

KANGAROO ISLAND

Draft Regional Landscape Plan 2026–31

For the Kangaroo Island Landscape Board

Working together for healthy land and sea



Caring for Country

DRAFT

DRAFT

Foreword

Minister's endorsement

Contents

Our Kangaroo Island vision	6
Our plan on a page	7
About the plan	8
Landscape plan connections	9
How the plan was developed	10
The Board's role	11
Working together	12
Our island home	14
Challenges facing Kangaroo Island	16
Empower community	19
Sustain biodiversity	20
Foster healthy land and water	21
Manage pests	22
Manage climate risks	23

Our Kangaroo Island vision

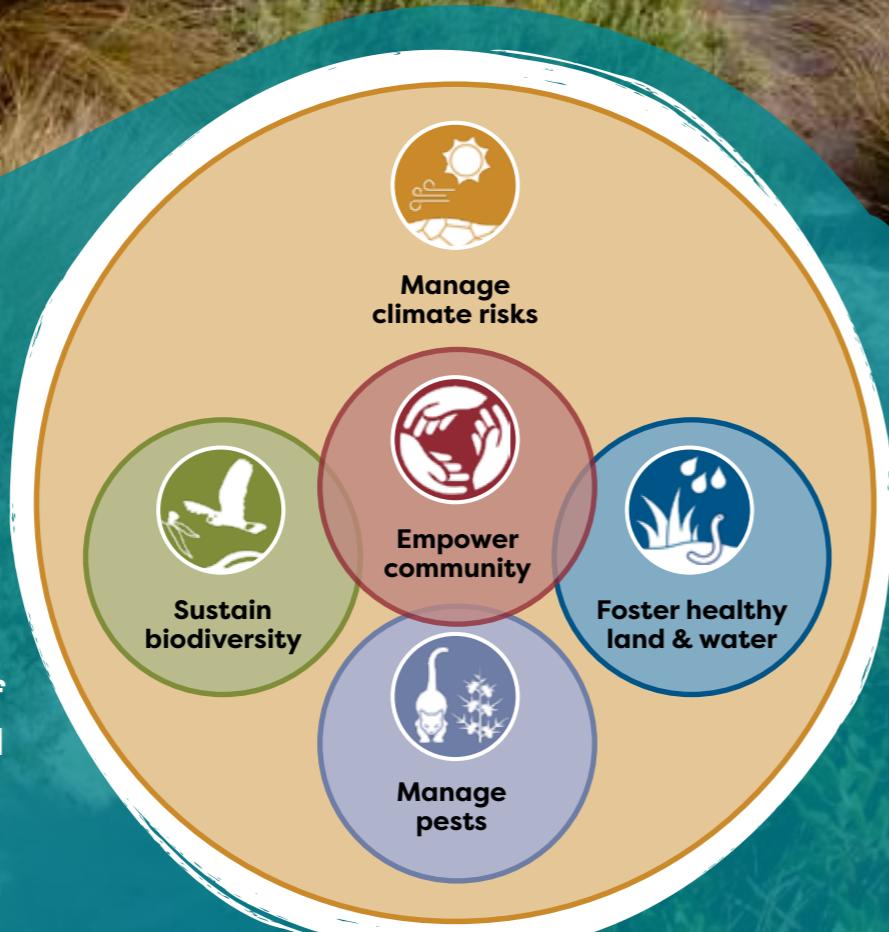
Working together for healthy land and sea



Our five priorities are all connected.

Each priority impacts the others. When we make progress in one area, it supports the others.

Community is at the centre of all we do. Together, our island community looks after our land and sea.



Our plan on a page

Working together for healthy land and sea				
VISION	REGIONAL PRIORITIES	FOCUS AREAS	OUTCOMES	
	 EMPOWER COMMUNITY			
		Islanders connect, share knowledge and work together	Community connections are broader and deeper	Native vegetation is more extensive, connected, and in better condition
	 SUSTAIN BIODIVERSITY			
		Our biodiversity is flourishing, in the bush, farms, waters and oceans	KI land managers benefit from the Board's programs, grants and shared knowledge.	Priority animal populations are stable or improving
	 FOSTER HEALTHY LAND & WATER			
		Fertile soil and fresh water for life and productivity	More young people and First Nations people are involved in the Board's initiatives.	Coastal, estuarine and marine habitats are more extensive and in better condition
	 MANAGE PESTS			
		An island haven for biodiversity and productive agriculture		More land managers are adopting sustainable and climate smart primary production practices
	 MANAGE CLIMATE RISKS			
		Resilient communities, farms and nature		More land managers are meeting their legal obligations to control declared weeds
		Prepare for a hotter, drier climate		The Board has net zero operational emissions by 2035
		Strengthen disaster preparedness and recovery		
		Enable the transition to low carbon		

Image left: Pennington Bay

About the plan

This plan sets out how the Kangaroo Island Landscape Board (the Board) will work with land managers (those who care for land and sea), community members and partners to care for KI's landscapes (land and sea).

It is grounded in community conversations, local knowledge and the best available science – reflecting the region's top values and most pressing challenges.

The plan includes:

- A shared **vision** – working together for healthy land and sea
- **5 regional priorities** for landscape management
- **16 outcomes** to achieve by 2031 or in the longer term
- **16 focus areas** to guide investment and effort
- **56 priority actions** to deliver together.

The Board will partner widely to deliver this plan.

Progress depends on collaboration with land managers and other partners, as well as securing funding and support.

The plan will be implemented and reviewed through:

- Annual Business Plans – setting out priority, budgeted actions to be delivered each year
- Annual reporting – summarising yearly delivery and progress
- Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement (MERI) – identifying SMART goals, measures and data sources to track progress and outcomes
- Mid-term and full-term evaluations – assess impact and inform adaptive management
- Develop the next Landscape Plan for endorsement in 2031.

This plan aligns with the South Australian State Landscape Strategy and other relevant plans and strategies. Figure 1 shows how these connect.

Landscape plan connections

Strategic alignment to

- Australia's Strategy for Nature 2024-2030
- Australia's Threatened Species Action Plan 2022-2032
- Australia's Climate-Smart Agriculture Program and future Natural Heritage Trust (NHT) priorities
- Australia's Drought Plan
- South Australia's State Landscape Strategy
- South Australia's Net Zero Strategy 2024-2030
- 2024 Statewide Climate Change Risk and Opportunity Assessment
- Regional Drought Resilience Plan
- Kangaroo Island Council Community Strategic Plan

This plan also aligns to a number of other national, state and regional strategies and plans, and vice versa

Kangaroo Island Regional Landscape Plan

5 YEARS

- Vision for the region
- 5 strategic priorities
- Board's focus areas

Evaluating the KI Landscape Plan

Monitoring, evaluation, reporting and improvement framework

KI Landscape Board Annual Business Plan

1 YEAR

- Board income
- Investment priorities
- Key projects, services and partnerships
- Board staffing arrangements

Annual reporting

Key supporting resources

- Kangaroo Island Landscape Water Affecting Activity Control Policy
- Kangaroo Island Landscape Board Emergency Response Framework for Natural Assets
- Kangaroo Island Landscape Board project implementation plans and associated monitoring, evaluation, reporting and improvement plans



Figure 1. Where the KI Landscape Plan fits within the policy environment.

Image left: Monitoring KI Narrow-leaved Mallee Woodland. Image below: Endangered Beyeria Bush-Pea (*Pultenaea insularis*).

How the plan was developed

This plan was shaped by the people of Kangaroo Island – with over 450 interactions. Community members, First Nations people, school students, land managers and partner organisations contributed their knowledge, concerns and aspirations through workshops, surveys, written feedback and voting at the Kingscote and Parndana Shows.

People's insights, observations and experience were combined with scientific evidence, monitoring data and existing strategies to ensure the plan is grounded in local values and informed by the best available information. The result is a shared direction that reflects what matters most to the Kangaroo Island community.



The Board's role

The Board is a statutory body established under the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019* to provide regional leadership in managing KI's land, water, biodiversity and pests (pest animals, weeds and diseases). The Board sets regional priorities through a 5-year Landscape Plan, administers key requirements under the Act (such as water affecting activities and declared species), and works alongside land managers, communities and partners to coordinate on-ground action. Landscape levies are used to deliver this work and attract additional funding and partnerships to help achieve better outcomes for our island.

Protect and restore Kangaroo Island's land and sea



Mobilise and support others to care for land and sea



Build partnerships and work collaboratively



Understand and share knowledge about Kangaroo Island's land and sea



Focus investment where it will have the greatest impact



Report progress and advocate for Kangaroo Island's needs



Working together

Caring for Kangaroo Island's landscapes is a shared responsibility. Individuals, communities, industry and government each play a role in looking after our land and sea, so they stay healthy, resilient and thriving.

The Board partners with the Australian Government through national grant programs, including the Regional Land Partnerships program.

The Board's success is founded on relationships, including with:

- First Nations entities and communities
- land managers
- peak bodies, industry groups and non-government organisations
- community and volunteer groups
- education and research bodies
- local, State and Australian Governments and statutory authorities.

We work with a wide range of local and national partners to deliver on-ground projects, like those highlighted on the following page.



Parndana Progress Association
"Improving our community"



Image left: Local school students participating in the Board's Young Environmental Leaders program and installing a bandicoot fire bunker.

Image above: Kingscote Men's Shed volunteers working with Board staff building structures to hold tiles to build artificial native oyster reefs.

Our island home

Kangaroo Island is a special place, with landscapes and biodiversity found nowhere else. Our unique plants, animals and soils support our way of life. They keep our community healthy, attract visitors from around the world, and underpin our farming industry.

Australia's third-largest island, KI is characterised by rugged cliffs, limestone plains, estuaries, coastal dunes and seagrass meadows. Nearly half the island remains native habitat, and western KI is a biodiversity hotspot. We have 221 vertebrate animal species, 43 of which are threatened, 800 fungi species, and more than 906 native plant species, including 45 plants found nowhere else.

Encounters with wildlife are valued by our community and a major drawcard for tourists. Our island is a stronghold for biodiversity, protected by our freedom from rabbits and foxes, and recent eradications of feral goats, deer and pigs.

Our clean seas and reefs support a healthy aquaculture industry. Our watercourses and 15 nationally significant wetlands support wellbeing, supply our water, and sustain nature, farming, fishing and tourism. Our soils underpin all life here – from productive farming and food production to native vegetation.

Our economy, led by farming, fishing and tourism, depends heavily on nature. Our community of about 5,000 people deeply values living and working within this rich landscape. These pages highlight what they most value about our island home.

KEY

- Township
- Remnant native vegetation
- Conservation area
- Inland waterbody
- ~ River
- Marine park sanctuary zone
- Marine park restricted access zone



0 10 20
kilometres

Figure 2. Map of the Kangaroo Island region.

Challenges facing Kangaroo Island

Kangaroo Island's landscapes face long-standing and emerging pressures. By combining what locals observe and experience with environmental monitoring and research, we can see the key challenges shaping our landscapes, industries and way of life. This plan lays out what needs to change so we don't lose the values that make the island such a remarkable place to live.

Water security

Water security is declining due to drought, lower catchment flows and growing demand. During dry periods, salinity can increase, reducing water quality for agriculture, the environment and some local water supplies. Dams, runoff and storm events all influence how water moves through the landscape. Erosion, sediment and nutrients can reduce water quality in streams, rivers and estuaries, affecting ecosystem health. As the climate shifts, managing water wisely is becoming more challenging and more essential.



Habitat loss

Habitat trends across Kangaroo Island vary. Monitoring shows recovery in some areas, alongside ongoing habitat loss and degradation in areas where pressures are greatest. Roadside vegetation and wildlife corridors have been lost or fragmented, reducing landscape connectivity. Too frequent or intense fires, and inappropriate fire regimes, affect vegetation recovery and survival. In some areas, expanding salinity is reducing water quality and vegetation health. Some key plant communities, like KI Narrow-leaved Mallee Woodland, are showing signs of stress and decline. Soil-borne pathogens like *Phytophthora cinnamomi* pose a significant threat to ecosystems. Together, these changes are diminishing the quality, connectivity and resilience of native habitats across Kangaroo Island.



Soil health pressures

Kangaroo Island's soils face ongoing challenges from erosion, acidity, waterlogging and compaction. Bushfires leave soils exposed and vulnerable – allowing weeds to outcompete pasture and native groundcover. Changing seasons, late breaks and heat stress affect soil moisture and productivity. Healthy soils are the foundation for both farming and biodiversity, so these pressures are significant for KI's long-term landscape resilience.



Pest animals, weeds and overabundant natives

Managing pest animals, weeds and overabundant wildlife remains one of KI's biggest challenges. Feral cats threaten many native species, while koalas, corellas, kangaroos and wallabies put pressure on vegetation and farmland. The number of weed species on KI is growing – the last decade has seen an astounding 30% jump in records. Invasive plants like cape tulip and Tasmanian blue gums spread quickly after disturbance, making it harder for ecosystems to bounce back from fire, drought or clearing. Together, these pressures change ecosystems, increase demands on land managers, and threaten KI's hard-won sanctuary status.



Declining volunteerism

Community capacity is under strain. Volunteer groups are finding it harder to maintain momentum, with youth engagement declining and many long-serving volunteers nearing burnout or retirement. This can limit the diversity of voices involved in decision-making and on-ground work, with participation often falling to the same committed individuals. These social challenges directly influence the KI's ability to respond to environmental pressure, care for habitats and sustain long-term projects.



Inappropriate development, tourism and recreation

Some areas of Kangaroo Island are experiencing increasing pressure from tourism, recreation, and development. Buildings and infrastructure in sensitive locations, along with activities such as cruise ship visitation, free camping and drive-on beaches, can damage fragile ecosystems, nesting habitat and cultural sites. Without careful management, these pressures can undermine the natural values that make our bush and coast such special places.



Trip Advisor

Climate change and natural disasters

Climate change is already reshaping Kangaroo Island's weather, land and waters, with the years since 2019, described by locals as the worst in 70 years. Hotter, drier conditions, late seasonal breaks, the Black Summer bushfires, the drought and the algal bloom have left lasting impacts and uncertainty for people, nature and industries. Less reliable rainfall and more intense storms threaten water supplies, soils, habitats and agricultural productivity. Extreme heat increases evaporation and stresses people and nature. Rising, warmer and more acidic seas put pressure on coastlines, marine life and the fishing industry.



B. Florence



Empower community

Islanders connect, share knowledge and work together

Islanders are central to the health of Kangaroo Island's landscapes. The knowledge, skills and commitment of land managers, volunteers, First Nations people, young people and local organisations shape how land and sea are cared for every day. Strong relationships, shared learning and community agency help Kangaroo Island take collective action.

What is needed

Strong, connected and supported land managers, community groups, First Nations and young people who have the confidence, knowledge and are empowered to care for Country.

Outcomes

- Community connections are broader and deeper.
- KI land managers benefit from the Board's programs, grants and shared knowledge.
- More young people and First Nations people are involved in the Board's initiatives.

FOCUS AREAS	PRIORITY ACTIONS
Broaden and strengthen partnerships	Engage land managers in public-private partnerships at property and landscape scales
	Involve local community, students, industry (agriculture and tourism), agencies and non-government organisations in planning and projects
	Partner with and support First Nations people
	Support Kaurna, Narrunga and Ngarrindjeri Nations through a collaborative planning process
Share knowledge and build capability	Deliver youth engagement to develop skills, improve environmental literacy and strengthen volunteering and career pathways
	Support citizen science by promoting opportunities and offering training in how to take part
	Collect and share knowledge, including by conducting flora and fauna surveys, exchanging knowledge with First Nations people, and advising other agencies about KI's natural assets and how to protect them
	Capture local knowledge and lessons learnt through on-ground works
Enable Islanders to manage landscapes	Promote land management achievements through field days, workshops, videos, stories and media
	Offer Grassroots Grants and other on-ground funding
	Build meaningful co-delivery with land managers and volunteers into program design and delivery
	Provide opportunities for land managers to connect, supporting peer learning and stronger community resilience
	Link land managers with advice, processes and people in state agencies, to enable legal land management activities to take place



Sustain biodiversity

Our biodiversity is flourishing, in the bush, farms, waters and oceans

Biodiversity is the variety of life – including plants, animals, fungi, microorganisms and the ecosystems they form. Kangaroo Island's biodiversity underpins its identity, wellbeing and economy – including tourism, farming and fishing. From mallee woodlands and wetlands to reefs and seagrass meadows, KI supports species and habitats found nowhere else. Protecting, restoring and reconnecting these ecosystems strengthens resilience and ensures our biodiversity can thrive on land and at sea.

What is needed

Healthy, connected habitats and coordinated action to protect Kangaroo Island's unique plants, animals and ecosystems across land, freshwater and marine environments.

Outcomes

- Native vegetation is more extensive, connected, and in better condition.
- Priority animal populations are stable or improving.
- Coastal, estuarine and marine habitats are more extensive and in better condition.

FOCUS AREAS	PRIORITY ACTIONS
Protect, connect and restore native vegetation	Provide advice and funding for fencing, revegetation and ecological restoration
	Support protection and restoration of threatened plant communities and species
	Operate the KI Native Plant Nursery, as a critical enabler of revegetation projects on KI
Protect and enhance threatened animal populations	Maintain a viable glossy black cockatoo population by implementing recovery actions and monitoring their effectiveness
	Deliver recovery actions for KI dunnart, southern brown bandicoot, KI echidna, little penguin, hooded plovers, and other priority fauna species
Strengthen marine, estuarine and coastal resilience	Expand habitat restoration of coastlines, estuaries and oyster reefs
	Keep marine and estuarine waters healthy by managing erosion and water quality inland



Foster healthy land and water

Fertile soil and fresh water for life and productivity

Healthy land and clean, reliable water are essential for productive farming, thriving ecosystems and community wellbeing on Kangaroo Island. As the climate becomes drier and more variable, it will be increasingly essential to support land managers to protect water resources, improve catchment health and strengthen soil condition. The Board will support land managers through data collection, science-based advice, funding, equitable water regulation, on-ground action, demonstration sites and community partnerships.

What is needed

Better soil health, cleaner water, and resilient farming and catchment systems that can thrive under a drying, more variable climate.

Outcomes

- More farms have water efficiency and security measures in place.
- Nutrient and sediment runoff is reduced.
- More land managers are adopting sustainable and climate smart primary production practices.

FOCUS AREAS	PRIORITY ACTIONS
Safeguard equitable water supplies	Help land managers improve water efficiency and security in response to a changing climate
	Update water management policy to reflect new data and modelling
	Regulate water affecting activities
Improve water quality in catchments	Work with land managers to fence and restore riparian revegetation, to protect watercourses, stabilise banks and reduce runoff
	Capture the water monitoring data needed to inform short and long-term decision-making
Protect and enhance soil health	Promote agriculture systems that protect and enhance soil health
	Help land managers to minimise soil loss and maintain ground cover all year
	Assist land managers to reduce soil acidity, salinity and erosion
	Trial, demonstrate and promote practices that improve soil health and long-term productivity in a hotter, drier climate





Manage pests

An island haven for biodiversity and productive agriculture

Kangaroo Island's biosecurity and pest-free status are core to its environmental and economic health. Managing feral cats, declared weeds, overabundant wildlife and emerging pests in line with legal obligations protects native species, supports agriculture, and maintains KI's reputation as a sanctuary for biodiversity and production. Strong partnerships and sustained effort are essential.

What is needed

Island-wide vigilance, strong partnerships and sustained action to eradicate feral cats, meet declared species obligations, and maintain KI's world-class biosecurity.

Outcomes

- Kangaroo Island is feral cat free by 2050.
- Cat-susceptible species are recovering.
- No new invasive species establish on Kangaroo Island, and no eradicated species re-establish.
- More land managers are meeting their legal obligations to control declared weeds.

FOCUS AREAS	PRIORITY ACTIONS
Eradicate feral cats	Complete the Dudley Peninsula feral cat eradication program, providing proof of concept for whole-of-island eradication
	Develop a whole-of-island feral cat eradication plan and secure funding to implement it
	Sustain community involvement in, and support for, feral cat eradication
	Share and learn best practice with community, First Nations people, and other islands
	Work with stakeholders to build support for and implement a 'last cat policy' for KI
Reduce the impact of declared weeds	Deliver control program for priority declared weeds
	Deliver targeted Tasmanian blue gum wildling removal
	Enable land managers to meet their obligations to identify, report, control and prevent the spread of declared weeds
Limit impact of declared pest animals and overabundant native animals	Regulate declared pest animals (e.g. domestic goat and pig permits)
	Contribute to developing and trialling practical actions to manage impacts of priority overabundant animals
Enhance biosecurity	Partner with agencies and stakeholders to update the KI Biosecurity Strategy
	Investigate and rapidly respond to reports of declared weeds and pest animal incursions
	Enable the declaration of emerging landscape weeds and pest animals
	Detect, survey and assess the risk of emerging and declared weeds across KI



Manage climate risks

Resilient communities, farms and nature

Climate change is influencing every part of Kangaroo Island's landscapes – from soil moisture and water security, to farming systems and ecosystem health. Emerging carbon and nature repair markets offer land managers new opportunities to invest in restoration and resilience. Building climate resilience helps people, nature and industries to thrive – and to bounce back from natural disasters like bushfires, drought, storms, heatwaves and algal blooms.

What is needed

Partnering to implement adaptive land and water management practices that are informed by climate data, attract investment, and can withstand a hotter, drier and more extreme future.

Outcomes

- KI attracts more investment into climate resilient land management.
- Communities, farms, and ecosystems are more resilient to climate shocks.
- The Board has net zero operational emissions by 2035.

FOCUS AREAS	PRIORITY ACTIONS
Prepare for a hotter, drier climate	Assist land managers to interpret and make informed decisions based on long-term seasonal forecasting and climate projections
	Work with land managers to trial climate-adapted species and agriculture systems for a hotter and drier climate
	Build on-farm drought resilience by delivering actions in the Regional Drought Resilience Plan
	Explore embedding climate projections into water management policies
Strengthen disaster preparedness and recovery	Implement the Emergency Response Framework for Natural Assets (ERNA)
	Encourage land managers to undertake resilient property management planning
	Share data and local knowledge with lead agencies about which natural assets to protect in a disaster
	Post-event, rapidly deploy temporary fencing around priority natural assets, erosion control for watercourses, pest animal and weed control, and species recovery programs
Enable the transition to low carbon	Work with agencies and partners to build preparedness into policies and programs
	Engage in climate networks and partnerships
Enhance biosecurity	Build knowledge and capability to enable informed decision-making on low-emissions land management practices and technologies
	Explore opportunities to attract landscape management investment, including through nature repair and carbon markets
	Account and reduce the Board's operational emissions, with the aim of achieving net zero by 2030





Kangaroo Island Landscape Board

A 35 Dauncey St, Kingscote SA 5223

P +61 08 8553 2476

E ki.landscapeboard@sa.gov.au

www.landscape.sa.gov.au/ki

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