



## JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

<b>The Hon Peter Garrett MP</b> Australian Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts	<b>The Hon Tony Burke MP</b> Australian Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
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20 October 2008

### PROJECTS TO PROTECT SOUTH AUSTRALIAN WETLANDS AND WINE DISTRICT

South Australia's fragile wetlands and the internationally-renowned Padthaway wine growing district will be better protected under projects funded through the Caring for our Country initiative.

Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts, Peter Garrett, and Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Tony Burke, said the Caring for our Country package would support eight projects around the state in 2008-09.

A total \$18.9 million will be shared between the state's eight Natural Resource Management boards.

"Wetlands provide an essential link between our land and water resources and they need to be protected," Mr Garrett said.

"In the South Australian Murray-Darling Basin region work will be done to improve the condition and connection of wetlands around Coorong and the Lower Lakes.

"Funds will also be used to protect the endangered Glossy Black-Cockatoo on Kangaroo Island, by continuing to improve nesting habitats and control the impact of feral animals and weeds."

Mr Burke said the Caring for our Country funding would help address the salinity challenge facing wine growers in the Padthaway district.

"Padthaway, meaning 'good water', is recognised as one of Australia's premier wine growing areas and its wines are in high demand around the world," he said.

"To ensure the region's water is protected, we will work with wine growers on practical ways to manage and reduce root-zone salinity, minimising the impact on soil and maximising vine productivity.

"Our farmers, including wine growers, are already leaders in environmental management on their properties and Caring for our Country will help to ensure they are supported into the future."

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](http://www.nrm.gov.au)

## **Summary of activities under the Caring for our Country investment for South Australian regions**

### **SA Murray Darling Basin: \$5.08 million**

Key activities include: best practice guidelines for land managers; mapping priority pest densities; whole farm planning, monitoring and evaluation of environmental water policies; integrated floodplain management; collection and assessment of baseline fish and in-stream habitat data; wetland management including implementation of the Coorong and Lower Lakes Ramsar Management Plan; protection of resources through conservation agreements; conservation and enhancement of habitat; establishment of revegetation buffer areas and natural regeneration of degraded areas; recovery programs for priority threatened species; community support, education and awareness-raising; engagement of local Indigenous people. *For more information contact Jenny Phillips on (08) 8532 1432.*

### **South East: \$2.61 million**

Key activities include: identification of the most profitable and sustainable commercial pasture-based systems for the areas impacted by the Upper South East deep drainage system; improving the ecological health of Lake George; recovery of threatened species and habitat (eg. Southern bent-wing bat, Buloke Woodland); protecting the iconic Blue Lake from land use impacts; development of an invasive species biosecurity strategy for the South East; assessment and management of salt water intrusion into the coastal aquifers; improving management of soil salinity for wine quality at Padthaway; restoration of several Lower South East wetlands; strategic feral deer control; supporting indigenous involvement in natural resource management; support of the Waterwatch South East Program. *For more information contact Fred Stadter on (08) 8762 9116.*

### **Adelaide and Mt Lofty Ranges: \$2.28 million**

Key activities include: minimising threats to biodiversity in the region by implementing recovery plans to protect populations of key species; on-ground reconstruction works to enhance ecosystems and improve their natural functionality; improving conservation outside of reserves by supporting land managers in effectively managing remnant ecosystems on private land with a focus on conservation clusters; providing advice and incentives to assist farmers implement sustainable production methods; and fencing and re-vegetating watercourses to improve water quality. *For more information contact Christel Mex on (08) 8273 9100.*

### **Eyre Peninsula: \$2.07 million**

Key activities include: farm planning, assistance with identification of best cropping/grazing mixes for enterprises, planning for climate change movement corridors on the Eyre Peninsula; implementation of recovery plans for threatened species; partnership with councils to protect and revegetate coastal and dune areas; streambank erosion control in the Cummins Wanilla/Salt Creek/Dutton River Catchments; promotion and adoption of best practice sustainable agricultural and grazing techniques; improved water quality in three major catchments through fencing, revegetation, perennial pasture establishment, erosion control and improved land use practices; coordinated feral pest control over a large part of Eyre Peninsula; control of White Weeping Broom and African Boxthorn; engagement of Indigenous Communities, schools and volunteers. *For more information contact Kate Clarke on (08) 8682 7555.*

### **Kangaroo Island: \$1.45 million**

Key activities include: protecting the island's biodiversity by controlling and eradicating pest species and preventing new introductions; maintaining and replanting habitat to increase populations of the endangered Glossy Black Cockatoo; minimising threats to threatened plant species in the eastern part of the island by revegetating, improving fire management and controlling weeds; replanting along watercourses to improve water quality and mitigate seagrass decline; and increasing the sustainability of agriculture by increasing awareness of practices to manage soil acidity, waterlogging and soil erosion. *For more information contact Jeanette Gellard on (08) 8553 4340.*

### **Alinytjara Wilurara: \$1.99 million**

Key activities include: research into sustainable groundwater harvesting limits and the impact of grazing on native vegetation, increasing knowledge of hydrological processes, ground and surface water resources and the impacts of water harvesting; protection of rock hole springs; implementing sustainable fire regimes; educating Indigenous communities in traditional and contemporary biodiversity principles and working with them to protect biodiversity from feral animals such as camels, foxes, rabbits and cats; sustainable use of bush tucker and medicine; encouraging sustainable grazing; controlling feral pests; and managing vehicle and visitor activity in the area. *For more information contact Danielle Rosenberg on (08) 8357 3880.*

### **SA Arid Lands: \$1.8 million**

Key activities include: enhancing landscapes and biodiversity by controlling key threatening pest species through the development of best practice in feral animal control; supporting local community groups to better manage pest plants and animals, including the use of evidence-based measures to control dingo populations; re-establishing natural ecosystems by reintroducing locally extinct fauna and implementing recovery measures for other threatened fauna. *For more information contact Mark Wheeler on (08) 8204 9328.*

### **Northern & Yorke: \$1.69 million**

Key activities include: improving land management practices while enhancing farmers/landholders ability to sustain productive livelihoods, protecting iconic species and ecological communities; creating wildlife corridors; buffering landscape edges from threatening processes; restricting vehicular access to sensitive coastal environments; improving water quality discharged to marine environments; improving farm management practices through addressing soil erosion and acidity; increasing adoption of no-till farming; implementing agreements for the permanent conservation of natural resources; managing weeds and pest animals; and helping local Indigenous people to manage their land. *For more information contact Wendy Fowler on (08) 8636 2361.*