



JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

The Hon Peter Garrett MP

Australian Minister for the Environment,
Heritage and the Arts

The Hon Tony Burke MP

Australian Minister for Agriculture,
Fisheries and Forestry

12 September 2008

PROJECTS TO BOOST THE ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABLE FARMING IN NSW

The Rudd Government has announced 13 projects to improve the NSW environment and boost sustainable farming practices, through the Caring for our Country initiative.

The 13 projects will include habitat restoration for threatened ecological communities, establishing conservation agreements with private landholders, protecting stream bank vegetation and boosting the skills of farm businesses.

Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts Peter Garrett and Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Tony Burke said the projects would be funded with \$41 million from the Caring for our Country initiative.

The package includes around \$9 million for land management training and education programs across the state's 13 natural resource management regions.

"Through *Caring for our Country* we will work with communities, including Indigenous people, local government, school children and volunteers, so that together we ensure the best outcomes for the environment," Mr Garrett said.

"Our challenge is to ensure all the work we do today towards the sustainable management of our environment improves its resilience to cope with the pressures of a changing climate."

Minister Burke said farmers across Australia, including NSW, were already leading the way in improved land management practices.

"Our farmers are on the front-line when it comes to the impacts of climate change and we will continue to work with them to prepare for the future," Mr Burke said.

"This comes on top of the prolonged drought which continues to cause hardship for many farmers.

"Caring for our Country funding will help give landholders the skills to meet the challenges of the future while increasing productivity."

The \$2.25 billion Caring for our Country package is a five-year initiative to deliver a new, coordinated approach to environmental management in Australia, built on a set of consistent national targets.

It is part of the Rudd Government's plans to assist our primary industries and the environment to adapt to a changing climate.

For more information visit www.nrm.gov.au

NSW Region Summaries Caring for our Country 2008-09

Border Rivers Gwydir: \$2.460 million

Key activities will include habitat restoration focused on iconic fauna, such as the Bush Stone Curlew and the Brolga, as well as threatened ecological communities such as Grassy White Box Woodland, through long-term conservation agreements; targeting weeds, such as Mimosa, which affect threatened flora and fauna; improving water quality, erosion, riparian vegetation, aquatic biodiversity and in-stream salinity in priority sub-catchments, including Halls Creek and the Ramsar-listed Lower Gwydir wetlands; improving soil condition, land capacity and salinity management in priority sub-catchments through partnerships with landholders and other key stakeholders focused on property planning, increasing landholder capability and adoption of best management sustainable farming practices. For more information contact the Border Rivers Gwydir Catchment Management Authority on (02) 6728 8020 or visit <http://www.brg.cma.nsw.gov.au>.

Central West CMA: \$3.24 million

Key activities include establishing conservation agreements with private landholders to encourage sustainable farming practices, protect and enhance native vegetation communities such as Brigalow Belt South and the Darling Riverine Plains; implementing recovery actions to improve the viability of key threatened species including the Brush-Tailed Wallaby and Mallee Fowl and rehabilitating and revegetating riparian vegetation types and river styles such as Wilga on Floodplains and River Red Gum Forest; providing incentives to private landholders to reduce sediment, nutrient and salt load contributions in upland catchments; increasing the area of the Ramsar-listed Macquarie Marshes through partnerships and conservation agreements; and building on the capacity of the catchment community to participate in sustainable resource management activities through education programs, targeted training and awareness-raising events. For more information contact the Central West Catchment Management Authority on (02) 6840 7810 or visit <http://www.cw.cma.nsw.gov.au>.

Lachlan: \$3.37 million

Key activities will focus on improving sustainable farming practices which also enhance the extent of high conservation value native vegetation protected and managed in priority areas such as the Lower Lachlan River through long term conservation agreements with landholders; implementation of threatened species recovery activities and improved protection of various endangered ecological communities including White Box, Yellow Box and Blakely's Red Gum (Box Gum Woodland) within the travelling stock route reserve system; activities to reduce the impact and occurrence of carp in the Lachlan River; improved management planning for the nationally significant wetland, Booligal Swamp; increasing the number of perennial grass species and groundcovers and improving soil health through changed management of grazing land; and increasing the skills and knowledge of natural resource managers, landholders and the Indigenous community in the region. For more information, contact the Lachlan Catchment Management Authority on (02) 6851 9500 or visit www.lachlan.cma.nsw.gov.au.

Lower Murray Darling: \$2.11 million

Key activities include increasing the extent of permanent conservation reserves; improved landholder management of vegetation condition in remote areas and adoption of sustainable grazing management in the rangelands through incentives; identifying net improvement in riverine health across the Lower Murray Darling through fish habitat monitoring; implementation of conservation farming techniques suitable for mallee dryland cropping practices; and increased capacity of Indigenous and other land managers to contribute to regional decision making for improved natural resource management. For more information, contact the Lower Murray Darling Catchment Management Authority on (03) 50219443 or visit <http://www.lmd.cma.nsw.gov.au>.

Murray: \$4.3 million

Key activities include improving sustainable farming practices as well as building on and linking existing areas of remnant native vegetation (including Grassybox, Buloke and Myall woodlands) through conservation agreements with landholders; mapping priority remnant native vegetation and establishment of catchment-wide baseline flora and fauna information; protection of riverine sites of high conservation value and re-vegetation of riverine corridors through conservation agreements; preventing further soil resource degradation by improving pH and organic carbon and increased community capacity in dryland salinity best practice management through prioritised incentives; increasing partnerships and collaboration with the community, government, industry, and non-government organisations through the Living Murray community engagement initiative and improving Indigenous community participation and training in natural resource decision making through consultation and site protection works. For more information, contact the Murray Catchment Management Authority on (03) 58983902 or visit <http://www.murray.cma.nsw.gov.au>.

Murrumbidgee: \$4.53 million

Key activities include protection and enhancement of stream bank vegetation as buffers and traps, and to plant riparian native vegetation for riverbank stabilisation to reduce sedimentation; protection and enhancement of native vegetation through supplementary planting, weed and feral animal control; rehabilitation and restoration of aquatic habitats by sequestration of carbon, control land degradation and improved biodiversity to increase the area of wetlands and improve their connectivity to promote species movement; and enhancement of knowledge and skills of farm businesses, local government and the wider community to foster profitable and sustainable farming systems and landscapes. For more information, contact the Murrumbidgee Catchment Management Authority on (02) 6923 6478 or visit <http://www.murrumbidgee.cma.nsw.gov.au>.

Namoi: \$2.58 million

Key activities include increasing the extent and quality of native vegetation within the Brigalow Belt South and Nandewar bioregions; developing knowledge of appropriate flow management to support threatened ecological communities associated with the Namoi River and its tributaries such as wetland systems including Goran Lake, endangered ecological communities including Coolibah-Black Box and Redgum Woodlands and migratory bird species including the Cattle Egret; and increasing sustainable farming skills and knowledge within natural resource managers, landholders and Indigenous groups through training and fields days. For more information, contact the Namoi Catchment Management Authority on 02 6742 9220 or visit www.namoi.cma.nsw.gov.au

Western CMA: \$2.4 million

Key activities include training and incentives to maintain native pastures and control invasive flora species; implementing suppression and control measures for pest flora and fauna species such as Mesquite, Prickly Scrub, feral foxes and pigs; establishing conservation agreements on high conservation value land in the Barwon-Darling and Paroo River corridors as well as priority biogeographic regions; training and incentives to improve the sustainability of farming practices in the rangelands with a focus on groundcover management; encouraging the participation of the Aboriginal community in natural resource management through establishing Aboriginal Reference Advisory groups; and building the capacity of the catchment community to participate and contribute to sustainable natural resource management through training and extension activities. For more information, contact the Western Catchment Management Authority on (02) 6836 1575 or visit <http://www.western.cma.nsw.gov.au>.

Hawkesbury-Nepean CMA: \$3.37 million

Key activities include re-vegetating and restoring priority fauna habitats such as grassy woodlands, upland swamps, coastal wetlands and saltmarsh; implementing recovery actions for threatened species and endangered ecological communities including Brush-Tailed Rock Wallaby and Cumberland Plain Woodland; reducing the coverage of weeds such as bitou bush, lantana and *Salvinia molesta*; regenerating riparian zones and sub-catchments in close proximity to the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area; and increasing the social connectivity of the catchment through enhancing regional landcare networks and groups, and targeted education, training and extension programs focussed on building sustainable farming capacity. For more information, contact the Hawkesbury-Nepean Catchment Management Authority on (02) 4828 6747 or visit <http://www.hn.cma.nsw.gov.au>.

Hunter Central Rivers: \$3.81 million

Key activities include protection and regeneration of threatened species habitats such as Grassy White Box Woodland at significant sites including the Ramsar-listed area of Myall Lakes in conjunction with improving sustainable farming practices through long term conservation agreements with private and public landholders; partnerships with State agencies to manage weeds such as alligator weed and bitou and animal pests (fox and wild pigs) and maintain the habitat for vulnerable species in reserves or national estate areas; protection, regeneration and enhancement of native riparian vegetation in high conservation river style reaches of Wallis and Myall Lakes through conservation covenants with private and public landholders; protection and enhancement of the condition of Ramsar and other important wetlands including Kooragang and Hexham Swamp; stabilising highly erodible and saline discharge site soils; and providing education, awareness and other support for key stakeholders to increase the level of understanding of and participation in sustainable farming and natural resource management programs. For more information, contact the Hunter Central Rivers Catchment Management Authority on (02) 4930 1030 or visit <http://www.hcr.cma.nsw.gov.au>.

Northern Rivers: \$4.41 million

Key activities include securing long term management agreements with land owners and managers of private and public land to sustainably manage this land, also restoring critical habitat of threatened species such as the Northern Corroboree Frog and giant dragon fly through weed management and threat abatement, enhancing native terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems such as montane peat lands and swamps, restoring habitat to provide connectivity in high biodiversity areas including the Gondwana Rainforests of Australia and Lord Howe Island World Heritage areas; rehabilitating and protecting rivers through structural works and increased native vegetation; implementing actions from regional recovery plans for endangered ecological communities such as Davison Plums and coastal fontanes;

actively managing areas of acid sulphate soils to enhance sustainable production outcomes on floodplains and protect endangered ecological communities such as coastal saltmarsh and freshwater wetlands; implementing estuary management plans to increase the area of native vegetation and habitat in estuaries, coastal lakes and lagoons particularly in the Solitary Island Marine Parks; and contracting local government, community organisations and Aboriginal community groups to provide training and build capacity of stakeholders, particularly of Aboriginal youth, to be engaged in natural resource management. For more information, contact the Northern Rivers Catchment Management Authority on (02) 6642 0622 or visit <http://www.northernrivers.cma.nsw.gov.au>.

Southern Rivers: \$3.68 million

Key activities include increasing the connectivity of reserve systems across intervening private land for biodiversity conservation, enhanced long term conservation management through agreements with landholders to enhance sustainable production outcomes and improve the quality of priority remnant vegetation, targeting 21 endangered ecological communities, and establishing benchmarks for long term condition monitoring; the development and implementation of natural resource management plans to maintain or improve the condition of critical estuarine habitat (saltmarsh and mangroves); enhanced dairy industry partnerships to improve environmental performance, maintain international market share and meet local community expectations; and improved Indigenous engagement in natural resource management, planning, knowledge and skills transfer, including support for traditional land and sea management planning. For more information, contact the Southern Rivers Catchment Management Authority on (02) 4224 9701 or visit <http://www.southern.cma.nsw.gov.au>.

Sydney Metro CMA: \$0.75 million

Key activities include improved management of biodiversity corridors and fragmented coastal habitats including Cumberland Plain, Blue Gum High Forest, the Parramatta River and Botany Bay and Clontarf catchments and significant coastal wetlands within the region; reducing the coverage of weeds such as bitou bush, lantana and *Salvinia molesta*; and increasing the social connectivity of the catchment through partnerships with local government, the Indigenous community and industry, focusing in particular on estuary and weed management. For more information contact the Sydney Metro Catchment Management Authority on (02) 9895 6272 or visit <http://www.sydney.cma.nsw.gov.au>.