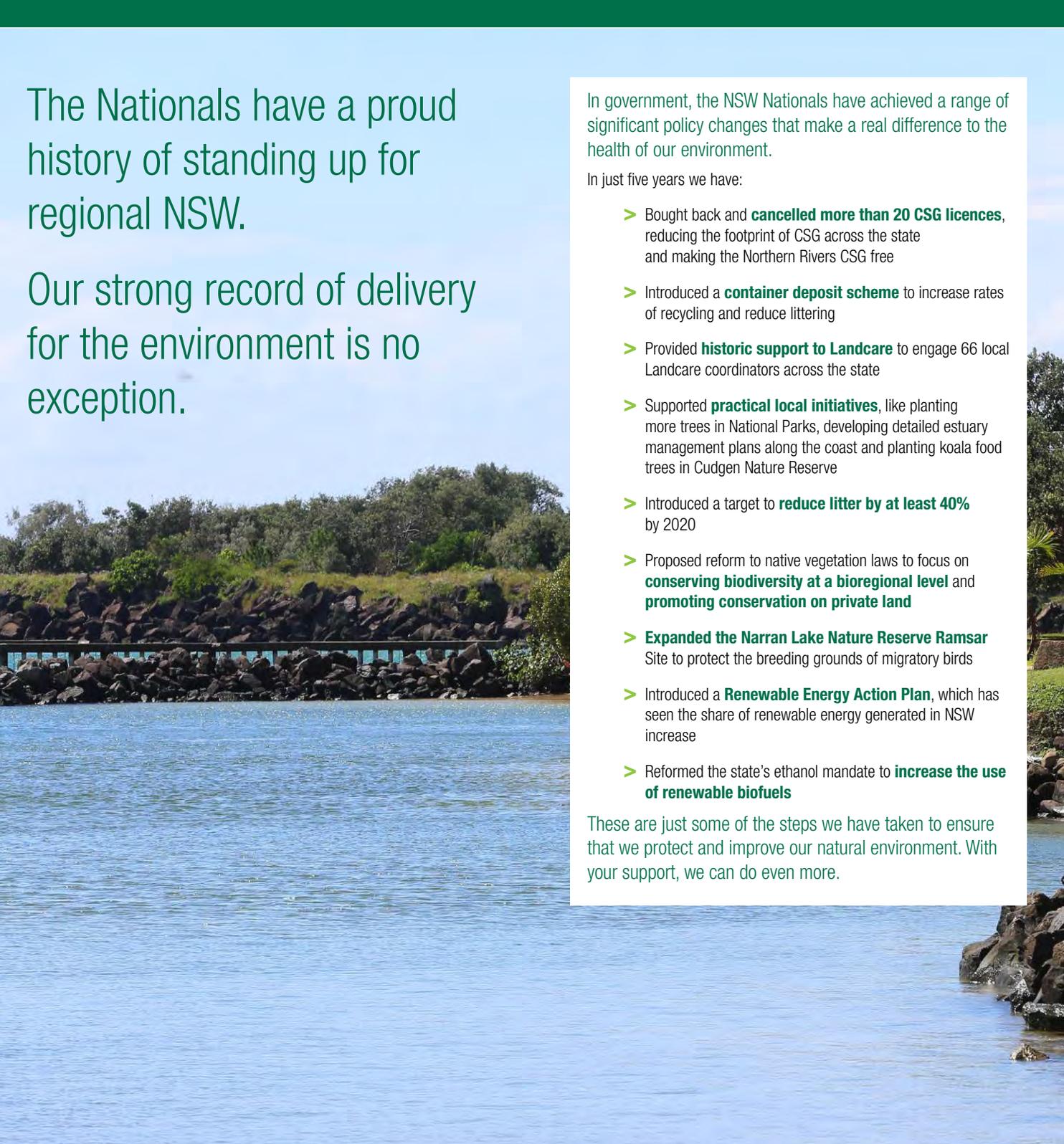


THE NATIONALS *for Regional NSW*

A scenic view of a forest with tall trees and a rocky stream bed in the foreground. The trees are mostly eucalyptus, with some green foliage. The stream bed is composed of many smooth, rounded rocks. The sky is blue with some light clouds.

Protecting and
improving our
environment



The Nationals have a proud history of standing up for regional NSW.

Our strong record of delivery for the environment is no exception.

In government, the NSW Nationals have achieved a range of significant policy changes that make a real difference to the health of our environment.

In just five years we have:

- > Bought back and **cancelled more than 20 CSG licences**, reducing the footprint of CSG across the state and making the Northern Rivers CSG free
- > Introduced a **container deposit scheme** to increase rates of recycling and reduce littering
- > Provided **historic support to Landcare** to engage 66 local Landcare coordinators across the state
- > Supported **practical local initiatives**, like planting more trees in National Parks, developing detailed estuary management plans along the coast and planting koala food trees in Cudgen Nature Reserve
- > Introduced a target to **reduce litter by at least 40%** by 2020
- > Proposed reform to native vegetation laws to focus on **conserving biodiversity at a bioregional level** and **promoting conservation on private land**
- > **Expanded the Narran Lake Nature Reserve Ramsar Site** to protect the breeding grounds of migratory birds
- > Introduced a **Renewable Energy Action Plan**, which has seen the share of renewable energy generated in NSW increase
- > Reformed the state's ethanol mandate to **increase the use of renewable biofuels**

These are just some of the steps we have taken to ensure that we protect and improve our natural environment. With your support, we can do even more.

Making the Northern Rivers CSG-free

The NSW Nationals made a commitment in early 2015 that we would buy back PEL 445 near Lismore to reduce CSG exploration in the Northern Rivers.

Since then we have not only delivered on that commitment but gone further, making the entire Northern Rivers CSG free.

CSG on the Northern Rivers was the legacy of the former Labor government. Every Petroleum Exploration Licence (PEL) allowing CSG activities in the Northern Rivers – in fact every PEL across the entire state – was issued by the former Labor government. When Labor left office in 2011, more than 60% of the state was affected by a PEL and subject to potential CSG activity, including National Parks. The NSW Nationals have ensured that the government has bought back and cancelled 20 PELs across the state, including all PELs in the Northern Rivers. Today, only 8% of the state is covered by a PEL.

We have not only bought back every PEL issued by the former Labor government across the Northern Rivers, we also bought back the only Petroleum Production Licence for CSG in the region. **The Northern Rivers are now CSG free thanks to the efforts of the NSW Nationals in government, and the extraordinary commitment of the local community.**

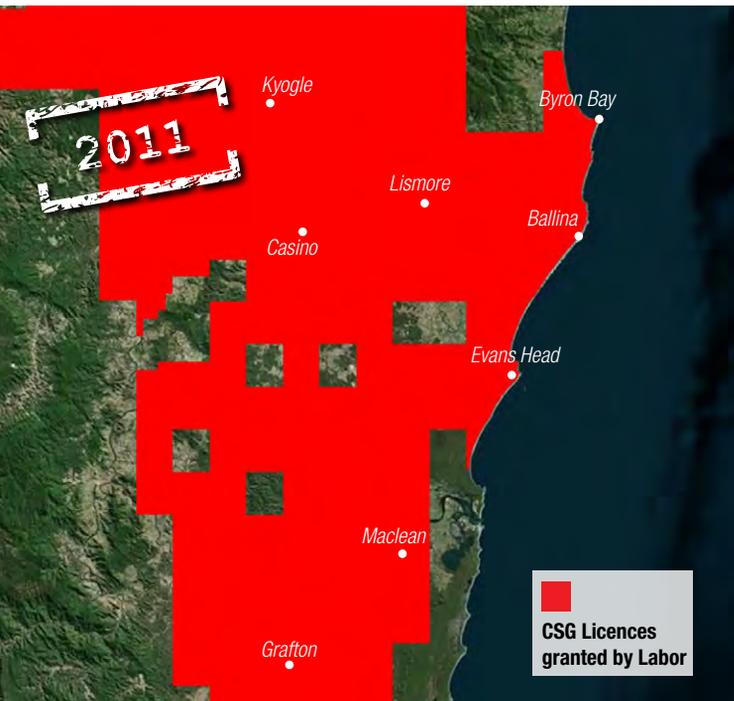
Tighter controls for CSG development

As well as issuing exploration licences over more than 60% of the state, the former Labor government failed to apply strict controls to CSG mining and exploration activities. The Nationals have worked to ensure that where CSG activities are undertaken they are subject to the strictest controls in the country.

Some of the controls we have implemented include:

- > **Introducing exclusion zones** for new CSG activity within two kilometres of existing and future residential areas, and certain critical industry clusters;
- > **Banning toxic chemicals** during hydraulic fracturing;
- > **Banning evaporation ponds**;
- > Requiring all CSG operations to obtain an environmental protection licence from the EPA, including **strict and enforceable conditions to protect the environment**;
- > **Doubling** the number of Department of Planning and Environment compliance staff.

These measures, among others, mean that NSW now imposes stricter controls on CSG activity than any other state – an achievement the NSW Nationals are particularly proud of.



Committed to conserving biodiversity

The NSW Nationals have taken the lead in working to reform the state's biodiversity conservation laws.

The quality of biodiversity in NSW has been declining for a long time. We have recently proposed a new Biodiversity Conservation Bill to deliver better environmental outcomes.

The new conservation framework will focus on conserving biodiversity at a bioregional and state level. This will mean decisions affecting biodiversity are not made in isolation on a site-by-site basis but considered holistically, delivering better protections for our natural environment.

There will also be a substantial investment in conserving biodiversity on private land. Instead of only funding conservation in National Parks and other public lands, **we have committed \$240 million over five years to conserve biodiversity on private land as well.**

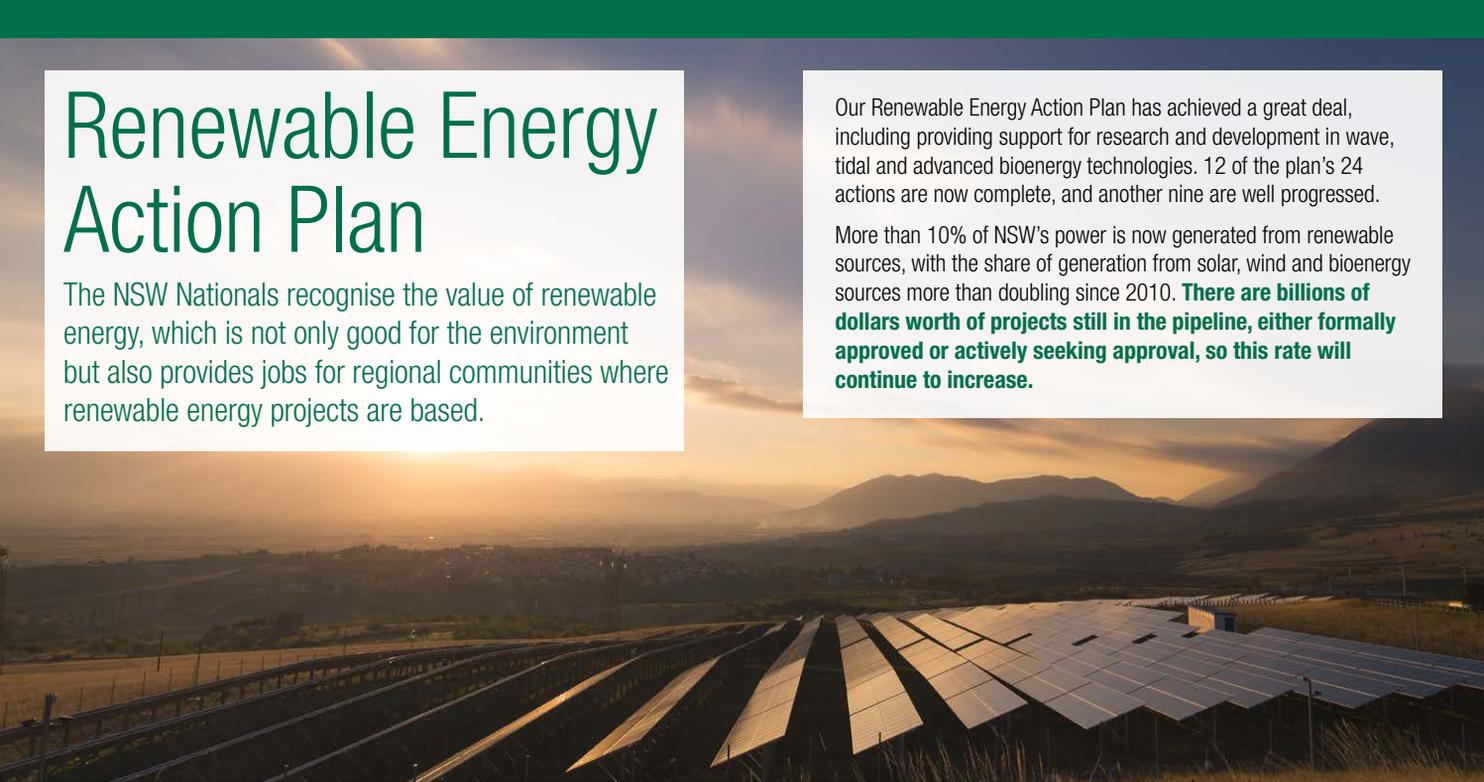


Supporting renewable biofuels

Biofuels provide a renewable source of energy and reduce reliance on oil for transport.

There has been a lot of support for the concept of requiring ethanol to be used in petrol for many years, but in reality very little of our fuel supplies were renewable. Despite the government mandating that at least 6% of all fuels sold in NSW should be ethanol, that target never came close to being met.

The Nationals have long argued that more needed to be done to promote the use of ethanol. The Nationals have achieved serious reform to the ethanol mandate, with more service stations now required to supply ethanol-blended fuels. **This will ensure increased availability of more renewable fuels, and help to reduce our reliance on oil.**

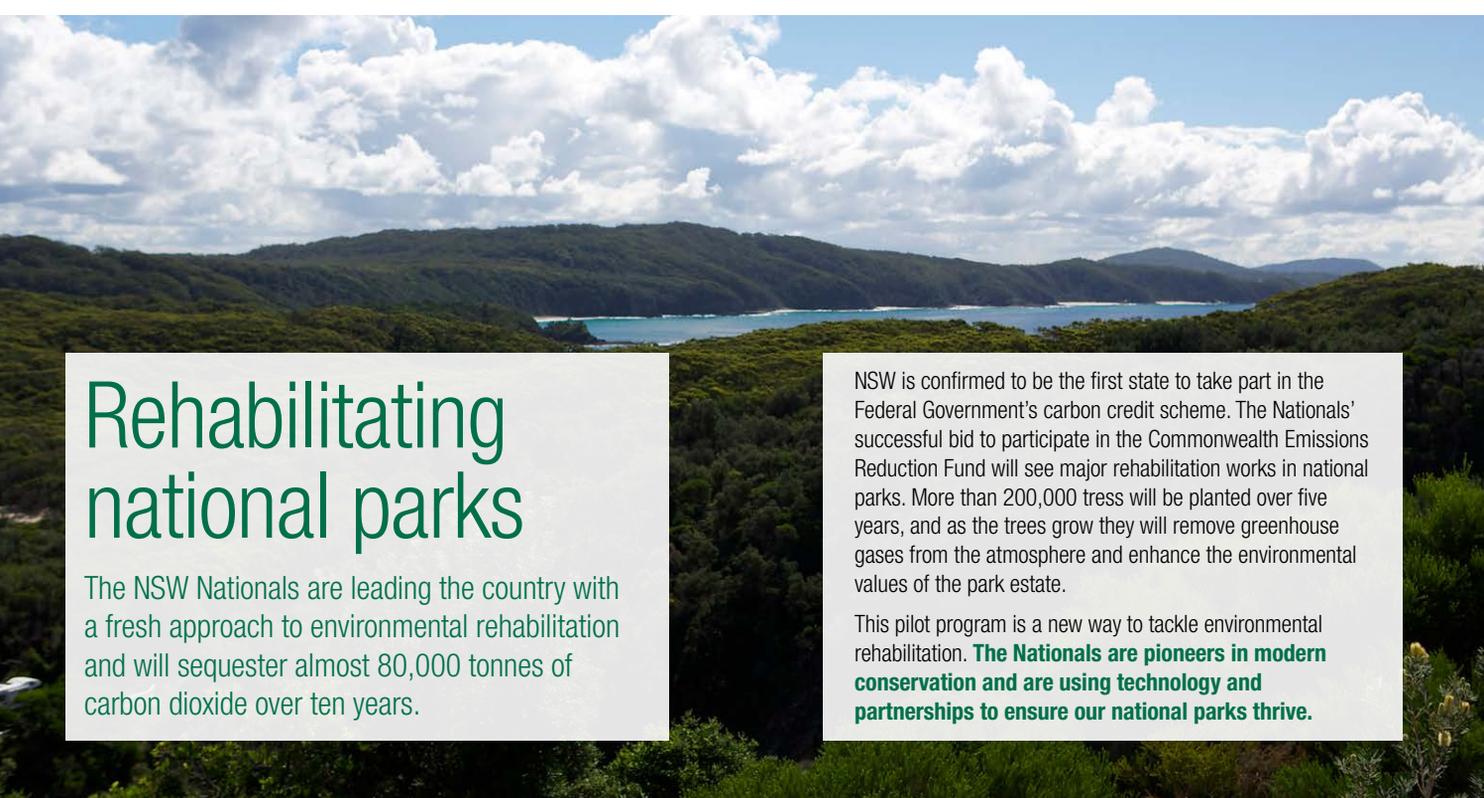


Renewable Energy Action Plan

The NSW Nationals recognise the value of renewable energy, which is not only good for the environment but also provides jobs for regional communities where renewable energy projects are based.

Our Renewable Energy Action Plan has achieved a great deal, including providing support for research and development in wave, tidal and advanced bioenergy technologies. 12 of the plan's 24 actions are now complete, and another nine are well progressed.

More than 10% of NSW's power is now generated from renewable sources, with the share of generation from solar, wind and bioenergy sources more than doubling since 2010. **There are billions of dollars worth of projects still in the pipeline, either formally approved or actively seeking approval, so this rate will continue to increase.**



Rehabilitating national parks

The NSW Nationals are leading the country with a fresh approach to environmental rehabilitation and will sequester almost 80,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide over ten years.

NSW is confirmed to be the first state to take part in the Federal Government's carbon credit scheme. The Nationals' successful bid to participate in the Commonwealth Emissions Reduction Fund will see major rehabilitation works in national parks. More than 200,000 trees will be planted over five years, and as the trees grow they will remove greenhouse gases from the atmosphere and enhance the environmental values of the park estate.

This pilot program is a new way to tackle environmental rehabilitation. **The Nationals are pioneers in modern conservation and are using technology and partnerships to ensure our national parks thrive.**



Improving estuary management

The NSW Nationals have invested almost \$100,000 to protect and manage the Tweed River to ensure community access and environmental protection of the waterway.

The Nationals understand the Tweed River's estuary ecosystem is a vital part the region's natural environment and are working to protect it for generations to come. The 10-year Coastal Zone Management Plan to be created locally from the investment will enhance the condition of the river with as little interruption to community enjoyment as possible.

The Nationals are committed to protecting and managing the state's coastal areas and estuaries. Funding has also been provided for environmental initiatives in 29 other areas in the state, including the Richmond River, Nambucca River and the Everlasting Swamp. The NSW Nationals want to ensure we have healthy waterways with thriving and resilient communities now and into the future.

Historic support for Landcare

The Nationals recognise the incredible contribution made to our environment by voluntary groups like Landcare.

Fighting illegal dumping

The NSW Nationals are focused on working with community groups and local government to stop illegal dumpers in their tracks.

We know that illegal dumping is a scourge on communities that not only creates an eyesore but can also severely harm the environment.

The Nationals have committed over \$3 million in funding for councils and community groups to help clean up and prevent illegal dumping. This includes funding for practical solutions like fencing, lighting and surveillance cameras. The successful program has seen more than 2,300 tonnes of waste and 192 tonnes of asbestos removed from our streets so far.



That's why we've created a partnership with Landcare to help build the capacity of local Landcare groups. The Local Landcare Coordinators Initiative will provide Landcare with \$15 million to deliver a network of locally based coordinators across the state. This is a historic partnership – **no previous NSW government has ever provided funding to Landcare.**

Already, 21 Landcare coordinators have been funded on the north coast, with 66 in total across the state. These coordinators are working directly with local volunteers to make the Landcare network even more effective at improving the local environment. By building the capacity of local communities through Landcare coordinators, we are helping to ensure the best outcomes for the environment across the state.

“Cash for Cans”



The Nationals have long championed a container deposit scheme to significantly reduce litter across the state.

We were steadfast in our push to see a 10 cent refund on most drink containers to get litter off our streets, beaches and waterways. The Nationals have advocated providing financial incentives for the community to do the right thing and recycle.

From 1 July 2017, a 10 cent refund will be available on all drink containers between 150 mL and 3 litres. The Nationals are proud of this new reform, which is the largest single initiative ever undertaken to reduce litter in NSW. It will make a real difference in reducing the approximately 160 million drink containers littered annually.

As representatives of regional NSW, the Nationals also know how community groups will benefit from a container deposit scheme. Regional NSW has some of the highest volunteering rates in the state, so there are great opportunities for groups such as scout troops and schools to benefit by raising money while removing litter from our environment.

Protecting wetlands

The NSW Nationals are continually working to ensure wetlands remain protected.

This not only provides a habitat for wildlife but respects the cultural importance of some of these areas to local Aboriginal people. The Nationals have successfully extended the Narran Lake Nature Reserve Ramsar Site by more than 3,100 hectares to enhance the protection of wildlife and the site's environmental value.

The NSW Nationals are ensuring internationally listed breeding areas are preserved and supported, with the site being the home of many water bird species. Many water birds fly up to 15,000 kilometres from as far away as Siberia for their annual migration. The Nationals are ensuring their habitats are protected on a global scale to maintain breeding cycles. Regional NSW is the location of many internationally listed breeding areas and the NSW Nationals are committed to protecting and investing in these precious resources.





Enhancing koala habitat

The NSW Nationals are committed to protecting and investing in practical support for endangered wildlife.

Last year the NSW Nationals in government started to plant an additional 15,000 koala food trees at Cudgen Nature Reserve. The \$200,000 investment will enhance catchment values and also improve the biodiversity of the region, assisting threatened species to establish themselves along vegetation corridors.

The NSW Nationals understand the rehabilitation of koalas is a great boost for community confidence and is an example of the difference government can make when working with the community.

The Nationals are ensuring local habitat and food essential for endangered wildlife is protected and invested in, not only for the benefit of our precious resources and local species but to ensure the region maintains its reputation as an eco-tourism hotspot.

Reducing waste and littering

The NSW Nationals are proud of the target to reduce litter in the state by 40%.

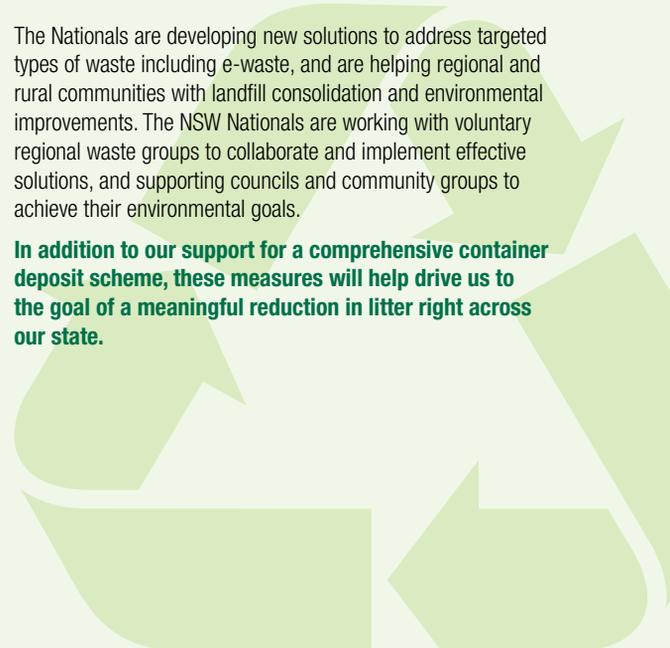
While we recognise that a target on its own won't help the environment, it is important to have a target to ensure that reducing litter remains a focus both for government and the community.

The NSW Nationals are proud to implement new ways to work with the community to transform waste and recycling in our state. A total of \$465.7 million will be invested to clean up NSW through new infrastructure, food and garden waste recycling, new waste drop off services and education programs. The NSW Nationals are empowering local communities to think differently about recycling and waste, delivering value-for-money waste infrastructure to make it easier for households and businesses, and driving innovative regulatory approaches.

The Nationals are continuing the charge for innovative and cost-effective approaches to managing waste, improving environmental outcomes and encouraging and educating the community on this important issue.

The Nationals are developing new solutions to address targeted types of waste including e-waste, and are helping regional and rural communities with landfill consolidation and environmental improvements. The NSW Nationals are working with voluntary regional waste groups to collaborate and implement effective solutions, and supporting councils and community groups to achieve their environmental goals.

In addition to our support for a comprehensive container deposit scheme, these measures will help drive us to the goal of a meaningful reduction in litter right across our state.





To find out more about how The Nationals
are protecting our environment, visit
nswnationals.org.au/environment
or speak to your local Nationals MP

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