

PEOPLE AND PARKS

A Visitor Strategy for South Australia's
National Parks, Marine Parks and Reserves



Government
of South Australia

Department of Environment,
Water and Natural Resources



PARKSA

FOREWORD



We are fortunate in South Australia to have a magnificent system of over 300 parks and reserves encompassing some of Australia's most treasured natural and cultural assets. Belair National Park, Coorong National Park, Flinders Ranges National Park and a host of lesser known but equally important parks have been enjoyed by people all over South Australia for generations. Our challenge is to ensure that this privilege is handed on to future generations.

To achieve this, a new strategy has been developed to help shape how we enjoy South Australia's National Parks, Marine Parks and Reserves. This strategy is called *People and Parks*.

Outdoor activities such as camping, bush walking and four wheel drive touring are synonymous with parks. These experiences leave us with cherished memories and can lead to an understanding and appreciation of parks and their special values. For many of us, our experiences in the outdoors have stimulated a life long commitment to conservation. I think our children deserve the same opportunity.

People and Parks recognises that our parks are critical for the protection of our land, sea, biodiversity and culture. Conservation remains paramount; however parks are also a community asset; important for our own wellbeing and that of regional economies. *People and Parks* outlines a vision, goals, guiding principles, strategies and actions to ensure that we can enjoy parks without compromising them.

I would like to thank everyone who has helped develop *People and Parks*. For those businesses and individuals who are actively involved in recreation, tourism and outdoor education, *People and Parks* is an affirmation of their values and efforts. For those who have not yet experienced South Australia's unique parks and reserves, it opens the door to exciting new opportunities.

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

The Hon Paul Caica MP

Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation



VISION

By 2020 South Australia's parks will be celebrated for the benefits they provide to communities and the contribution people make to conservation.







CONTENTS

Introduction	2
What is this strategy about?	2
What guides this strategy?	3
Our starting position	3
Our special places	4
Current Trends	6
Ecosystems under pressure	6
Visitor experiences	7
The tourism industry	8
The parks network	9
Future Directions	12
Guiding principles	12
Goal 1 – Enriching our lives	12
Goal 2 – Enhancing parks	13
Goal 3 – Shared stewardship for parks	13
Goal 4 – Growing community benefits and prosperity	14
Strategies and Actions	15
Strategy 1 – Create exciting places to visit	16
Strategy 2 – Promote visitor use, enjoyment, understanding and awareness of parks and their value	17
Strategy 3 – Make sure that recreation and tourism is sustainable	18
Strategy 4 – Involve people in setting the future directions for recreation and tourism in parks	19
Strategy 5 – Make it easier for partners to provide recreation and tourism experiences for visitors	20
Strategy 6 – Develop an understanding of the social, health and economic benefits of parks	21
Evaluation	22
Appendix 1 Contribution to South Australia's Strategic Plan Targets	23



INTRODUCTION

What is this strategy about?

South Australia has a magnificent network of over 300 land-based national parks and reserves and a new system of 19 marine parks. These parks are a vital community asset, critical for the long-term protection of our natural and cultural heritage and central to the state's growing tourism industry.

People and Parks introduces a new vision for visitor use, enjoyment, understanding and awareness of South Australia's parks:

By 2020 South Australia's parks will be celebrated for the benefits they provide to communities and the contribution people make to conservation.

The Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources (DEWNR) has developed *People and Parks* to enhance parks and the experiences they provide to people. It has been developed in consultation with other agencies, Aboriginal partners, the tourism and recreation sectors, local government, education providers, community organisations, volunteer groups and conservation groups.

People and Parks has four goals and six underlying strategies. The goals are:

Enriching our lives

Our lives will be enriched by enjoyment of South Australia's national parks and reserves.

Enhancing parks

Our enjoyment of parks will also benefit the conservation of parks.

Shared stewardship for parks

Parks will be cared for by the community.

Growing community benefits and prosperity

Parks will provide health, social and economic benefits for South Australians.

In this strategy, the term 'parks' is used to describe all categories of parks and reserves under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972*, the *Wilderness Protection Act 1992* and the *Marine Parks Act 2007*. The strategy focuses on visitors to parks from local residents through to interstate or overseas tourists. It deals with recreation, tourism and education, recognising that there is considerable overlap between these uses of parks.

People and Parks does not set goals for biodiversity conservation or provide management strategies at an individual park level. Park management plans and other strategies provide these directions. This strategy sets new directions for visitor use of South Australia's national parks, marine parks and reserves. In summary, it will encourage people to enjoy richer experiences in parks and to support their conservation.

What guides this strategy?

South Australia's parks are protected, with future generations in mind, by the National Parks and Wildlife Act, the Wilderness Protection Act, the Marine Parks Act, and park management plans. These set out the objectives for a suite of park categories. The National Parks and Wildlife Act has twelve objectives of management. *People and Parks* directly contributes to one of these objectives:

'the encouragement of public use and enjoyment of reserves and education in, and a proper understanding and recognition of, their purpose and significance'.

People and Parks also contributes to the following object of the Marine Parks Act:

'to assist in providing opportunities for public appreciation, education, understanding and enjoyment of marine environments'.

People and Parks is consistent with *The 30-Year Plan for Greater Adelaide* and a number of targets in *South Australia's Strategic Plan 2011*, which relate to our environment, community, health and prosperity. These targets are outlined in Appendix 1.

This strategy is underpinned by a collaborative, comprehensive approach to the management of national parks, marine parks and reserves. Accordingly, the strategy is intended to complement and support the associated community and stakeholder engagement that is also being conducted such as the marine parks consultation.

Our starting position

South Australia's more than 300 parks and reserves cover around 21% of the state's land – a greater percentage than any other mainland state. In addition, marine parks cover 44% of state waters. Our parks, including national, conservation and recreation parks and 19 new marine parks, conserve irreplaceable plants and animals, distinctive landscapes and unique culture.

South Australia's parks attract more than four million visits each year; around one million are by people from interstate or overseas. Generations of South Australians have had a strong connection to parks but only about one-third of us currently visit parks regularly. Some of our parks are vast remote areas with few or no facilities, whereas other parks closer to towns and cities have been used as meeting places for years.

Volunteer groups, schools, universities, conservation groups, recreational clubs, recreation peak bodies and commercial tour operators play a critical role in parks. They promote park values, educate visitors, encourage sustainable recreation and participate in volunteer conservation activities.

It is our responsibility to strengthen the synergy between people and parks for the long term.





Our special places

South Australia's parks range from small pockets of precious native vegetation in urbanised or agricultural landscapes to vast areas in the north of the state, which are co-managed in partnership with Aboriginal communities. They conserve a diverse range of habitats and landscapes, including heathlands, woodlands, deserts, beaches, coasts, marine ecosystems, caves and places that reflect our distinctive culture, such as Aboriginal sites, mines and ruins.

The appeal of South Australia's parks lies in their unspoilt natural values, rich cultural heritage and distinctive landscapes.

Our special places and natural values lie at the heart of sustainable nature-based tourism and recreation. They are central to the lives of South Australians and provide significant social, economic and health benefits to rural and urban communities. It is vital that the fundamental appeal of parks is maintained through good planning, careful management and responsible use.

Our challenge is to ensure that parks continue to conserve special places and natural values, while also enabling people to enjoy the benefits they bring.

Aboriginal cultural heritage

South Australia's parks are important to Aboriginal communities. They include many evocative and culturally significant sites and landscapes, and opportunities to learn about Aboriginal culture with Aboriginal guides.

Non-Indigenous cultural heritage

Hundreds of non-Indigenous heritage sites, including lighthouses, ruins, shipwrecks, mines and historic properties, help to tell South Australia's story. Visitors are immersed in this story by staying in heritage accommodation, going on guided tours or exploring historic sites.

Caves and fossils

Extensive karst systems such as the Naracoorte Caves World Heritage Area have been developed into major tourism destinations. These cave systems are underground classrooms as well as iconic tourism sites.

Cliffs, bays and beaches

South Australia has over 5 000 km of coastline. Many parks protect spectacular, unspoilt beaches and dune systems, and their lack of development is particularly appealing. People use these coastal parks for sightseeing, fishing, walking, swimming, surfing and four-wheel drive touring.

Outback

Huge areas of arid inland South Australia are located within parks and reserves. Most of these wilderness landscapes are undeveloped and free of people. However, the outback is a quintessential Australian experience, which captivates modern day explorers.

Rivers, lakes and wetlands

Many parks are located around freshwater and estuarine ecosystems, including the Coorong and the Murray River. These places attract people who want to escape the crowds by cruising down the river, camping, canoeing and fishing.

Forests and woodlands

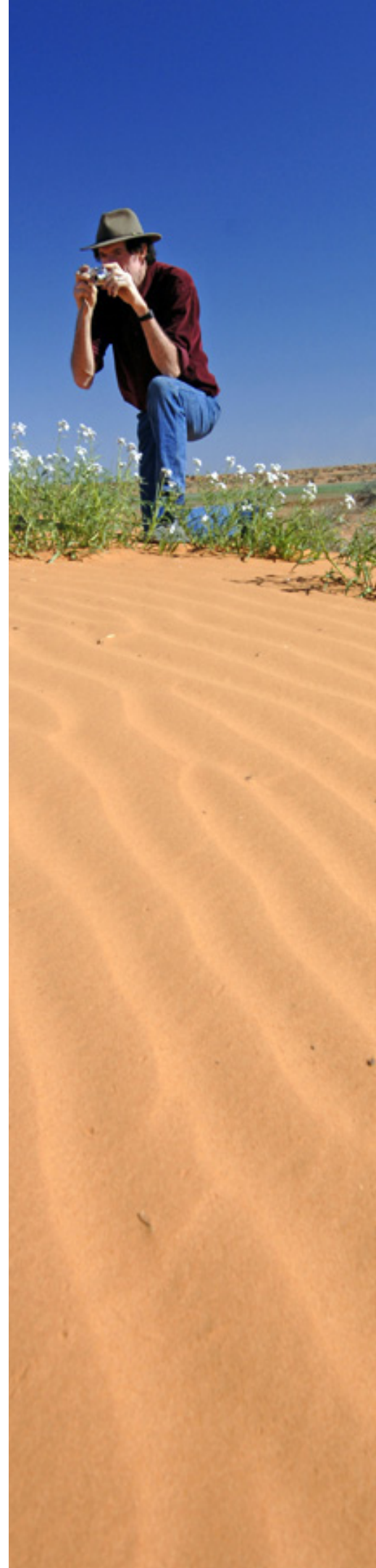
Many parks include eucalyptus forest and mallee woodland, typical of the Australian bush. These places are used for recreation, tourism and education. They support a diverse collection of precious plants and animals.

Coastal waters

Marine parks include a range of habitats, including sheltered waters and wild ocean coastlines. They support a huge variety of recreation, tourism and educational activities, such as fishing, surfing, scuba diving and boating.

Marine wildlife

Several of our coastal parks allow visitors to have close encounters with magnificent southern right whales, dolphins, great white sharks, New Zealand fur seals and Australian sea lions. Some of these sites are important for tourism as well as education.





CURRENT TRENDS

Four major trends have influenced the shape of this strategy. These are the increasing pressure on ecosystems and biodiversity, the changing expectations of visitors, the maturing of the tourism industry and the growth and consolidation of the parks network.

Ecosystems under pressure

South Australia's parks protect precious ecosystems and contain irreplaceable natural and cultural assets. *No Species Loss – A Nature Conservation Strategy for South Australia 2007–2017* sets a vision and goals for biodiversity conservation in South Australia.

The biggest threats to biodiversity include inappropriate fire regimes, invasive weeds, urban and coastal development, clearance of native vegetation and intensive use.

Climate change means that parks are now under even greater pressure. A hotter and drier climate is already affecting the River Murray, and the Coorong and Lower Lakes. Drought, higher temperatures and more frequent bushfires may affect many parks across the state. Coastal parks are likely to be affected by sea level rise, coastal instability and storm events.

Not every park can support a full spectrum of recreation activities. Many parks have a limited capacity to support use and others have under-utilised facilities, which could support a greater number of visitors.

Creative solutions will be needed to enhance the tourism experience, protect parks and maintain the sustainability of the natural environment in the face of climate change.

The nature-based tourism industry and park managers can ensure that visitor use is sustainable by:

- adopting a precautionary approach in the face of uncertainty and contributing to adaptive management practices and risk assessments
- building knowledge about threatening processes and sustainable practices through research
- encouraging the responsible use of parks
- building community appreciation about the value of parks through information and interpretation
- providing low-carbon visitor experiences and adopting best practice energy and water efficient designs for infrastructure, and
- controlling and managing the types of activity and levels of use in parks.

Communities are working with governments to address threats and enhance parks all over the world.

Non-government organisations are working in partnership with governments to detect threats, monitor impacts, educate users and help achieve sustainable management practices. The concept of social and environmental carrying capacity is being used to make sure parks are not 'loved to death'.

Decisions about how parks are used in the future will need to be compatible with conservation objectives and consider environmental, social, economic and cultural values.

Visitor experiences

The popularity of parks around the world is increasing as the range of activities provided for visitors grows. Parks are being managed to optimise conservation and their value to visitors, as well as for the benefits they provide to the broader community. Worldwide, the recreation and tourism industries are responding to these trends and are playing an increasingly important role in shaping visitor experiences in parks.

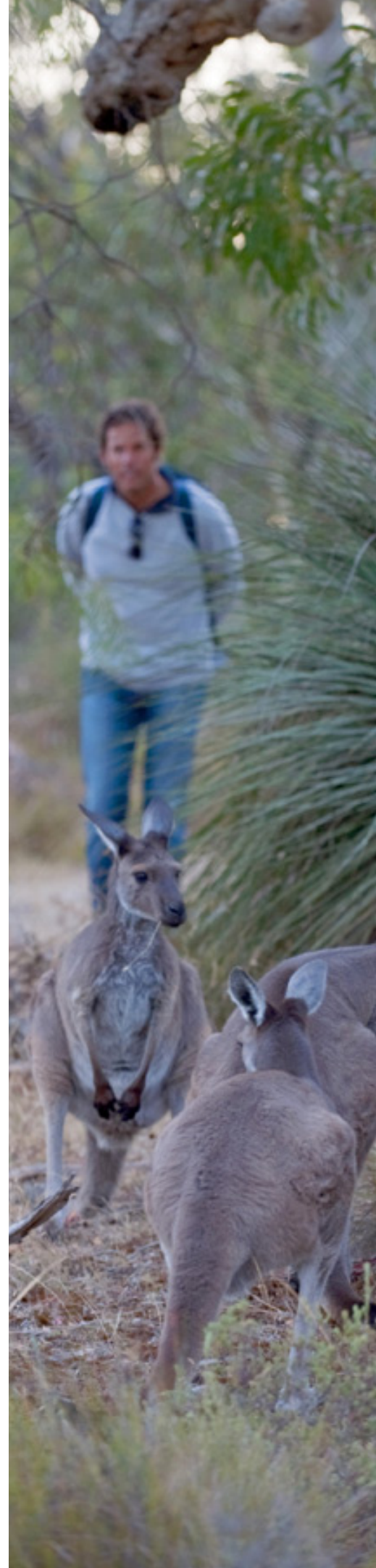
In the past, visitors used parks for relatively simple, self-sufficient outdoor activities such as walking, viewing scenery and visiting iconic natural destinations. This is still the case but people are increasingly involved in a broader range of activities and need places to undertake them. Visitors want access to parks for surfing, camping, horse riding, fishing, cycling, four-wheel driving, rock climbing, scuba diving and outdoor education.

Today's park visitors also expect much richer experiences, based on nature. Many want to reconnect to nature on a personal level and make a contribution to the planet. They are looking for 'memorable' experiences such as cage diving with great white sharks or 'exclusive' experiences such as luxury eco-lodges. At the same time they expect to learn about the park and have a minimal footprint. We want visitors to feel welcome and choose the appropriate park for the experience they seek. The expectations of all visitors cannot be met in all parks.

Parks are no longer just places to 'go' – they are now places to 'grow'.

South Australia's Strategic Plan includes a target to increase the state's population to two million by 2027. More people will mean a greater demand for different experiences in parks, particularly in metropolitan parks and those in the Mount Lofty Ranges, which are within easy reach of over one million residents.

Understanding why people visit parks, and the experiences they want, will be essential for sustainable park planning and development.





The tourism industry

National parks and reserves hold an iconic status, not only for their biodiversity values, but for the wide range of experiences and opportunities they provide for recreation, relaxation, tourism and learning. Worldwide, nature-based tourism is growing at an estimated rate of 10–30% per annum. Parks lie at the heart of this industry.

Many nature-based tourism businesses are internationally competitive, globally integrated and demonstrate best practice in the sustainable use of sensitive environments. South Australia's tourism industry is maturing and flourishing by capitalising on a series of world-class cultural and sporting events, developing an expanded suite of tourism products, and promoting unique nature-based attractions. The value of this industry to the state economy continues to increase. Between 2002 and 2009 tourism expenditure in South Australia grew from \$3.7 billion to \$4.5 billion. Parks will play a key role as the industry continues to mature.

The lack of crowds, unspoilt nature and minimal development sum up the fundamental appeal of South Australia's parks – retaining this is essential.

*The South Australian Tourism Plan 2009–2014 seeks to achieve South Australia's Strategic Plan target to create a \$6.3 billion tourism industry by 2014. Experiencing unspoilt nature is a core attribute of South Australia's tourism branding. Implementing *People and Parks* will help achieve the state's tourism vision to establish South Australia as a world-class tourism destination, which supports a sustainable and profitable tourism industry.*

Kangaroo Island's tourism industry focuses on parks and provides the highest economic return of any industry sector on the island. In 2001, tourism contributed \$53 million in turnover to Kangaroo Island businesses, and accounted for 360 jobs on the island. The Flinders Ranges are also an important tourism asset and, along with Kangaroo Island, are part of the National Landscapes Program, which recognises tourism landscapes of national significance.

The private sector is ready to become more involved in developing new visitor experiences in South Australia's parks. This is already occurring through concessions at Flinders Chase National Park and Wilpena Pound at Flinders Ranges National Park, and through guided activities in many parks around the state. This strategy seeks to improve visitor-related opportunities for the private sector.

The parks network

The South Australian protected area network has grown significantly over the last ten years. The establishment of 19 new marine parks puts the state at the forefront of marine conservation and will present exciting opportunities for visitors.

As a result of the expansion of the protected area network, a greater proportion of the state's nature-based recreation and tourism now occurs within protected areas. Ensuring sustainable visitor use across South Australia's marine parks and vast land-based parks is a challenge, which will require innovative approaches to park management and the continued support of user groups, Friends of Parks groups and other partners.

Before the marine parks network was established there were approximately 4.2 million visits to the protected area network each year. The total number of visits to the new expanded network has not yet been quantified but it is expected to be significant. It is possible that the number of annual visits to South Australian parks could double within the next 5–10 years.

There is now a greater opportunity than ever before to use the parks network to build community support for conservation.

For the purposes of this strategy, the protected area network has been divided into four zones.

The outback zone includes over 80% of South Australia's land area. This area is largely uncleared but has been modified through grazing by stock and other introduced animals. There are several iconic outback parks, including Simpson Desert Conservation Park, Innamincka Regional Reserve, Great Australian Bight Marine National Park and Flinders Ranges National Park.

The accessible zone includes over 10% of South Australia's land area. This area has higher rainfall than the outback zone and has been extensively cleared for agriculture. Parks in the accessible zone protect many areas of remnant vegetation. They attract moderate numbers of visitors because of their reasonable level of accessibility to population centres, drive routes or boat launching facilities.

The marine zone ranges from inaccessible areas of the Southern Ocean, Spencer Gulf and Gulf St Vincent, to beaches and inshore areas which are frequently visited.

The urban fringe zone is characterised by its proximity to Adelaide. Visitor numbers to parks close to Adelaide, such as Belair National Park, Cleland Wildlife Park, Cleland Conservation Park, Morialta Conservation Park and Para Wirra Recreation Park, are rising. South Australians living in expanding metropolitan areas are looking for relaxation and recreation in parks close to their homes with pedestrian, cycle, public transport or car access.

Iconic tourism sites occur across parks within outback, accessible, marine and urban fringe zones. They are discrete sites, which are significant from a state, national or international tourism perspective. Visitors are attracted to these sites by the appeal and exclusivity of the experiences they offer, rather than their accessibility. Experiences such as viewing Australian sea lions at Seal Bay Conservation Park or cage diving with great white sharks at the Neptune Islands Conservation Park are internationally recognised tourist attractions. Other experiences such as flying over Lake Eyre National Park are beginning to emerge as popular tourist activities.





Engaging with Aboriginal culture
Innes National Park



Driving through the outback
Simpson Desert Conservation Park



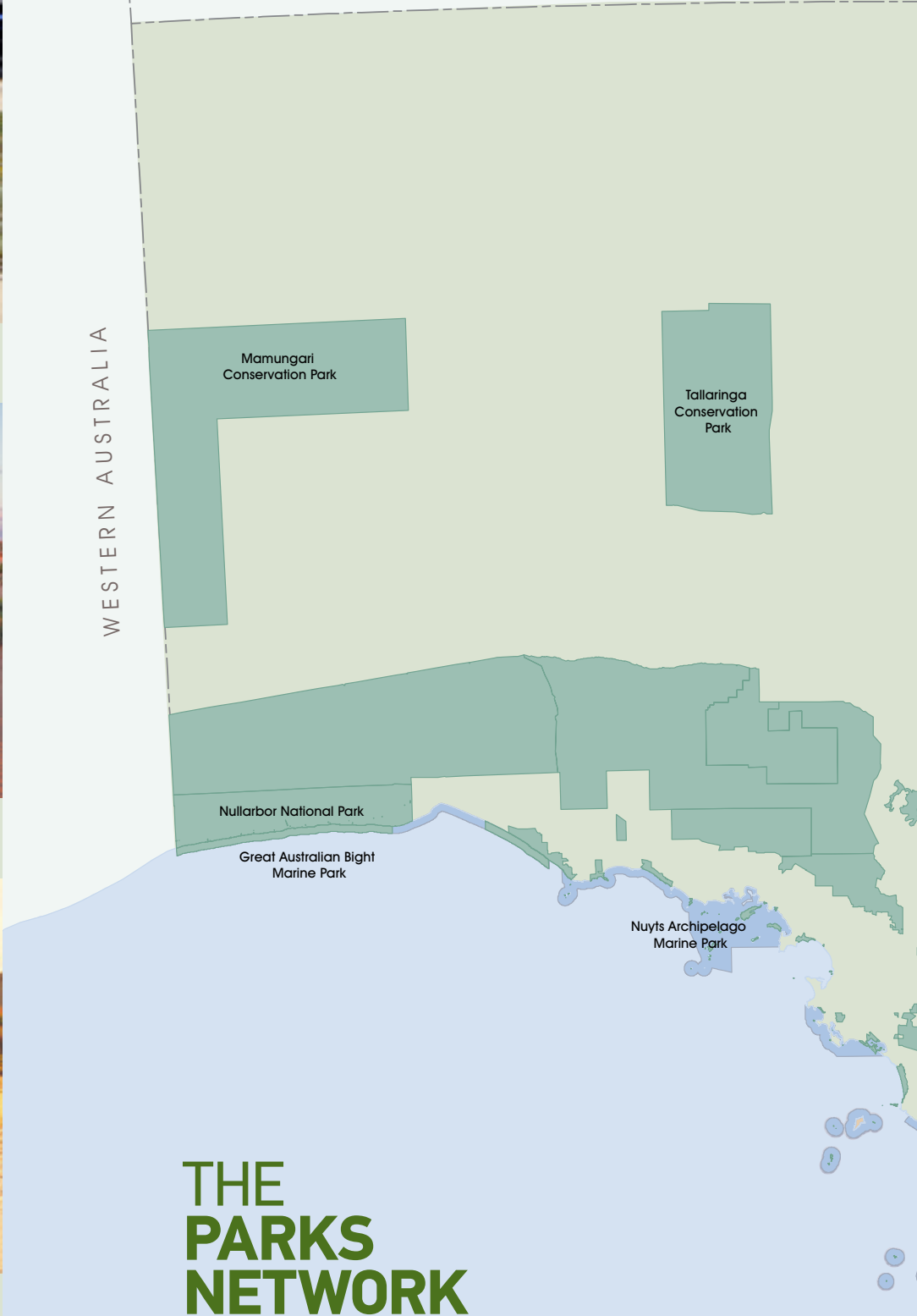
Escaping to nature
Coorong National Park



Diving with sharks
Neptune Islands Group Marine Park

NORTHERN TERRITORY

WESTERN AUSTRALIA



THE PARKS NETWORK



- National Parks and Reserves
- Marine Parks



0km 100 200



Getting up close with native animals
Cleland Wildlife Park



Cycling in the Adelaide Hills
Belair National Park



Scaling new heights
Flinders Ranges National Park



Meeting a sea lion colony
Seal Bay Conservation Park



FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Guiding principles

People and Parks is founded on four guiding principles and seeks to achieve four goals: these are discussed below.

Conservation first

People who use parks for recreation and tourism have a responsibility to contribute to the long-term protection of parks. The values of parks must not be compromised through their use.

Appropriate access

People should have a reasonable opportunity to enjoy access to parks and learn about their natural and cultural features.

Community service

Parks are an integral part of the landscape and play an important role in supporting healthy, vibrant and prosperous communities.

Responsible management

Decisions about the way parks are used should be based on evidence, risk assessment and adaptive management principles.

Goal 1 – Enriching our lives

Our lives will be enriched by enjoyment of South Australia's national parks and reserves.

The lives of more people will be enriched by attracting new visitors to parks, and providing them with high quality nature, learning or socially focused experiences. There is significant scope for this to occur in urban fringe parks where facilities are already in place. Encouraging new visitors will also be the first step towards building a stronger foundation of community support for the care and stewardship of parks.

Goal 1 will contribute to:

- *South Australia's Strategic Plan* vision - Our communities are vibrant places to live, work, play and visit (Appendix 1).
- Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources *Corporate Plan*.
- Department of Health and Ageing *The Eat Well Be Active Strategy for South Australia 2011-2016*.

Target 1 – By 2020 50% of South Australians will visit parks annually.

Goal 2 – Enhancing parks

Our enjoyment of parks will also benefit the conservation of parks.

All visitors can make a positive contribution to parks by treading lightly and respecting park values. Schools, sporting clubs, local communities and the recreation and tourism industries already provide a wide range of opportunities for people to enjoy parks. There is potential for these groups to enhance the values of parks by playing a greater role in their sustainable management, including through conservation works such as tree planting and weed removal, consolidation of existing facilities and limiting the spread of new facilities.

Goal 2 will contribute to:

- *South Australia's Strategic Plan* vision - We look after our natural environment (Appendix 1).
- Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources *Corporate Plan*.
- *No Species Loss - A Nature Conservation Strategy for South Australia 2007-2017*.
- *The 30-Year Plan for Greater Adelaide*.

Target 2 – By 2020 more recreation and tourism partners will take action to enhance parks each year.

Goal 3 – Shared stewardship for parks

Parks will be cared for by the community.

Government has a clear responsibility for the care of parks, but there are many opportunities for others to play a greater role. Visitors can contribute to the protection of parks by doing the right thing, such as keeping to trails or actively contributing through volunteer activities. The private sector, clubs, schools and other organisations may also become stewards for certain sites.

Visitor information, interpretation and education can encourage people to get involved. This can be especially effective at important tourism sites and in urban fringe parks.

Encouraging children to know and love nature by providing wonderful experiences and education opportunities in parks will ensure that our parks remain in safe hands.

Goal 3 will contribute to:

- *South Australia's Strategic Plan* vision - We look after our natural environment (Appendix 1).
- Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources *Corporate Plan*.

Target 3 – By 2020 more South Australians will support and actively help care for parks.





Goal 4 – Growing community benefits and prosperity

Parks will provide health, social and economic benefits for South Australians.

Parks offer many significant community benefits by providing opportunities for business development, employment and education, along with venues for social, sport, health and fitness, or community events.

The Department of Health and Ageing's 'Health in all Policies' approach encourages all sectors to consider the health impacts of their policies and practices. Parks will play a significant role in supporting community health and wellbeing including people with special needs or limited mobility.

The private sector and tourism industry contribute to economic growth with the support of government. In time, the private sector could provide more tourism choices in parks, such as accommodation, luxury camping, weekend adventure trips and guided tours to special places, and could participate in environmental research or conservation activities.

Partnerships between government, communities and the private sector can result in innovative park visitor experiences and greater community benefits.

Goal 4 will contribute to:

- *South Australia's Strategic Plan* visions - We are active in looking after our health; and a strong, sustainable economy that builds on our strengths (Appendix 1).
- Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources *Corporate Plan*. Goal 1: The environment is conserved and natural resources are used sustainably.
- The *South Australian Tourism Plan 2009-2014*.

Target 4 – By 2020 parks will make an even greater contribution to the wellbeing of the community and the South Australian economy.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

This section outlines the strategies and actions required to achieve the vision and four goals on which *People and Parks* is founded. The Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources will continue to provide a range of opportunities for sustainable recreation and tourism in parks.

In the short term, resources will be focused on implementing the actions outlined in this strategy while continuing to do important operational work that improves visitors' experiences, such as cleaning, maintenance and risk management.

The actions listed in *People and Parks* are just the beginning. Flagship projects, such as development of iconic multi-day walks (Action 1.5), will help refine and showcase a new approach to tourism in parks and engage people in planning. Other projects, such as policy development (Actions 3.2 & 5.2), will provide a foundation for future initiatives. In the longer term, additional actions will be identified, based on longer term priorities. These are outlined under each of the six strategies.

The Department will lead the implementation of *People and Parks*, but achieving the vision requires coordinated effort. The following groups and organisations are key partners in delivery.

Volunteers

Continue to care for and help manage parks.

Aboriginal partners

Continue to work with DEWNR by promoting Aboriginal culture through learning opportunities and providing tourism alternatives for visitors through co-management.

Local and State government agencies

Support the strategy by partnering with DEWNR and catering for visitors in a coordinated way, regardless of land management responsibility.

South Australian Tourism Commission

Continue to promote parks, encourage tourism investment in parks and assist in the implementation of the strategy.

Private sector

Partner with DEWNR to provide new recreation and tourism alternatives for visitors.

Community organisations

Support this strategy by helping to implement actions and encouraging the participation of members. Community organisations include recreational peak bodies, sporting clubs, scouts, volunteer groups, friends groups, Conservation Council SA, Nature Conservation Society of SA and Wilderness Society.

Schools

Facilitate an awareness and understanding of parks through the school curriculum and programs such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme.

Natural resource management boards

Help engage local communities and integrate natural resource management goals with visitor and recreation activities in parks.





Strategy 1 – Create exciting places to visit

Rationale & Priorities	Action	Partners
<p>Strategy 1 contributes to:</p> <p>Goal 1 (Enriching our lives) by motivating people who don't visit parks to visit regularly;</p> <p>Goal 4 (Growing community benefits and prosperity) by creating places that meet the needs of communities and enhance tourism.</p> <p>Long term priorities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> maintaining priority sites, especially those that are important to local communities creating new experiences in urban fringe parks and accessible parks, in partnership with clubs, schools, the private sector and others revitalising existing iconic tourism sites and popular places within urban fringe parks and accessible parks encouraging the development of unique and low impact accommodation options. 	1.1 Redevelop Cleland Wildlife Park (Cleland Conservation Park) to create a contemporary visitor experience.	DEWNR, private sector, SATC, Aboriginal communities, COs
	1.2 Redevelop the Seal Bay visitor precinct (Seal Bay Conservation Park) to engage visitors in Australian sea lion conservation and to enhance tourism potential.	DEWNR, private sector, SATC, Aboriginal communities, COs
	1.3 Establish the Mount Lofty Ranges as a nationally recognised cycling destination.	DEWNR, ORS, LG, CTOs, SATC, COs, FSA
	1.4 Expand the suite of distinctive, broadly appealing trails in the Adelaide Hills that are suitable for people with limited mobility.	DEWNR, SATC, ORS, LG, volunteers, COs
	1.5 Develop outstanding multi-day walking trails on Kangaroo Island and in Flinders Ranges National Park.	DEWNR, private sector, Govt agencies, Aboriginal communities, COs



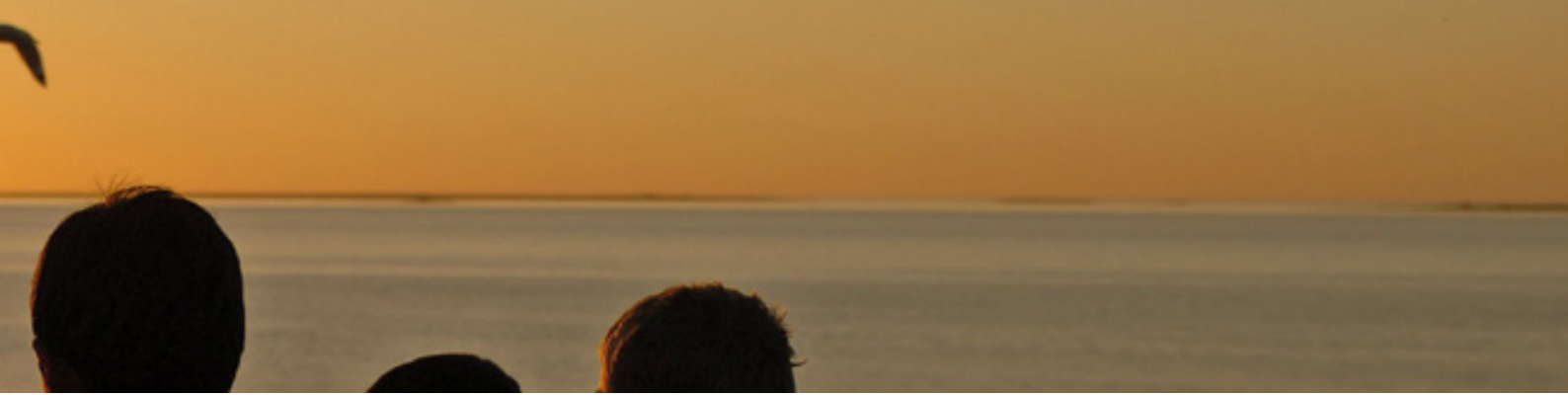
Strategy 2 – Promote visitor use, enjoyment, understanding and awareness of parks and their value

Rationale & Priorities	Action	Partners
<p>Strategy 2 contributes to:</p> <p>Goal 1 (Enriching our lives) by motivating people who don't visit parks to visit regularly;</p> <p>Goal 3 (Shared stewardship for parks) by engaging people in nature and encouraging them to help care for parks.</p> <p>Long term priorities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> encouraging people to visit parks, especially existing, under-utilised sites developing engaging information and interpretation for marine parks and popular places within urban fringe parks and accessible parks making information about parks, places to visit, sustainable access and safety easy to access through park-based visitor centres, the internet, tour operators, rangers and community organisations, including Friends groups promoting places for education and learning about parks including Cleland Wildlife Park (Cleland Conservation Park), Naracoorte Caves National Park and other interpretive places supporting programs that teach people how to enjoy the outdoors. 	<p>2.1 Revitalise the public image of South Australia's parks by refining and enhancing the South Australian parks brand.</p>	<p>DEWNR, Govt agencies, COs</p>
	<p>2.2 Upgrade the parks website to integrate the enhanced parks brand, pilot emerging communication technologies and initiate interest in visiting parks.</p>	<p>DEWNR, SATC, COs</p>
	<p>2.3 Establish an improved distribution network for visitor information, park permits, national park passes, bookings and other products – through outdoor retailers, tour operators, visitor centres and the internet.</p>	<p>DEWNR, SATC, private sector, NRMBs, COs</p>
	<p>2.4 Identify opportunities for one or more major park-based events in the Mount Lofty Ranges to further increase appreciation of parks among younger visitors.</p>	<p>DEWNR, Govt agencies, SATC, COs, private sector</p>



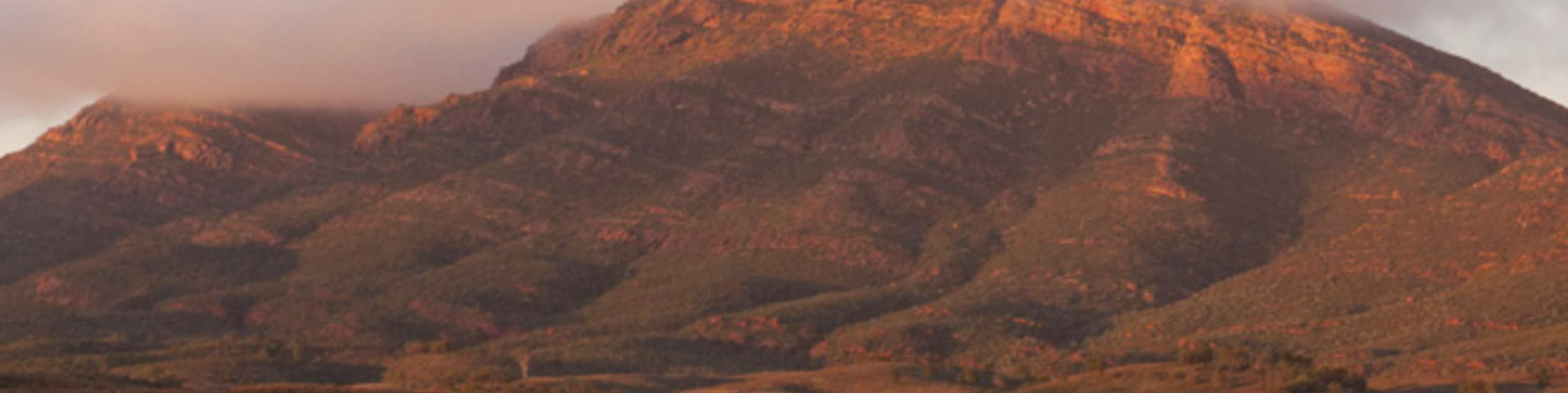
Strategy 3 – Make sure that recreation and tourism is sustainable

Rationale & Priorities	Action	Partners
<p>Strategy 3 contributes to:</p> <p>Goal 1 (Enriching our lives) by ensuring that parks are conserved for the benefit of future generations;</p> <p>Goal 2 (Enhancing parks) by promoting responsible use and ensuring that any development enhances parks;</p> <p>Goal 3 (Shared stewardship for parks) by encouraging partners to help care for parks.</p> <p>Long term priorities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • minimising and offsetting the environmental footprint of new developments • developing policies to guide decisions about sustainable recreation and tourism • applying the concept of carrying capacity to the visitor use of sensitive places • developing a landscape-scale approach to planning for visitor activities, integrated with park management and natural resource management planning • supporting projects that demonstrate best practice sustainable tourism development principles and practices • closing and consolidating under-utilised or redundant infrastructure, or infrastructure that is impacting on park values. 	3.1 Establish community monitoring projects to engage community groups and the private sector in adaptive management practices.	DEWNR, CTOs, COs, S&EP
	3.2 Develop and implement policies and risk assessment procedures to guide consistent and sustainable management decisions about visitor access and visitor facility development.	DEWNR, COs, Other protected area managers
	3.3 Design and initiate a state-wide awareness raising campaign to communicate core messages about sustainable use.	DEWNR, NRMBs, S&EP, volunteers, CTOs, COs
	3.4 Develop and implement a program of priority works to close and/or rehabilitate places and trails which are impacting on park values.	DEWNR, volunteers, CTOs, COs



Strategy 4 – Involve people in setting the future directions for recreation and tourism in parks

Rationale & Priorities	Action	Partners
<p>Strategy 4 contributes to:</p> <p>Goal 1 (Enriching our lives) by understanding the needs and expectations of people;</p> <p>Goal 3 (Shared stewardship for parks) by providing people with an opportunity to have a say;</p> <p>Goal 4 (Growing community benefits and prosperity) by understanding community needs.</p> <p>Long term priorities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> encouraging greater involvement in park management, particularly from community groups engaging as many people as possible in the planning for recreation and tourism in parks understanding why many people don't regularly visit parks. 	4.1 Evaluate the performance of <i>People and Parks</i> .	DEWNR, NPWC
	4.2 In partnership with NRM Boards, develop plans for engaging communities in the implementation of <i>People and Parks</i> .	DEWNR, COs, NRMBs, volunteers
	4.3 Initiate a renewed commitment to customer service by DEWNR staff and partners, which demonstrates consistent high standards, encourages outstanding visitor service and sets targets for response times.	DEWNR, CTOs, SATIC, private sector, COs
	4.4 Identify opportunities to integrate and enhance the parks and trail network in line with planning for growth of greater Adelaide.	DEWNR, Govt agencies, LG, COs



Strategy 5 – Make it easier for partners to provide recreation and tourism experiences for visitors

Rationale & Priorities	Actions	Partners
<p>Strategy 5 contributes to:</p> <p>Goal 1 (Enriching our lives) by enabling partners to offer new or improved visitor experiences;</p> <p>Goal 3 (Shared stewardship for parks) by providing the opportunity for partners to share responsibility for the management of places;</p> <p>Goal 4 (Growing community benefits and prosperity) by stimulating investment by the private sector.</p> <p>Long term priorities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> clarifying leasing and licensing processes and reducing red tape for commercial tour operators and other businesses supporting projects that demonstrate successful tourism partnerships between government and the private sector. 	<p>5.1 Enable the private sector and other partners to provide visitor services in parks. This will be facilitated at priority sites when a benefit to parks and visitor experiences has been demonstrated.</p>	<p>DEWNR, SATC, DMITRE, SATIC, COs, CTOs, LG</p>
	<p>5.2 Develop and implement policies and procedures to guide partnerships between government, the private sector and other organisations.</p>	<p>DEWNR, DMITRE, COs, S&EP</p>
	<p>5.3 Initiate partnerships with schools and other educational providers in managing outdoor education and recreation precincts for use by schools and the general public.</p>	<p>DEWNR, COs, S&EP, CTOs</p>



Strategy 6 – Develop an understanding of the social, health and economic benefits of parks

Rationale & Priorities	Actions	Partners
<p>Strategy 6 contributes to:</p> <p>Goal 1 (Enriching our lives) by ensuring that park management is informed by an understanding of people's needs;</p> <p>Goal 3 (Shared stewardship for parks) by understanding whether strategies to encourage stewardship are working;</p> <p>Goal 4 (Growing community benefits and prosperity) by understanding whether strategies to enhance social, health and economic benefits are effective.</p> <p>Long term priorities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> improving our understanding of visitor needs and expectations improving our understanding of the needs of economically, socially and mobility disadvantaged groups understanding why many South Australians don't regularly visit parks working in partnership with other park managers to understand state-wide and national trends. 	6.1 Develop and implement methodologies for measuring the <i>People and Parks</i> targets.	DEWNR, Govt agencies, DMITRE
	6.2 Improve the state-wide system for monitoring visitor numbers.	DEWNR, Govt agencies, COs
	6.3 Collect baseline data to establish the economic and other community values of South Australia's parks.	DEWNR, Govt agencies, S&EP, COs
	6.4 In conjunction with other park managers, contribute to a coordinated research program to build an understanding of the social health and economic benefits of South Australia's parks.	DEWNR, LG, COs, FSA, DMITRE, SATC, S&EP

COs – Community organisations (includes recreational peak bodies, sporting clubs, volunteers groups, Conservation Council SA, Nature Conservation Society of SA, Wilderness Society, friends of parks groups and Friends of Parks Inc)

CTOs – Commercial tour operators

DEWNR – Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources

DMITRE – Department for Manufacturing, Innovation, Trade, Resources and Energy

FSA – Forestry SA

LG – Local Government

NPWC – National Parks and Wildlife Council

NRMBs – Natural resource management boards

ORS – Office for Recreation and Sport

S&EP – Schools and education providers (Includes schools, universities and other educational providers)

SATC – South Australian Tourism Commission

SATIC – South Australian Tourism Industry Council

Evaluation

To ensure that *People and Parks* is having an impact, a performance evaluation framework will be developed (Action 4.1). This framework will ensure that progress towards our goals and targets is measured and periodically reviewed (Action 6.1). There are four targets:

Target 1 – By 2020 50% of South Australians will visit parks annually.

The numbers of visitors to parks has often been used to demonstrate the importance of parks to people. Total visitation is a useful measure, but it is often strongly influenced by repeat visitation from a relatively small cross-section of the community. Understanding the proportion and demographics of the population that visit parks regularly is more useful. This can be measured using total visitation in combination with national census data and structured surveys. An improved system for monitoring visitor numbers will be developed (Action 6.2).

Target 2 – By 2020 more recreation and tourism partners will take action to enhance parks each year.

There are many clubs, tour operators and other partners who regularly take action to enhance parks through activities such as environmental research or site rehabilitation. At the moment the scale of this effort is unknown. Through a regular survey of the recreation and tourism sectors, the positive contribution of partners towards the enhancement of parks will be determined and monitored.

Target 3 – By 2020 more South Australians will support and actively help care for parks.

A methodology will be developed so that this target can be effectively measured (Action 6.1). Baseline information will be collected to quantify the current level of stewardship (Action 6.3) and actions will be undertaken to increase community engagement (Action 4.2).

Target 4 – By 2020 parks will make an even greater contribution to the wellbeing of the community and the South Australian economy.

A methodology will be developed (Actions 6.1 & 6.4) to assess the economic value of parks. This is not intended to focus on revenue; rather it will measure the value of parks to the broader financial and social economy. Once this is done, baseline information will be collected so that the current contribution that parks make to the State's economy and community wellbeing can be quantified (Action 6.3).

APPENDIX 1

Contribution to South Australia's Strategic Plan Targets

Visions	Goals	Targets
<p>Our communities are vibrant places to live, work, play and visit.</p>	<p>We are committed to our towns and cities being well designed, generating great experiences and a sense of belonging.</p>	<p>Target 1. – Urban spaces: Increase the use of public spaces by the community.</p>
	<p>New developments are people friendly with open spaces and parks connected by public transport and bikeways.</p>	<p>Target 2. – Cycling: Double the number of people cycling in South Australia by 2020.</p>
<p>A strong, sustainable economy that builds on our strengths.</p>	<p>We develop and maintain a sustainable mix of industries across the state.</p>	<p>Target 4. – Tourism Industry: Increase visitor expenditure in South Australia's total tourism industry to \$8 billion and on Kangaroo Island to \$180 million by 2020 (Milestone of \$6.3 billion (total industry) by 2014).</p>
<p>We are connected to our communities and give everyone a fair go.</p>	<p>People in our community support and care for each other especially in times of need.</p>	<p>Target 23. – Social participation: Increase the proportion of South Australians participating in social, community and economic activities by 2020.</p>
<p>We look after our natural environment.</p>	<p>We look after our land, rivers and wetlands.</p>	<p>Target 69. – Lose no species: Lose no native species as a result of human impacts.</p>
		<p>Target 71. – Marine biodiversity: Maintain the health and diversity of South Australia's unique marine environments.</p>
		<p>Target 72. – Nature conservation: Increase participation in nature conservation activities by 25% by 2015.</p>
<p>We are active in looking after our health.</p>	<p>We are physically active.</p>	<p>Target 83. – Sport and recreation: Increase the proportion of South Australians participating in sport or physical recreation at least once per week to 50% by 2020.</p>

For further information please contact:

Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources
GPO Box 1047
Adelaide SA 5001
Telephone: (08) 8204 1910

Copies of this document can be downloaded from: www.parks.sa.gov.au

Photography credits: South Australian Tourism Commission, Leah McIntyre, HelloFriday and Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources.

Permissive Licence

© State of South Australia through the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources. Apart from fair dealings and other uses permitted by the Copyright Act 1968 (Cth), no part of this publication may be reproduced, published, communicated, transmitted, modified or commercialised without the prior written approval of the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources.

Written requests for permission should be addressed to:
Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources,
GPO Box 1047, Adelaide SA 5001.

Disclaimer

While reasonable efforts have been made to ensure the contents of this publication are factually correct, the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources makes no representations and accepts no responsibility for the accuracy, completeness or fitness for any particular purpose of the contents, and shall not be liable for any loss or damage that may be occasioned directly or indirectly through the use of or reliance on the contents of this publication.

Reference to any company, product or service in this publication should not be taken as a Departmental endorsement of the company, product or service.

© Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources. All rights reserved.
Published September 2012 | ISBN: 978-1-921800-24-5 | FIS: 91639