

Achievements Report

2024-2025

Leading the way to biodiverse and productive landscapes in a changing climate

Each year the SA Arid Lands Landscape Board delivers projects and programs across its five key priority areas and we are pleased to feature a snapshot of its key achievements for 2024-25.

The South Australian Arid Lands Landscape Board works across Outback SA and partners with community, industry, traditional owners and government agencies to ensure a sustainable approach is taken to manage, protect and restore soils, water, and native plants and animals.

The board works to ensure there is a balance between the needs of regional communities and the sustainable management of the environment.

It also operates as the relevant authority for a range of water, land protection and animal and plant control activities.

The board's work is funded through a collection of a land-based Landscape Levy and a water levy, which allows the board to leverage state and federal government funding.

The board has five strategic priorities:



CLIMATE RESILIENT REGION



WATER MANAGEMENT



SUSTAINABLE LAND MANAGEMENT



PROTECTING AND ENHANCING BIODIVERSITY



PEOPLE AND PARTNERSHIPS

The SA Arid Lands region

**525,000 km² or
52,500,000 ha**



26,000

people live here

Average

**annual rainfall
100-250 mm**



Traditional Owner Groups

Adnyamathanha, Antakirinja
Matu-Yankunytjatjara, Arabana,
Barngarla, Dieri, Eringa, Gawler
Ranges, Irrwanyere, Kokatha,
Kuyani, Malyankapa, Ngadjuri,
Nukunu, Tjajiwara Unmurru,
Wangkangurru/ Yarluyandi,
Walka Wani, Wilyakali,
Yandruwandha/Yawarrawarrka



Main industries

Mining,
Pastoralism,
Renewable energy,
Tourism



Major centres

Port Augusta, Quorn, Hawker,
Woomera, Roxby Downs,
Andamooka, Coober Pedy,
Marree, Leigh Creek





Quorn's Carbon in the Rangelands workshop



Climate resilient region

Resilient landscapes, communities and enterprises are mitigating and adapting to climate change

Carbon and emissions better understood following workshops

The understanding of carbon and its role in emissions reduction has increased with the delivery of a number of workshops and presentations across the region.

More than 90 people have attended and gained a clearer understanding of emissions reduction and carbon farming, having attended one of seven carbon workshops across the SAAL region.

The board's Carbon Outreach Officer is supporting land managers and primary producers to make decisions to reduce emissions and provide access to clear and consistent information on carbon farming and low-emissions technologies and practices in relation to the rangelands environment.

Delivered as 'Carbon 101 – Carbon in the Pastoral Zone' and 'Carbon in the Market Supply Chain', the workshops were held in Port Augusta, Bindarra, Quorn, Cradock, Kingoonya and Olary.

A further five workshops will be held before April 2026 in the region.

SAAL's Carbon Outreach Officer Jade Leyden said carbon farming had become an increasingly confusing and ambiguous term for Australian producers, particularly in a rangelands context.

She said the locally-run workshops were helping to clear the air about carbon credits, tax and market access and identify practical first steps for pastoral businesses.

"Knowing your carbon account is the low-cost, low-input way to be business-ready for a low-emissions market," she said.

"Carbon accounting tracks what goes in, what's emitted, and what leaves in your product. Completing a carbon account is free and leaves businesses with total net emissions and emissions intensity, which is needed for comparison and benchmarking between businesses."



A landscape rehydration workshop delivered in Kingoonya with the Mulloon Institute



The Pastoral Field Day in March drew more than 600 landholders from across the region



North Flinders landholders heard from Mexican rancher Alejandro Carrillo at a Regenerative Grazing workshop at Cradock



Kokatha Aboriginal Corporation and Kokatha Pastoral were supported to develop an Ecologically Sustainable Rangelands Management (ESRM) Plan



1 Ecologically Sustainable Rangelands Management (ESRM) plan developed with Kokatha Pastoral and Kokatha Aboriginal Corporation

5 training/capacity building/ awareness raising events hosted with 691 total participants

1 revegetation on-ground trial/demonstration delivered

30 soil tests completed



6 Carbon Outreach workshops delivered with 91 total participants





Water management

The region's water resources are managed judiciously

Valuable insights from water trials

Five trials underway in the Far North Prescribed Wells Area to investigate water usage are providing valuable insights in the water use of stock and other animals, alongside metering technology, vegetation profiles, and seasonal influences.

Being trialled until the end of summer 2026, the information will be used to develop a Water Accounting Implementation Plan by the Department for Environment and Water.

The trials are being undertaken on two cattle properties in the Marla-Oodnadatta district and one in the Marree-Innaminka district, as well as two sheep trials in the Kingoonya and Marree-Innaminka districts.

Since trials began in November 2023, seasonal conditions have demonstrated the challenges of managing water on pastoral properties.

The trials consider all water removed from the trough, including non-stock species and evaporation. On cattle properties the average water usage ranges between 20-litres per head per day (L/h/d) in winter, and 60L/h/d in summer. The two independent sheep trials monitoring the use of merino and dorper sheep have shown that on average, water usage is 5L/h/d in the cooler months and up to 12L/h/d in summer.

Camera monitoring technology installed at the water points have shown that water taken at the sheep trial sites is also influenced by a high-take from other species, mostly kangaroos, which are presently in high numbers south of the dog fence.

The benefit of the trial is that participants and SAAL staff can understand the total water usage from a trough, which is influenced by both stock and non-livestock species and other losses.

Site visits undertaken as part of the trial have also enabled SAAL staff to work with landholders on trough water sampling, paddock vegetation assessments and to gather additional data that will feed into the overall results.

Ongoing updates are presented to the board's Water Accounting Advisory Committee, who will view the results and feedback and discuss potential opportunities. The committee has provided ongoing guidance and advice throughout the trial.

The Department for Environment and Water will use the results to develop a Water Accounting Implementation Plan which will specify the allowed options for water accounting in the Far North Prescribed Wells Area in line with the [South Australian Licenced Water Use Metering Policy](#).

Blanche Cup

Monitoring of GAB Springs has been undertaken in partnership with traditional owners, land managers and the Friends of Mound Springs



Desert Goby



The Bubbler

9 land managers directly engaged in water management initiatives

2 water accounting trials initiated during FY25 making **5** total projects underway

2 Water Affecting Activities (WAAs) applications granted, **16** permit enquiries addressed and **1** site visit



52 WAA Best Practice Operation Procedure (BPOP) risk assessments

2 compliance visits

1 mine/proposed mine sites visited

15ML/year of water savings from water projects



2 infrastructure projects and **4** non-infrastructure projects completed

1 watercourse erosion management project completed

1 large feral herbivore survey completed





Landholders were supported to know their soil through workshops across the region



SAAL staff supported tours that travelled through the region to the International Rangelands Congress

Sustainable land management

Preparing the landscape for hydration

Land management practices protect soil, vegetation and biodiversity

Landholders from the Kingoonya, North Flinders and North East Pastoral districts gained more confidence in principles of landscape rehydration following workshops held at Kingoonya and Mt Victor Station in May.

The workshops were delivered by the Mulloon Institute.

The first, held at Kingoonya, offered a day of learning about soil hydrology and landscape processes impacting native pastures and land condition. Land managers from 11 pastoral properties who collectively manage 28,566km², learned about track maintenance and repair, planning fencelines, track improvements and understanding the impact livestock behaviour has on soil health.

The workshop included a mix of paddock site visits and classroom exercises and was offered after members of the Kingoonya District Group identified soil conservation and landscape rehydration as priority learning areas.

The second workshop, held at Mt Victor Station in the North East Pastoral district, was offered as an advanced bootcamp. It provided follow up to a workshop held at Boolcoomatta in 2024 and was delivered in an area with active and historical erosion challenges.

The bootcamp gave land managers a sound understanding of landscape rehydration principles and an opportunity to further their understanding of ways to improve water retention, reduce erosion and plan rehabilitation activities to effectively improve the small water cycle with increased vegetation and healthier soil outcomes.

The mixture of hands-on activities, sharing of experience and discussion kept attendees engaged. It was attended by 16 people, representing eight pastoral properties and the mining and conservation sectors.

The workshops were supported by the Australian Government through funding from the Natural Heritage Trust under the Climate Smart Agriculture Program and the South Australian Government's Landscape Priorities Fund.



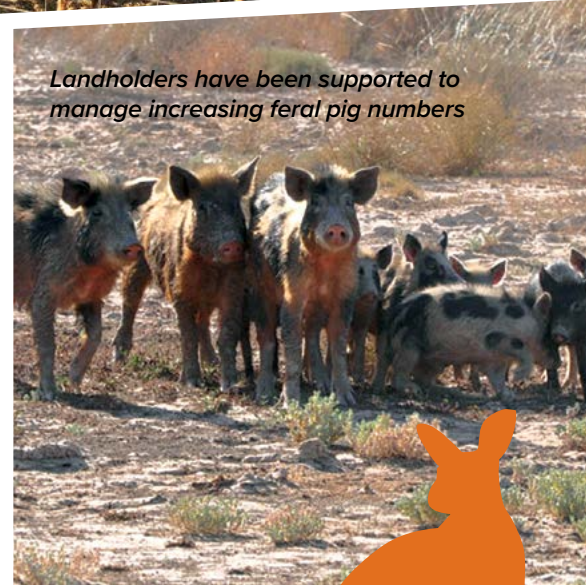
North East Pastoral landholders discussed landscape rehydration concepts during a workshop at Mt Victor



Western Grey Kangaroos at Dutchmans Stern



Landholders have been supported to manage increasing feral pig numbers



73 ground baiting injection services delivered across **7** districts

94,650 wild dog baits distributed

120 participating properties for ground baiting

2 Rangelands Goat Management Working Group Meetings held

7,733 feral goats controlled (including **3,696** undersized goats). In total, this has saved **6,186.4kg** of dry matter a day per animal

100 feral goat meat trialled as baits for control of foxes and wild dogs

300 fox baits provided for **3** properties

60 kg of pig baits provided to **1** property

84 volunteers supported contributed **3,782** volunteer hours for weed control and natural resource management

4 Kangaroo Partnership Steering Committee meetings held

6 EOI grants awarded worth \$130,628.26 to develop projects to sustainably manage kangaroos

19 properties supported to adopt Sustainable Agriculture practices

78 participants on the International Rangelands Congress bus tour

1 Significant Environmental Benefit (SEB) project assessed

3 soil extension workshops hosted and **2** soil demonstration sites supported



Protecting and enhancing biodiversity

Intrinsic biodiversity values are protected and enhanced

Partnering to protect the Idnya on Kokatha Country

Knowledge sharing is key to the protection and monitoring of the Idnya (Western quoll) as part of the board's *Discovery4Recovery* project.

Monitoring Idnya populations expanding from known reintroduction sites is just one facet of the project, but one that is driven by partnerships and collaborative delivery.

One of those key partnerships involved a monitoring location outside the Arid Recovery fenced reserve north of the Olympic Dam mine site within Kokatha Country.

The 12,300-hectare reserve is home to Australia's largest predator-proof fenced area, designed to exclude feral cats, foxes, and rabbits. Arid Recovery successfully reintroduced 12 western quolls in 2018, and they are now thriving and have been observed escaping the predator-proof fence into the surrounding landscape beyond the reserve.

Arid Recovery currently conducts feral animal control targeting feral cats in a buffer zone up to 5km from the reserve with trapping, shooting, baiting and use of Felixers.

SAAL has partnered with Arid Recovery and Kokatha Pastoral to monitor the activity of quolls, as well as other threatened species like plains mice (*Pseudomys australis*) and introduced species such as feral cats. This monitoring extends beyond the Arid

Recovery reserve, covering the broader area of Kokatha Pastoral's Roxby Downs and Andamooka stations.

Ecologists from SAAL and Arid Recovery delivered a two-day on-ground workshop with Kokatha Pastoral staff to set up monitoring cameras, as well as camera servicing and data analysis. Data will be useful for understanding the activity and survival of these threatened species outside the predator proof fence, particularly their interactions with cats and foxes.

To support ongoing learning, Arid Recovery ecologists developed a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) document, which was distributed to attendees. Fifty cameras were deployed during the workshop on both sides of the Arid Recovery fence.

A follow-up workshop will further train Kokatha staff in camera maintenance – such as checking devices and replacing SD cards – as well as in downloading, analysing, and recording data from the captured images.

Through the project, board staff and Arid Recovery will continue to provide support to Kokatha Pastoral staff as they gain skills to independently monitor these threatened species.

Discovery4Recovery is funded by the Australian Government Natural Heritage Trust and delivered by the SA Arid Lands Landscape Board, a member of the Commonwealth Regional Delivery Partners panel.

SAAL has partnered with Arid Recovery and Kokatha Pastoral to monitor the activity of Idnya and plains mice outside the Olympic Dam reserve





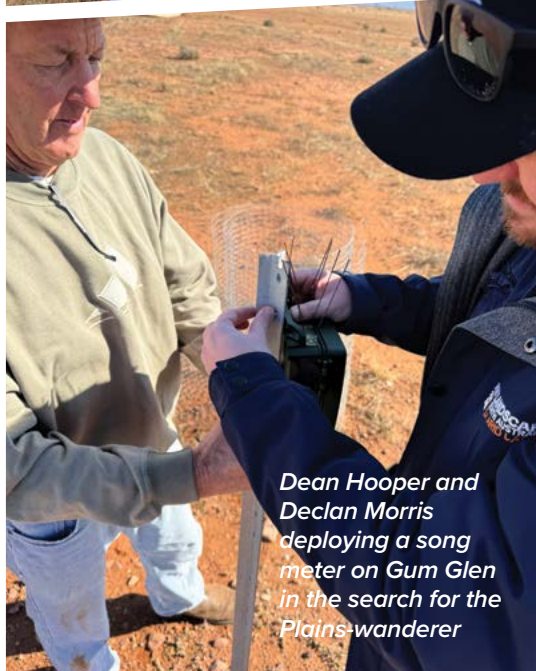
Kowari was the focus of a fauna survey in the Coongie Lakes Ramsar site



Quoll trapping was undertaken on Arkaba Station in April



Searching for Desert Greenhood orchids in the Gawler Ranges



Dean Hooper and Declan Morris deploying a song meter on Gum Glen in the search for the Plains-wanderer



Dieri elder Frank Warren and Dieri Aboriginal Corporation CEO Kirsty Dadleeh joined the board's Senior Water Resource Officer Aaron Smith to present to the International Rangelands Congress on a co-designed springs fencing project

844,636 hectares of aerial control programs targeting feral pigs and large feral herbivores in the Coongie Lakes Ramsar site

3 Fauna surveys in the Coongie Lakes Ramsar site targeting Kowari and native fish

1 feral pig pest animal survey in the Coongie Lakes Ramsar site

38 participants involved in stakeholder engagement including educational activities

271,875 hectares of aerial control programs targeting foxes

1 fauna survey targeting Idnya (Western Quolls)

1 flora survey targeting Arckaringa Daisies

1 camera survey of pest animal activity

2 Citizen Science projects for Idnya and Plains-wanderer launched

15 Fauna surveys targeting Plains-wanderer

6 Stakeholder engagements hosted for Plains-wanderer survey and information sharing

85 song meters deployed to detect Plains-wanderer and **1** dataset analysed

2 feral cat management events supported at Innamincka and Iron Knob



Ladies from across the region came together for an Outback Ladies Muster in Hawker



People and partnerships

People and community are central to looking after our landscapes

District groups connect communities with the board

District-based landscape groups play an important role in connecting communities with the work of the SAAL Landscape Board. Members of the board's seven groups play a key role in supporting the sustainable management of their district's natural resources. They work within their local communities to ensure implementation of the board's five-year plan and increase community awareness of board programs. Each group has up to seven members who are appointed by the board.

Recently, landscape group members have provided local level input to the regional landscape planning and delivery process.

While the main focus of landscape groups is program delivery, groups also have an important role in local level policy development that can be considered in a regional context by the board.

Members provide local knowledge, based on community views and perspectives, on issues related to the board's business, policy development, future planning and development of the regional plan. They advise on the delivery of natural resource management programs and participate in and host on-ground workshops.

Groups also play an important role in supporting communities. When running events and workshops, landscape groups will partner with local progress associations, the Isolated Children's Parents Association (ICPA), land managers and small local businesses.

Members have a range of skills and knowledge including primary production, land management, soil conservation, Aboriginal heritage, natural resource management, industry and tourism.

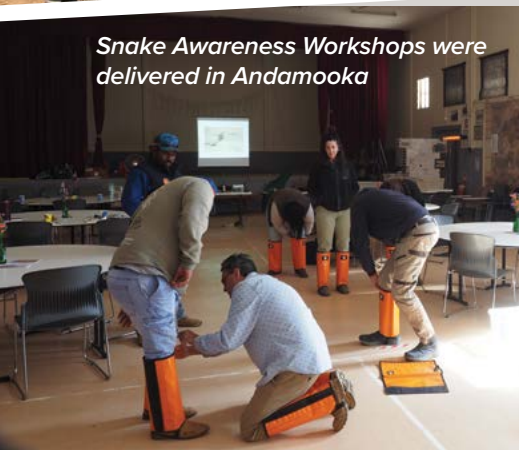
Find out who your local landscape group members are at www.landscape.sa.gov.au/saal/about-us/our-board/landscape-groups

The Gawler Ranges and Port Augusta Quorn Landscape Groups came together for a joint meeting that included a tour of the South Middleback Ranges minesite at Iron Duke





Family Fun Days drew families to events held across the region. The Murrumbidgee district gathered at Aroona Dam near Leigh Creek for a Kayaking and Fishing Day



Snake Awareness Workshops were delivered in Andamooka



An Indigenous Ranger Gathering was held on Nukunu Country in August 2024



The SAAL Board held a community meeting in Roxby Downs and visited neighbouring towns and properties

23 Landscape Group meetings across all
7 Landscape Districts

24 landholder capacity building/extension activities delivered

7 community education events delivered

12 nature education events with schools and teacher professional development



18 grassroots grants awarded worth \$143,102.72



3 Aboriginal Engagement workshops to build relationships with Traditional Owner groups

1 Indigenous Ranger Gathering hosted

6 Family Fun Day community events supported by the CLOs

3 Kids On Country™ events supported

4 Across the Outback editions delivered to
1,118 subscribers

An increase in **726** Facebook followers and
92 Instagram followers

Supported **20** people to attend the International Rangelands Congress to learn from **700** rangelands managers from **50** countries



Projects – Looking forward

LANDSCAPE PRIORITIES FUND

Resilient Rangelands – Managing Biosecurity threats for climate resilient landscapes

This project addresses the significant threat posed by feral goats, feral pigs and wild dogs to the condition and resilience of rangelands ecosystems and agricultural enterprises. It addresses total grazing pressure impacts on biodiversity and pastoral production.

Statewide Rangelands Goat Management Strategy

This project delivers landscape scale goat management by establishing a formal network and working with the region's land managers, in collaboration with industry, neighbouring rangelands landscape boards, First Nations and policy makers.

Sustainable Use of Undersized Goats to Protect Native Habitat and Pasture

This joint venture between Zoos SA and landscape boards makes use of protein from harvested feral goats. It involves humane, on-site destruction and processing of undersized or unfit-to-load animals to feed carnivores at the Zoos SA sites, while reducing goat impacts.

Sustainable Land Management

Working with land managers to increase native vegetation and biodiversity, this project positions the region to take part in the Nature Repair Market outlined in the Federal Government's Nature Positive Plan and provides opportunities for increased restoration of groundcover and critical habitat protection. It provides information and works with land managers on emerging nature repair markets, native vegetation restoration projects and land management practices to increase groundcover and biodiversity.

Kangaroo Partnership Project – improving landscape and community resilience in South Australia (KPP)

Building on the partnership developed by the previous project, this project further refines efforts on over-abundant kangaroo management priorities, explores and trials new pathways, offers knowledge sharing opportunities to increase public understanding of kangaroo management and increase social licence to achieve positive outcomes. Also funded by the SA Drought Hub.

LEVY FUNDED

Native Not Noxious

This project aims to reduce population sizes, establishment, distribution and impacts of weeds that align with board priorities and district plans, as well as State legislation, frameworks and policies.

Biteback – Wild dog management

The board runs a comprehensive Wild Dog Management program in partnership with landholders. Twenty-one wild dog local area groups are supported to implement the best practice guidelines for baiting and wild dog control.

BHP

Great Artesian Basin Springs

This project will see a monitoring protocol developed to expand knowledge on the Great Artesian Basin (GAB) Springs. It includes establishing baseline conditions, identifying the occurrence of threatened plants, using sensitive indicator plant species to measure spring condition and determine threats. It will enable staff, volunteers and First Nations groups to individually collect springs data.

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT

Monitoring Plains-Wanderer to Track Trajectory (Saving Native Species Program)

Partnering with Bush Heritage Australia and Birdlife Australia, this project improves understanding of Plains-wanderer distribution by deploying bioacoustic equipment in known habitat and analysing call data. A management guide will be developed for landholders with known Plains-wanderer habitat and updating a species distribution map.

Great Artesian Basin Water Security Program

Funding for the rehabilitation, maintenance, and replacement of wells and associated distribution networks available on a cost sharing basis for landholders accessing water from the Great Artesian Basin (GAB). It is administered in partnership with the Department for Environment and Water.

NATURAL HERITAGE TRUST

Discovery4Recovery

This project continues monitoring of quolls and reducing threats by targeting pest species, monitoring the Arckaringa Daisy and key populations of the Flinders Ranges Purple-spotted Gudgeon to understand population trends and guide management actions. Surveys for Desert Greenhood will determine population and extent and provides opportunities for First Nations groups and other organisations to participate in conservation of EPBC-listed species.

Wetland Wonders

Threats to the Coongie Lakes Ramsar values and beyond will be protected through a focus on impacts by feral animal and priority weed incursions, particularly after flood. On-ground management informed by a Strategic Adaptive Management process is being implemented in collaboration with land managers. Monitoring will involve traditional owners and community volunteers and aims to fill knowledge gaps in past and existing monitoring data.

Building Pastoral Sustainability

Pastoralists are supported to adopt sustainable practices that improve ground cover, soils, and landscapes. Information will be provided to help them reduce emissions, and plan, implement and monitor practices such as rotational grazing, soil erosion works and carbon accounting. Soil demonstration sites showcased in previous projects will be revisited to build a better profile and understanding of the region's soil carbon. The project focuses on building the knowledge and capacity of pastoralists through events and peer-to-peer learning.

Landscape SA Carbon Outreach

This project provides land managers with the latest information to understand carbon accounting and low emissions technologies and practices. Tailored training is offered to pastoralists, First Nations, and conservation land managers, and board staff are upskilled to be independent advisors for emissions reduction. *This program is also funded by the Department of Industry, Science and Resources*

