



A Natural Legacy

Revitalising private land conservation in South Australia for nature, people and thriving rural landscapes





Watchalunga Planting Day. *Credit: Patrick Mentzel*

Cover Photo: Volunteer Kate Holmes and botanist Helen Vonow examine wildflowers at Bob Bon Station Reserve. *Credit: Kelly Barnes*

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Independent assessment of Heritage Agreements in South Australia prepared by
Conservation Management for Nature Foundation of South Australia, Australian Land
Conservation Alliance and The Pew Charitable Trusts

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Contents

Contents	4
Abbreviations	5
Executive Summary	7
Methodology	8
Key Findings	9
Recommendations	10
1. Introduction	13
Methodology	13
2. Overview of South Australian Private Protected Areas	15
2.1 Heritage Agreements	15
2.2 Establishment	18
2.3 Management	18
2.4 Protection from extractive activities	19
3. Assessment of the Heritage Agreement Program	21
3.1 Contribution to South Australia’s protected area network	21
3.2 Management of the Heritage Agreement program at state and regional level	24
3.3 Management of Heritage Agreement areas by landholders	27
3.4 Contribution to conservation outcomes in South Australia	28
3.5 Role of landholder networks in supporting conservation outcomes	29
4. Recommendations	30
Match landholders’ commitment to conservation with increased investment	30
Support practical cooperation between landholders	30
Enhance conservation management and monitoring	31
Encourage integration of conservation and primary production	31
5. Conclusions	33
6. Appendices	34
Appendix 1: References	34
Appendix 2: Assessment Methodology	36
Appendix 3: Estimated funding needed to support effective management of Heritage Agreement network	37
Appendix 4: Heritage Agreement Holder Survey Results	38

Figures

Figure 1: Map of protected areas in South Australia by type and governance arrangement	16
Figure 2: Cumulative number of Heritage Agreements entered into by year (from CAPAD 2016)	18
Figure 3: Cumulative number of hectares of Heritage Agreements per year (from CAPAD 2016)	18
Figure 4: Significant Environmental Benefit Offsets income vs Heritage Agreement payments from the Native Vegetation Fund	19
Figure 5: Map of underrepresented IBRA Regions in South Australia	21
Figure 6: Heritage Agreement payments from the Native Vegetation Fund	24
Figure 7: Sources of support received by Heritage Agreement Holders	25
Figure 8: Types of support received by Heritage Agreement Holders	25
Figure 9: Organisations that had been in contact with Heritage Agreement Holders beyond the initial support	25
Figure 10: Type of contact received	26
Figure 11: What Heritage Agreement Holders use to guide management of their area	27
Figure 12: Management actions that survey respondents had contributed to the improvement	27
Figure 13: Survey respondent observations in change of condition of conservation values since establishment of the Heritage Agreement	28
Figure 14: Changes observed by survey respondents	28
Figure 15: Methods used by Heritage Agreement Holders to understand the condition of conservation values	28
Figure 16: Networks Heritage Agreement Holders are part of	29
Figure 17: Value received from being in contact with other Heritage Agreement Holders	29

Tables

Table 1: Terrestrial Protected Areas by Reserve Type in South Australia (2016)*	17
Table 2: Timeline of Heritage Agreement Program since inception in 1980 and corresponding changes to incentives offered to landholders through the program	17
Table 3: Terrestrial Protected Areas in each Bioregion (IBRA Version 7) in South Australia (2016)	22
Table 4: Assessment methodology matrix	36
Table 5: Estimate for management funding requirement for current extent of Heritage Agreement Network	37

Abbreviations

CAPAD	Collaborative Australian Protected Area Database
CAR	Comprehensive, Adequate and Representative
IBRA	Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation for Australia
IPA	Indigenous Protected Area
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
NGOs	Non-Government Organisations
NRM	Natural Resource Management
NRS	National Reserve System
NVC	Native Vegetation Council
PPA	Private Protected Areas
PIRSA	Department of Primary Industries and Regions SA



Private landholders are working to protect rare species like the Yellow-footed rock wallaby.

Executive Summary

For many years, South Australia had a well-deserved reputation as a leader in private land conservation, but a sharp decline in funding over the past decade has left landholders without much needed support to protect and manage wildlife habitat on their land.

With nearly 60 percent of land in South Australia privately owned or managed, voluntary conservation commitments by landholders have a vital role to play in protecting the state's native wildlife and sustaining thriving rural landscapes.

Seventy-three species have become extinct in South Australia since European settlement, and more than one thousand species are listed as rare and threatened under the South Australian *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972*. By protecting and managing wildlife habitat on their land, private landholders can help to turn the tide of extinction.

Hundreds of landholders across South Australia are taking voluntary, practical action to conserve wildlife habitat and manage threats like weeds and feral animals. The hard work and commitment of these landholders is helping to ensure the survival of iconic and much-loved species like the Yellow-footed rock wallaby (pictured).

By conserving natural habitats on their properties, landholders are supporting sustainable and resilient primary production by helping to maintain soils, water quality and quantity, shade, storm protection, pollination and other ecosystem services. Conservation land management also presents opportunities for landholders to diversify their income through carbon management, native vegetation offsets and nature-based tourism.

There are a range of tools for formalising private land conservation commitments in South Australia, including Heritage Agreements, Management Agreements, Nature Reserves, Sanctuaries and Indigenous Protected Areas.

Landholders have a vital role to play in protecting the state's native wildlife and sustaining rural landscapes.



This report focuses on Heritage Agreements because they are the mechanism most commonly used by landholders to establish protected areas on private land in South Australia.

Launched by the Tonkin Government in 1980, the Heritage Agreement program was hailed as an Australian first. This innovative and popular program provides landholders with practical advice and



The elusive and endangered plains wanderer is regularly sighted on Boolcoomata Station Reserve, a property managed by Bush Heritage Australia.

financial incentives to permanently protect native vegetation on their property. Heritage Agreements are also used as a regulatory tool to control land clearing.

Today, there are more than 1,600 Heritage Agreements, protecting more than 1.8 million hectares of wildlife habitat across South Australia (DEW 2019). The program has attracted participation by a diverse range of landholders, including hundreds of primary producers.

Unfortunately, financial support for Heritage Agreement landholders has declined dramatically over the past decade. Fewer landholders are entering the program and existing participants are less able to access support for effective conservation measures on their land.

Nonetheless, Heritage Agreement landholders remain strongly committed to conservation. This provides an exciting opportunity to revitalise the program and build on its proud history of innovation and voluntary action by landholders.

Financial support for Heritage Agreement landholders has declined dramatically over the past decade.

This report provides an assessment of the current status of the Heritage Agreement program, and proposes public policy and budgetary measures to better support the establishment and management of private protected areas in South Australia.

Methodology

The review was conducted in four parts: (a) a desktop review of relevant literature; (b) a survey of 84 landholders, including 55 Heritage Agreement landholders; (c) interviews with landholders, government agencies, conservation organisations and other key stakeholders; and (d) a cross-sectoral stakeholder roundtable on private land conservation.

Key Findings

1. The Heritage Agreement Program is the SA Government's primary mechanism to establish private protected areas in South Australia, with significant benefits to wildlife conservation, landscape health and primary producers. The diversity of vegetation types represented in the Heritage Agreement program is vital for the survival of some species.
2. There has been broad landholder uptake of Heritage Agreements, with more than 1,600 agreements in place. The program has attracted participation by a diverse range of landholders, including hundreds of primary producers. Collectively, these landholders are protecting more than 1.8 million hectares of wildlife habitat across South Australia (DEW 2019).
3. Many Heritage Agreement landholders are taking practical action to manage wildlife habitat on their land (including weed control, feral animal control and replanting native trees), but their ability to plan and implement effective conservation actions is increasingly constrained by a lack of financial and technical support.
4. Unfortunately, funding for Heritage Agreement landholders from the Native Vegetation Fund has declined by more than 99 percent, from \$453,000 per year in 2009 to \$4,000 per year in 2018 (NVC Annual Reports).
5. There has been a long-term decline in the establishment of new Heritage Agreements. There were 811 new Heritage Agreements established from 1990 to 1999 (81 per year), declining to 310 from 2000 to 2009 (31 per year) and 117 between 2010 and 2019 (12 per year)(CAPAD 2016, DEW 2019).
6. The number and extent of Heritage Agreements is lower in the Arid Zone than the Agricultural Districts. Further expansion of private protected areas in the Arid Zone is constrained by the SA Government's recent decision that Heritage Agreements are not legally permissible on pastoral leasehold land.
7. Government support for Heritage Agreement landholders has shifted from localised support with strong community relationships to a more regionalised approach. This has seen a drop-off in landholders accessing support, and perceived loss of local knowledge in delivery of support.
8. Nearly 50 percent of Heritage Agreement landholders surveyed have a conservation management plan, but the lack of a consistent and coordinated approach to monitoring makes it difficult to reliably assess the collective impact of conservation actions and investment across the network.
9. There does not appear to be a coordinated strategic approach between agencies and organisations to support the establishment and management of Heritage Agreement areas to maximise conservation impact.
10. There are important opportunities to capitalise on the local knowledge and land management expertise of Heritage Agreement landholders by supporting and investing in a community of practice to share information and practical skills.



Major Mitchell's Cockatoo. Credit: Subbu Conley

Recommendations

Match landholders' commitment to conservation with increased investment

Heritage Agreement landholders invest substantial time and effort to conserve and restore wildlife habitat on their land. Investing in the revitalisation of the Heritage Agreement program presents an exciting opportunity to achieve much-needed conservation outcomes in partnership with dedicated landholders, for the benefit of all South Australians.

Recommendation 1.

Increase funding for the establishment and management of Heritage Agreements to \$8.7 million per year in the 2020-21 SA Budget, with annual increments to reflect future expansion of the Heritage Agreement network.

Recommendation 2.

To help meet this funding need, prioritise expenditure from the Landscapes SA Fund and Native Vegetation Fund to support the establishment, management and monitoring of private protected areas. This investment should be complemented by an increased allocation from consolidated revenue to support Heritage Agreement landholders.

Support practical cooperation between landholders

Rural landholders, conservation organisations and government agencies have a diverse range of skills, knowledge and experience relevant to conservation. Heritage Agreement landholders have indicated that they would benefit from more opportunities to share knowledge and work together to deliver practical conservation outcomes.

Recommendation 3.

Establish an enduring network of private protected area owners and managers to support collaboration, peer-to-peer learning and develop a self-sustaining community of practice.

Recommendation 4.

Government and conservation organisations work together to provide practical support to landholders in conservation planning, management and monitoring.

Enhance conservation management and monitoring

Even with a Heritage Agreement in place, natural values may deteriorate if the land is not appropriately managed. Establishing an adaptive management cycle of planning, managing, monitoring and adapting management actions can help make the most of landholder and government investments.

Recommendation 5.

Support landholders to develop simple management plans for their properties, appropriate to the scale and complexity of conservation challenges on their land.

Recommendation 6.

Adapt an existing simple and cost-effective monitoring framework (e.g. WildTracker) to demonstrate management effectiveness and impact, for nature conservation and primary production.

Encourage integration of conservation and primary production

Primary producers are increasingly focusing on opportunities to enhance and promote the sustainability of their industries, while increasing their resilience to changing environmental conditions. By managing natural habitats on their land, primary producers can help to foster thriving, productive and resilient landscapes. Private protected areas provide a tool for landholders to secure these improvements for the long-term, and may present opportunities for income diversification through biodiversity offsets, carbon farming and ecotourism.

Recommendation 7.

Conservation, landcare and primary producer organisations work together to develop a shared vision for voluntary private land conservation in South Australia.

Recommendation 8.

Remove barriers to conservation and support income diversification and new employment opportunities in the pastoral sector by permitting conservation, biodiversity offsetting and carbon management on pastoral leasehold land.

Recommendation 9.

Provide targeted incentives to primary producers that wish to protect threatened species and underrepresented ecosystems, with payments based on the estimated cost of relevant management actions and/or any loss of income.

Benefits of revitalising South Australia's private protected area network

By working together to implement these recommendations, we can chart a new path for private land conservation in South Australia, building on the state's proud history of achievement to deliver a private protected area program that:

- values, supports and celebrates the contributions of dedicated landholders;
- engages volunteers and the broader community in practical conservation action;
- fosters income diversification and new employment opportunities in rural areas;
- provides vital and cost-effective protection for South Australian wildlife; and
- supports thriving rural landscapes and resilient primary production enterprises.



Wetlands on private property are important ecosystems. *Credit: Matt Turner*



1. Introduction

Seventy-three species have become extinct in South Australia since European settlement, and more than one thousand species are listed as rare and threatened under the *South Australian National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972*. By protecting and managing wildlife habitat on their land, private landholders can help to turn the tide of extinction.

Conservation on private land plays a vital role in protecting special and threatened species like the yellow-footed rock wallaby, plains wanderer, short-tailed grass wren and purplewood in South Australia. Private land conservation also helps primary production by helping to maintain good soil quality and water retention in the surrounding area.

This report focuses on Heritage Agreements, the main mechanism used by the South Australia Government to establish protected areas on privately owned and managed land.

The Tonkin Government paved the way for private protected areas in Australia by launching the Heritage Agreement program in 1980. It was a visionary move which put landholders squarely in the picture when it came to protecting and managing wildlife habitat and the program has since been emulated extensively in other states.

Together, Heritage Agreement landholders have established the second largest private protected area network in Australia. However, public investment in the Heritage Agreement network has declined sharply over the past decade, leaving landholders without access to much needed financial and technical support.

This report presents (a) an assessment of the current status of Heritage Agreements in South Australia; and (b) proposed public policy and budgetary measures to better support the establishment and management of Heritage Agreements in the state.

Methodology

In order to assess the South Australian Heritage Agreement Program, the report uses the following key assessment questions:

1. What is the contribution of the Heritage Agreement Program to a comprehensive, adequate and representative network of protected areas in South Australia?
2. How well has the Heritage Agreement Program been managed at a state and regional level?
3. How well are Heritage Agreement areas managed by landholders on the ground?
4. How have Heritage Agreements contributed to conservation outcomes?
5. What role have landholder networks played in supporting conservation action?

Further information on the review methodology is presented in **Appendix 1**.



Raptor research Witchelina Nature Reserve.



Private landholders are playing an important role in efforts to save the critically endangered Orange bellied parrot.

2. Overview of South Australian Private Protected Areas

Private landholders have a vital role to play in conserving and restoring natural values on their land. In South Australia, private land conservation is already delivering positive outcomes for people and nature, with the potential to deliver greater environmental, social and cultural benefits over time.

If we rely only on public protected areas like reserves, conservation parks and national parks to protect biodiversity, we would likely fail to avoid extinctions (Bradshaw 2018). This is because most land in South Australia is either privately owned (freehold land) or managed (pastoral leasehold land), and some ecosystems and threatened species are found predominantly on privately owned or managed land. This means that landholders are vitally important in managing threats to native plants and animals through voluntary action on their land.

Private land conservation in South Australia can be formalised in Heritage Agreements, Management Agreements, Nature Reserves, Sanctuaries and Indigenous Protected Areas. Heritage Agreements form, by far, the largest component by area and number of protected areas on private land under South Australian legislation (Table 1). For this reason, this report focuses on Heritage Agreements as the primary mechanism for creating protected areas on private land.

2.1 Heritage Agreements

The Heritage Agreement Program began in 1980 under the *South Australian Heritage Act 1978* as a response to over-clearance of native vegetation in agricultural regions of the state. The Heritage Agreement Program was developed to provide a mechanism to establish a conservation covenant on private land which is attached to the land title.

Today, Heritage Agreements are established under the *Native Vegetation Act 1991* and are a legal agreement between a landholder and Minister for Environment and Water that permanently protects a special natural feature such as a Threatened Ecological Community.

Landholders are vitally important in managing threats to native plants and animals through voluntary action on their land. ... If we only rely on public protected areas we would likely fail to avoid extinctions.

Heritage Agreements are a voluntary agreement, registered on the title of the land. They bind current and future landholders of that title to the agreement in perpetuity (NVC, 2017).

The Minister must not enter into, vary or terminate a Heritage Agreement without first consulting with, and obtaining the approval of, the Native Vegetation Council (DEW, 2019). The Native Vegetation Council (NVC) is an advisory body established under the *Native Vegetation Act 1991* and has a central role in promoting the uptake of Heritage Agreements.

Since the Heritage Agreement Program was introduced in 1980, 1,607 Heritage Agreements have been entered into, protecting more than 1.8 million hectares of the state's native vegetation (DEW, 2019). Since inception, the program has been through two legislative reviews resulting in changes to incentives offered to landholders (Table 3; data from NVC, 2017).

Figure 1: Map of protected areas in South Australia by type and governance arrangement

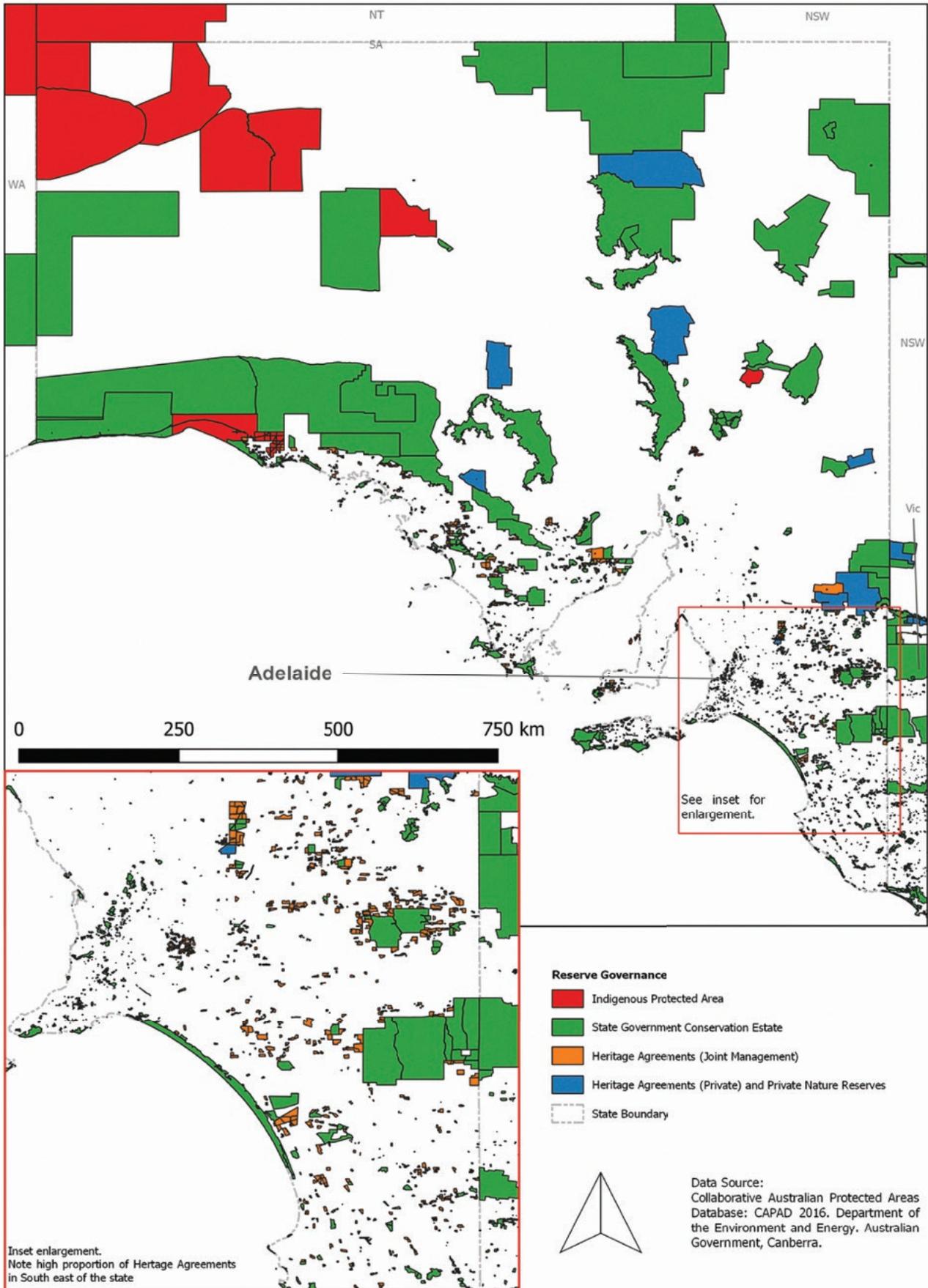


Table 1: Terrestrial Protected Areas by Reserve Type in South Australia (2016)*

Terrestrial Protected Areas by Reserve Type in South Australia (2016)				
TYPE	Number	Area (ha)	% of PA	% of SA
Private protected areas				
Heritage Agreement	1,567	1,465,437	4.95	1.49
Private Nature Reserve	4	697,323	2.36	0.71
Indigenous Protected Areas				
Indigenous Protected Area	10	6,192,946	20.93	6.29
Government reserves				
Regional Reserve	7	9,347,354	31.59	9.50
Conservation Park	261	5,812,253	19.64	5.90
National Park	20	3,877,201	13.10	3.94
Wilderness Protection Area	14	1,851,954	6.26	1.88
Conservation Reserve	17	299,154	1.01	0.30
Game Reserve	10	25,955	0.09	0.03
Forest Reserve	61	16,010	0.05	0.02
Recreation Park	13	1,701	0.01	0.00
NRS Addition - Gazettal in Progress	4	1,596	0.01	0.00
Total	1,988	29,588,883	100.00	30.06

*Source: Australian Government (2016) Collaborative Australian Protected Area Database. Only protected areas that meet the standard for inclusion in the NRS are included in this table. See p.4 of Technical Specification document - Terrestrial CAPAD 2016 at www.environment.gov.au/capad for details. This table excludes protected areas that are categorised ENVIRON = 'B' (both terrestrial and marine) which are <30 percent land (based on Geoscience Australia 100k coastline).

Table 2: Timeline of Heritage Agreement Program since inception in 1980 and corresponding changes to incentives offered to landholders through the program

Year	Legislation	Incentives offered
1980	South Australian Heritage Act 1978	Rates and tax relief for area under Heritage Agreement Fencing
1985	Native Vegetation Management Act 1985	Financial payment for loss of production Rates and tax relief Allowance for fencing
1991	Native Vegetation Act 1991	Potential reduction of rates and taxes via Concessional Property Valuations NVC covers establishment costs

2.2 Establishment

Once a property is identified and agreement to proceed secured with the landholder, a ‘Memorandum of Agreement’ is developed and signed by the Minister and landholder identifying:

- location and boundary of the area protected by the Heritage Agreement;
- permitted and prohibited activities on that area of land, and;
- the landholder’s and Minister’s responsibilities over that area of land.

To establish a Heritage Agreement, a landholder can apply to the Native Vegetation Council (NVC) by completing an “Application for a Native Vegetation Agreement” (NVC, 2019).

For landholders entering into a Heritage Agreement, the NVC meets the costs associated with the negotiation, assessment, drafting and registration of the Heritage Agreement. Any subsequent changes would require the consent of the NVC and the Minister, and the landholder may be responsible for any costs associated with the changes (NVC, 2019).

Landholders entering into a Heritage Agreement may be released from the payment on some rates and taxes on the agreement land. Only areas identified in the Agreement or Registered Plan as Heritage Agreement areas can receive a reduced rate. The rate reduction is calculated by the State Valuation Office and varies from property to property across the state (NVC, 2019).

Approval and formalising a Heritage Agreement can take 12-24 months, depending on the complexity of the proposal.

At its inception in 1980, the Heritage Agreement Program provided incentives to encourage landholders to engage in the process which has since ceased.

The *Native Vegetation Act 1991* contains provisions for financial incentives for landholders, specifically a reduction in rates and taxes in respect of the agreement land, and compensation for decrease in value of land resulting from execution of heritage agreement. The Act also contains a specific provision allowing the Minister to pay the owner of the land an amount as an incentive to enter into a heritage agreement.

Properties identified in the Agreement or Registered Plan as Heritage Agreement areas can receive a reduced valuation and subsequent reduction in particular rates and taxes. The reduction is based on property valuations made by the State Valuation Office and varies between properties across the State.

Until recently, the Native Vegetation Fund was a key source of funding for the establishment of Heritage Agreements. Established under the *Native Vegetation Act 1991*, the primary purpose of the Fund is to fund research, preservation, enhancement and management of native vegetation in South Australia, and encouraging the re-establishment of native vegetation on land from which it has been previously cleared. The Native Vegetation Council is responsible for the administration of the Fund.

2.3 Management

The Heritage Agreement Program initially provided financial incentives to landholders to enter into agreements. Financial support to manage the agreement areas was also provided. Over the past few decades, funding came from the Native Vegetation Fund established under *Native Vegetation Act 1991*.

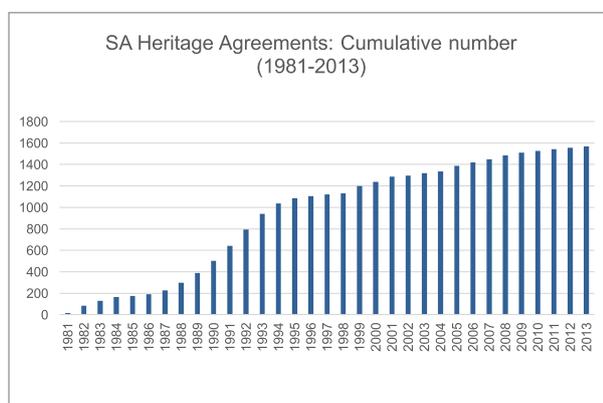


Figure 2: Cumulative number of Heritage Agreements entered into by year (CAPAD 2016)

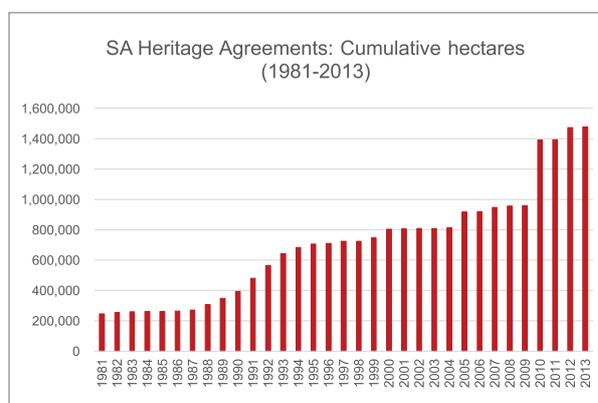


Figure 3: Cumulative number of hectares of Heritage Agreements per year (CAPAD 2016)

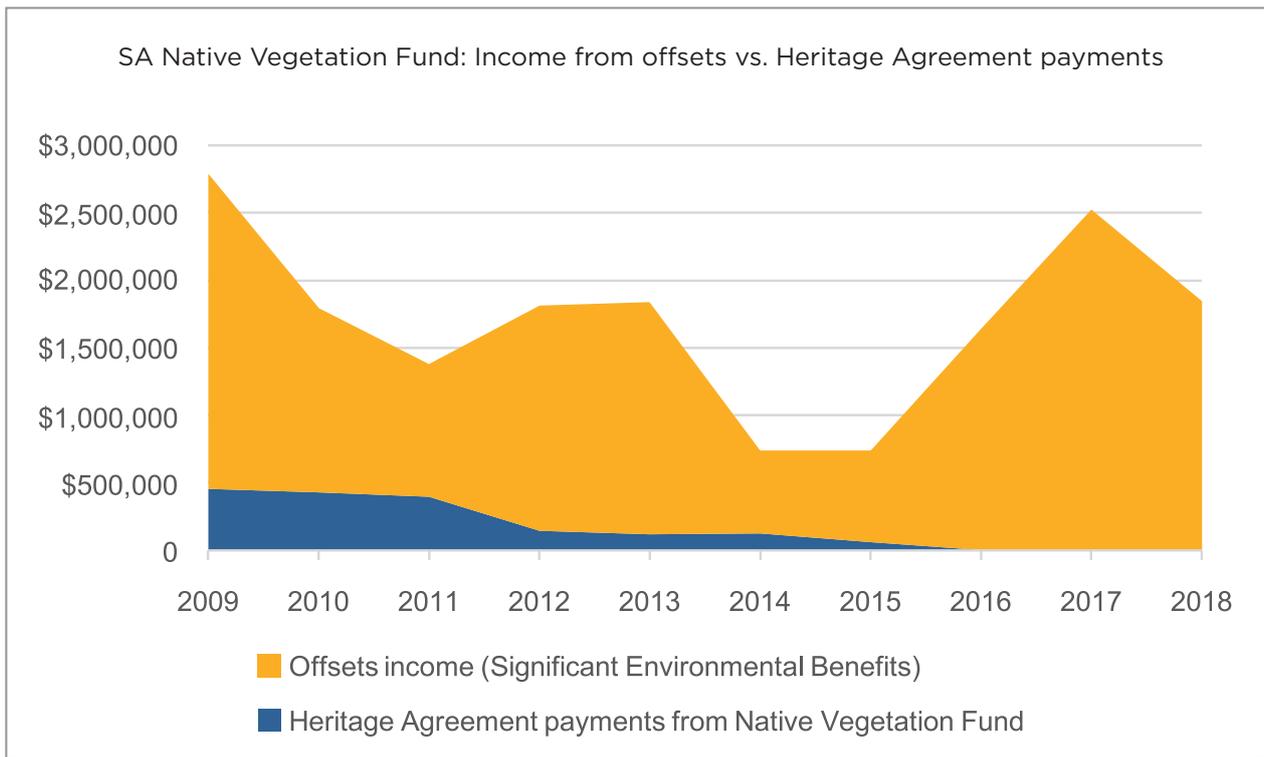


Figure 4: Significant Environmental Benefit Offsets income vs Heritage Agreement payments from the Native Vegetation Fund

Income to the Native Vegetation Fund comes from three key sources: consolidated revenue; fines and clearing application fees; and, income from vegetation clearing offsets.

Individuals or companies that propose to clear native vegetation are required to deliver an appropriate offset (“Significant Environmental Benefit”) (SEB) by either (a) directly protecting or restoring native vegetation, or (b) paying money into the Native Vegetation Fund. Income paid into the fund from offsets is required to be used to “establish, regenerate or maintain native vegetation” (s21, *Native Vegetation Act 1991*).

Since 2009, the Fund has received \$15 million in SEB payments, with \$1.7 million spent on Heritage Agreements over the past ten years (**Figure 4**).

Payments were made to agreement holders for infrastructure, such as fencing to protect the agreement area from grazing. Some management actions such as the control of weeds are a landholder responsibility under the *Natural Resources Management Act 2004*.

2.4 Protection from extractive activities

The *Native Vegetation Act 1991* does not allow for the removal or disturbance of rocks or soil, including cultivation, in or from Heritage Agreement land (NVC, 2017). However, the Native Vegetation Regulations 2017 permit clearing of native vegetation (including in Heritage Agreement areas) for certain mining and exploration activities.





Volunteers on Witchelina Nature Reserve. Credit: Andy Rasheed

3. Assessment of the Heritage Agreement Program

This section assesses the Heritage Agreement Program based on the assessment questions.

3.1 What is the contribution of Heritage Agreements to a comprehensive, adequate and representative network of protected areas in South Australia?

For protected areas on private land to be most effective for landscape-scale conservation, they should be established in conjunction with strategic level plans (e.g. Regional NRM Plans), temporal and institutional concerns, conservation management of ecological and cross-ecosystem processes, and resilience in the face of climate change (Perkins, 2015; Allen et al., 2018). At a smaller scale, protected areas on individual parcels of private land should protect specific attributes (Perkins, 2015) and, where properties are targets for conservation, based on identification of biodiversity assets (Greiner, 2015).

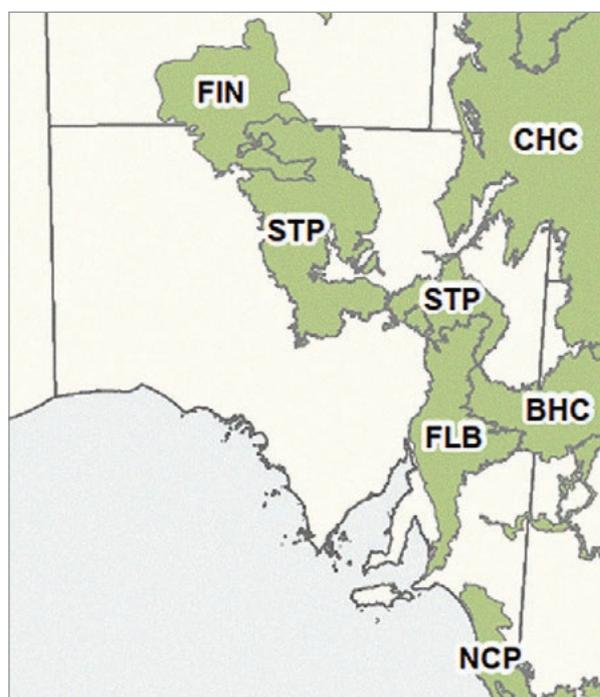
Although 30 percent of South Australia is in the Protected Area System this does not equate to a Comprehensive, Adequate and Representative (CAR) Protected Area system. The Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation for Australia (IBRA) was developed as a tool for identifying land for conservation and to include in the National Reserve System. It classifies Australia's landscapes into 89 large geographically distinct bioregions based on common climate, geology, landform, native vegetation and species information.

IBRA regions and subregions have been used as a surrogate for representative section of ecological communities and having 10 percent of each IBRA region in Protected Areas broadly meets the comprehensive and adequate requirements.

There are 6 IBRA regions in South Australia which have less than 10 percent coverage (see **Figure 6 and Table 3**

highlighted in orange). Five are within the Pastoral Zone which is still predominantly native vegetation. The sixth, the Naracoorte Coastal Plain is in the South East of South Australia which is predominantly agricultural land and has a high proportion of freehold land.

Figure 5: Map of underrepresented IBRA Regions in South Australia



Earless Dragon at Witchelina Nature Reserve. Credit: EBS Ecology

Table 3: Terrestrial protected areas by bioregion (IBRA Version 7) in South Australia (2016)

IBRA Region Name	IBRA Code	IBRA Area in SA (ha)	Area Protected (ha)	% Protected	% PA Total
Hampton	HAM	45,155	44,695	98.98	0.15
Nullarbor	NUL	5,986,726	4,023,851	67.21	13.61
Simpson Strzelecki Dunefields	SSD	13,693,273	7,133,630	52.10	24.12
Great Victoria Desert	GVD	20,452,348	9,978,654	48.79	33.75
Central Ranges	CER	2,842,963	1,106,326	38.91	3.74
Riverina	RIV	166,462	46,569	27.98	0.16
Channel Country	CHC	5,159,680	1,188,947	23.04	4.02
Murray Darling Depression	MDD	5,660,893	1,256,313	22.19	4.25
Kanmantoo	KAN	812,415	169,063	20.81	0.57
Gawler	GAW	12,002,883	1,888,941	15.74	6.39
Eyre Yorke Block	EYB	6,120,409	900,516	14.71	3.05
Flinders Lofty Block	FLB	6,615,765	586,852	8.87	1.98
Naracoorte Coastal Plain	NCP	2,041,438	168,527	8.26	0.57
Broken Hill Complex	BHC	1,868,681	136,716	7.32	0.46
Finke	FIN	1,915,465	3,729	0.19	0.01
Stony Plains	STP	12,963,443	934,045	7.21	3.16
Southern Volcanic Plain	SVP	84,194	2,510	2.98	0.01
Total		98,432,192	29,569,882	30.04	100.00

Five of the six underrepresented bioregions are in the Pastoral Zone. The number and extent of Heritage Agreements in the Pastoral Zone is lower than in the Agricultural Districts, but previous experience (including the Arid Lands Pastoral Stewardship Trial (see below)) indicates that pastoralists are open to participation in voluntary conservation programs.

Unfortunately, future expansion of private protected areas on pastoral land is currently constrained by a recent policy decision by the SA Government that Heritage Agreements are not permissible on pastoral leasehold land. This position is based on a narrow reading of the Pastoral Land Conservation and Management Act 1989, including a view that conservation agreements are contrary to the pastoral purpose, despite specific provisions in the Act allowing the Pastoral Land Board to authorise the use of leased land for conservation.

Although the 10 percent goal of each IBRA region in Protected Areas has been met for 11 of the IBRA regions, there will be some unique ecosystems and species that have a very narrow range and will not be in protected areas, putting them at risk of extinction. Where they are present on privately owned or managed land private landholders will have an important role to play in protecting these rare ecosystems and species.

While there have been targeted approaches to developing the protected area network in South

Australia in the past, this study could not identify any specific information, either in the Native Vegetation Act 1991 or any publications available from the Native Vegetation Council or Department for Environment and Water (South Australia), outlining a process for strategic selection or targeting of private properties as potential for Heritage Agreements. Rather, it appears it is up to the landholder, in consultation with regional NRM staff, to voluntarily apply to the Native Vegetation Council establish a Heritage Agreement.

Key findings

1. There does not appear to be a clear, coordinated and strategic approach between agencies and organisations to support the establishment and management of Heritage Agreements to maximise conservation impact.
2. The number and extent of Heritage Agreements is lower in the Pastoral Zone than the Agricultural Districts. Further expansion in the Arid Zone is constrained by a recent decision by the SA Government that Heritage Agreements are not permissible on pastoral leasehold land.

CASE STUDY

Arid Lands Pastoral Stewardship Trial

One program that adopted a more strategic approach to selection of Heritage Agreement properties was the Pastoral Stewardship Incentive Pilot Program, developed and delivered by Arid Lands NRM.

This initiative was developed as a model to trial innovative ways to improve conservation in pastoral regions of the state, principally in the SA Arid Lands NRM Region. It worked by enabling a compensatory payment to offset the loss of production incurred by pastoralists from setting aside portions of properties from pastoral use (Willson and Freebairn, 2017).

Submissions received through an expression of interest process were assessed and ranked using a prioritisation matrix that included representativeness of landscape types in proposed areas relative to the existing reserve network (based on CAPAD) and habitat provision for species of high conservation value (Willson and Freebairn, 2018).

The result of the program was the establishment of a particular type of Heritage Agreements (Stewardship Agreements) over 19,400 ha across two pastoral properties high in biodiversity value located in ecosystems poorly represented in the National Reserve System (Willson and Freebairn, 2018).

3.2 How well has the Heritage Agreement Program been managed?

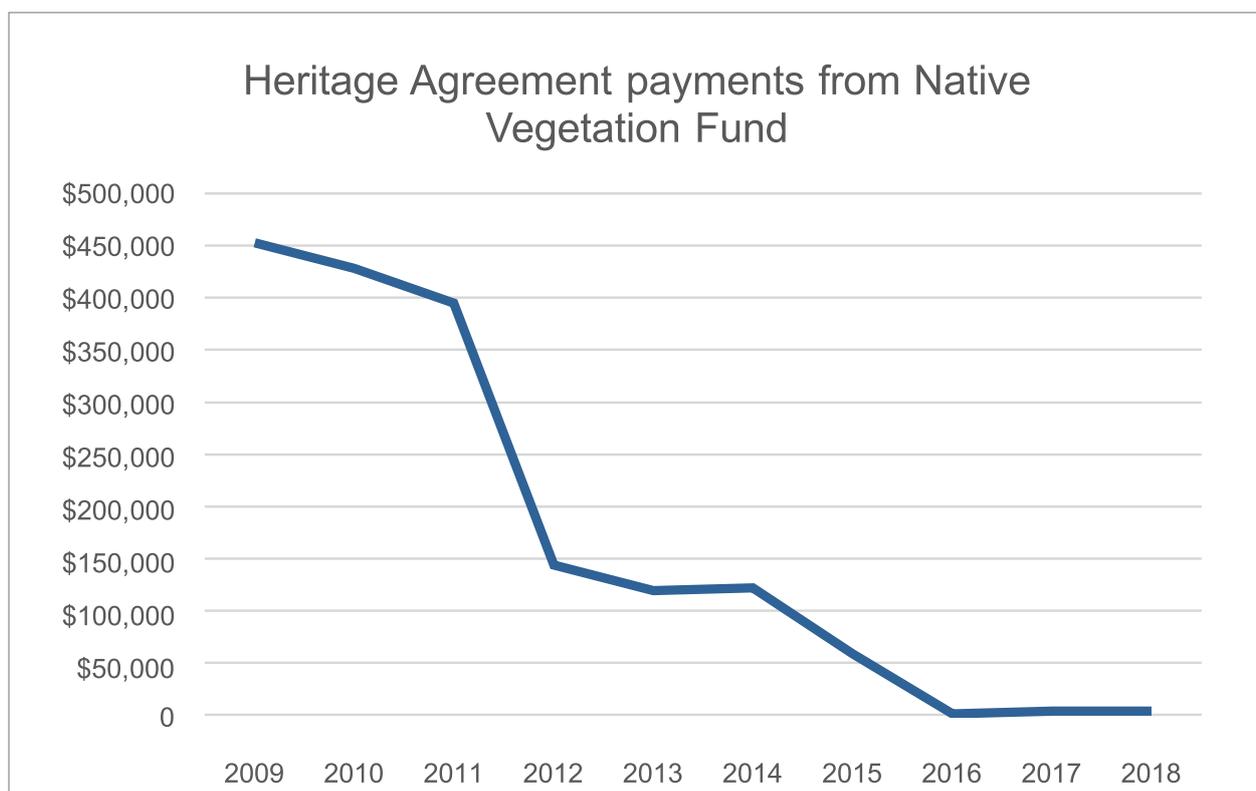
The Heritage Agreement Program has been popular, with a high uptake across a diverse range of landholders including primary producers. It was initially well resourced and landholders received funding for establishment and management.

More recently the burden has largely fallen on Heritage Agreement Holders to maintain the natural values of their properties. Many have committed to Heritage Agreements because they are conservation-minded. They commit the resources available to them to manage the property but without additional support they are less able to plan, implement and evaluate effective conservation measures.

Funding support for landholders

Government priorities have changed, and between 2009 and 2018 Native Vegetation Fund allocation to landholders has dropped from \$453,000 per year to \$4,000 per year (Native Vegetation Council Annual Reports). This represents a **99 percent decline** in support for Heritage Agreements over the past two terms of government.

Figure 6: Heritage Agreement payments from the Native Vegetation Fund



Technical assistance for landholders

The support provided by government to Heritage Agreement Holders has changed. The Native Vegetation Unit is a central point of contact for those seeking to vary agreements and those who have decided to enter into a new agreement. Regional Natural Resources centres are the main point of contact for initial advice on establishing a Heritage Agreement on their property and for management advice and support.

Heritage Agreements are no longer actively promoted and the model of a local officer with the community relationships and detailed local knowledge has changed to the local Natural Resources Centre being the point of contact for advice and support. Some landholders have not adapted to the new model and have not been accessing the advice and support available to them.

There has been a long-term decline in the establishment of new Heritage Agreements. There were 811 new Heritage Agreements established from 1990 to 1999 (81 per year), declining to 310 from 2000 to 2009 (31 per year) and 117 between 2010 and 2019 (12 per year)(CAPAD 2016, DEW 2019).

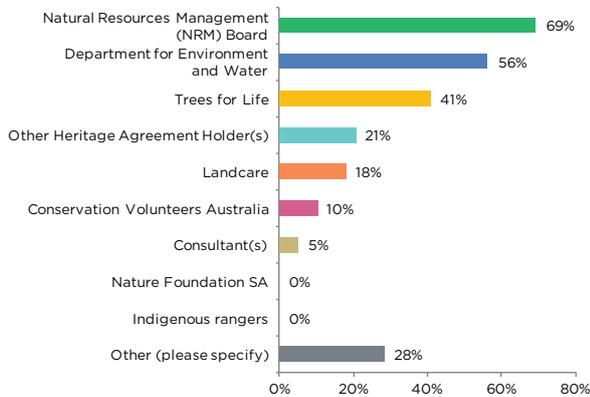
Landholder views on the availability of support

An electronic survey was conducted to understand landholder perceptions of Heritage Agreements. Survey respondents who have Heritage Agreements were overwhelmingly positive about their Heritage Agreements. The survey was distributed to landholders via several conservation-focused networks, which may have influenced the results of the survey.

When asked about the support they had received, 74 percent of survey respondents said they had received some form of support to manage their Heritage Agreement and of those 69 percent had received funding. Many (72 percent) had also received advice on managing their Heritage Agreement.

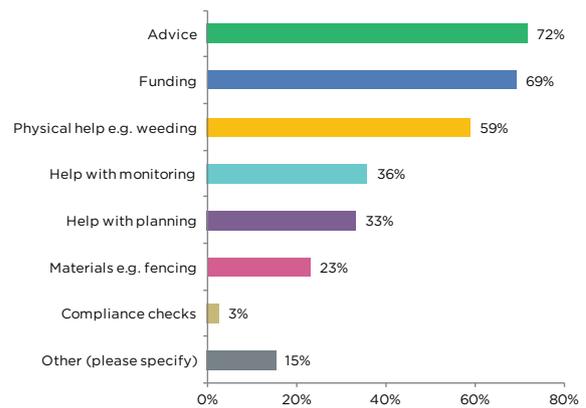
While the Native Vegetation Unit has been responsible for administering the Heritage Agreement program since established under the Native Vegetation Act 1991, Natural Resource Management (NRM) Boards and their staff have provided grants, materials and advice on land management. This was reflected in the survey where 6 percent of respondents stated that they had received support from NRM staff with 56 percent stating they have received support from Department for Environment and Water (e.g. Native Vegetation Unit).

Figure 7: Sources of support received by Heritage Agreement Holders



Seventy-four percent of survey respondents had received some sort of support to manage their Heritage Agreement. The graph below details the type of support they received.

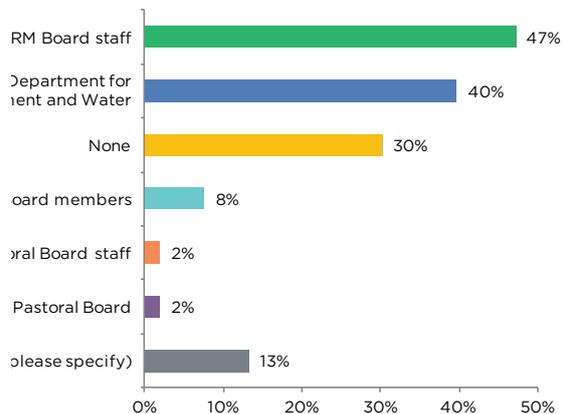
Figure 8: Types of support received by Heritage Agreement Holders



When asked whether the funding was sufficient for managing their Heritage Agreement 59 percent said it was not. Of the respondents that provided comments in response to this question, most (54 percent) stated that funding was sufficient when they had entered into the agreement, but that funding was no longer available making it difficult to manage their Heritage Agreement.

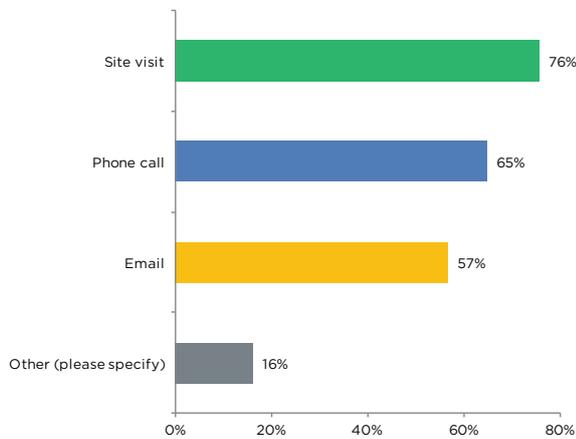
When asked whether they had received any other contacts, 30 percent of respondents stated that they had no other contact. Those that had other contact Natural Resource Management staff were the most common (Figure 10).

Figure 9: Organisations that had been in contact with Heritage Agreement Holders beyond the initial support



Of the 70 percent that received contact, a site visit and phone calls were the common (Figure 10). Eighty-six percent felt the assistance was useful or very useful and only one respondent said the assistance was not useful at all.

Figure 10: Type of contact received



Key findings

1. Funding for Heritage Agreements from the Native Vegetation Fund has declined by 99 percent of the past two terms of government, from \$453,000 in 2009 to \$4,000 in 2018.
2. Reduced financial support to Heritage Agreement Holders is impacting their ability to plan, manage and monitor conservation values effectively, thereby reducing the value of their significant contributions of time, money and expertise.
3. Government support structures for Heritage Agreement Holders has shifted from localised support with strong community relationships, to become more regionalised. This has seen a drop off of landholders accessing support, and perceived loss of local knowledge in delivery of support.
4. There has been a long-term decline in the establishment of new Heritage Agreements. There were 811 new Heritage Agreements established from 1990 to 1999 (81 per year), declining to 310 from 2000 to 2009 (31 per year) and 117 between 2010 and 2019 (12 per year) (CAPAD 2016, DEW 2019).

Emerging funding opportunity: Biodiversity Credit Exchange

The Native Vegetation Council has recently established a program aimed at supporting private landholders with native vegetation on their land to generate in income from protecting that vegetation.

The 'Biodiversity Credit Exchange', as it is called, gives eligible landholders access to funding to protect, manage and restore areas of native vegetation on their land in order to generate biodiversity credits (DEW, 2017). Credits are sold at cost to buyers – individuals or organisations applying for approval to clear native vegetation – who are required to offset vegetation clearances in the same region (DEW, 2017).

The Biodiversity Credit Exchange is in its first stage and is currently seeking expressions of interest from landholders in the SA Arid Lands and Northern and Yorke NRM Regions as these areas have the highest demand for biodiversity credits (DEW, 2017). While it is targeted to specific areas it is driven by clearances rather than by supporting a CAR Protected Area Network in South Australia.



Para Woodlands planting day. Credit: Patrick Mentzel

3.3 How well are Heritage Agreement areas managed by landholders?

The Native Vegetation Council recommends a Native Vegetation Management Plan be developed for all Heritage Agreement land (NVC, 2017). However, there is no formal requirement for this unless specified in the Memorandum of Agreement between the minister and landholder, and no monitoring infrastructure to measure progress or impact of any management actions (NVC, 2017).

Management Plans are to be developed by the landholder or a consultant engaged by the landholder who is accredited in vegetation assessment methodology. The NVC may be able to cover such costs however this is not clear and may be subject to negotiation.

Monitoring can occur on an informal basis, such as through visits by Bush Management Officers or Regional NRM Officers in assisting Heritage Agreement landholders with management works.

Heritage Agreements that are a requirement of a Significant Environmental Benefit (SEB) offset are subject to review to ensure they meet the conditions of approval (NVC, 2017).

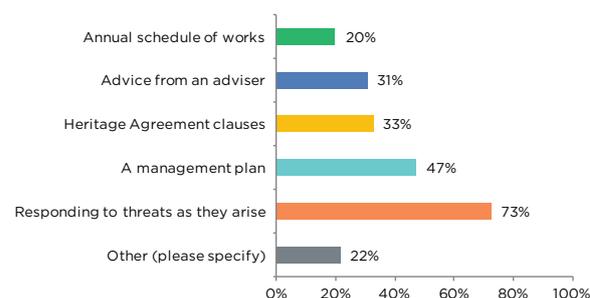
Ensuring adherence to the requirements of Heritage Agreements across multiple activities – such as weed control, stormwater management, erosion control and track management – across large properties can be challenging with limited resources (pers. comm., 2019).

Bradshaw (2019) notes that a persistent weakness in assessments of the condition of South Australia’s environment in the lack of rigorous, long-term monitoring that clearly measures how South Australia’s biodiversity values are changing over time.

Landholder views on Heritage Agreement management

When asked what they used to guide the management of their Heritage Agreement area, and how they knew change was happening, landholders used a range of methods, as summarised in **Figure 11** (landholders could choose more than one answer).

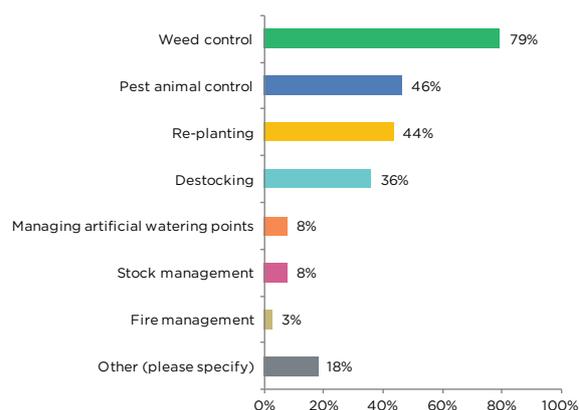
Figure 11: What Heritage Agreement Holders use to guide management of their area



While development of a management plan is not a requirement of a Heritage Agreement, 47 percent of survey respondents stated that they had a management plan. Many Heritage Agreements areas appear to be actively managed with 73 percent of survey respondents stating that they respond to threats (e.g. weeds) as they arise.

When asked about which activities contributed to an improvement, weed control was considered to be the key activity that had contributed to the improvement. Weed control is a statutory requirement under the Natural Resource Management Act 1994, so most landholders should be conducting weed control. There is also a significant amount of information and advice available on weed control.

Figure 12: Management actions that survey respondents had contributed to the improvement (landholders could choose more than one answer)



The survey data indicates that the majority of landholders are actively managing their Heritage Agreement area. However, this survey was distributed through conservation networks and the majority (87 percent) of Heritage Agreement Holders who took the survey had entered into the

agreement or purchased land with an agreement for conservation purposes so this information may not be reflective of the entire network.

On-ground management by landholders who entered into agreements either because of compensation for not being able to clear their land, or because they took the offer of entering into a Heritage Agreement instead of going to the Environment, Resources and Development Court for an alleged breach of the Native Vegetation Act 1991, were not assessed due to a lack of data.

Key findings

Nearly 50 percent of Heritage Agreement landholders surveyed have a management plan to guide the management of conservation values.

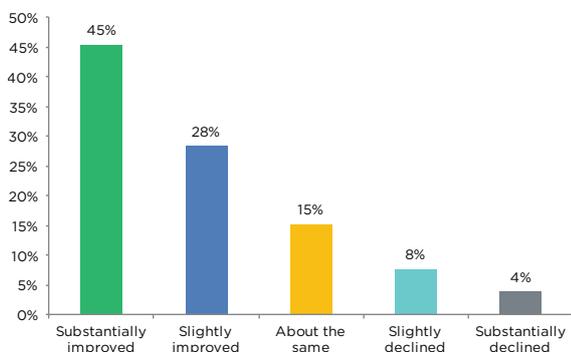
Most Heritage Agreement landholders are investing time, effort and resources in management activities, including weed control, feral animal control and tree planting.

3.4 How have Heritage Agreements contributed to conservation outcomes?

There is no requirement for monitoring in the Heritage Agreement so landholders mostly use their own observations to understand whether the conservation values of their Heritage Agreement area are improving or not.

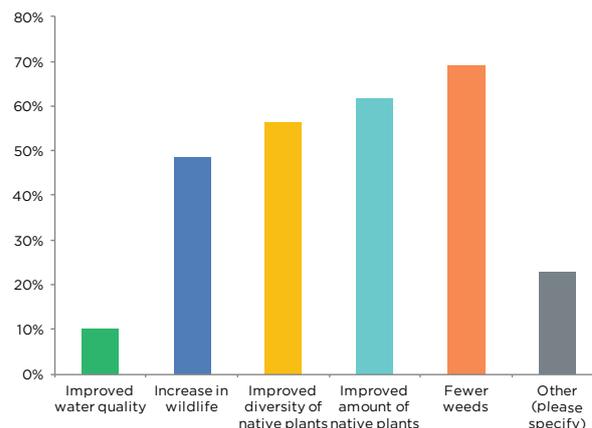
Over 70 percent of survey respondents say they had observed an improvement in conservation values on their Heritage Agreements.

Figure 13: Survey respondent observations in change of condition of conservation values since establishment of the Heritage Agreement



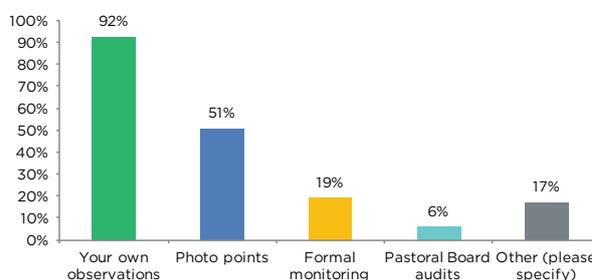
The most commonly observed positive changes were fewer weeds (69%), more native plants (62%), increased diversity of native plants (56%) and more native wildlife (49%).

Figure 14: Changes observed by survey respondents



Of the 55 survey respondents, only 6 had observed a decline in conservation values since the establishment of the Heritage Agreement. The reasons for this decline ranged from feral deer impacts and overgrazing of kangaroos to development of the surrounding area impacting water quality and increasing the number of weeds and pests to a bush fire sweeping through the property.

Figure 15: Methods used by Heritage Agreement landholders to understand the condition of conservation values



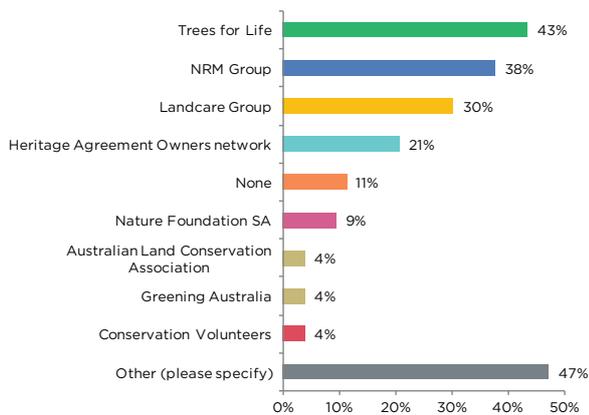
Key finding

Monitoring of conservation outcomes is either largely not occurring, or not against a clear and consistent management and monitoring framework, so it is not possible to assess the contribution of Heritage Agreements to conservation outcomes across the state.

3.5 What role have landholder networks played in supporting conservation action?

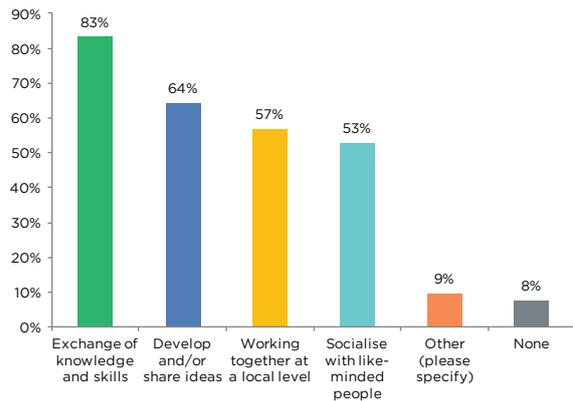
Networks can also be an important source of advice and support and so survey respondents were asked if they were part of any networks. As the survey had been distributed by conservation organisations it was not surprising that the majority of respondents stated that they were (89 percent). Survey respondents are members of a variety of network and often more than one (see Figure 16).

Figure 16: Networks Heritage Agreement Holders are part of



Survey respondents also recognised the value they received from being part of a network (see Figure 18) with only 7 percent of respondents feeling they would not get any value from being part of a network.

Figure 17: Value received from being in contact with other Heritage Agreement Holders



Key finding

Most Heritage Agreement landholders remain strongly committed to conservation. There are important opportunities to capitalise on the local knowledge and land management expertise of Heritage Agreement landholders by supporting a community of practice to share information and practical skills.



4. Recommendations

This section proposes ways in which private protected areas could be improved in South Australia with a focus on the Heritage Agreement Program.

Match landholders' commitment to conservation with increased investment

Heritage Agreement landholders invest substantial time and effort to conserve and restore wildlife habitat on their land. Investing in the revitalisation of the Heritage Agreement program presents an exciting opportunity to achieve much-needed conservation outcomes in partnership with dedicated landholders, for the benefit of all South Australians.

Recommendation 1.

Increase funding for the establishment and management of Heritage Agreements to \$8.7 million per year in the 2020-21 SA Budget, with annual increments to reflect future expansion of the Heritage Agreement network.

Recommendation 2.

To help meet this funding need, prioritise expenditure from the Landscapes SA Fund and Native Vegetation Fund to support the establishment, management and

monitoring of private protected areas. This investment should be complemented by an increased allocation from consolidated revenue to support Heritage Agreement landholders.

Support practical cooperation between landholders

Rural landholders, conservation organisations and government agencies have a diverse range of skills, knowledge and experience relevant to conservation. Heritage Agreement landholders have indicated that they would benefit from more opportunities to share knowledge and work together to deliver practical conservation outcomes.

Recommendation 3.

Establish an enduring network of private protected area owners and managers to support collaboration, peer-to-peer learning and develop a self-sustaining community of practice.

Recommendation 4.

Government and conservation organisations work together to provide practical support to landholders in conservation planning, management and monitoring.



Desert rivers flood across privately-owned properties after rain. *Credit: Colliers International.*

Enhance conservation management and monitoring

Even with a Heritage Agreement in place, natural values may deteriorate if the land is not appropriately managed. Establishing an adaptive management cycle of planning, managing, monitoring and adapting management actions can help make the most of landholder and government investments.

Recommendation 5.

Support landholders to develop simple management plans for their properties, appropriate to the scale and complexity of conservation challenges on their land.

Recommendation 6.

Adapt an existing simple and cost-effective monitoring framework (e.g. WildTracker) to demonstrate management effectiveness and impact, for nature conservation and primary production.

Encourage integration of conservation and primary production

Primary producers are increasingly focusing on opportunities to enhance and promote the sustainability of their industries, while increasing their resilience to changing environmental

conditions. By managing natural habitats on their land, primary producers can help to foster thriving, productive and resilient landscapes. Private protected areas provide a tool for landholders to secure these improvements for the long-term, and may present opportunities for income diversification through biodiversity offsets, carbon farming and ecotourism.

Recommendation 7.

Conservation, landcare and primary producer organisations work together to develop a shared vision for voluntary private land conservation in South Australia.

Recommendation 8.

Remove barriers to conservation and support income diversification and new employment opportunities in the pastoral sector by permitting conservation, biodiversity offsetting and carbon management on pastoral leasehold land.

Recommendation 9.

Provide targeted incentives to primary producers that wish to protect threatened species and underrepresented ecosystems, with payments based on the estimated cost of relevant management actions and/or any loss of income.



The Black-flanked rock wallaby (or warru) is threatened by habitat loss and feral predators. *Photo credit: Sarah Matheson.*



Volunteers planting trees at Watchalunga Nature Reserve. *Credit: Alex Nankivell*

5. Conclusions

Private Protected Areas contribute significantly to the Protected Area Network in South Australia but a targeted approach to establishing Heritage Agreements to develop a CAR Protected Area Network has not been used. At its inception, the Heritage Agreement Program was innovative and well-resourced and was successful in supporting private land conservation and managing land clearance.

Over time, government priorities changed and financial incentives for establishing Heritage Agreements effectively ceased. The focus of Native Vegetation Unit staff has moved towards compliance and managing the Significant Environmental Benefits Fund. Natural Resource Management staff have provided technical advice, but this support has also reduced in recent years. This has meant that the rate of establishment of Heritage Agreements and support for landholders who have Heritage Agreements has declined substantially.

Without an implemented regional monitoring framework, it is difficult to assess the contribution that Heritage Agreements are making to conservation outcomes beyond Heritage Agreement Holders own monitoring and observations.

The Heritage Agreement Program has been very popular, with more than 1,500 agreement holders. This provides a very strong foundation for private land conservation in South Australia. There is considerable goodwill and expertise within the Heritage Agreement Holders that could be leveraged through a consolidated network to share

resources and expertise and together would be able to positively influence private land conservation from a practitioners' perspective. The network could also facilitate a regional monitoring program for landholders and government to use for adaptive management and to monitor conservation outcomes at various scales.

Heritage Agreement landholders remain strongly committed to conservation. Investing in the revitalisation of the Heritage Agreement program presents an exciting opportunity to achieve much-needed conservation outcomes in partnership with dedicated landholders, for the benefit of all South Australians.

By working together to implement the recommendations set out in this report, we can chart a new path for private land conservation in South Australia, building on the state's proud history of achievement to deliver a private protected area program that:

- values, supports and celebrates the contributions of dedicated landholders;
- engages volunteers and the broader community in practical conservation action;
- provides vital and cost-effective protection for South Australian wildlife; and
- fosters thriving rural landscapes and resilient primary production enterprises.

6. Appendices

Appendix 1: References

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Appendix 2: Assessment Methodology

This review provides an assessment of the current status of the Heritage Agreement Program, and proposes public policy and budgetary measures to better support the establishment and management of the program. The review was conducted in four parts:

1. A desktop review of publicly available documents, and documents provided by individuals contacted as part of the review.
2. An electronic survey of 84 landholders including 55 Heritage Agreement Holders.
3. Private interviews with Department of Environment and Water and Department of Primary Industries and Regions SA (PIRSA) staff, Heritage Agreement Holders, conservation organisations and other key stakeholders.
4. A stakeholder roundtable on private land conservation, held 22 August 2019.

Table 4: Assessment methodology matrix

Assessment questions	Indicators	Methods/ tool
What is the contribution of the Heritage Agreement Program to the comprehensive, adequate and representative (CAR) network of protected areas in South Australia?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area, percent of each bioregion and subregion • Coverage of regional ecosystems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compile tables and maps of coverage. • Compile tables of coverage of regional ecosystems in each bioregion
How has the Heritage Agreement Program been managed at a state and regional level?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic targeting of properties for inclusion • Negotiated and flexible arrangements • Extent and adequacy of resourcing • Effectiveness of communication with landholders • Level of satisfaction of landholders, including with follow-up service • Success of recruitment of Heritage Agreements • Monitoring and evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicly available material • Evidence provided by the Department of Environment and Water • Interviews with current staff • Interviews with key stakeholders • Electronic survey results
How well are the Heritage Agreements managed by landholders on the ground – i.e. in reducing threats and restoring integrity?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which activities are undertaken to manage threats • Existence of some form of management plan or program • Level of commitment shown by landholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expert opinion • Questions asking how the Heritage Agreements is managed from electronic survey results
How have Heritage Agreements contributed to conservation outcomes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of species, ecosystem or landscape recovery (photos, monitoring results, expert opinion or anecdotal) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expert opinion • Questions asking for evidence from electronic survey results
What role have landholder networks played in supporting conservation action?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of success factors from literature, desktop data, survey and interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of electronic survey results • Expert opinion and interviews

Appendix 3: Estimated funding needed to support effective management of Heritage Agreement network

Table 5: Estimate for management funding requirement for current extent of Heritage Agreement Network

Improved management of existing Heritage Agreements	Estimated cost per hectare of effective conservation management*	Estimated current extent of the Heritage Agreement Network**	Total cost for 2020 for the existing network
Full management costs (per annum)	\$6.09/ha	1,835,892 ha	\$11.2 million
Less 50 percent discount for Heritage Agreements managed by private conservancies ***	\$3.05/ha	831,580 ha	- \$2.5 million
Proposed investment by SA Government (per annum, 2019-20)			\$8.7 million

* The estimated cost per hectare was based on interviews with leading private land conservancies conducted by Protected Areas Solutions (Allen et al 2018).

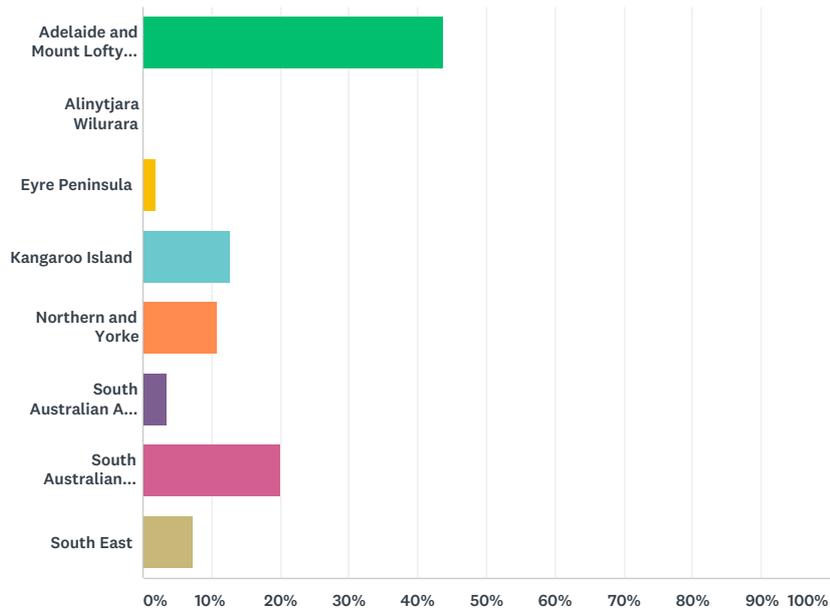
** 1,465,437 ha are recorded in CAPAD 2016 up until 2013. 370,455 ha are recorded for 2014 to 2018 by DEW 2019.

*** This assumes that private land conservancies will cover 50 percent of management costs through their own philanthropic fundraising efforts.

Appendix 4: Heritage Agreement Holder Survey Results

Q1 Please select the NRM region your conservation area is located in (if you have more than one please answer all questions based on your largest conservation area).

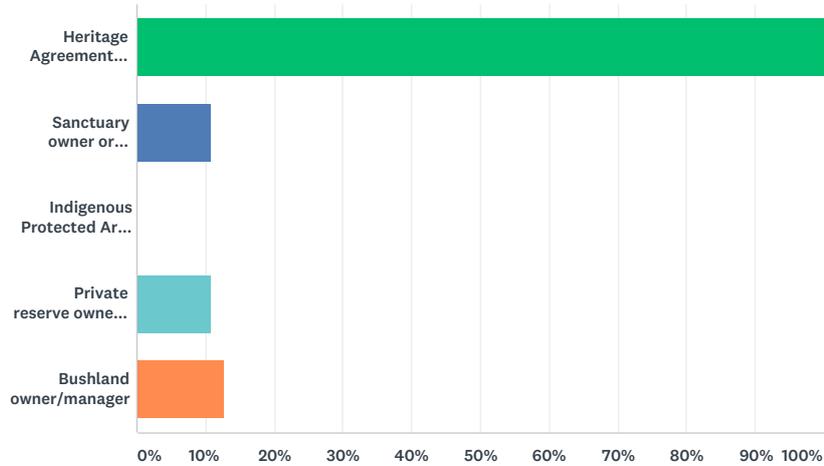
Answered: 55 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges	43.64%	24
Alinytjara Wilurara	0.00%	0
Eyre Peninsula	1.82%	1
Kangaroo Island	12.73%	7
Northern and Yorke	10.91%	6
South Australian Arid Lands	3.64%	2
South Australian Murray-Darling Basin	20.00%	11
South East	7.27%	4
TOTAL		55

Q2 Are you a.....

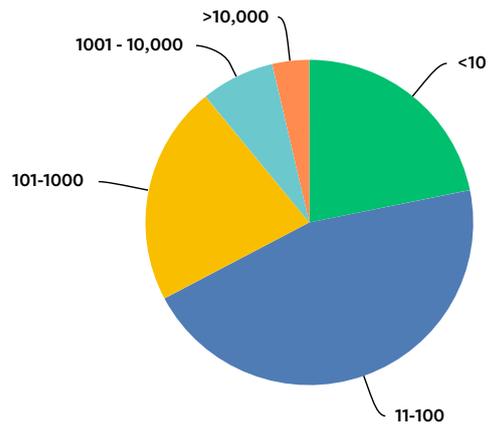
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Heritage Agreement Holder	100.00%	55
Sanctuary owner or manager	10.91%	6
Indigenous Protected Area owner or manager	0.00%	0
Private reserve owner or manager e.g. Gluepot Reserve	10.91%	6
Bushland owner/manager	12.73%	7
Total Respondents: 55		

Q3 What is the size (ha) of your bushland/conservation area?

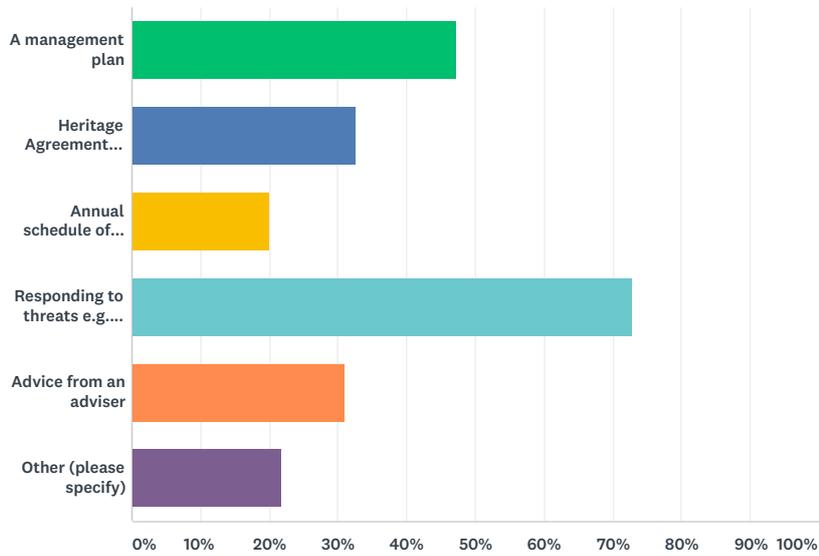
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
<10	21.82%	12
11-100	45.45%	25
101-1000	21.82%	12
1001 - 10,000	7.27%	4
>10,000	3.64%	2
TOTAL		55

Q4 What do you use to guide the management of your bushland/conservation area?

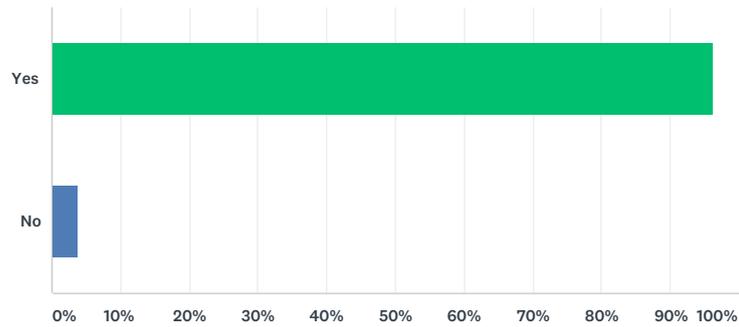
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
A management plan	47.27%	26
Heritage Agreement clauses	32.73%	18
Annual schedule of works	20.00%	11
Responding to threats e.g. weeds, as they arise.	72.73%	40
Advice from an adviser	30.91%	17
Other (please specify)	21.82%	12
Total Respondents: 55		

Q5 Do you have a formal agreement under legislation to protect your bushland/conservation area?

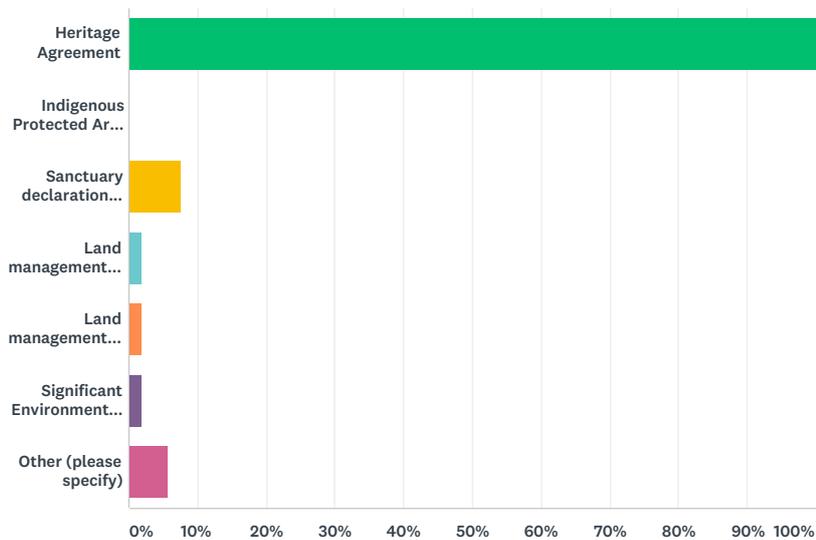
Answered: 54 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	96.30%	52
No	3.70%	2
TOTAL		54

Q6 What agreement

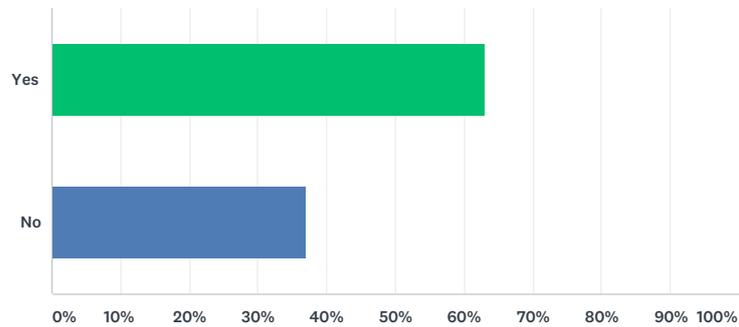
Answered: 53 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Heritage Agreement	100.00%	53
Indigenous Protected Area agreement	0.00%	0
Sanctuary declaration under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972	7.55%	4
Land management agreement under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972	1.89%	1
Land management agreement under the Local Government Act 1999	1.89%	1
Significant Environment Benefits agreement	1.89%	1
Other (please specify)	5.66%	3
Total Respondents: 53		

Q8 Would you find a management plan for your bushland/conservation area useful?

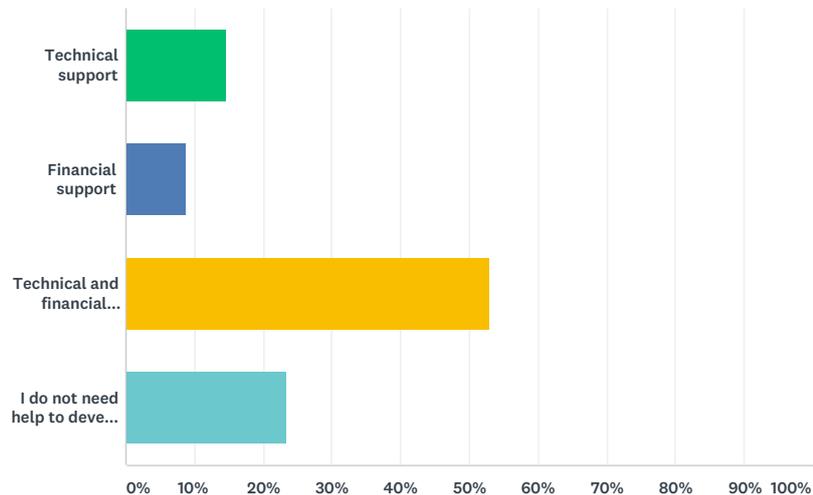
Answered: 54 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	62.96%	34
No	37.04%	20
TOTAL		54

Q9 What types of support would you require to develop a management plan?

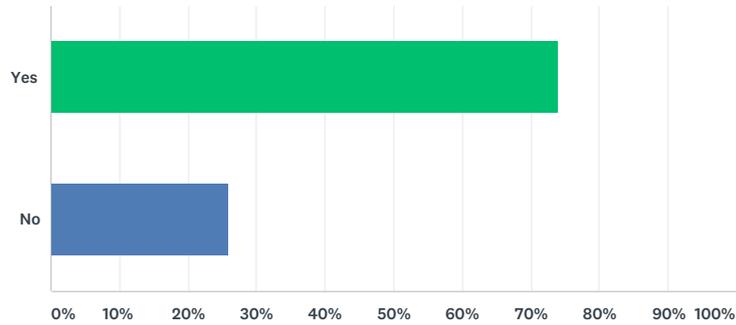
Answered: 34 Skipped: 21



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Technical support	14.71%	5
Financial support	8.82%	3
Technical and financial support	52.94%	18
I do not need help to develop a management plan	23.53%	8
TOTAL		34

Q10 Have you received any support to manage your bushland/conservation area?

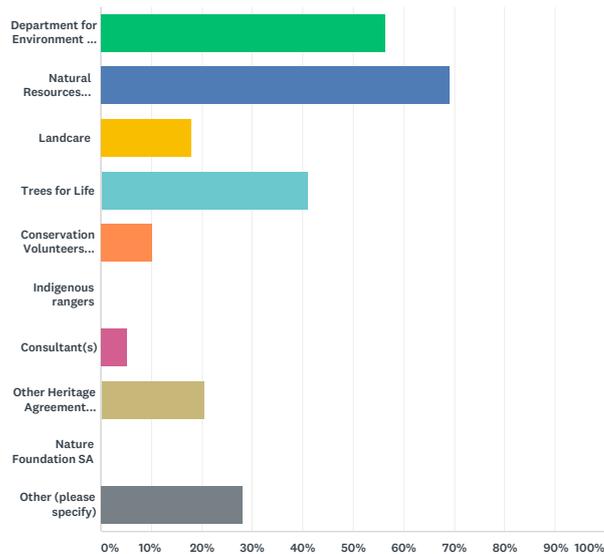
Answered: 54 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	74.07%	40
No	25.93%	14
TOTAL		54

Q11 Which organisations or people have supported you?

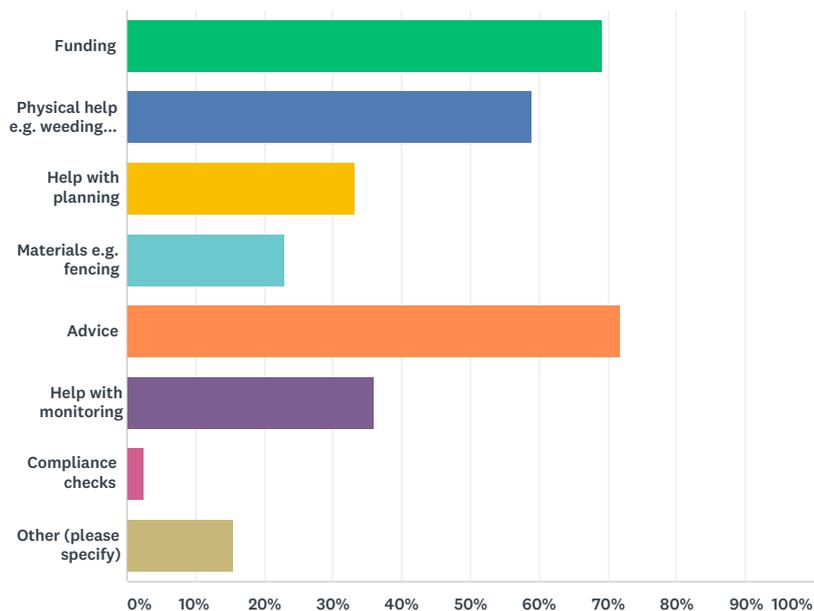
Answered: 39 Skipped: 16



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Department for Environment and Water e.g. Native Vegetation Unit	56.41%	22
Natural Resources Management (NRM) Board	69.23%	27
Landcare	17.95%	7
Trees for Life	41.03%	16
Conservation Volunteers Australia	10.26%	4
Indigenous rangers	0.00%	0
Consultant(s)	5.13%	2
Other Heritage Agreement Holder(s)	20.51%	8
Nature Foundation SA	0.00%	0
Other (please specify)	28.21%	11
Total Respondents: 39		

Q12 What type of support have you received?

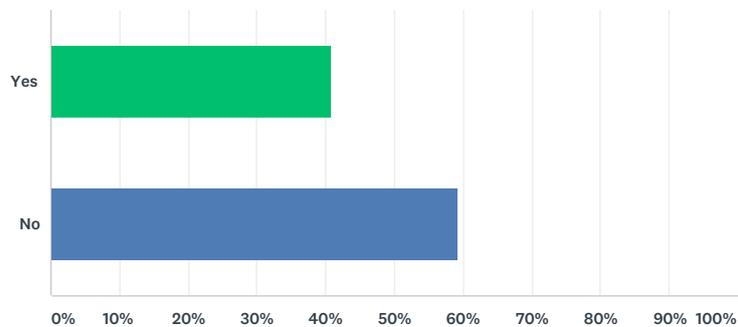
Answered: 39 Skipped: 16



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Funding	69.23%	27
Physical help e.g. weeding, planting, fencing	58.97%	23
Help with planning	33.33%	13
Materials e.g. fencing	23.08%	9
Advice	71.79%	28
Help with monitoring	35.90%	14
Compliance checks	2.56%	1
Other (please specify)	15.38%	6
Total Respondents: 39		

Q13 Was the funding provided sufficient for the management of your bushland/conservation area?

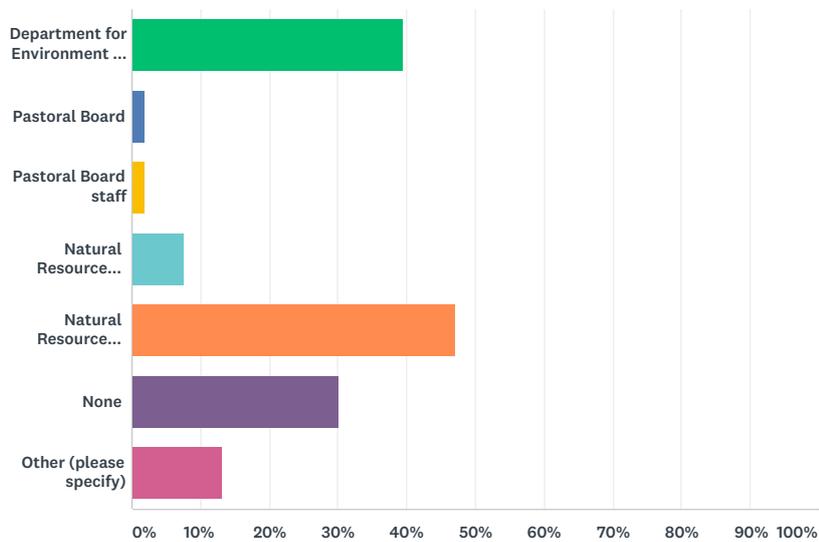
Answered: 27 Skipped: 28



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	40.74%	11
No	59.26%	16
TOTAL		27

Q14 Other than support, have you had any other contact relating to your bushland/conservation area from the following:

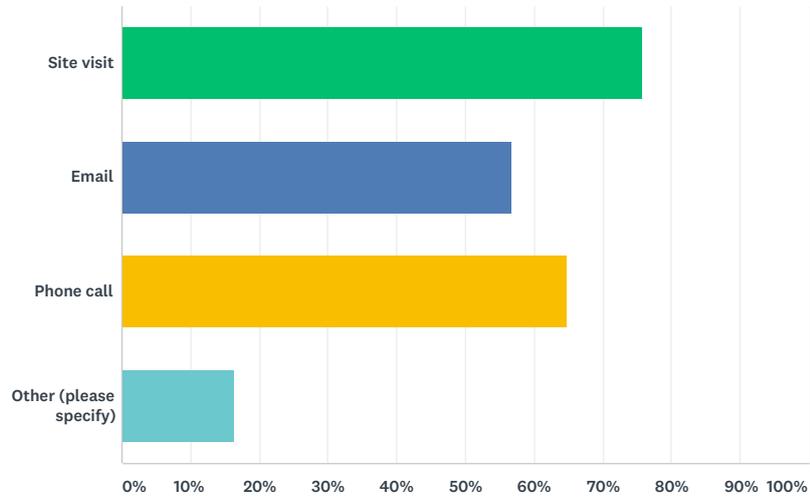
Answered: 53 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Department for Environment and Water e.g. Native Vegetation Unit	39.62%	21
Pastoral Board	1.89%	1
Pastoral Board staff	1.89%	1
Natural Resource Management (NRM) Board members	7.55%	4
Natural Resource Management (NRM) Board staff	47.17%	25
None	30.19%	16
Other (please specify)	13.21%	7
Total Respondents: 53		

Q15 What type of contact have you had?

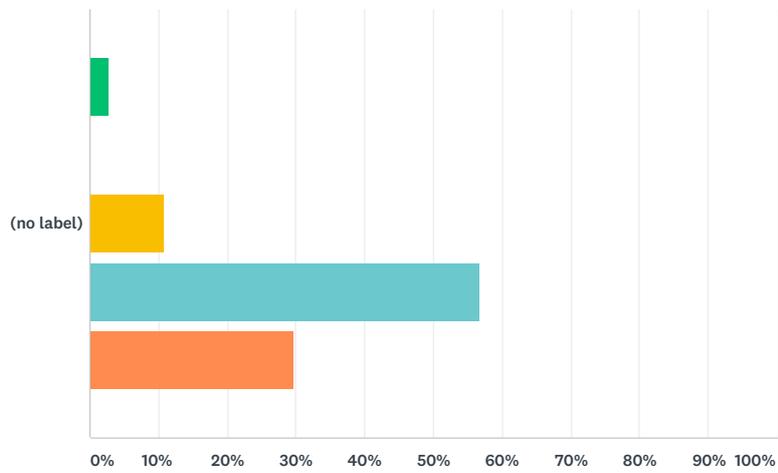
Answered: 37 Skipped: 18



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Site visit	75.68%	28
Email	56.76%	21
Phone call	64.86%	24
Other (please specify)	16.22%	6
Total Respondents: 37		

Q16 On a scale of 1 to 5 how useful was the assistance you were given? (where 1 is not useful at all and 5 is very useful)

Answered: 37 Skipped: 18

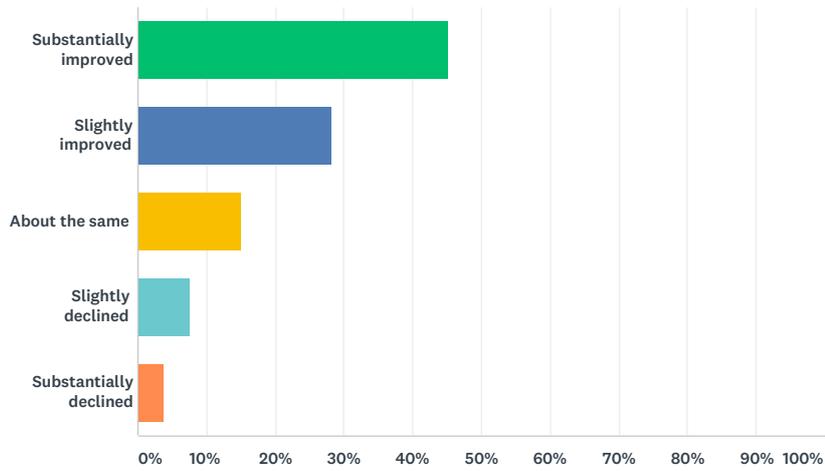


■ 1 Not useful at all
 ■ 2 Not useful
 ■ 3 Neither useful nor not useful
■ 4 Useful
 ■ 5 Very useful

	1 NOT USEFUL AT ALL	2 NOT USEFUL	3 NEITHER USEFUL NOR NOT USEFUL	4 USEFUL	5 VERY USEFUL	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	2.70%	0.00%	10.81%	56.76%	29.73%	37	4.11
	1	0	4	21	11		

Q18 Do you think the conservation values e.g. native vegetation or wildlife, on your property have improved since its establishment?

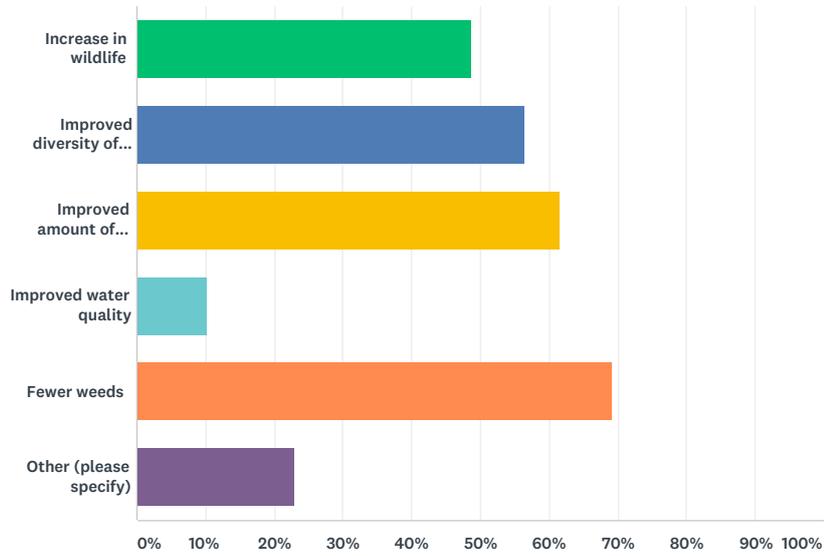
Answered: 53 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Substantially improved	45.28%	24
Slightly improved	28.30%	15
About the same	15.09%	8
Slightly declined	7.55%	4
Substantially declined	3.77%	2
TOTAL		53

Q19 What changes have you observed?

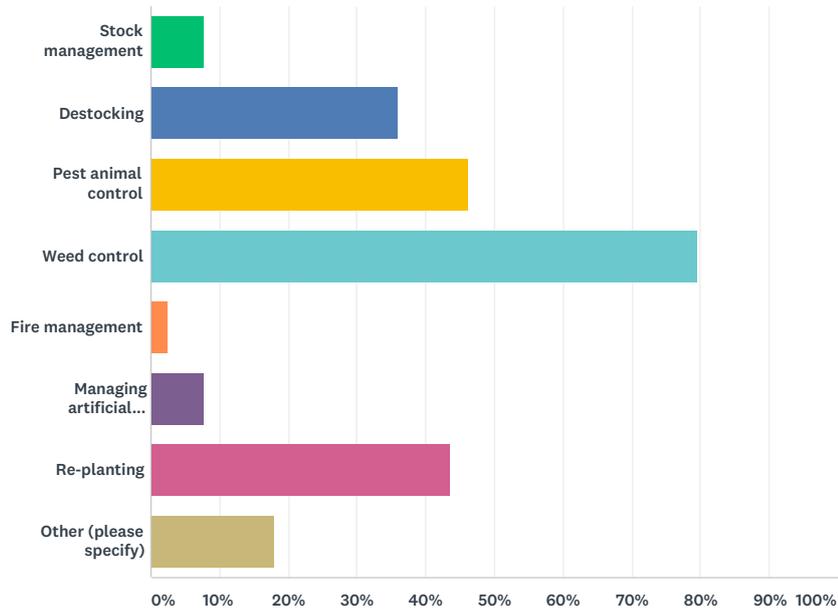
Answered: 39 Skipped: 16



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Increase in wildlife	48.72%	19
Improved diversity of native plants	56.41%	22
Improved amount of native plants	61.54%	24
Improved water quality	10.26%	4
Fewer weeds	69.23%	27
Other (please specify)	23.08%	9
Total Respondents: 39		

Q20 What do you think has supported the improvement?

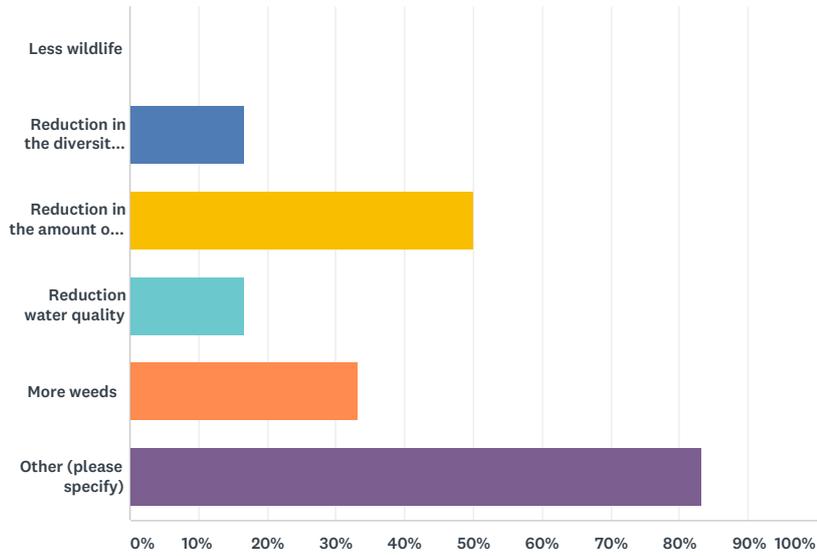
Answered: 39 Skipped: 16



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Stock management	7.69%	3
Destocking	35.90%	14
Pest animal control	46.15%	18
Weed control	79.49%	31
Fire management	2.56%	1
Managing artificial watering points	7.69%	3
Re-planting	43.59%	17
Other (please specify)	17.95%	7
Total Respondents: 39		

Q21 What changes have you observed?

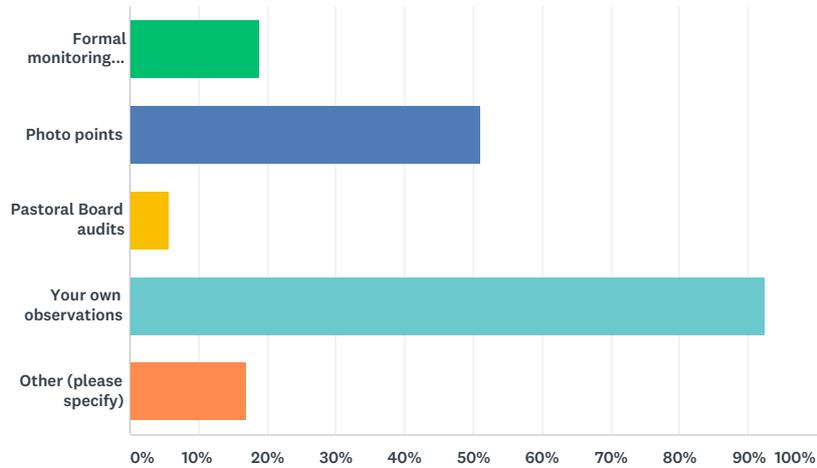
Answered: 6 Skipped: 49



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less wildlife	0.00%	0
Reduction in the diversity of native plants	16.67%	1
Reduction in the amount of native plants	50.00%	3
Reduction water quality	16.67%	1
More weeds	33.33%	2
Other (please specify)	83.33%	5
Total Respondents: 6		

Q23 How do you know changes are or aren't happening?

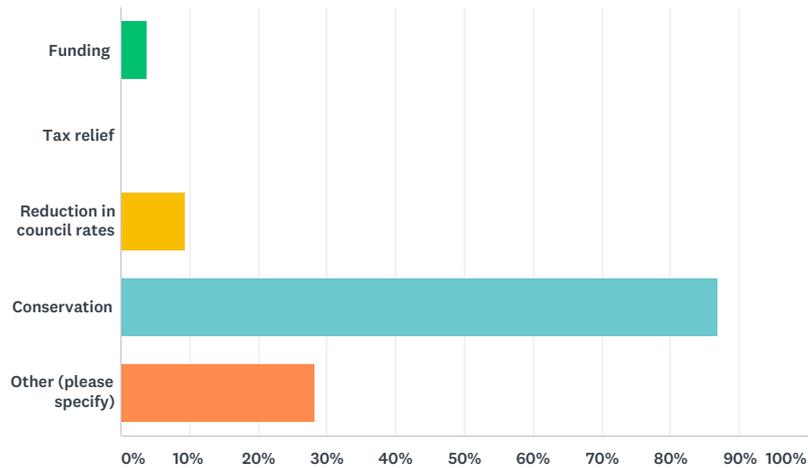
Answered: 53 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Formal monitoring (other than audits by the Pastoral Board)	18.87%	10
Photo points	50.94%	27
Pastoral Board audits	5.66%	3
Your own observations	92.45%	49
Other (please specify)	16.98%	9
Total Respondents: 53		

Q24 What was the reason you entered into a conservation agreement or set aside land for conservation?

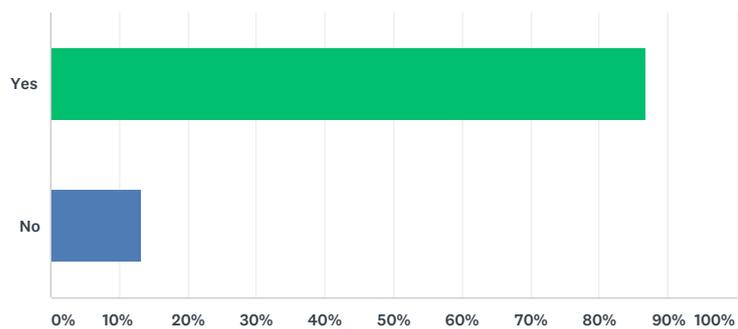
Answered: 53 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	Count
Funding	3.77%	2
Tax relief	0.00%	0
Reduction in council rates	9.43%	5
Conservation	86.79%	46
Other (please specify)	28.30%	15
Total Respondents: 53		

Q25 Has the bushland/conservation area helped you achieve your goals and aspirations for your property?

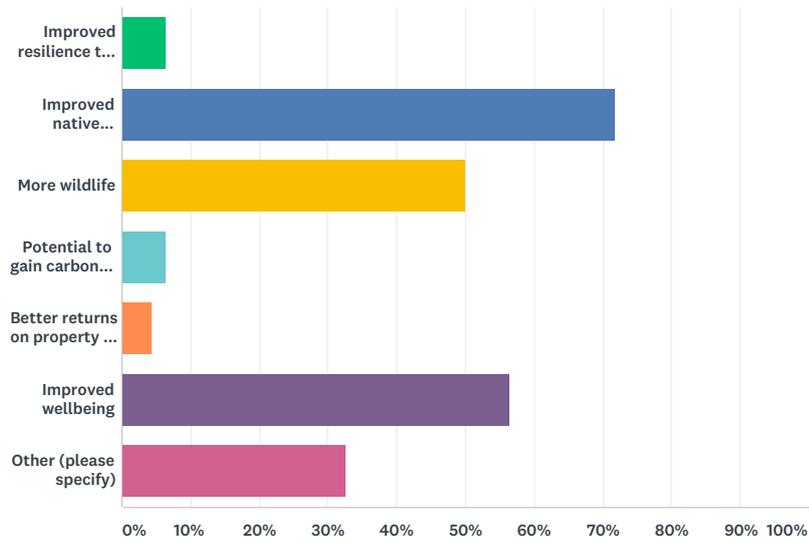
Answered: 53 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	Count
Yes	86.79%	46
No	13.21%	7
TOTAL		53

Q26 How has your bushland/conservation area helped you achieve your goals and aspirations?

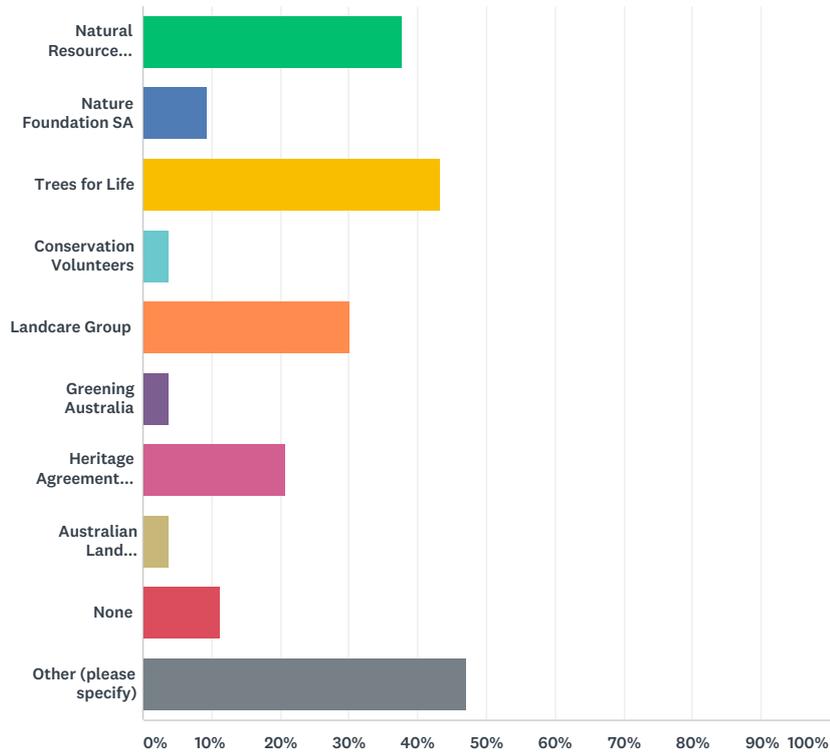
Answered: 46 Skipped: 9



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Improved resilience to drought	6.52%	3
Improved native vegetation	71.74%	33
More wildlife	50.00%	23
Potential to gain carbon credits	6.52%	3
Better returns on property due to other financial incentives e.g. reduced council rates	4.35%	2
Improved wellbeing	56.52%	26
Other (please specify)	32.61%	15
Total Respondents: 46		

Q27 Which networks are you part of?

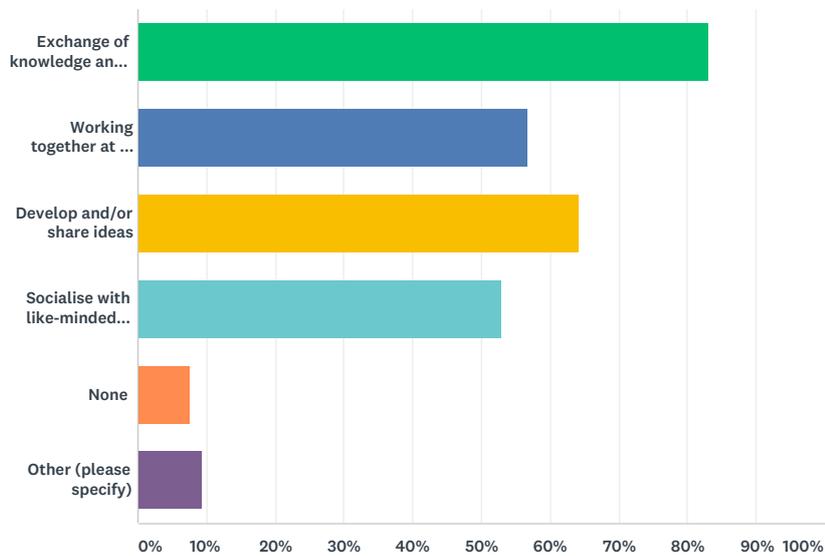
Answered: 53 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Natural Resource Management (NRM) Group	37.74%	20
Nature Foundation SA	9.43%	5
Trees for Life	43.40%	23
Conservation Volunteers	3.77%	2
Landcare Group	30.19%	16
Greening Australia	3.77%	2
Heritage Agreement Owners network	20.75%	11
Australian Land Conservation Association	3.77%	2
None	11.32%	6
Other (please specify)	47.17%	25
Total Respondents: 53		

Q28 What value do you/would you get from being in contact with other conservation area owners and managers?

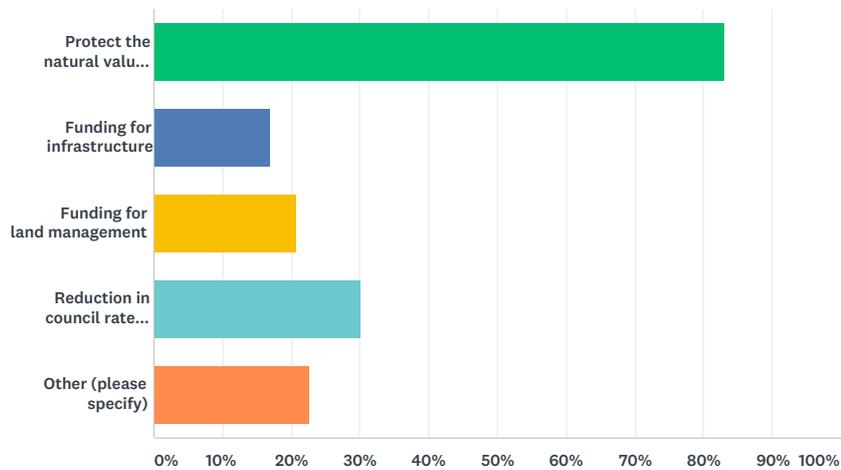
Answered: 53 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Exchange of knowledge and skills	83.02%	44
Working together at a local level	56.60%	30
Develop and/or share ideas	64.15%	34
Socialise with like-minded people	52.83%	28
None	7.55%	4
Other (please specify)	9.43%	5
Total Respondents: 53		

Q29 What incentives have encouraged you to enter into a conservation area agreement e.g. Heritage Agreement?

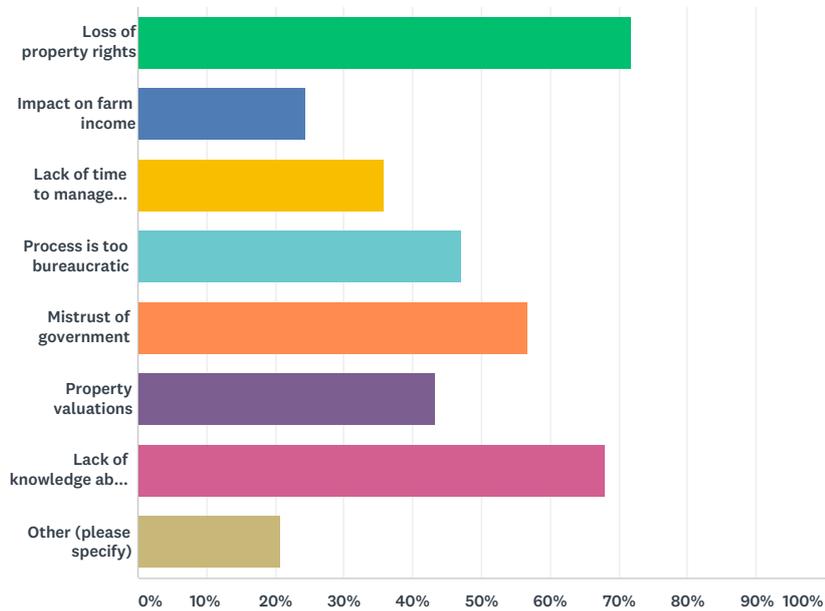
Answered: 53 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Protect the natural values of your land	83.02% 44
Funding for infrastructure	16.98% 9
Funding for land management	20.75% 11
Reduction in council rates and or taxes	30.19% 16
Other (please specify)	22.64% 12
Total Respondents: 53	

Q30 What do you think might make landholders reluctant to have Heritage Agreements or covenants on their properties?

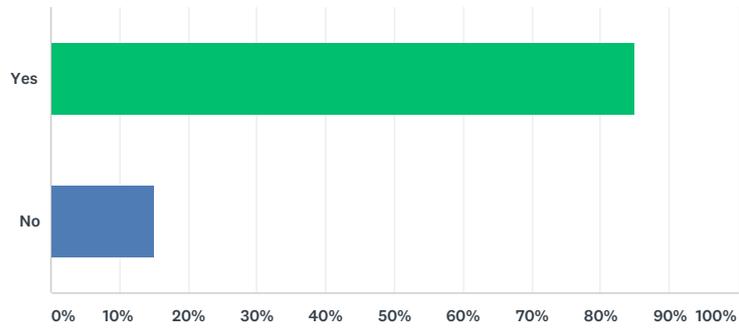
Answered: 53 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Loss of property rights	71.70%	38
Impact on farm income	24.53%	13
Lack of time to manage Heritage Agreement	35.85%	19
Process is too bureaucratic	47.17%	25
Mistrust of government	56.60%	30
Property valuations	43.40%	23
Lack of knowledge about Heritage Agreements	67.92%	36
Other (please specify)	20.75%	11
Total Respondents: 53		

Q31 If you had your time again, would you have entered into the conservation area agreement?

Answered: 53 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	84.91%	45
No	15.09%	8
TOTAL		53

