

Hills and Fleurieu Landscape Board Business Plan 2020-21

An initial business plan under the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019*



Government of South Australia
Hills and Fleurieu Landscape Board

LANDSCAPE
SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Acknowledgement of Country

The Hills and Fleurieu Landscape Board acknowledges the Kaurna, Peramangk, and Ngarrindjeri Nations as the Traditional Owners of the region. We respect Aboriginal people's deep knowledge and relationship with Country. We are committed to involving and partnering First Nations in planning for and managing landscapes.



Landscape South Australia reform

The South Australian Government is reforming how our landscapes are managed, putting community at the heart of sustainably managing the state's soil, water, pest plants and animals and biodiversity. From 1 July 2020, the new *Landscape South Australia Act 2019* (the Act) will replace the *Natural Resources Management Act 2004*.

Eight new regional landscape boards and a new metropolitan board, Green Adelaide, will administer the Act and partner with government and regional communities to deliver a stronger, back to basics system with greater autonomy and flexibility to respond to local issues.

Landscape boards will support local communities and land managers to be directly responsible for sustainably managing their region's natural resources. They will deliver practical, on-ground programs that manage our water, land and soil, pests and biodiversity through a range of partnerships, for example with farming systems groups, environmental non-government organisations, Aboriginal communities and local councils.

In 2020-21, landscape boards will work alongside community members and stakeholders to develop a simple and accessible five year regional landscape plan with five priorities (seven for Green Adelaide). Boards will need to report their spending against the levy simply and clearly.

The Act also introduces a number of other benefits, including a cap on landscape and water levies, new regional Grassroots Grants programs that will provide support for community groups, not for profit organisations and volunteers to address environmental issues at a local level, and the creation of a new Landscape Priorities Fund that will support large scale projects such as bushfire recovery and landscape restoration work. From 2022, communities will have the opportunity to elect three out of seven board members.

These reforms have been deeply informed by the people who are well placed to sustain our environment – those who work, live and care for our landscapes. This input has been invaluable to ensure the reforms meet the needs of local communities and landholders.

Business plans for 2020-21 are transitional. The land and water levy amounts that are set out in the business plans for 2020-21 reflect the levy amounts collected in NRM regions in 2019-20, adjusted by CPI (1.9%). This will provide for broad consistency in the levy rates paid by levy payers in this transitional year while planning is undertaken by the landscape boards.



I, David Speirs, Minister for Environment and Water, after taking into account and in accordance with the requirements of section 51(1)&(3), and Schedule 5 Part 30, under clause 95, of the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019* hereby approve the initial Business Plan 2020-21 for the Hills and Fleurieu Landscape Board.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Speirs'.

Hon David Speirs MP
MINISTER FOR
ENVIRONMENT AND
WATER

Date: 22 June 2020

Foreword

A message from the Hills and Fleurieu Landscape Board Presiding Member – David Greenhough

As a member of the local Hills and Fleurieu community, I am proud to be the inaugural Presiding Member for the new Hills and Fleurieu Landscape Board. We are fortunate to live in one of the most beautiful parts of Australia, with its thriving primary production, connected communities and rich biodiversity.

The Minister for Environment and Water has given landscape boards a strong mandate for getting 'back-to-basics' – putting community at the heart of our three main pillars:

- water resource management;
- sustainable agriculture; and
- control of pest plants and animals.

I am looking forward to working with our new Hills and Fleurieu board members, local councils, industry, local organisations, environmental groups, and our community as a whole to improve management of our region's landscapes. We will engage with the community and look to build partnerships and find innovative ways to sustain our precious natural environment, strengthen our regional economies and bolster our great communities.

This is the inaugural business plan for the Hills and Fleurieu Landscape Board. The business plan is an important accountability tool that sets out:

- the income that the Hills and Fleurieu Landscape Board will receive through levies and other funding; and
- how the board will spend that money to achieve the best outcomes.

The Business Plan 2020-21 provides a transitional path from the work of the former natural resources management board. Key foci for this year will be supporting the Cudlee Creek fire recovery effort, delivering the new Grassroots Grants program, providing practical support to landholders and managers, and delivering important work against

our three main pillars. We will partner with the community, local government, industry, local environment groups and the Australian government to achieve these on-ground outcomes.

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted on our entire community in unprecedented ways, and undoubtedly will influence the board's operations through 2020-21. The board, however, stands ready to do what it can to work with and support the community on issues such as job recovery, particularly through contracting local goods and services for our work.

One of the board's most important tasks in 2020-21 will be the development of a five-year Hills and Fleurieu Landscape Plan. Our promise is to work with the community to produce a practical plan that puts community back at the heart of managing the sustainability of the Hills and Fleurieu region's landscapes.

It will be a plan that seeks to build strong partnerships with landholders, First Nations people and the wider community. It will empower local people and communities to bring their knowledge and understanding to managing their landscapes.

We welcome the councils, community groups, landowners, businesses and residents who now form part of the Hills and Fleurieu region. We look forward to working together with you to create new opportunities and directions in the sustainable management of our landscapes in the Hills and Fleurieu region.

David Greenhough

Presiding Member



We will engage with the community and look to build partnerships and find innovative ways to sustain our precious natural environment, strengthen our regional economies and bolster our great communities.








Hills and Fleurieu Landscape Board (l-r) Andy Lowe, Drew Smith, Chris West, Amy Williams, David Greenhough (Presiding Member), Carol Schofield, Janet Klein.

Our priorities

For 2020-21, the Board has adopted the SA Murray-Darling Basin (SAMDB) and Adelaide and Mt Lofty Ranges (AMLR) Regional NRM Plans as its Landscape Plan while it develops its own plan with the community.

We will focus on five transitional priorities from the SAMDB Regional Plan¹. The priorities align with the Back to Basics principles, with a clear focus on managing water, land, pest plant and animals, and biodiversity. There are also priorities focussed on people - engaging community at the centre of managing the region's landscapes, and climate adaptation – making our landscapes more resilient for the future.

| Transitional priorities | Key focus areas |
|---|---|
|  Sustainable production (includes land and pest management) | Supporting landholders to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adopt sustainable land management practices (soils, pests, water, biodiversity); - undertake land management responsibilities (compliance actions where required); and - increase groundcover and water quality in bushfire affected areas Controlling emerging weeds and pests Collaborating to manage overabundant native species |
|  Water | Water allocation planning and implementation to supporting sustainable use of water resources Integrated water management and implementing low flows to improve aquatic ecosystem health Support effective stormwater management planning |
|  Biodiversity | Support restoration of habitats and management of threats to coastal, terrestrial and aquatic biodiversity Implement recovery plan actions for prioritised threatened species and threatened ecological communities Improve capacity and involvement of landholders, Aboriginal people and community in restoration of ecological communities |
|  People | Community involvement with board initiatives in managing landscapes Community participation in simple landscape planning Increased partnering in board program delivery Aboriginal people engaged in planning and delivery of landscape projects and cultural heritage assessment |
|  Climate adaptation | Incorporate climate adaptation into planning and program delivery, including advice for urban centres and regenerative agriculture |

¹These priorities are 'strategic directions' in the SAMDB Regional NRM Plan, and closely align with the AMLR Regional NRM Plan 'key drivers' of *Land management and change, Economic impacts, Knowledge and community capacity, Climate change*.

Our region and key projects

Landscape Officers working with local government, industries and landholders to manage pests, land and water



Cudlee Creek bushfire recovery supporting landholders



Community based environment centres throughout the region



Delivering Australian government-funded projects for threatened species and sustainable agriculture



Landscape and water planning with community and stakeholders



Sources of funding (income)

Table 1 Sources of funding

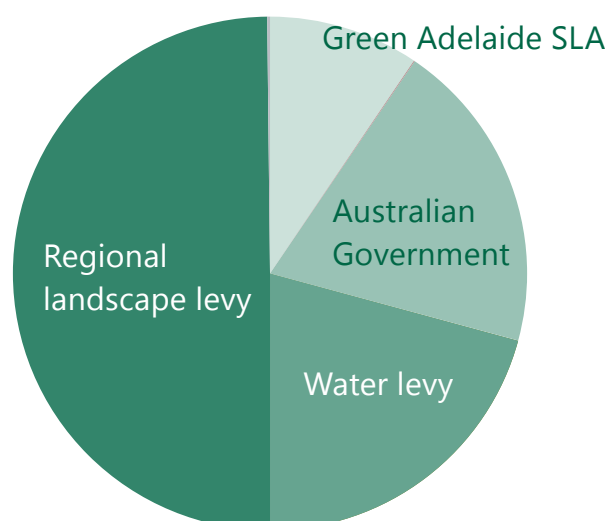
| Funding source | 2020-21 budget (\$) |
|---|---------------------|
| Landscape and water levies¹ | |
| Regional landscape levy (formerly NRM land levy) | 5,032,000 |
| Water levy | 2,162,000 |
| External funding | |
| Australian Government National Landcare Program 'Regional Land Partnerships' funding ² | 1,272,000 |
| Australian Government bushfire recovery Woodlands Birds funding ² | 750,000 |
| Service level agreement with Green Adelaide ³ | 832,000 |
| Other sources of income | |
| Interest | 10,000 |
| TOTAL INCOME | 10,058,000 |

¹ Landscape levy income to be raised in 2020-21 is based on 1.9% actual CPI rate (September 2019 quarter, Adelaide) increase on the approved 2019-20 income, and water levy income is based on 1.9% increase on the 2019-20 water levy rates.

² The H&F Landscape Board is the service provider for the AMLR area for the Australian Government's *National Landcare Program: Regional Land Partnerships* (RLP) funding.

³ As part of transition, Green Adelaide will support some community partnership commitments and staff roles within the Hills and Fleurieu region in 2020-21.

Fig 1. Income by funding source





Program investment (expenditure)

The Board invests funding from the levies and other sources into delivering activities against the five priorities and their key focus areas. The following tables provide the anticipated expenditure against each priority and focus area.

Table 2 Expenditure by priorities and funding source in 2020-21

| Priority | Landscape and water levies (\$) | External and other funding (\$) | Total (\$) |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------|
| Sustainable production | 2,062,000 | 705,000 | 2,767,000 |
| Water | 2,711,000 | 0 | 2,711,000 |
| Biodiversity | 533,000 | 1,529,000 | 2,062,000 |
| People | 1,754,000 | 619,000 | 2,373,000 |
| Climate adaptation | 145,000 | 0 | 145,000 |
| Total expenditure | 7,205,000 | 2,853,000 | 10,058,000 |

Fig 2. Expenditure by priority

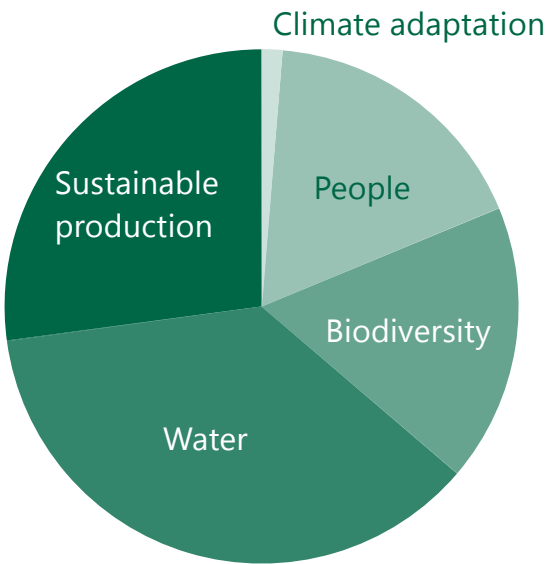


Table 3 Expenditure by priority and focus areas in 2020-21

| Priority | Projects | Expenditure | |
|------------------------|--|-------------------|-----------------------|
| | | Levy funding (\$) | External funding (\$) |
| Sustainable production | Landholder and industry groups advice and capacity building | 375,000 | 200,000 |
| | Healthy soils, healthy landscapes | 74,000 | 169,000 |
| | Regional Agricultural Landcare Facilitator | 0 | 136,000 |
| | Emerging pests, including roadside weeds | 278,000 | 69,000 |
| | Reducing total grazing pressure | 154,000 | 0 |
| | Advice on overabundant native animals with DEW and councils | 45,000 | 0 |
| | Regenerative agriculture | 141,000 | 0 |
| | Wildlife for Wine | 100,000 | 0 |
| | Woodland trees in pastures | 132,000 | 0 |
| | Coordination of compliance activities | 54,000 | 131,000 |
| | Program support ¹ | 709,000 | 0 |
| Water | Eastern Mt Lofty Ranges and Angas Bremer water allocation planning, monitoring and implementation ² | 329,000 | 0 |
| | Western Mt Lofty Ranges and McLaren Vale water allocation planning, monitoring and implementation ² | 263,000 | 0 |
| | Watercourse, wetlands and stormwater management | 58,000 | 0 |
| | WAA advice, permits and policy, and specialist watercourse management | 171,000 | 0 |
| | Securing low flows | 221,000 | 0 |
| | Program support ¹ | 265,000 | 0 |
| | State water planning and management contribution ³ | 1,404,000 | 0 |
| Biodiversity | Advice and engagement for landholders and groups on biodiversity, native vegetation and habitats | 104,000 | 0 |
| | Mt Lofty Ranges bandicoot recovery | 49,000 | 0 |
| | Management of Australian Government partnerships for biodiversity outcomes | 8,000 | 79,000 |
| | Back from the Brink (threatened species and ecological communities) | 79,000 | 700,000 |
| | Bushfire recovery for threatened woodland birds | 0 | 750,000 |
| | Program support ¹ | 293,000 | 0 |
| People | Cudlee Creek Fire Recovery | 202,000 | 66,000 |
| | Grassroots Grants | 220,000 | 0 |
| | Support and advice for volunteer groups | 234,000 | 34,000 |
| | Community run Natural Resource Centres | 23,000 | 331,000 |
| | Raising community awareness and information | 203,000 | 26,000 |
| | Landscape planning with community | 142,000 | 0 |
| | Collaborating and partnering Australian, state and local government, industry and community organisations | 207,000 | 0 |
| | Aboriginal partnerships | 76,000 | 136,000 |
| | Program support ¹ | 447,000 | 26,000 |
| Climate adaptation | Collaborating with state and local government to promote climate resilience planning and adaptation | 109,000 | 0 |
| | Program support ¹ | 36,000 | 0 |
| TOTAL | | 7,205,000 | 2,853,000 |

¹ Included in the 'Program Support' for each priority are board and committee expenses of \$196,000, monitoring, business running costs and resource centres.

² The Hills and Fleurieu region includes parts of five Prescribed Water Resource Areas (PWRAs), and shares four of these resources with neighbouring landscape regions. The board is responsible for water planning for the Eastern Mt Lofty Ranges, Western Mt Lofty Ranges, McLaren Vale and Angas Bremer PWRAs. The boards that share water resources will collaborate to ensure that resources are effectively managed with consistent approaches.

³ State Water Planning and Management contributions include the following functions: water licensing and assessment, water resource monitoring, state and condition reporting for water resources, compliance activities and water planning advice to support the management of water resources. These services are provided by the Department for Environment and Water, including departmental staff based regionally.

*In 2020-21, H&F levy-funded staff salaries and on-costs will cost \$3,126,000. In Table 3, these staff costs are apportioned to the projects that they will deliver.

Hills and Fleurieu Landscape Board

The board is a statutory regional board formed under the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019*. Landscape board responsibilities include:

- undertaking, promoting and integrating the management of natural resources within the region;
- supporting landholders to understand their responsibilities in land management, water management, and pest animal and plant control;
- promoting awareness of the importance of integrated and sustainable natural resources management; and
- assisting in the management of over-abundant native animals.

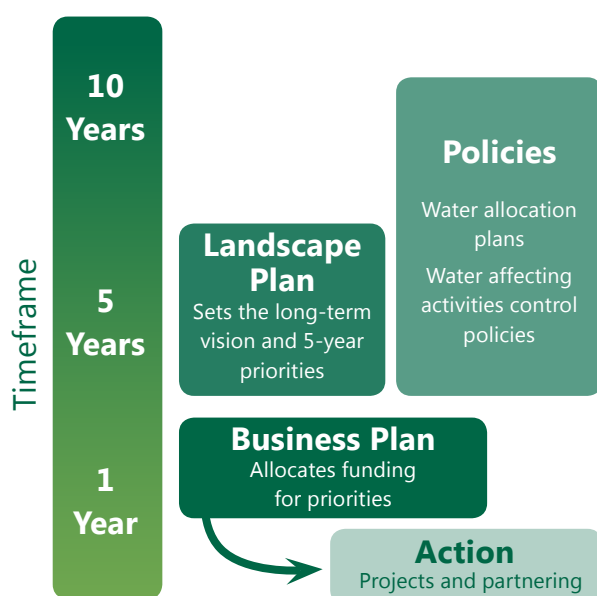
The board consists of seven community members with a range of skills and knowledge, appointed by the Minister for Environment and Water.

For more information about the board members, see the Hills and Fleurieu Landscape Board website www.landscape.sa.gov.au.

Board planning and reporting framework

During 2020-21, the Hills and Fleurieu Landscape Board has strategic oversight of the delivery of this business plan, including implementing the board's planning framework (see Figure 3).

Fig 3. Landscape board planning framework



It will work with the community to:

- develop a 5-year Landscape Plan that sets the priorities for action;
- prepare a Regional Engagement Statement and an Aboriginal Engagement Statement;
- prepare a statutory annual report and a community-facing report showing how the levy funds have been spent in the financial year;
- conduct monitoring to understand the condition of landscapes; and
- evaluate its programs to understand its impact.

Staffing

Under the Act, day-to-day operations of the board are managed by a General Manager who employs staff to deliver the programs and services. In 2020-21, it is anticipated that there will be 39.3 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions (29 FTE funded by levies and 10.3 FTE funded by external funding). The staff are public sector employees.

In 2020-21, the board will receive Corporate Services support (including finance, human resources, and information technology) through the Department for Environment and Water.

Partnering to deliver outcomes

The Hills and Fleurieu Landscape Board is proud to partner with the Australian Government to deliver significant outcomes for the sustainable management of agricultural land and the conservation of threatened species and ecological communities.

The H&F Landscape Board will continue to partner with local community groups for delivery of parts of its projects, and will seek out and develop new and innovative partnerships.



Landscape and water levies

To enable the Hills and Fleurieu Landscape Board to lead the management of landscapes in the region, the Act provides for two types of levies to be raised: a **regional landscape levy** collected by constituent councils from rate payers; and a **water levy** collected from all water licence holders in the region.

Why do we pay levies?

The levies are a primary source of funding for the management of the region's landscapes and natural resources. Our landscapes benefit everyone, which is why we contribute to the levies. The levies enable the board to deliver important programs, and also enable it to leverage significant, additional funding - greatly increasing the amount of work achieved in our region.

quarterly contributions to the landscape board and gazette a levy rate to reimburse themselves for this amount.

In the Hills and Fleurieu landscape management region, the regional landscape levy is raised based on the value of rateable land. In 2020-21, the landscape levies will continue to be collected based on the existing NRM region boundaries (see Table 4). This will allow time for the board to work with councils to implement an equalisation scheme so that in future a common levy can be collected across the region.

The total amount of income collected from the landscape levy in 2020-21 will be a CPI (Consumer Price Index) increase on the amount raised last year in the AMLR and SAMDB portions of the H&F region.

Regional landscape levy

The landscape levy is raised and collected by local councils in the same way as the NRM levy has been collected in the past. Councils will continue to pay

Table 4 Council contributions to regional landscape levy income, number of rateable properties and collection fees for councils for 2020/21

| Local government area | Council contribution to regional landscape levy 2020-21 (\$) | No. rateable properties | Collection fees (\$) |
|---------------------------------|--|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Adelaide Hills (AMLR NRM area) | 952,629 | 18,657 | 7,196 |
| Adelaide Hills (SAMDB NRM area) | 6,042 | 47 | 2,544 |
| Alexandrina (AMLR NRM area) | 179,955 | 3,781 | 3,477 |
| Alexandrina (SAMDB NRM area) | 1,352,730 | 15,852 | 6,495 |
| Mount Barker (AMLR NRM area) | 111,879 | 2,147 | 3,069 |
| Mount Barker (SAMDB NRM area) | 1,511,687 | 15,957 | 6,521 |
| Onkaparinga (AMLR NRM area) | 312,093 | 6,547 | 4,169 |
| Onkaparinga (SAMDB NRM area) | 4,459 | 33 | 2,540 |
| Victor Harbor (AMLR NRM area) | 401,342 | 11,177 | 5,326 |
| Victor Harbor (SAMDB NRM area) | 3,419 | 20 | 2,537 |
| Yankalilla | 195,929 | 5,888 | 4,004 |
| Total | 5,032,164 | 80,106 | 47,879 |

Water levy

Water levies are collected by the Department for Environment and Water on behalf of the Minister and paid to the landscape board.

In 2020-21, the Hills and Fleurieu Landscape Board will raise water levies in accordance with the existing levy basis:

- For the Eastern Mt Lofty Ranges and Angas Bremer prescribed water resources (formerly in the SAMDB NRM region), levies will continue to be charged based on a rate per ML of water allocated, with a minimum charge of \$200.; and
- For the Western Mt Lofty Ranges and McLaren Vale prescribed water resources (formerly in the AMLR NRM region), levies will continue to be charged based on a rate per ML of water allocated.

The levy rates for 2020-21 (Table 5) are increased by CPI (September quarter, Adelaide) on the 2019-20 rates.

Water resource sharing arrangements

For the prescribed water resource areas that are shared by Hills and Fleurieu and neighbouring landscape regions, the water levy is shared between the boards in proportion to the amount of water allocated in each region (see Table 5).

The Hills and Fleurieu Landscape Board will work together with the Green Adelaide, Northern and Yorke, and Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Boards to ensure that water planning and programs are implemented collaboratively.

Table 5 2020-21 water levy rates and proportion of allocated water in each Prescribed Water Resource in the Hills and Fleurieu region

| Prescribed Water Resource Area (PWRA)/ Prescribed Wells Area (PWA) and allocation type | 2020-21 levy rate | Proportion of the PWRA's allocated water within Hills & Fleurieu |
|--|---|--|
| Angas Bremer PWA water taking allocation | \$6.75 ML of water allocated or a levy of \$200, whichever is greater | 100% |
| Eastern Mt Lofty Ranges PWRA water taking allocation | \$6.75 ML of water allocated or a levy of \$200, whichever is greater | 98% |
| Eastern Mount Lofty Ranges PWRA water taking Lower Angas Bremer allocation (Flood) | \$1.61 / ML | 100% |
| McLaren Vale PWA water taking allocation | \$6.28 /ML | 96% |
| Western Mount Lofty Ranges PWRA water taking allocation (including water levy on organisations authorised under section 105 to take water from a water resources within the Western Mount Lofty Ranges PWRA) | \$6.28/ML | 93% |
| Western Mount Lofty Ranges PWRA public water supply - SA Water fixed charge | \$1,255,800 | 100% |

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