



Annual highlights

of the Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board

Working in partnership with regional communities to deliver a healthy and resilient landscape

Welcome to the annual highlights report for the Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board.

In 2022-23, many projects and partnerships delivered great outcomes for the region that contributed to the enhancement and protection of the Murraylands and Riverland landscape. Much of this work was funded by levies paid by rate payers and water licensees, as well as considerable investment from the South Australian and Australian Governments.

This was the second year of the implementation of the 2021-2026 Regional Landscape Plan which focuses the landscape board's work on 5 priority areas: sustainable agricultural and pastoral landscapes; sustainable water use; healthy rivers, lakes and wetlands; healthy natural landscapes; and people at the heart of landscape management.

The landscape board sincerely thanks its partners for their efforts towards delivering a healthy and resilient landscape. The work that this report highlights has only been possible through strong partnerships with landholders, First Nations, industry, government and non-government organisations, and the wider community.

Our regional priorities



Sustainable agricultural and pastoral landscapes



Sustainable water use



Healthy rivers, lakes and wetlands



Healthy natural landscapes



People at the heart of landscape management

Acknowledgement of Country

The Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board acknowledges Aboriginal people as the First Peoples and Nations of the lands and water that we live and work upon, and we pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge and respect the deep spiritual connection and the relationship that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have to Country.

2022-23 snapshot



Grassroots Grants Program funded **30 projects from 25 community groups**, including **7 new groups** that were supported for the first time



83 volunteers recognised at celebration events



Engaging with the community at **506 events**



Over **5,200 people** engaged at events



The Education program supported **49 schools**, engaging **1,179 students** and **264 teachers**



The **Agricultural Knowledge Grants** program supported **12 community and industry groups** to undertake events and activities



3,643 interactions with landholders and community members to provide support and technical advice



43 on-ground trial sites were established to increase knowledge in management practices



Revegetation of 164.5 ha for conservation



Species recovery actions occurred on more than **50,500 ha**



28,303 fox baits were sold to assist in controlling foxes



1,826 ha benefitted from **weed control** for land management



895,440 ha benefitted from **pest animal control** for land management purposes



At least **311 land managers** involved in coordinated pest animal baiting



51,090 ha benefitted from **pest animal control** for conservation



30 priority threatened species and/or ecological communities received targeted support



Improved irrigation efficiency over 900 ha of land



More than 13,000 ha of wetlands and floodplains managed to improve or maintain their condition, including 3 Ramsar sites

Highlights

- ✓ Building knowledge and skills in the community by engaging 5,222 people through field days, workshops and forum events.
- ✓ Working together for greater impact, we have partnered with 168 different organisations including 14 community groups, 8 First Nations groups, 18 industry groups, 19 land managers/farmers groups, 15 research institutes and universities, 6 volunteer groups, 8 local government, 24 non-government agencies and 32 other government agencies.
- ✓ A landmark trial to reintroduce the iconic Murray crayfish back into the SA portion of the River Murray resulted in approximately 200 Murray crayfish being released into the wild.
- ✓ Responding to community concerns about local water resource management by establishing community reference groups for the Marne Saunders, Mallee and Peake Roby Sherlock prescribed water resource areas to provide support and guidance through the Water Allocation Plan (WAP) review process. Community workshops were held to address concerns about sustainability of the water resource in the Marne Saunders catchment. The workshops were an opportunity for the community to articulate their long term vision (preferred outcomes) for the catchment and agreed options for achieving these outcomes.
- ✓ Increasing the awareness of 1,078 farmers and advisors about best practice land management methods, including management of soil acidity, prevention of soil erosion, and increasing soil carbon by hosting or sponsoring 36 field days, workshops and events held across the region.
- ✓ High priority weed species have been surveyed and mapped for occurrence along 1,512 km of river bank.
- ✓ Working together with Ngarrindjeri on a range of activities including priority on-ground works, Ngarrindjeri cultural site assessments, community yarning circles, and Ngarrindjeri community involvement in a range of threatened species recovery programs across Ngarrindjeri lands and waters. This has been possible through the landscape board working with a wide range of partners to successfully secure \$480,000 over 3 years from the SA Government's Landscape Priority Fund.
- ✓ Support for pest animal and weed management has been provided to more than 2,605 landholders by connecting them with our district teams for one-to-one technical advice, plant identification and property visits.



Highlights

- ✓ Volunteers participated in several citizen science programs such as Bioblitz, Insect Investigators, Frogspotter, TurtleSAT and Fungimap, and contributed 1,174 species records.
- ✓ The first projects were approved for funding through the LMRIA National Water Grid Connections program, after delays resulting from a widespread flood event. This was followed by an Expression of Interest process for the National Water Grid LMRIA Water Deliverability and Accessibility project that attracted strong interest from the community with the funds over-subscribed. This will ensure project outcomes are maximised and build longer term resilience and adaptability among local farming enterprises.
- ✓ In response to the major 2022-23 River Murray flood event, significant support was provided to the multi-agency flood incident control centres in Loxton and Murray Bridge. Staff provided the emergency services with detailed local knowledge, insight into the hydrological functionality of the river and floodplains, and understanding ecological risk.
- ✓ Vegetation condition across 720,000 ha of mallee vegetation, north of the River Murray, has improved as a result of removing goats from the landscape by removing old pastoral dams and culling. A goat browse monitoring survey of 1,262 plants over 50 sites indicated that 'browse intensity' for the majority of the study area has declined by 40%.
- ✓ Five new species of insects (4 parasitic wasps and one parasitic blow fly) collected by South Australian schools through the Insect Investigators project are in the process of being named collaboratively by students and taxonomists.
- ✓ Forty members of the Ngarrindjeri community participated in a series of wetland field trips where they had the opportunity to provide their perspective about the sites, their aspirations and ideas for future management.
- ✓ The Precious Plants for Precious People program celebrated its 10th Anniversary. This year the program was the most successful and biggest yet with more than 1400 threatened and special plants gifted to precious people.
- ✓ Round 4 of Grassroots grants program received 65 applications and the landscape board allocated an additional \$100,000 to the funding total to support as many projects as possible.

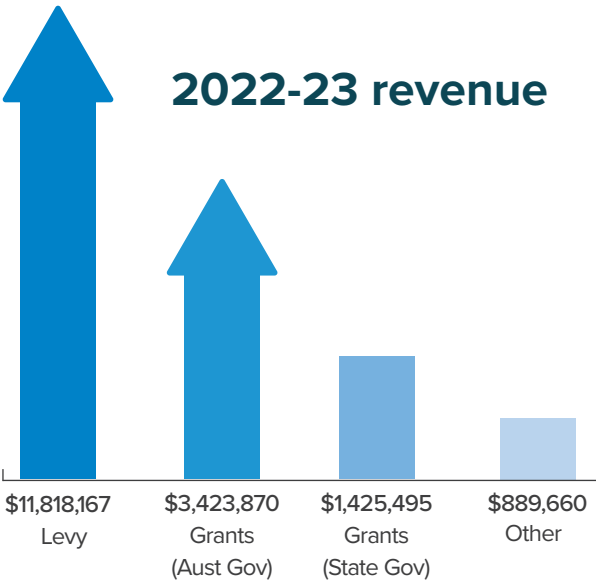
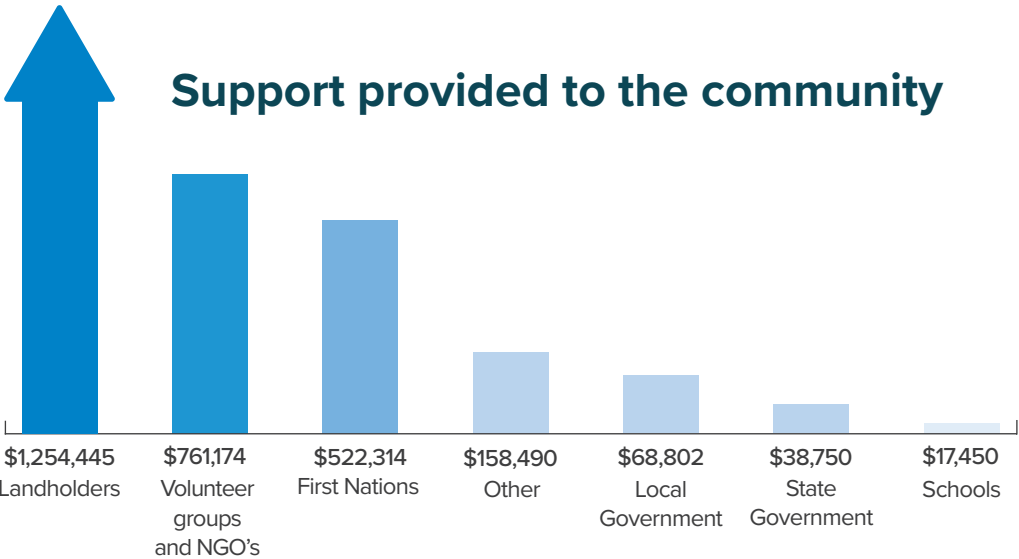


Investment in the region

Landscape levies play an important role in helping to secure our vision for “working in partnership with regional communities to deliver a healthy and resilient landscape.” Taking care of our natural landscapes is everyone’s responsibility and paying landscape levies is a way that everyone can contribute.

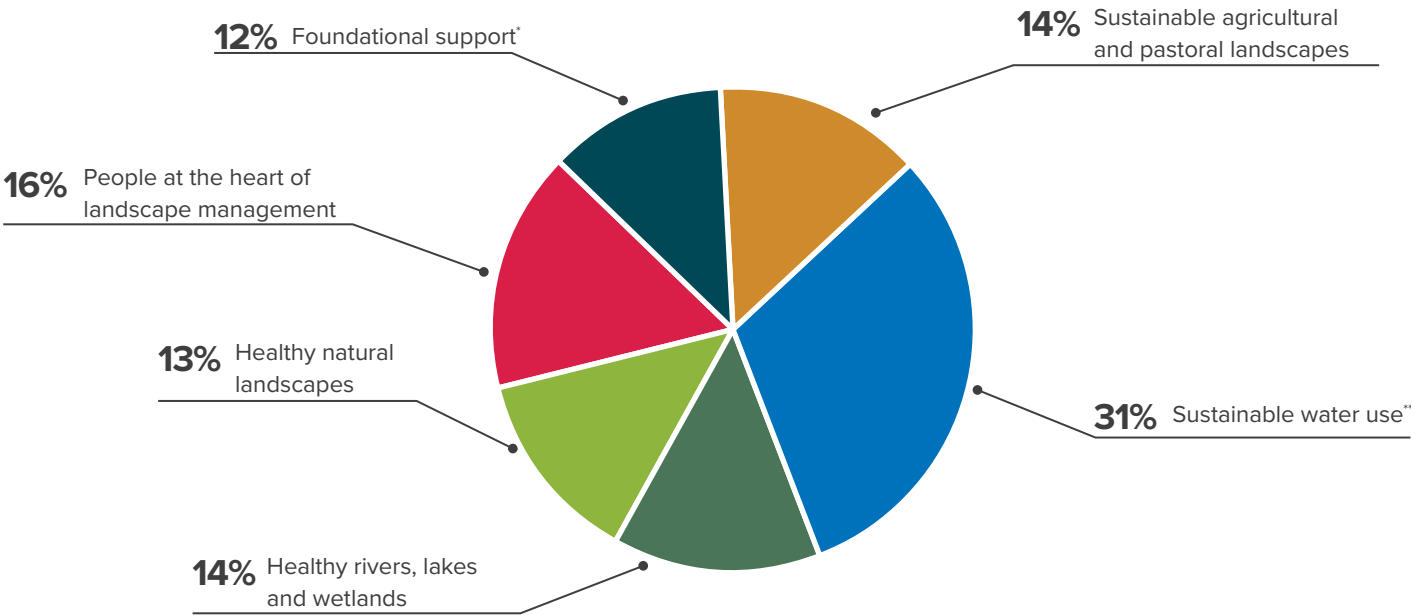
Funds raised within this landscape region remain invested here and are used for a variety of regional priorities including managing land, vegetation and water; citizen science; and community education and awareness. The landscape levies are used to leverage other funding sources including from the Australian Government.

In the 2022-23 financial year, the amount raised from landscape levies was \$11.8 million. \$3.4 million was committed from the Australian Government and \$2.3 million raised through other funding sources.



Note: These financial figures are yet to be formally audited for the 2022-23 financial year.

Expenditure by regional priorities



*Foundational programs represents the expenditure on the internal supporting programs such as customer and business services, communications, planning and evaluation, and board leadership and governance.

** The sustainable water use priority includes a significant proportion of Australian Government funds from the National Water Efficiency Program and the Lower Murray Reclaimed Irrigation Area Program.

More information

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