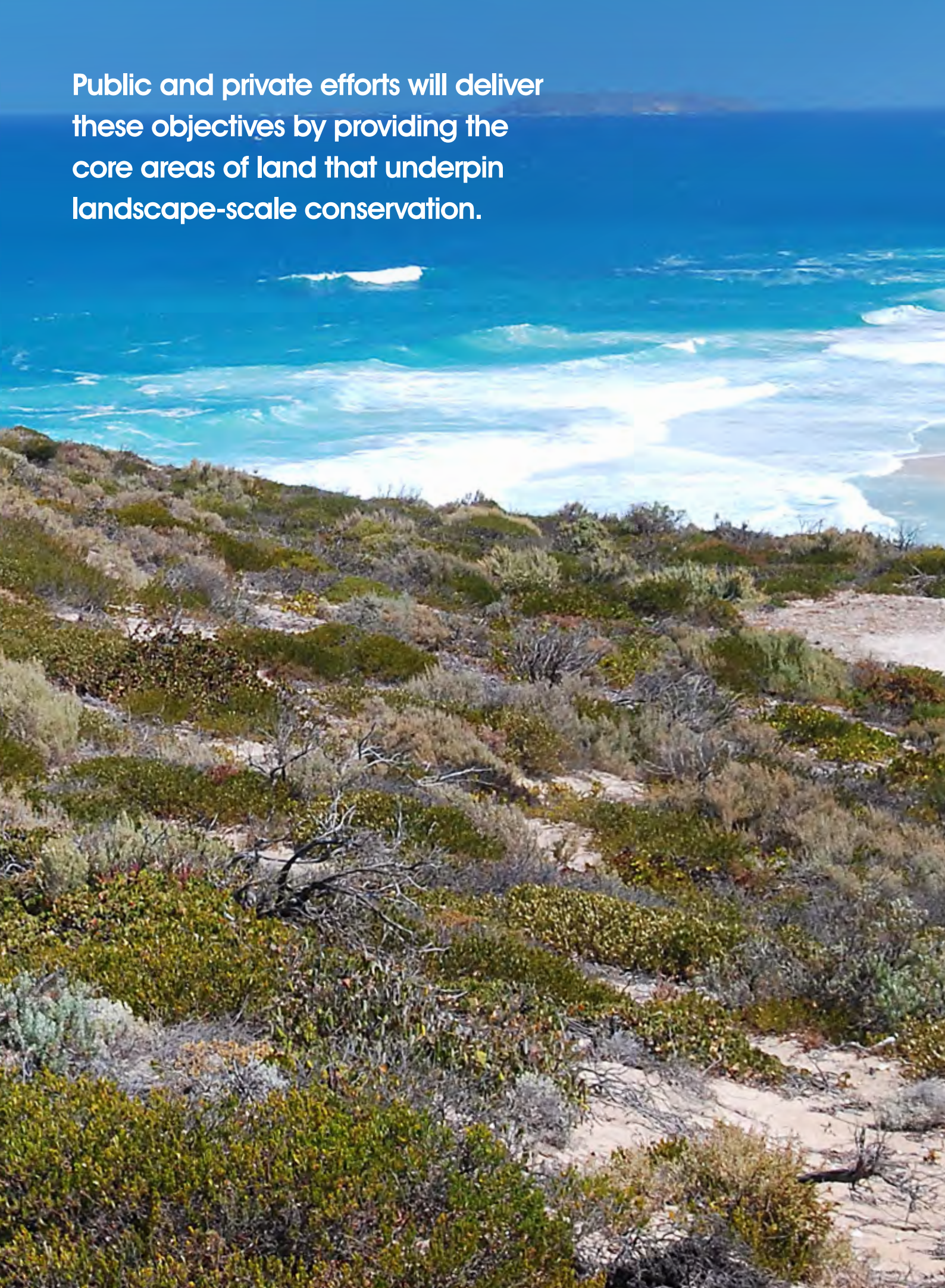
Twenty-six, or half, of the IBRA subregions that occur in South Australia have less than 10 per cent of their area protected in the State; 20 of these are unique to South Australia (Figure A4).

Increasing the representation of these bioregions and subregions in the protected area system is a priority and one of this strategy's major objectives.

Figure 1 South Australia's Protected Area System



Public and private efforts will deliver these objectives by providing the core areas of land that underpin landscape-scale conservation.





The Strategy

Conserving Nature sets out three objectives and ten contributing strategies, each with an associated outcome. These reflect the highest priorities for building the State's protected area system and for contributing to the goal and targets of the National Reserve System.

The objectives, strategies and outcomes reflect contemporary approaches to establishing protected areas including their role in building resilience to the impacts of climate change and other threatening processes.

Public and private efforts will deliver these objectives by providing the core areas of land that underpin landscape-scale conservation.

At a glance

Objective		Strategy	Outcome
1. Conserve the full range of ecosystems	1.1	By 2020, increase representation of IBRA bioregions and subregions that currently have less than 10% protection as protected areas	An increase in the area of under-represented IBRA bioregions and subregions in the protected area system
2. Build the capacity of natural systems to adapt to climate change and other stressors	2.1	Protect areas that support freshwater and groundwater-dependent ecosystems	An increase in the area of freshwater and groundwater dependent ecosystems represented in the protected area system
	2.2	Protect areas that will increase habitat connectivity across the landscape including areas that will contribute to South Australia's <i>NatureLinks</i> corridors	An increase in the connectivity of fragmented habitat across South Australia's landscape
	2.3	Protect areas of high species and/or ecosystem richness (especially in transition zones or population outliers) or that support threatened/endemic species or ecological communities	An increase in the diversity of species and ecological communities, including those that are threatened, represented in the protected area system
	2.4	Protect areas that support well-functioning ecosystems that have minimal impact from threatening processes	An increase in the area of healthy, well-functioning ecosystems represented in the protected area system
3. Protect places of special meaning for people	3.1	Protect places, objects and landscape features that are significant to Aboriginal people	Increased involvement of Aboriginal communities in the establishment and ongoing management of protected areas
	3.2	Protect special landscapes of community significance	An increase in the number of significant landscapes represented in the protected area system
	3.3	Protect sites that represent the development of South Australia's landscapes and the evolution of biodiversity	An increase in the number of sites that represent South Australia's geological and evolutionary origins are represented in the protected area system
	3.4	Protect sites with significant nature-based recreational values	An increase in the nature-based recreation and tourism opportunities in the protected area system which leads to a greater appreciation of the role of protected areas in conservation
	3.5	Protect significant historical sites and buildings	An increase in the number of historical sites and buildings that contribute to our heritage and are integral to the landscape of a protected area

Objectives, strategies and outcomes

OBJECTIVE 1 Conserve the full range of ecosystems

Strategy 1.1 By 2020, increase representation of IBRA bioregions and subregions that currently have less than 10% protection as protected areas

Increasing the representation of poorly conserved bioregions and subregions (Table 1) will enhance the effectiveness of the State's protected area system by increasing the diversity of ecosystems, and the different types of plants and animals, that are protected. Protecting as many different types of ecosystems as possible will provide an excellent basis for developing a protected area system that effectively and practically conserves as many species as possible in the face of climate change (Dunlop & Brown, 2008).

This strategy will also contribute towards achieving the reservation goal and targets of the National Reserve System, and a range of protected area types will deliver on this outcome.

In achieving the 10% goal, there may be areas of bioregions or subregions outside of South Australia that lead to a total of 10% protected, even if the figure is lower within South Australia; the total amount conserved in Australia will be taken into account in future decisions.

Appendix 2 provides more information on the location and conservation status of South Australia's IBRA bioregions and subregions.

OUTCOME

An increase in the area of under-represented IBRA bioregions and subregions in the protected area system.

Table 1 IBRA bioregions and subregions with less than 10% protection in South Australia

IBRA bioregion	% protected	IBRA bioregion	% protected
Broken Hill Complex	1.2	Victorian Volcanic Plain	3.0
Finke	0.0	Naracoorte Coastal Plain	8.2
Flinders Lofty Block	5.6	Stony Plains	7.3
IBRA subregion	% protected	IBRA subregion	% protected
Barrier Range	1.8	Gawler Volcanics	9.9
Barrier Range Outwash	0.2	Arcoona Plateau	0.6
Diamantina-Eyre	0.1	Kingoonya	3.0
Sturt Stony Desert	8.5	Fleurieu	4.8
Southern Yorke	6.9	Murray Mallee	4.2
St Vincent	0.7	Wimmera	0.6
Tieyon, Finke P3	0.0	Bridgewater	9.0
Pedirka	0.0	Glenelg Plain	5.8
Mount Lofty Ranges	5.3	Lucindale	4.2
Broughton	0.3	Warriner	2.3
Olary Spur	3.3	Oodnadatta	0.9
Southern Flinders	5.5	Murnpeowie	1.0
Mount Gambier	3.0	Peake-Dennison Inlier	0.0



OBJECTIVE 2 Build the capacity of natural systems to adapt to climate change and other stressors

Climate change will affect many species, ecosystems and ecological processes. It will exacerbate existing pressures on biodiversity and introduce new threats such as changing fire and hydrological regimes, the spread of exotic species, and changing land uses.

Establishing a protected area system that safeguards a diverse range of habitats and species (including the future location of species under changed climate conditions), and that is integrated with surrounding lands that are managed for conservation outcomes, will provide a strong buffer against the impacts of climate change and help to minimise biodiversity losses. Protected areas will increasingly act as climatic and drought refugia for a range of species.

STRATEGY 2.1 Protect areas that support freshwater and groundwater-dependent ecosystems

Drought conditions are likely to increase in frequency across many parts of South Australia as a consequence of climate change, particularly in agricultural areas. This is likely to lead to the degradation of aquatic and semi-aquatic ecosystems, many of which support unique communities of plants and animals including migratory waterbirds of international significance. Protected areas provide the most secure option for safeguarding these critical habitats.

Aquatic ecosystems are the most poorly protected ecosystems in the National Reserve System (Nevill, 2007). To this end, *Australia's Strategy for the National Reserve System* recognises and gives priority to increasing protection for areas that support reliable surface waters and accessible groundwater.

OUTCOME

An increase in the area of freshwater and groundwater dependent ecosystems that are represented in the protected area system.

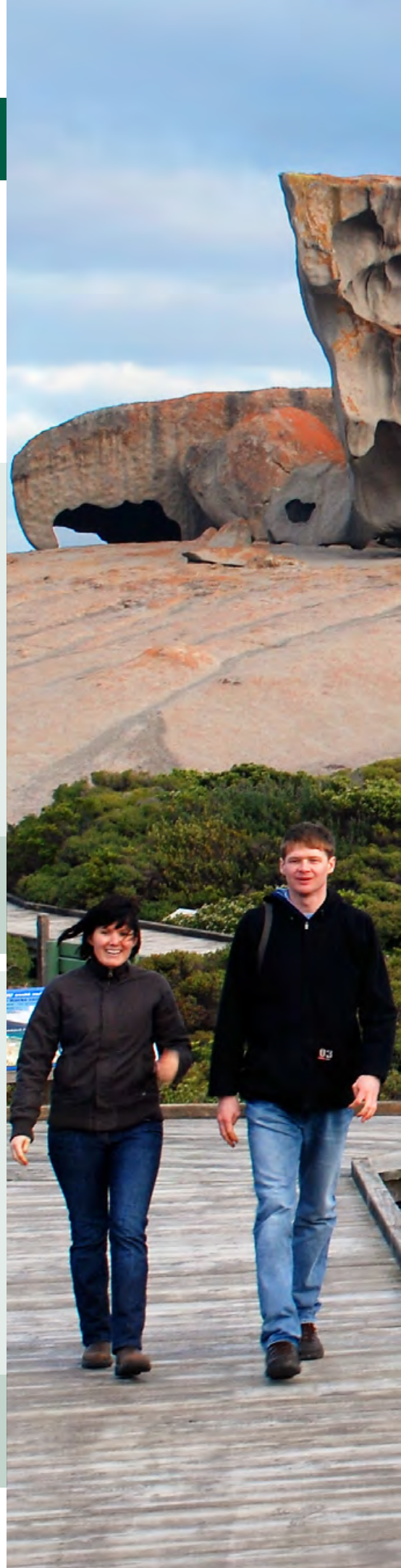
STRATEGY 2.2 Protect areas that will increase habitat connectivity across the landscape including areas that will contribute to South Australia's *NatureLinks* corridors

Protected areas by themselves will not safeguard natural systems against the impacts of climate change; a broader approach that maintains ecological processes across the landscape is required.

South Australia's five *NatureLinks* corridors (Figure 2) aim to connect fragmented habitat across the landscape by linking core protected areas with surrounding lands that are managed with conservation objectives in mind. Protected areas lie at the heart of this 'connectivity conservation' approach, which is now widely recognised as the most effective way to build resilience and ensure the long-term viability of species and ecosystems in a changing climate. In this regard, management connectivity is just as important as ecological connectivity.

OUTCOME

An increase in the connectivity of fragmented habitat across South Australia's landscape.





STRATEGY 2.3 Protect areas of high species and/or ecosystem richness (especially in transition zones or population outliers) or that support threatened/endemic species or ecological communities

Securing a wide range of habitats and species in the protected area system, including areas that are ecologically rich and areas that support ecosystems or species that are vulnerable or endemic, will maximise opportunities for as many ecosystems and species as possible to adapt to the impacts of climate change and other threatening processes.

OUTCOME

An increase in the diversity of species and ecological communities, including those that are threatened, represented in the protected area system.

STRATEGY 2.4 Protect areas that support well-functioning ecosystems that have minimal impacts from threatening processes

Maintaining healthy, functioning ecosystems is the single most important adaptation strategy for natural systems (Department of Climate Change, 2009). Healthy, functioning ecosystems provide essential services such as water and nutrient cycling, soil stabilisation and carbon sequestration; they will also have the greatest chance of withstanding the stresses and disturbances associated with climate change. Securing their long-term protection via the protected area system is a priority.

OUTCOME

An increase in the area of healthy, well-functioning ecosystems represented in the protected area system.

OBJECTIVE 3 Protect places of special meaning for people

Protected areas are an integral part of South Australia's broader social, cultural and economic landscape. As well as protecting biodiversity, they also conserve areas and objects that have spiritual, cultural, social, aesthetic, historic and scientific value to people. The establishment of protected areas should continue to reflect community values and the intrinsic connections that people have with the natural environment.

STRATEGY 3.1 Protect places, objects and landscape features that are significant to Aboriginal people

Many of the State's protected areas conserve places and objects that have cultural and spiritual importance to Aboriginal people. These include rock engravings, artwork, archaeological material, landscapes and topographic features that often have interconnected and complex meanings. Many of these sites also have ancestral stories associated with them that are central to the lives of Aboriginal communities.

OUTCOME

Increased involvement of Aboriginal communities in the establishment and ongoing management of the protected area system.

STRATEGY 3.2 Protect special landscapes of community significance

South Australia's protected areas contain some of the State's most iconic and outstanding landscapes including the Flinders Ranges, Simpson Desert, the Coorong, and Coongie Lakes. The protected area system has a major role to play in safeguarding landscapes that are unique or iconic, of great scenic beauty, or of high wilderness quality, for the enjoyment and appreciation of future generations. These areas are also significant drawcards for nature-based tourism and offer people a wide range of opportunities for relaxation and recreation.

OUTCOME

An increase in the number of significant landscapes represented in the protected area system.

STRATEGY 3.3 Protect sites that represent the development of South Australia's landscapes and the evolution of biodiversity

South Australia has rich geological and evolutionary origins. Sites that represent these origins have unique scientific and educational values because they provide an insight into the evolution of the State's landforms and biodiversity. Protected areas play an important role in securing the long-term protection of these sites for future learning and scientific discovery.

OUTCOME

An increase in the number of sites that represent South Australia's geological and evolutionary origins are represented in the protected area system.

STRATEGY 3.4 Protect sites with significant nature-based recreational values

Protected areas provide people with open spaces for recreation and relaxation. They contribute to the development of vibrant, cohesive communities and support outdoor-based recreational industries such as rock climbing, mountain bike riding, hiking and fishing. They also provide areas for nature-based tourism, quiet enjoyment, and for understanding nature. Establishing protected areas that provide a wide range of interesting recreational opportunities, where appropriate, will encourage more people to visit, and appreciate, parks and reserves.

OUTCOME

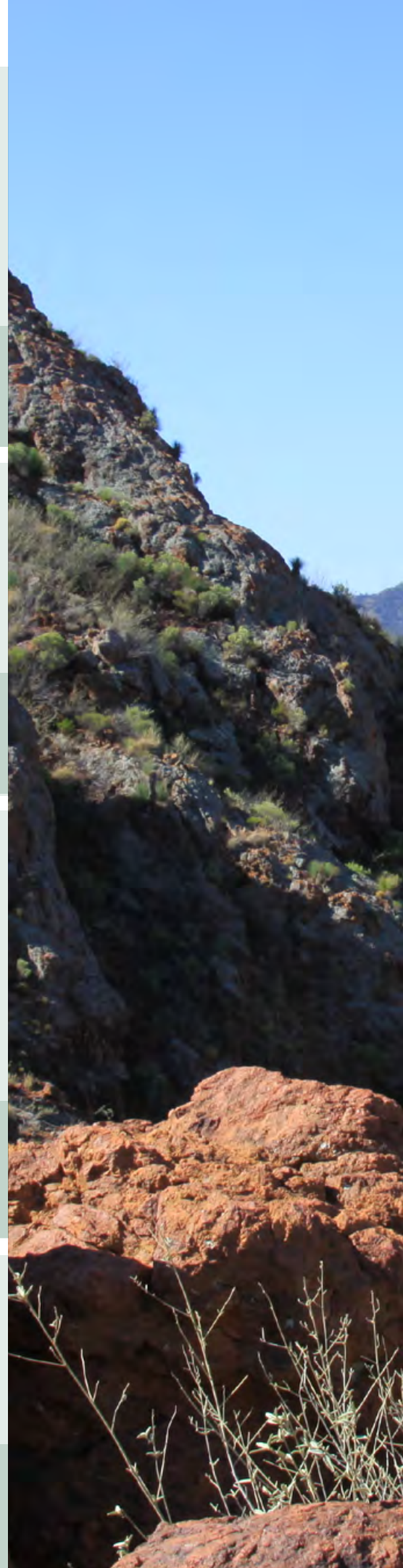
An increase in the nature-based recreation and tourism opportunities in the protected area system, which leads to a greater appreciation of the role of protected areas in conservation.

STRATEGY 3.5 Protect significant historical sites and buildings

Historic sites and buildings help to tell the story of South Australia's settlement and interactions with the environment. There is an important role for the protected area system to safeguard historic sites and buildings where they occur as an integral part of a broader landscape that represents a significant part of our heritage.

OUTCOME

An increase in the number of historical sites and buildings that contribute to our heritage and are integral to the landscape of a protected area.





Map of priority areas

Figure 2 provides a map which overlays the under-represented IBRA subregions (strategy 1.1) with the five *NatureLinks* corridors (strategy 2.2) and the current protected area system. This provides a broad indication of the priority locations for establishing future protected areas in South Australia.

Priorities for the State Government are in the *NatureLinks* corridors where there is an overlap with under-represented bioregions and subregions, and where there is the opportunity to consolidate the values of existing protected areas and their contribution to connectivity conservation. Areas within under-represented bioregions that occur outside of a *NatureLinks* corridor form the second order priority for the State Government.

Private and Aboriginal landowners will establish protected areas where they see the best outcomes for their aspirations, however this strategy will assist them in assessing how their goals can best link with the overall goals of the protected area system in South Australia.

It is important to recognise that many of the priority bioregions will not reach 10% of their land area conserved as protected areas over the life of this strategy, for two primary reasons: first, that there may be limited scope to acquire land in priority areas; but perhaps more fundamentally, in some areas, particularly in the agricultural region of the State, there may simply not be enough uncleared land remaining to ever achieve a figure of 10%.

In this context, 10% is an aspirational goal which will be supported to a significant degree by a management philosophy that focuses on entire landscapes, whereby there is a sympathetic and complementary approach to managing protected areas and land managed for other purposes.

Figure 2 Priority locations for establishing protected areas in South Australia

