



## 2019 Federal election A prime opportunity to show leadership and support for Landcare

For 25 years Tasmanian landholders and the wider community have embraced Landcare, contributing to the sustainability of our natural and production landscapes.

Despite poor funding, Landcare volunteers achieve significant sustainability and environmental outcomes on public and private land. Landcare groups have been largely excluded from the \$1.1b National Landcare Program (NLP), with only a tiny proportion of the money delivered through community Landcare. Now is the time to leverage the generosity of the Tasmanian community by supporting programs to deliver well-conceived cost-effective on-ground actions that have genuine ownership and buy-in from the community.

Experience shows that 'bottom up' community-driven Landcare projects are far more successful than 'top down' national, state or regional delivered projects. Local ownership leads to high levels of volunteer engagement, sustained effort and skills plus in-kind and other contributions from local businesses.

Landcare Tasmania is seeing strong growth in community participation in Landcare, including the formation of almost 60 new Landcare groups over the last 3 years. To continue that success a new package of commitments is required. Landcare Tasmania is looking to the next Australian government to deliver initiatives that will have the greatest combined impact across sustainability, environment and community within the State. This necessitates a significant re-focus of the current NLP to include community Landcare groups. Community Landcare volunteers need to be supported by paid facilitators and coordinators, as occurs in NSW under the NSW government Local Landcare Initiative.

Essential to the success of sustainable environmental programs are:

- Increased base funding of Landcare Tasmania to support and empower community Landcare organisation (est. \$200k / year for 5 years);
- Employment of part-time community facilitators to work out of Community Landcare Hubs (existing buildings) to be managed by Landcare Tasmania and hosted in community Landcare organisations (est. \$280k / year for 5 years);
- A carbon credits program enabling landowners to access private funding for increases in carbon storage through restoration of native vegetation and changes to soil management (\$TBA);
- A well-funded, community Landcare-based feral cat trapping and control program to continue highly successful work funded by the Threatened Species Commissioner (est. \$1m / year for 5 years);
- Reinstatement of the best elements of past programs to deliver synergies around environment and sustainable land management, including funding for (est. \$5 m / year for 5 years):
  - Biodiversity, particularly on private land, and secured under a Stewardship Program;
  - Corridors to restore ecological function of landscapes and to complement land management and production;
  - A community water monitoring, planning and implementation program covering governance, supply, quality, use and management of important freshwater areas;
  - Sustainable land management practices emphasising community Landcare to build resilience and maintain outcomes over time; and,
  - Reinstatement of the National Reserve Program, to address gaps on private land through voluntary participation by owners and managers and long-term access to resources for ongoing management.