

GREEN AELAIDE

Regional Landscape Plan
2026–2031



Recognition of Kurna Miyurna

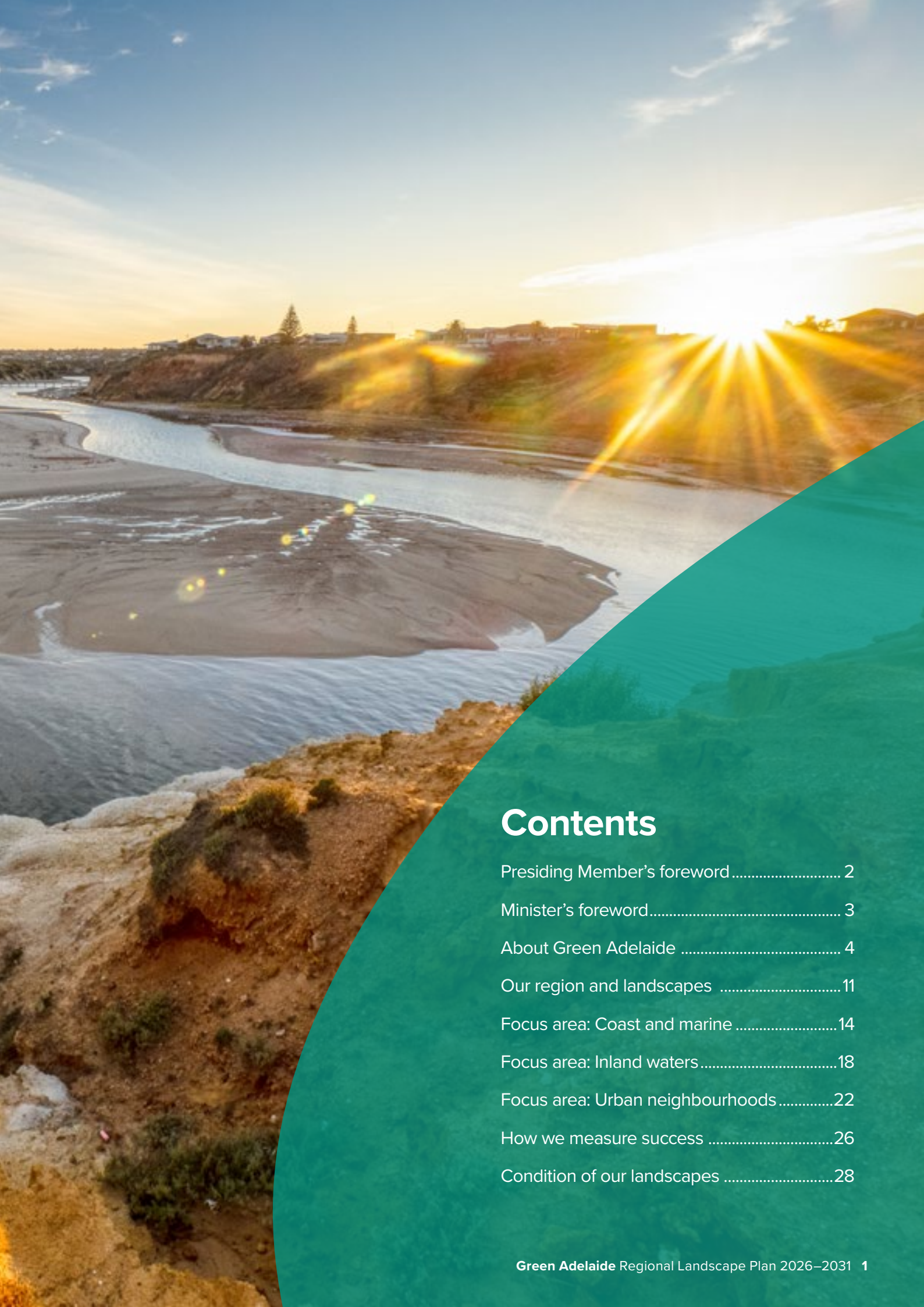
We acknowledge and respect the native title holders and traditional owners of the Green Adelaide region, the Kurna Miyurna (Kurna People), and pay homage to their ancestors who maintained the natural processes of the land we are on and whose spirits still dwell on Yarta (Country). Mutual respect and trust enable us to walk and work side-by-side to restore Yarta.

Looking to the future

Green Adelaide commits to strengthening the relationship with the Kurna Miyurna through environmental partnerships such as the one we hold with our Kurna strategic advisory group, Warpulai Kumangka (meaning 'working together').

We will work closely with Warpulai Kumangka and the Kurna Yarta Aboriginal Corporation (KYAC) to advance Kurna Miyurna aspirations for country through KYAC's Healthy Country Plan. This partnership prioritises strong governance and collaboration between all stakeholders, ensuring decision-making is inclusive, culturally informed and transparent.

We will support Warpulai Kumangka to implement an innovative, world-leading model for cultural engagement in the environmental sector. By fostering a mutually beneficial learning environment, the timeless knowledge of the Kurna Miyurna will guide sustainable growth of biodiversity in the Green Adelaide region. Together, we will raise awareness and build capacity around Aboriginal cultural knowledge, values and lore, embedding traditional practices in Green Adelaide-led projects and programs.



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Presiding Member's foreword

On behalf of the Green Adelaide Board, I am pleased to present our regional landscape plan 2026–2031.

As our second regional landscape plan since Green Adelaide was established, this plan reflects the evolution of our agency and outlines Green Adelaide's strategic intent over the next 5 years. It also reflects the times we are in – times of increasing environmental pressure, rapid urban change and growing community expectation for bold, coordinated action, while committing to the action required to support long-term environmental improvement.

Building on our solid foundations, this plan sets a sharper focus and a more refined direction so that we can continue to enable, influence and inspire environmental action across metropolitan Adelaide, with even more impact and urgency.

We thank everyone who contributed their insights, expertise and feedback throughout the development of the plan, helping us to refine our direction and strengthen our response to the challenges and opportunities ahead.

Since the establishment of Green Adelaide in 2020, we have achieved many successes, including delivering the Stage 3 redevelopment of Breakout Creek / Purruna Pari, developing metropolitan Adelaide's first Urban Greening Strategy, and leading the movement for Adelaide to become a National Park City. We have supported the recovery and reintroduction of threatened species in our region, enabled our community and partners to deliver important environmental outcomes through our grants programs, and so much more.

For this next chapter for Green Adelaide, we recognise that responding to climate change and the pressures of urban development will require courage, innovation and strong partnerships. We are committed to directing our effort towards 3 focus areas: coast and marine, inland waters, and urban neighbourhoods.

We have identified enabling functions that will guide our work, and actions that will deliver lasting impact for our

landscapes and communities. These enabling functions and actions will be reflected through targeted investment detailed in our annual business plans.

We will continue to develop and deliver meaningful projects over the next 5 years, responding to the realities of a changing climate and urban development, while seeking opportunities to enhance our urban and peri-urban landscapes with our partners. We know there is urgency in this work, and we are committed to taking practical, evidence-based action that delivers long-term environmental and community benefits.

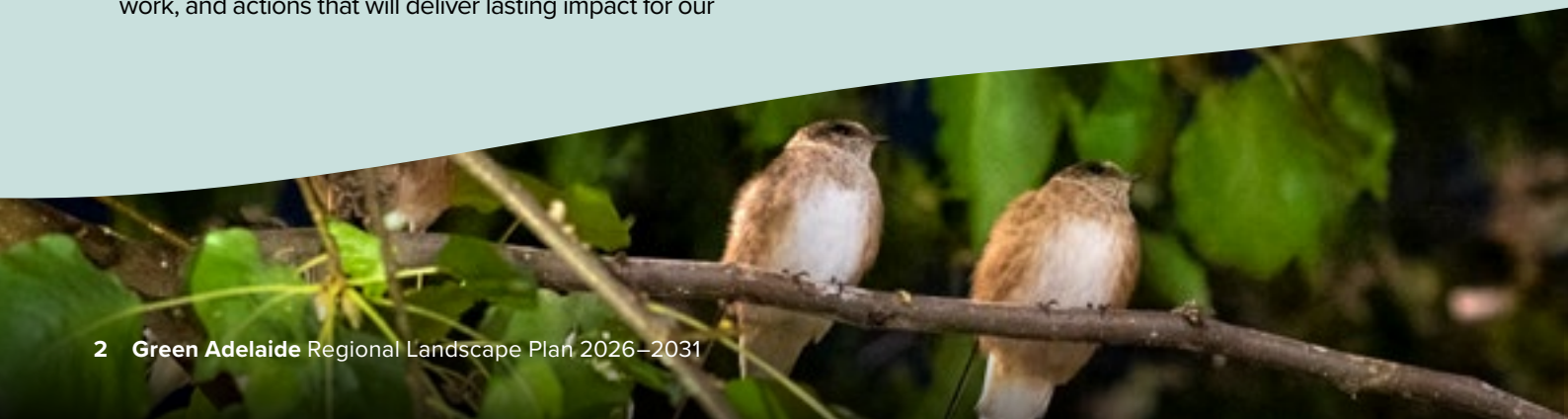
We also acknowledge that we face elements of uncertainty in our environment. We have particularly felt the impact of this uncertainty recently in the form of drought and the marine algal bloom, and are aware of the effect it has not just on our environment but on our communities too. We endeavour to respond to this uncertainty – and effectively plan for it when we can – and will adapt our work to maintain impact when circumstances change.

We know that our success relies on genuine and meaningful collaboration with many and varied partners across the region, and in doing so we will strive to deliver the best results for our metropolitan communities.

We look forward to delivering this 5-year regional landscape plan in partnership with all those who share our environmental aspirations for the region – a cooler, greener, wilder and more climate-resilient Adelaide that celebrates our unique culture.

Emeritus Professor Chris Daniels

Green Adelaide Board Presiding Member
BSc (Hons), PhD, DSc, FAICD





Minister's foreword

Green Adelaide demonstrates the importance of having those embedded in their communities help shape policy and drive practical environmental action from the northern and southern suburbs to the coast, and the foothills.

Its Board brings together local knowledge, diverse expertise and a shared commitment to creating a greener, more liveable Adelaide. Its second 5-year Regional Landscape Plan continues to support a vision for a cooler, greener and more climate resilient community, focusing clearly on the long-term actions that will strengthen the resilience of Adelaide's landscapes and biodiversity.

The Board remains steadfast in its investment in facilitating the implementation of the Urban Greening Strategy for metropolitan Adelaide and expansion of tree canopy, restoration of coastal habitats and urban river systems, and reintroduction and protection of native flora and fauna to deliver environmental outcomes, while also providing important co-benefits of delivering lasting social and economic benefits for current and future generations.

I am particularly proud of government led projects like the new Northern Park Lands which will play an important role in northern Adelaide, helping ensure

that we protect and create green space alongside with major housing growth, preserving places for nature and communities before homes are built.

The recent marine algal bloom, followed by the emergence of H5 Bird Flu has also highlighted how vital it is to continue investing in resilient, healthy and sustainable natural environments. In this context, the work of Green Adelaide has never been more important for sustained investment, science based decision making, and deep collaboration across government, industry, and community.

Together, we are helping to build a greener, more resilient Adelaide for future generations.

Hon Emily Bourke MLC

Minister for Climate, Environment and Water

About Green Adelaide

Who we are

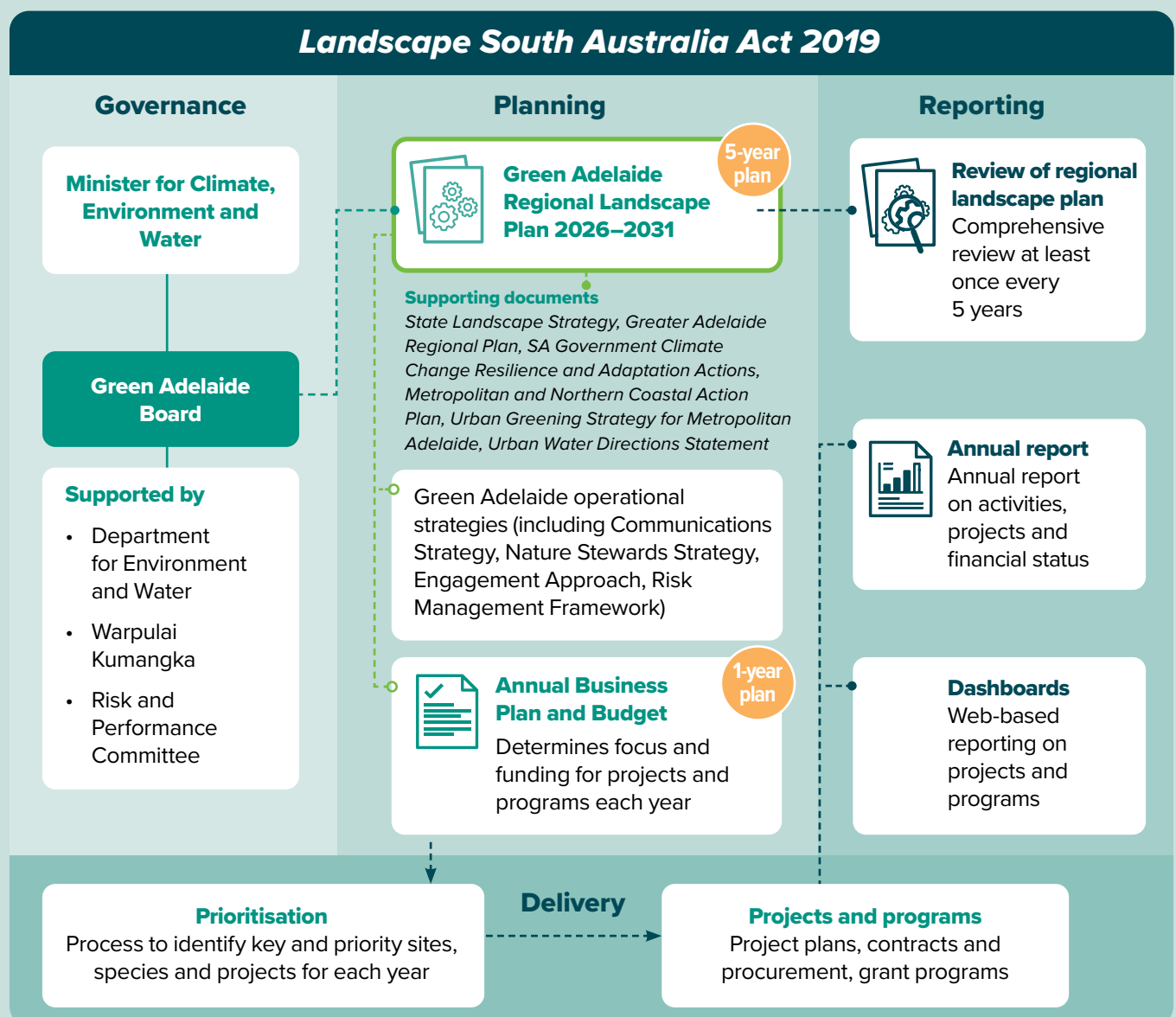
Green Adelaide is one of South Australia's 9 regional landscape boards tasked with undertaking, promoting and integrating the management of the state's land, water and biodiversity.

These landscape boards operate under the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019*, each focusing on a particular region of the state.

What makes Green Adelaide unique is that it's the only urban landscape board. Our remit spans the metropolitan Adelaide footprint – from Gawler River in the north to Sellicks Beach in the south, and east to west from the foothills to Gulf St Vincent.

Our role is to lead innovation and achieve positive outcomes across metropolitan Adelaide's urban landscapes. We do this by applying skills-based expertise to enable, influence and inspire the delivery of tangible environmental outcomes with our partners and communities.

Green Adelaide operates as a branch within the Department for Environment and Water and is guided by the strategic direction of the Green Adelaide Board.



This artwork, Kardalta Tarntanya, represents Green Adelaide's vision through the interconnected nature of our focus areas and the legislated priorities. It represents the relationships between the land, water, sea and biodiversity, and people keeping each other healthy, thriving and connected.

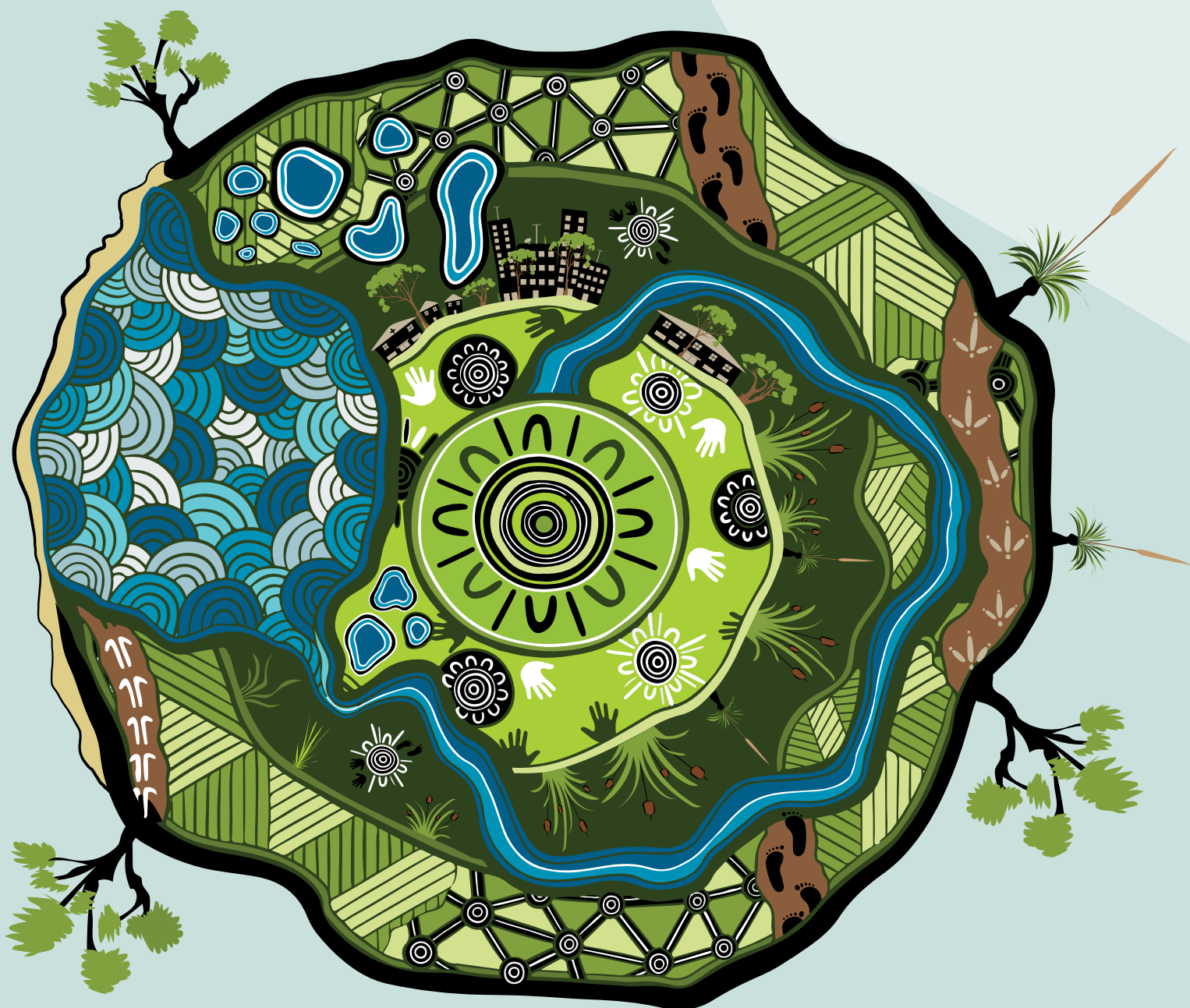


Illustration by Allan Sumner

What guides us

Our vision is for a cooler, greener, wilder and more climate-resilient Adelaide that celebrates our unique culture.

Our purpose is to inspire, support and connect our region, bringing people and place together to integrate nature into our urban spaces and create a thriving, biodiverse, and climate-ready region.

We aim to deliver tangible environmental outcomes for the region, working across 3 focus areas: **Coast and marine, Inland waters** and **Urban neighbourhoods**.

Our values

Collaboration

We unlock greater potential by working together – embracing, enhancing and respecting diverse disciplines, unique strengths and expertise.

Leadership

We inspire and facilitate collective action to drive meaningful change for our unique ecosystems and people, working towards shared goals with purpose, integrity and accountability.

Impact

We focus on measurable outcomes that create lasting, positive change for the ecological systems of our region.

Courage

We act boldly with integrity, remaining resilient when faced with complexity, and are prepared to challenge the status quo with determination.

How we're funded

The work of Green Adelaide is primarily funded by the regional landscape levy collected from ratepayers across Adelaide's 18 metropolitan councils, and water levies collected from water licence holders in our region.

This approach recognises that everyone has responsibilities around enjoying, managing and protecting our landscapes. Many of the activities that we engage in are also supported by financial or in-kind co-contributions from government and non-government organisations, volunteers and the broader community.

How we partner

For Green Adelaide to maximise our impact and deliver meaningful environmental outcomes, it's critical that we sustain strong strategic relationships.

We work collaboratively with local councils, state agencies, Kaurua Miyurna, non-government organisations, other landscape boards, communities, volunteers and individual landholders.

Our relationships are built on shared values, trust and transparency. We actively seek these qualities when we embark on new partnerships – and for partnerships that already exist, we uphold these qualities with the greatest respect.

Green Adelaide will continue to work with stakeholders in a range of different ways to deliver efficient and effective outcomes. These include:

- **Partnerships:** Collective efforts to achieve joint environmental benefit, such as working together to plan and coordinate activities.
- **Joint working:** Mutually beneficial efforts to achieve environmental outcomes, where both parties achieve their individual strategic initiatives by working together.
- **Fee for service:** Fees paid to engage a service provider to achieve specified outcomes.

How we work

We will contribute to achieving the aspirational environmental outcomes for our region by undertaking work consistent with these 5 enabling functions:

Catalyse on-ground action

We catalyse on-ground works through direct investment and partnering with landholders, community groups, and government and non-government organisations. Our investment enables partners to undertake these works, which include activities like planting, pest and weed control, species reintroductions and seed collection.

Develop and maintain data and evidence

We undertake monitoring and investigations to inform investment and to support our work and the work of our partners. This includes mapping projects, quality and condition assessments, and the sharing of data for partners and community access. We also support research and investigations to develop better approaches to enable positive environmental outcomes.

Facilitate collaboration

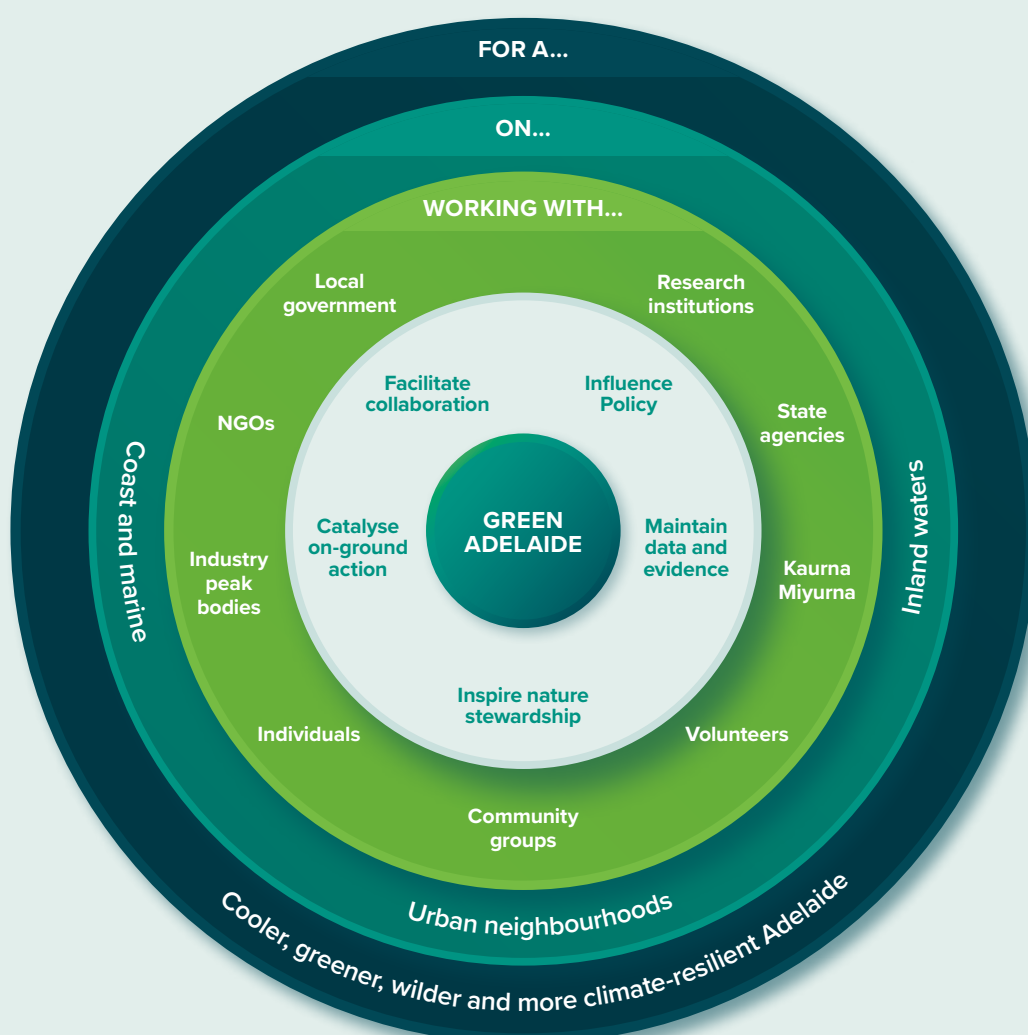
We actively engage in collaborative partnerships to maximise the delivery of environmental outcomes across our region. We provide leadership in bringing stakeholders together to plan and develop solutions to challenging problems, and support partnership approaches to action them.

Inspire nature stewardship

We build the capacity and capability of the people in our region to deliver environmental programs and outcomes by sharing information, education and engagement in targeted and accessible formats. When necessary, we also conduct compliance activities to encourage appropriate land and water management practices.

Influence policy

We provide advice on improving policies and planning for activities that impact our waterways, coast, marine and terrestrial environments, including our urban landscape. We also provide information and options to enable our partner agencies to achieve better environmental outcomes.

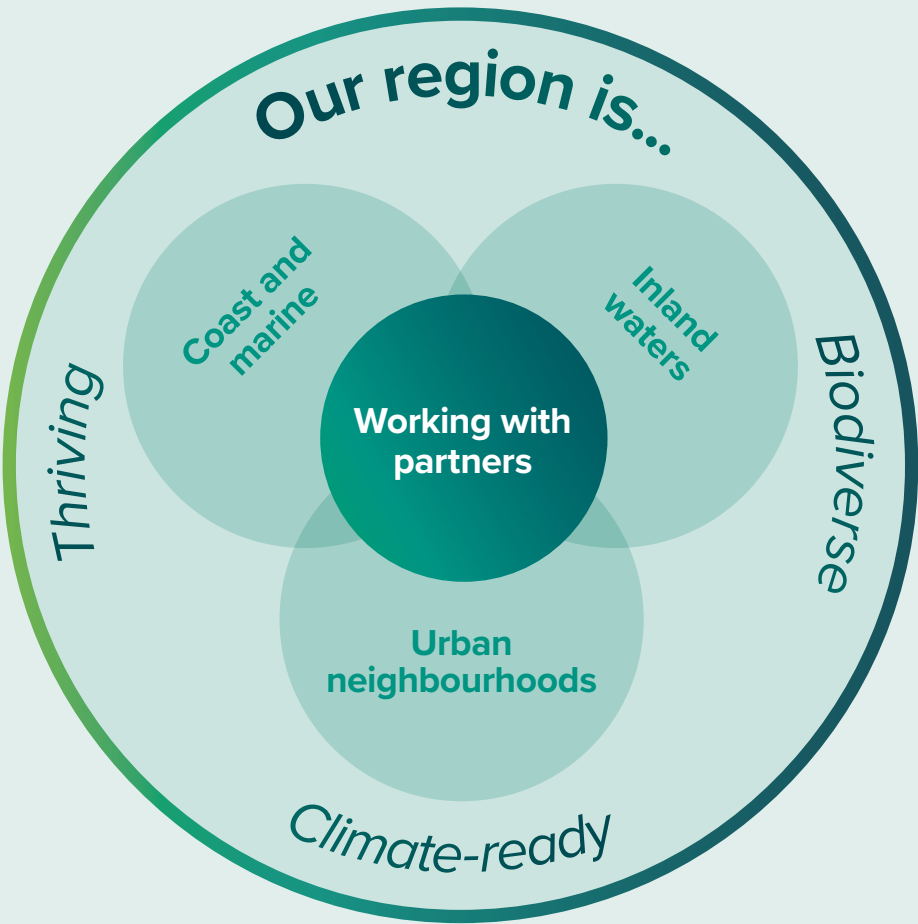


Investment principles

Green Adelaide makes significant investments to achieve environmental outcomes, and will assess proposals for work using these principles:

Strategic leadership	Alignment with our purpose, focus areas, enabling functions and actions to deliver a cooler, greener, wilder and climate-resilient region that celebrates our unique culture.
Collaboration	Broaden the impact of Green Adelaide, unlocking greater potential through co-investment and collaboration.
Kaurna values	Kaurna Miyurna’s voice and values are embedded into Green Adelaide’s business, and employment opportunities are considered.
Climate-ready	Our work and our investments are based on the most recent climate projections and contribute to building climate resilience and adapting to a changing climate.
Evidence-informed	Data, knowledge, trials and experimentation lead to stronger environmental decisions.
Regenerative	Decisions are driven by long-term environmental, social and economic regenerative opportunities.

Green Adelaide will publish annual business plans that document our proposed investment across a range of activities. The set of principles detailed above will be used to guide decision-making and target our investment.



Our direction for the next 5 years

This regional landscape plan sets our strategic direction for the next 5 years.

We've identified aspirational environmental outcomes for each of the 3 focus areas: Coast and marine, Inland waters, and Urban neighbourhoods.

We will contribute to achieving these outcomes through purposeful actions under our 5 enabling functions. This aligns with the 7 legislated priorities for Green Adelaide detailed in the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019* (as indicated in the table below).

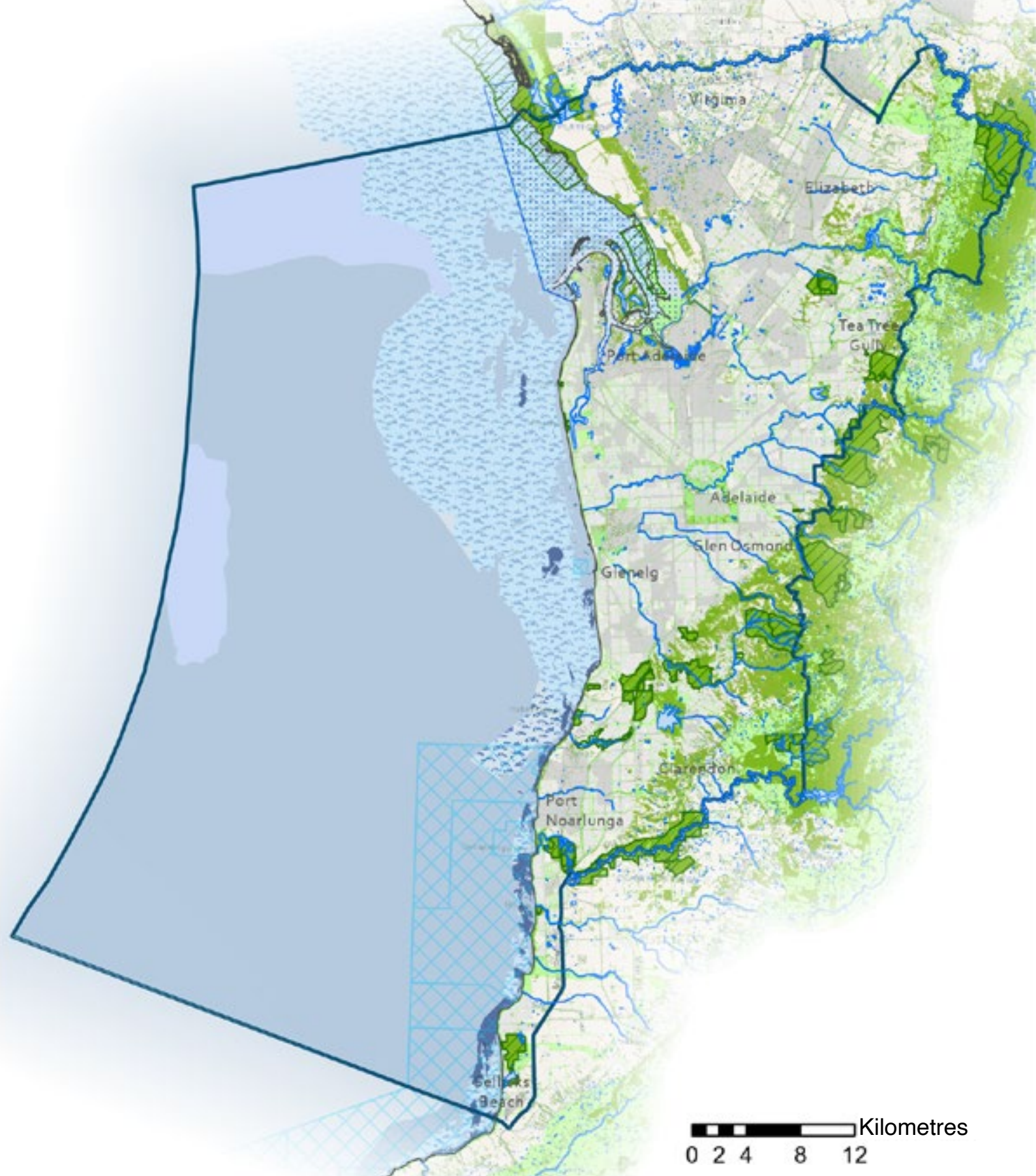
We will work in an integrated manner across our focus areas, acknowledging that action in one area may impact another. Actions for our focus areas will not be undertaken in isolation, and opportunities for aligned and coordinated implementation will be part of operational planning and delivery.

Our work will continue to be supported by a range of corporate functions, including finance, governance, human resources, risk management, legislative compliance, communications, strategy and planning.

This plan guides the activities we will undertake, and will be supported by annual business plans that more thoroughly outline the actions and collaboration required to achieve the outcomes. On the pages that follow, each of our focus areas will be explored in detail.

	Coast and marine	Inland waters	Urban neighbourhoods
Coastal management	✓		
Water resources and wetlands		✓	
Green streets and flourishing parklands			✓
Biodiversity-sensitive and water-sensitive urban design	✓	✓	✓
Fauna, flora and ecosystem health in the urban environment	✓	✓	✓
Controlling pest plants and animals	✓	✓	✓
Nature education	✓	✓	✓





- Water Courses
- Green Adelaide Region
- Water Bodies
- NPWSA Reserves
- State Marine Park Zoning
- Adelaide Dolphin Sanctuary

Terrestrial Environment

- Native vegetation contains known EPBC and/or NPW Act values
- Native vegetation may contain EPBC Act and/or NPW Act values
- Current Urban Areas
- Future urban development
- Open Space Network – Greenways

Marine Environment

- Seagrass
- Macroalgae and Invertebrate communities
- Reef
- Sand with macroalgae and seagrass
- Invertebrate communities

Our region and landscapes

Green Adelaide's region spans approximately 3,356 km² across metropolitan Adelaide and extends up to 30 km into Gulf St Vincent.

While the terrestrial part of the region is predominantly urban and peri-urban, it contains a range of key environmental assets, including remnant and restored patches of native vegetation, beaches, dune systems and coastal cliffs, and many watercourses and wetlands. It also includes areas used for primary production, such as horticulture on the Northern Adelaide Plains.

Off the coast, our region includes 2114 km² of marine area within the Gulf St Vincent. This area incorporates seagrass meadows and cool temperate reefs that are

critical for supporting a rich diversity of marine life, being high in ecological and economic value.

The landscape is constantly changing as metropolitan Adelaide grows, with development spreading to the northern and southern edges, replacing native vegetation and rural land.

With approximately 1.36 million people, the region contains 80% of the state's population.

Our communities are just as diverse as our landscape, with our population representing a broad range of socio-demographic characteristics.

Region at a glance

Size of region	3356 km ² (63% is marine; 37% is terrestrial)
Protected lands	88.2 km ² (including land under heritage agreements)
Protected waters	340 km ²
Watercourses	1700 km
Coastline	225 km
Population	1.36 million
Migrant population	32.5%
Language used at home	73% English only (27% language other than English)
Local government areas	17 councils
Residential area	35% (of terrestrial area of region)
Primary production area	22% (of terrestrial area of region)
Reserves (including sporting fields)	11% (of terrestrial area of region)
Roads	11% (of terrestrial area of region)
Commercial, industrial and public institutions	21% (of terrestrial area of region)
Impermeable surfaces	29.1% (of terrestrial area of region)
Tree canopy (3m and above)	16.5% (of terrestrial area of region)
Tallest tree	48.4 m (found in Mitcham)
Native vegetation	26.8% (of the terrestrial area of the region) remaining
Threatened ecological communities[#]	14 (4 are nationally threatened)
Threatened plant species[*]	53
Threatened animal species[*]	75
Native plant species[*]	1148
Native animal species[*]	946 vertebrates (including 431 birds, 61 mammals, 353 fish, 88 reptiles, and 13 amphibians) 3269 terrestrial
Introduced plant species[*]	913
Introduced animal species[*]	49

[#]as per Bushland Assessment Manual 2024 Appendix 11

^{*}Plant and animal species are as per Atlas of Living Australia, with threatened species identified as per *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

Note: all figures listed above are approximate as of October 2025.

Snapshot of factors influencing our region

Factor	Description
Population growth	Increase of 63,000 residents in the next 5 years
Housing growth	Additional 32,900 dwellings in the next 5 years
Employment lands	Additional 6.65 square km of land for employment in the next 5 years
Ageing population	Increase in active retirees (65-79 years old) by 30% by 2051
Urban heat intensity	Urban areas are 3.2 degrees Celsius higher than undeveloped areas
More days of extreme heat	Extra 1.6 days per year above 40 degrees Celsius by 2030
Average daily maximum temperature	Increase by 1.2 degrees Celsius by 2030
Annual rainfall change*	Decrease in annual rainfall by 7.5% by 2030, but an increase in high rainfall events
Sea level rise*	Increase of 12 cm by 2030
Sea surface temperature*	Increase by 0.5 degrees Celsius by 2030
Ocean acidification	There is very high confidence that around Australia the ocean will become more acidic

*1986-2005 baseline



Climate change

Climate change will create challenges for our region and, in turn, influence the work we do. It is expected to cause:

- increased temperatures, with associated risks of more days of 'extreme heat' and bushfire
- sea level rise, ocean acidification and warming
- reduced rainfall, although an increase in extreme high water flow events.

The Australian Government's National Climate Risk Assessment helps identify risk areas for us to prioritise, and the South Australian Government's Climate Change Risk and Opportunity Assessment report outlines how these impacts translate into risks that will need to be managed or adapted. These assessments provide insight into areas of need and help inform the activity required to mitigate and adapt to climate change risks.

The climate change related risks recognised as the most relevant to Green Adelaide and our work are:

- significant loss of biodiversity
- more intense erosion and inundation of coastal structures and ecosystems
- adverse impacts on flood and coastal protection defences such as levee banks, seawalls and beach replenishment
- adverse impacts on water availability, quality, supply and demand.

Green Adelaide will continue to work on understanding and addressing climate change-related risks associated with our focus areas and relevant to our actions.



Focus area: Coast and marine

A snapshot of our coast and marine environment

Our region includes 225 km of coastline, from the Gawler River estuary in the north to Sellicks Beach in the south, and 2,114 km² of marine waters in Gulf St Vincent.

This area makes up almost 63% of the Green Adelaide region and is home to a diverse range of coast and marine ecosystems and species.

It covers everything from offshore islands, intertidal and subtidal rocky reefs, seagrass meadows, estuaries and wetlands, to rocky shores, cliffs, sand dunes and beaches, as well as mudflats, mangrove and saltmarsh stretching inland from the coast.

These environments provide vital habitat for a wide range of flora and fauna, supporting many species that are unique to southern Australia as well as resident and migratory species of conservation significance.

Healthy seagrass, mangroves, saltmarsh and dune systems are critical for nutrient recycling and protecting the coastline from erosion and shielding nearby developed areas from flooding during storm surges. The extent and quality of these areas mean they are also well-placed to capture and store blue carbon, making it even more critical that we prioritise these areas for conservation and restoration.

The northern part of our region is a key feeding and roosting site for migratory shorebirds flying from as far away as Alaska and Siberia (as the southern gateway to the Adelaide International Bird Sanctuary). Our marine waters are home to many significant fish and invertebrate species, including an urban pod of Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphins that can be found in the Adelaide Dolphin Sanctuary (Port River Estuary and surrounds).

Along with their environmental value, the coast and the gulf are also critical from a socio-economic perspective. A large proportion of residents live along the Adelaide coastline, and many others travel to use and interact with the coast and marine environment for social, health and wellbeing reasons. Adelaide's beaches are the most visited public land in South Australia and are highly valued by residents and visitors alike.

Many recreational, commercial and industrial activities also rely on thriving coastal and marine ecosystems.



Why we're driven to act

While the significance of our coast and marine environment is clear, so too are the challenges and opportunities it faces.

Threats to coastal environments include climate change, urban residential and industrial development, population growth and increasing coastal visitation and recreational use, which can impact our sensitive coast and marine environment.

Our marine life and habitats are vulnerable to rising sea temperatures and marine heatwaves, and the effects of these may be heightened in the shallow waters of Gulf St Vincent.

The impact of rising sea levels is a direct threat to our coastline, as is the occurrence of more severe and destructive storms, which lead to degradation and habitat destruction. Healthy coastlines and estuaries can help to mitigate these impacts, so it's critical that we continue to strengthen coastal resilience through nature-based solutions.

Our beaches are highly valued, and there are many opportunities to work with engaged and interested communities to conserve and protect our unique coastal environment.

Our active community members can help us better protect our coastlines from the many pest plant and animal species that have become established along our coastline.

The impact of stormwater discharge, through the nutrients and sediments that flow out to sea is an ongoing challenge. This discharge affects near-shore marine habitats and biodiversity, impacting their long-term health and resilience. Our ability to integrate practices such as water-sensitive urban design (WSUD) throughout our catchments provide opportunities to protect the receiving waters of Gulf St Vincent.



Coast and marine actions and outcomes

Our enabling functions	The actions that we will undertake
Catalyse on-ground action	Drive conservation efforts for priority flora and fauna species, marine and coastal habitats, in partnership with landholders and communities, guided by the Metropolitan Adelaide and Northern Coastal Action Plan (MANCAP) and local biodiversity plans. Co-design and co-fund threat abatement, including minimising human disturbances and controlling priority pest plants and animals, in partnership with landholders and communities. Influence and enable conservation and enhancement of coastal habitat to build resilience to climate change impacts including marine heat waves and algal blooms.
Develop and maintain data and evidence	Continue to undertake targeted coastal and marine biodiversity and habitat monitoring programs for priority species and habitats, to inform conservation and protection efforts and to enable region-wide assessment and reporting. Track existing and new threats to coast and marine ecosystems, including climate change, pests, pollution, stormwater flows and development. Incentivise research that will improve and increase options for coastal and marine management. Strengthen understanding of social drivers, including values associated with behaviour change, to support the achievement of sustainable coastal use.
Facilitate collaboration	Establish and maintain partnerships with coastal councils and other key landholders for the protection and care of coastal habitats for key species and to promote connectivity across coastal areas, contributing to the implementation of the MANCAP. Co-design approaches to coast and marine management with landowners, communities, Kaurua Miyurna, relevant agencies and organisations.
Inspire nature stewardship	Work with communities and engage professional networks to provide expert advice, support awareness and foster capacity-building on coastal and marine management. Inform and build capacity of coastal residents, communities and volunteers to support positive behaviours and develop ambassadors for the conservation and enhancement of coastal habitats and wildlife. Design and deliver initiatives that strengthen coastal stewardship by incorporating local values, knowledge and success stories, providing expert advice and targeted education on coastal and marine environments, and empowering community leaders.

Our enabling functions	The actions that we will undertake
Influence policy	Assess and provide technical advice and guidance to drive enhanced conservation and enhancement for coastal and marine environments. Undertake assessments to identify key risks, including climate change and development, and work with landholders to ensure mitigation or adaptation options are identified for environmental assets. Influence policy through collaboration with partners, undertaking pilot projects and building evidence to shape government priorities.
Aspirational outcomes that Green Adelaide's actions will contribute to:	
Improved coast and marine habitats	Remnant coastal vegetation and connectivity corridors at priority sites are conserved, restored and enhanced. Coastal habitats at priority sites are protected, conserved and enhanced. Marine habitats, including reef and seagrass ecosystems, are restored and conserved at priority locations.
Improved species populations	Populations of priority flora and fauna species are maintained and increased at priority sites. Habitat for priority shorebirds and seabirds is protected, improved and restored at priority sites.
Reduced impacts of pests and other threats	Distribution and impacts of priority coastal pest plants and animals, and marine pests, are understood and managed where possible. Threats of climate change and pollution are better understood and mitigation actions are investigated.

Determining priority species and locations

The collaboratively produced MANCAP guides coastal actions, including priority locations and species for directing effort. Coastal works are carried out in partnership and with permission from landowners, primarily on public land under control of local councils or national parks with some sections under private ownership. Factors informing priority works include biodiversity and conservation values, scope for restoration, landholder agreement, the relationship of the site to Kauria Miyurna and the ability to leverage investment.

The coastal and marine priorities will be reviewed and determined annually as part of Green Adelaide's business planning processes. They may be reviewed at interim periods if significant reasons arise, such as if greater ability to leverage funding for major works or an unforeseen major risk to the natural environment becomes evident.



Focus area: Inland waters

A snapshot of our inland waters

With Adelaide's relatively dry climate, water is vital for quality of life, public wellbeing and the natural environment.

Our region has approximately 1,700 km of watercourses, including rivers, streams and creeks, along with wetlands and groundwater resources. Collectively, these are our inland waters, and they provide a wide range of environmental, economic and social benefits.

Our major watercourses include the Torrens and Onkaparinga rivers, which flow from the Mount Lofty Ranges and across the region to the coast. We also have several smaller rivers that are important to the region, including the Gawler, South Para, Little Para, Sturt and Field rivers, along with a network of creeks spread across the landscape.

Many of these watercourses are seasonal or ephemeral in nature, generally flowing during winter and spring while maintaining permanent pools over summer and autumn.

The natural riparian areas along these watercourses provide food and habitat for fauna, and act as biodiversity corridors that run through our urban landscape.

More broadly, they support a diverse range of environmental, social and cultural outcomes, such as providing opportunities for active and passive recreation, and acting as meeting places with rich traditional storytelling significance.

Across our region, there are also a number of natural and constructed wetlands, which provide food and habitat for aquatic fauna, including native species like rakali and native freshwater fish.

These wetlands also help to manage stormwater quantity and quality – often to capture and treat runoff before it is discharged out to sea or utilised for other purposes.

Groundwater sustains the upper reaches of some of our watercourses, both for base flow and permanent pools, and supports land-based vegetation like river red gums.

Groundwater, mainly from sedimentary aquifers of the Adelaide Plains, is also relied on for commercial industry and for irrigation of quality public and private green spaces. Our partners make significant efforts to manage these systems, as well as to capture, store and later recover stormwater for a variety of uses, including to support urban greening.



Why we're driven to act

The responsibility for managing our region's water resources is shared by landholders, which includes state government, councils, businesses and individuals.

Land use change and urbanisation are significantly changing the way water needs to be managed in the landscape.

This brings unique opportunities to address complex issues to achieving an integrated urban water management approach across the region.

With urban development comes impervious surfaces, leading to greater water runoff and less infiltration into the soil. By working with our partners we can change the way stormwater is managed as development occurs, particularly by introducing WSUD throughout the urban landscape.

This has the potential to reduce stormwater volume, improve water quality and extend the life of existing stormwater systems, including reducing localised flooding and watercourse flow and discharge into Gulf St Vincent during high rainfall events.

Best-practice stormwater management can improve the health of watercourses and reduce the movement of pollutants such as fuels, heavy metals, excessive nutrients and pathogens through our waterways into our sensitive coast and marine environments.

Climate change is a critical driver too. Over the past 30 years, rainfall has declined and storm intensity, including high-intensity short-duration rainfall events, has increased, which has significantly changed stormwater volumes and the natural flow regime of watercourses throughout the region. These altered flow regimes have the capacity to impact native aquatic fauna that rely on natural cues for lifecycle stages.

Remediation and restoration of watercourses will help mitigate the negative impacts of historical development and future climate change. Reducing barriers like dams and weirs that impede the movement of native fish species, including those species that require freshwater and estuaries or the ocean to complete their lifecycles, will help improve our watercourses and the biodiversity within them.

We have opportunities to create less fragmented and healthier riparian habitat by connecting watercourses and wetlands, reducing concreted sections, and managing introduced flora and fauna that outcompete native species. This will create healthier rivers and creeks that help our native species survive and thrive.



Inland waters actions and outcomes

Our enabling functions	Actions that we will undertake
Catalyse on-ground action	Co-design and co-fund planting, weed control, habitat protection, restoration, and species reintroduction activities with councils, state agencies, and other landholders, incorporating rare and threatened flora species along waterways. Promote the value and importance of, and incentivise the adoption of, WSUD principles, gross pollutant traps and sediment control measures to improve stormwater quality in new developments and upgrades to existing assets. Explore options and funding opportunities for collaborative projects focussed on naturalising and improving connectivity within waterways.
Develop and maintain data and evidence	Continue, and investigate extending, monitoring programs for surface water and riparian and aquatic species and habitat to support and improve baseline condition and trend analysis, including representative sites to enable region-wide assessment and reporting.
Facilitate collaboration	Co-design and co-fund the development and collaborative implementation of management and restoration plans for key waterways to inform future prioritisation of resources, partnering with landowners, Kaurua Miyurna, relevant agencies and organisations. Assess and provide technical advice on urban water management, including stormwater management plans, to improve inflows into waterways and Gulf St Vincent.
Inspire nature stewardship	Promote the value and importance of integrated water management to key land managers and other agencies, particularly where this also achieves biodiversity outcomes. Improve landowner and community awareness and responsibilities for watercourse management. Inform and build capacity of residents, communities and volunteers to support positive behaviours for the protection and conservation of aquatic and riparian habitats and wildlife.
Influence policy	Assess and provide technical advice and guidance to achieve adequate environmental flows into the South Para River, the River Torrens and Onkaparinga River, including embedding them in water management frameworks. Develop region-wide policies and procedures to protect inland waters, including adequate controls for water affecting activities and developing water allocation plans. Support and advocate for capacity-building programs for WSUD and integrated water management to improve uptake across the region, including incorporation into planning and development frameworks and policies. Advocate for controls to improve stormwater management (quantity and quality) in the planning system to protect receiving waters. Undertake assessments to identify key risks, including climate change and development, and work with landholders to ensure mitigation or adaptation options are identified for environmental assets.

Aspirational outcomes that Green Adelaide's actions will contribute to:

Improved condition of waterways

Sections of priority waterways are conserved, restored or naturalised.

Adequate environmental flows into South Para River, the River Torrens and Onkaparinga River are provided.

The quantity and quality of stormwater flows into key watercourses are improved.

Improved species and habitat

The connectivity between priority sites within aquatic systems is improved to allow native aquatic fauna movement, focusing on the South Para River, the River Torrens and Onkaparinga River.

The condition of native species, including fish and macroinvertebrate communities, in waterways are maintained or improved.

The condition and extent of riparian vegetation along key watercourses is improved.

Reduced impacts of pests and other threats

Aquatic and riparian pest plants and animals are reduced from priority sites and key waterways.

Determining priority species and locations

Decisions on priority locations and species for work are guided by many factors, particularly as ownership of watercourses and surrounding lands is complex and involves local and state governments, businesses and private individuals. Factors that inform decision-making include the extent of existing partnerships and functional relationships, the relationship of the site to Kaurua Miyurna, the ability to provide managed environmental flows, the biodiversity value upstream and downstream of a location and opportunities for ecological linkages, and the challenges associated with governance and access to land for both initial works and ongoing maintenance. Priority species are determined using the process outlined under the Urban Neighbourhoods section of this plan.

These priorities will be reviewed and determined annually as part of Green Adelaide's business planning processes. They may be reviewed at interim periods if significant reasons arise, such as if greater ability to leverage funding for major works or an unforeseen major risk to the natural environment becomes evident.

Focus area: Urban neighbourhoods

A snapshot of our urban neighbourhoods

Being an urban landscape board, we have a unique and diverse landscape compared to others in our state. It includes the built-up central business district of Adelaide and the sprawling suburban areas, major outer metropolitan nodes, concentrated industrial and commercial districts, parks and reserves, and primary production areas, along with a diverse mix of vegetation types dotted through the urban landscape and along our region's fringes.

Our region contains a range of natural and novel ecosystems. Natural ecosystems include wetlands, estuaries, grasslands, shrublands, forests and woodlands. Novel and built ecosystems include urban parks, streetscapes and modified green corridors, such as along our waterways. Currently about 27% of the remnant native vegetation remains as fragmented patches in our region, with much of this being fragmented by urban and agricultural land uses.

Our region also includes some of the Mount Lofty Ranges, which is a nationally recognised biodiversity hotspot that supports a high diversity of native species and vegetation communities, some of which are of state, national and global significance.

Our region is home to 4 ecological communities that are listed as threatened under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*: grey box grassy woodland, peppermint box grassy woodland, subtropical and temperate coastal saltmarsh, and irongrass grassland.

In our built-up areas, we have a relatively low diversity of trees in streets and reserves, which are also constrained by above-ground and below-ground infrastructure. Our population of 1.36 million is rapidly growing, with many new large urban developments planned for the near future. As the city has grown, our green spaces have shrunk and in 2022 we had 16.5% tree canopy cover across the region.

Quality green space and canopy cover that is biologically diverse is fundamentally important to human health, both in natural areas and within the built environment. A green and biodiverse urban environment that includes a high proportion of diverse planted spaces can provide habitat and critical refuges for native animals and plants. It can also provide ecosystem services, such as improved stormwater quality, reduced runoff and erosion, improved air quality, cooling of the area, and the capture and storage of carbon dioxide that can help to mitigate climate change.



Why we're driven to act

Increasing urban development and intensification of peri-urban growth is occurring across the region to support our growing population and changing demographics. Without actively considering the role of greening and biodiversity in the urban environment, we risk losing space for trees and other vegetation and reducing the comfort and liveability of our city.

Across much of metropolitan Adelaide, population growth is being accommodated through greenfield and infill development. This results in increased housing density and the cumulative loss of private green space, tree canopy and urban habitat, and places greater pressure on remaining landscapes to deliver biodiversity, cooling and liveability outcomes.

In the competition for space to meet the needs of our urban communities, hard infrastructure often wins out over formal or informal open space. We have opportunities to build better, in ways that improve the greening and biodiversity of our urban areas. The practices of biodiversity-sensitive urban design (BSUD) and WSUD can help us work with our partners to create liveable, green and healthy developments across our urban area.

Only a small proportion of our region is conserved within formally protected areas, leaving our remaining green spaces, unique biodiversity, and many ecosystems, vulnerable. In addition, large areas of highly valued biodiversity are on private land. Improving our knowledge and understanding of this existing biodiversity is important so that we can better facilitate its care and protection.

Strong partnerships with landholders, councils and developers will help obtain the best environmental outcomes to create communities with high quality greening and open spaces.

With a changing climate, the potential impacts on our native flora and fauna could be dire, as are the impacts for our communities. Hotter temperatures will mean reduced survival for many of our plants – increased temperatures can increase growth, which will impact our urban green spaces, tree canopy and habitat for our native animals. Diverse, climate-resilient planting, supported by the use of multiple water sources throughout our urban areas, has potential to mitigate many of the impacts of climate change.

With more urbanisation, buildings and hard surfaces, the heat island effect could become greater – and so too the impact on ecosystems, human health and wellbeing. This provides impetus for improving canopy cover and green space throughout our gardens, backyards, streetscapes, parks and reserves.

By working together to protect remnant native vegetation and increasing the variety of species planted along our streets, we can be better placed to conserve biodiversity and address biosecurity risks such as pests and diseases that threaten the health of our trees, particularly across our built-up areas where the diversity of street trees is low.

Planning and preparing for these risks is critical to ensure a thriving urban forest exists into the future.



Urban neighbourhoods actions and outcomes

Our enabling functions	Actions that we will undertake
Catalyse on-ground action	Undertake activities to improve the condition of plant communities and habitats, and to facilitate the recovery of priority threatened species, including translocations and reintroductions. Support private landholders, councils and other relevant organisations to deliver activities that reduce the impacts of pests and improve the conservation prospects for native species and native plant communities. Incentivise, build capacity and provide clarity to developers and major landholders, scaling up and improving urban greening efforts by providing guidance on incorporating BSUD and WSUD. Lead investigations, incentivise and build capacity for agencies and landholders to improve greening and cooling and enhance biodiversity and climate resilience across urban areas. Partner on large infrastructure projects to deliver increased greening and biodiversity and enhance climate resilience.
Develop and maintain data and evidence	Establish and develop data systems for mapping tree canopy cover, urban heat and regional biodiversity including critical habitat, to inform policy development and planning of on-ground works by organisations across the region. Establish and share information on impact-causing native animals in urban and peri-urban areas to support development of mitigation actions with partners. Further develop an understanding of key risks to biodiversity, greening and tree canopy (particularly focused on climate change, development, and biosecurity risks) and establish mitigation strategies. Support research that increases our understanding of techniques for biodiverse greening and conservation activities across the region. Investigate establishment of baseline monitoring to develop consistent region-wide biodiversity datasets and reporting.
Facilitate collaboration	Provide coordination and leadership to establish cross-organisational collaborations to identify opportunities for biodiversity conservation and biodiverse greening across urban areas and new developments. Develop and foster new and existing partnerships with Kaurua Miyuna, individuals, organisations and groups to improve understanding of local flora and fauna, and how to support its conservation and inclusion into the urban landscape. Develop and facilitate implementation of a pest plant and animal strategy to guide actions of landholders across the region.
Inspire nature stewardship	Provide advice, information, education and engagement opportunities to stakeholders and communities to improve biodiverse greening within the region. Support and build capacity of the community and other stakeholders to engage in biodiversity conservation through on-ground action, monitoring programs (including citizen science) and education opportunities. Inform and build capacity of residents, communities and volunteers to develop local champions for improving biodiverse greening and biodiversity conservation. Develop practical guidance on how to accommodate trees and other green infrastructure to improve cooling, amenity and biodiversity of urban and peri-urban areas.

Our enabling functions	Actions that we will undertake
Influence policy	Build capacity for BSUD to improve its uptake across the region, including incorporation into planning and development frameworks and policies. Undertake assessments to identify key risks, including climate change and development, and work with stakeholders to ensure mitigation or adaptation options are identified for environmental assets. Investigate differential tree canopy targets for a variety of land uses and landscape types. Assess and provide technical advice on enhancing terrestrial biodiversity and urban greening in appropriate contexts, including mapping of remnant and critical habitats to inform planning, development and policy.

Aspirational outcomes that Green Adelaide's actions will contribute to:	
Improved and better conserved biodiversity	Native flora, fauna and ecological communities are protected and conserved at priority sites. Populations and extent of priority species and threatened ecological communities are expanded through restoration. Biodiversity is integrated into new developments and retrofits of existing hard infrastructure.
Improved quality and extent of urban greening	Awareness and implementation of BSUD principles, particularly for new developments, are increased. Urban greening in priority areas is increased.
Reduced impacts of pests and other threats	Pest plants and animals, along with impact-causing native animals, are managed to support protection and restoration of remnant vegetation communities and urban biodiversity. New and emerging pests are identified and controlled before they become established in the region.

Determining priority species and locations

Decisions on priority species are guided by the Biological Database of South Australia and local expert knowledge on species of conservation interest. They are also informed by the capacity of a species for recovery as well as other factors such as other agency priorities, access to resources to undertake recovery efforts, Kaurua Miyurna cultural significance and community support. The priority list for fauna and flora will be reviewed and determined annually as part of Green Adelaide's business planning processes. It may be reviewed at interim periods if significant findings or changes occur – with final decision on changes to priority species being made by the Green Adelaide Board.

Priority locations for investment towards urban greening will be identified using tree canopy, urban heat and socio-economic data. Other data, such as active transport corridors and demographic factors, may also be incorporated to assist with decision-making.

How we measure success

To understand the effectiveness of our activities and the value of our investment, we are committed to regular monitoring, reporting and evaluation. This involves reporting on our activities, evaluating the success of this plan, and providing environmental data for the region.

Green Adelaide's annual activity

We will report on activity through a range of annual measures. The annual measures will provide an indication of the work that we have undertaken each year in implementing this plan. They will be reported through our Annual Measures Dashboard. Our Annual Highlights Report will also provide a qualitative snapshot of some of our major achievements.



Evaluating implementation of this plan

We aim to assess success in performing the 5 enabling functions in this plan. This assessment will have a focus on clear evaluation questions that will be documented in a separate Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement (MERI) framework to support this plan.

Themes that will guide development of these questions are presented below.

Enabling function	Guidance for key evaluation questions
Catalyse on-ground action	Influence of investment
Develop and maintain data and evidence	Quality, comprehensiveness and availability of data and information
Facilitate collaboration	Quality, strength and diversity of partnerships
Inspire nature stewardship	Breadth and depth of community awareness and action
Influence policy	Extent and strength of policy influence

Monitoring environmental change

We will continue to resource a range of monitoring programs focused on collecting and reporting data for indicators of regional environmental condition. They will be reported through the publicly accessible 'Dashboards' on the Green Adelaide website as far as possible. This data may help to inform the work occurring within the region, whether by us or others.

We will, at a minimum, monitor the following indicators of regional environmental condition:

Monitoring programs	Indicators monitored
Coast and marine	
Reef ecosystems	Fish and invertebrate biodiversity, biomass, fish thermal index (climate), macroalgae cover, pest species, species of conservation concern
Marine debris	Pollution abundance and diversity (number of pieces, composition, weight)
Inland waters	
Water quality	Total flow and flow rate, nitrogen, phosphorus, sediment
Fish biodiversity	Species diversity, recruitment and survivorship, length, weight, fish health indices
Urban neighbourhoods	
Tree canopy	Regional canopy cover, canopy cover by local government area, tree height, canopy change over time

The Green Adelaide Dashboards are accessible at www.greenadelaide.sa.gov.au/about-us/dashboards.

Condition of our landscapes

There are a number of measures that assist Green Adelaide to understand the condition of the environment in the region. The tables below provide a snapshot of available data on the condition of the landscape for our 3 focus areas.

For some measures of environmental condition, Green Adelaide maintains 'Dashboards' that report observations from regional monitoring programs in an accessible interactive format (see www.greenadelaide.sa.gov.au/about-us/dashboards).

For a range of other measures, Green Adelaide is reliant on the Department for Environment and Water's Environmental Trend and Condition Report Cards (see www.environment.sa.gov.au/about-us/our-reports/trend-and-condition-report-cards).

While there are several indicators where trend and/or condition is unknown for the Green Adelaide region, data collection and analysis is ongoing and more comprehensive reporting of the condition of our landscapes will continue to be investigated.

State of the landscape: Coast and marine

Measures reported through Green Adelaide Dashboards

Measure	Trend
Fish species richness¹	Northern and Metro Adelaide – Increasing (2015-2022) Southern Metro – Stable (2008-2022)
Macroinvertebrate species richness¹	Northern and Metro Adelaide – Decreasing (2015-2022) Southern Metro – Stable (2008-2022)
Macroalgae coverage¹	Northern and Metro Adelaide – Stable (2015-2020) Southern Metro – Stable (2015-2020)
Marine debris²	Not assigned – trend not analysed in the reporting period (2010-2022)

¹ Green Adelaide Reef Ecosystems Dashboard

² Green Adelaide Marine Debris Dashboard

Measures reported through DEW Trend and Condition Report Cards

Measure	Trend	Condition
Seagrass percentage cover	Getting better	Unknown – no agreed condition thresholds (extent 23.9% within sampling sites)
Mangrove vegetation percentage cover	Unknown	Unknown – no agreed condition thresholds (extent 1.398% of terrestrial area of the region)
Coastal saltmarsh percentage cover	Unknown	Unknown – no agreed condition thresholds (extent 0.499% of terrestrial area of the region)
Coast and marine native flora percentage declining	Unknown	Unknown – no agreed condition thresholds



Measures reported through DEW Trend and Condition Report Cards

Measure	Trend	Condition
Coast and marine native fauna percentage declining	Unknown	Unknown – no agreed condition thresholds
Coast and marine established invasive species abundance and distribution	Stable	Good (statewide rating)
Coast and marine new incursions of invasive species	Getting worse	Good (statewide rating)

State of the landscape: Inland waters

Measures reported through Green Adelaide Dashboards

Measure	Trend	Condition
Fish biodiversity³	Not assigned – trend not analysed within the reporting period (2011-2024)	Site condition rated as Good at 9 sites, Intermediate at 42 sites, and Poor at 20 sites within the Green Adelaide region (at the last time each site was visited within the reporting period)
Suspended solids (mg/L)⁴	Getting better at 6 sites and getting worse at 4 sites Not assigned at 4 sites (<95% confidence)	Not assigned – condition thresholds not defined
Total Nitrogen (mg/l)⁴	Getting better at 5 sites and getting worse at 3 sites Not assigned at 6 sites (<95% confidence)	Not assigned – condition thresholds not defined

Measures reported through Green Adelaide Dashboards

Measure	Trend	Condition
Total Phosphorous (mg/L)⁴	Getting better at 4 sites and getting worse at 3 sites Not assigned at 7 sites (<95% confidence)	Not assigned – condition thresholds not defined
Salinity (EC – $\mu\text{s/cm}$)⁴	Getting better at 5 sites and getting worse at 2 sites Not assigned at 10 sites (<95% confidence)	Not assigned – condition thresholds not defined

³ Green Adelaide Fish Biodiversity Dashboard

⁴ Green Adelaide Water Quality Dashboard

Measures reported through DEW Trend and Condition Report Cards

Measure	Trend	Condition
Aquatic Ecosystem Condition (based on Environment Protection Authority aquatic ecosystem condition reporting)	Getting better based on 16 sites across the Green Adelaide region visited 3 or more times within the reporting period (2008 – 2021)	Site condition rated as Very Good at 1 site, Good at 18 sites, Fair at 14 sites, and Poor at 11 sites within the Green Adelaide region (at the last time each site was visited within the reporting period)
Inland waters native flora percentage declining	Unknown	Unknown – no agreed condition thresholds
Inland waters native fauna percentage declining	Unknown	Unknown – no agreed condition thresholds
Inland waters established invasive species abundance and distribution	Stable	Poor (statewide rating)
Inland waters new incursions of invasive species	Unknown	Unknown (statewide rating)

State of the landscape: Urban neighbourhoods

Measures reported through Green Adelaide Dashboards

Measure	Trend	Condition
Tree canopy (3 m and above)⁴	Not assigned – further data required	Fair (extent 16.5% of terrestrial area of the region)

⁴ Green Adelaide Green Streets Dashboard

Measures reported through DEW Trend and Condition Report Cards

Measure	Trend	Condition
Urban heat intensity	Stable (between 2014 and 2023)	Fair
Terrestrial native vegetation cover	Unknown (statewide rating)	Unknown – no agreed condition thresholds (extent 26.8% of the terrestrial area of the region)
Terrestrial native flora percentage declining	Unknown	Unknown – no agreed condition thresholds
Terrestrial native fauna percentage declining	Unknown	Unknown – no agreed condition thresholds
Terrestrial established invasive species abundance and distribution	Stable	Fair
Terrestrial new incursions of invasive species	Unknown	Unknown







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Acknowledgement

The Green Adelaide Board is thankful for all of those who protect and care for the natural resources of our unique region, contributing to a cooler, greener, wilder and more climate resilient Adelaide for all.



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