

Principles for Sustainable Resource Management in the Rangelands

April 2010



Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council

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Principles for Sustainable Resource Management in the Rangelands

Background

Following a prime ministerial commitment in 1993, the Australian Government and all state and territory governments agreed to publish the *National Principles and Guidelines for Rangeland Management* (1999). This document built on existing national strategies, particularly the *National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development* (1992) and the *National Strategy for the Conservation of Australia's Biological Diversity* (1996).

The principles and guidelines provided a coherent framework for regional communities to develop their own strategies for action. They focused on taking a regional approach to sustainable resource management (SRM) in the rangelands and identified the need for a comprehensive rangelands monitoring and reporting program. Further background regarding national rangelands initiatives is at Appendix A.

In 2001, the National Land and Water Resources Audit (NLWRA) published the report *Rangelands—Tracking Changes* that defined elements of a comprehensive monitoring and reporting program. It also proposed establishing the Australian Collaborative Rangelands Information System (ACRIS) to collate and interpret relevant rangelands information. In 2002 ACRIS was established with a management committee comprised of representatives from the Australian Government, the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), the governments of the Northern Territory, Queensland, Western Australia, New South Wales and South Australia and the Desert Knowledge Cooperative Research Centre.

In 2008, ACRIS published *Rangelands 2008—Taking the Pulse* (the ACRIS report) which examined the change in condition of Australia's rangelands during a 1992-2005 monitoring and reporting period. After analysing the ACRIS report, the Natural Resource Policies and Programs Committee (NRPPC), a sub-committee of the Natural Resource Management

Ministerial Council (NRMCC)¹ asked the Australian Government to develop a paper that would:

... identify and report on what the problems are [in the rangelands] and why the NRM Ministerial Council (NRMCC) should address them in an integrated way.

The NRMCC considered the key SRM issues in the rangelands outlined in that paper and established a rangelands task group to address these issues, with members drawn from the Australian Government and all state and territory governments except the ACT and Tasmania.

The task group analysed current national strategies, including the *National Strategy for the Conservation of Australia's Biological Diversity* (1996) and the *National Framework for the Management and Monitoring of Australia's Native Vegetation* (1999). It found them to be issue-based rather than place-based, addressing some but not all of the SRM issues in the rangelands. A list of relevant strategies is at Appendix B.

The task group found that to develop a place-based national rangelands strategy would involve considerable duplication. Instead it recommended developing national principles for sustainable resource management in the rangelands. This would encourage and guide consideration of rangelands SRM issues in national strategies and other relevant work by the NRMCC. This approach, which builds on the *National Principles and Guidelines for Rangelands Management* (1999), was agreed by the NRPPC in May 2009.

¹ The Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council (NRMCC) consists of the Australian/state/territory and New Zealand government ministers responsible for environment and water policy, primary industries and natural resources. The agreed objective of the Council is: to promote the conservation and sustainable use of Australia's natural resources. The Council is the peak government forum for consultation, coordination and, where appropriate, integration of action by governments on natural resource management issues.

About this publication

This publication is intended to encourage and guide the consideration of rangelands natural resource management issues in national strategies and other relevant work by the NRMCC. It outlines key principles underpinning sustainable resource management in the rangelands and provides sources of further information. The words natural resource management and sustainable resource management are used interchangeably throughout this publication.

Who is it for?

This publication is intended for national committees reporting to NRMCC, which primarily comprise government representatives. These committees will be able to use this document to ensure that rangelands issues are considered when developing, implementing and reviewing national NRM strategies. Rangelands stakeholders, including NRM groups, industry, the agricultural sector and Indigenous land managers may also use this publication as a reference.

Scope

The scope of this publication is limited to those issues that relate to the terms of reference of the NRMCC, namely:

...the development of policies and strategies for national approaches to the conservation, sustainable use and management of Australia's land, water, vegetation and biological resources and oversight of the development and implementation of national natural resource management programs.

Socio-economic issues are not addressed in detail as they are outside the scope of the NRMCC. However, the principles do refer to such issues acknowledging that social and economic factors are integrally related to SRM in the rangelands.

What are the rangelands?

The rangelands, popularly known as 'the outback', cover approximately 81 per cent of Australia's land area. They encompass:

- tropical woodlands and savannas in the far north
- vast treeless grassy plains (downs country) across the mid-north
- hummock grasslands (spinifex), mulga woodlands and shrublands through the mid-latitudes
- saltbush and bluebush shrublands that fringe the agricultural areas and Great Australian Bight in the south.²

The rangelands have no clearly defined boundary. They include the low rainfall and variable climate arid and semi-arid areas of Australia, and some seasonally high rainfall areas north of the Tropic of Capricorn. Boundaries move according to climatic conditions³ and because there is no single definition of rangelands. *Rangelands 2008—Taking the pulse* says that 'Great climate variability and the dominating influence of short growing seasons distinctly characterise rangelands environments.'⁴ The ecological, economic and social characteristics of some areas adjacent to the rangelands are similar to those of the rangelands and should be managed in similar ways.⁵

2 G Bastin, and the ACRIS Management Committee Rangelands 2008—Taking the pulse, published on behalf of the ACRIS Management Committee by the National Land and Water Resources Audit, Canberra, 2008, p2.

3 The Australian and New Zealand Environment Conservation Council (ANZECC) and the Agriculture and Resource Management Council of Australia and New Zealand (ARMCANZ), National Principles and Guidelines for Rangelands Management, Commonwealth of Australia, 1999, p2.

4 Bastin, op. cit., pxvii.

5 ANZECC and ARMCANZ, op. cit, p2.

The rangelands



Source: NWLRA 2007 in Bastin (2008)

Why are the rangelands important?

The rangelands provide substantial benefits to Australia including through provision of ecosystem services, agricultural production, mineral extraction, natural resources such as water and intact vegetation, and cultural values fundamental to Indigenous Australians. These benefits are of great significance to Australia both economically and culturally and are increasingly being recognised by the wider community.⁶

Biodiversity

The rangelands are relatively uncleared ecosystems and are important to Australia's biodiversity. They contain some of Australia's most intact ecosystems, many of which are still relatively unmodified and contain a great variety of habitats.⁷

Although European settlement has produced large changes in Australia's biota and landscape processes, the rangelands have avoided some of the fragmentation that is characteristic of more intensively settled areas. As a result, there are unique opportunities for conservation and production to co-exist.

Water resources

Water is a crucial resource for land use and management in the rangelands. It is sourced primarily from surface water in drainage basins or large catchments such as Lake Eyre Basin and the Great Artesian Basin. There are also a number of major river systems throughout the rangelands including the rivers of the Lake Eyre Basin and parts of the Murray-Darling Basin in south-eastern Australia, the Victoria River in the Northern Territory, the Gascoyne River in Western Australia and the Burdekin River in Queensland.⁸

Carbon sequestration

In the rangelands carbon is found in both the woody vegetation and in soils, with a low amount of soil carbon storage per unit. However, due to the large expanse of the rangelands the total carbon store is considerable⁹. Equally, the rangelands are potentially a source of significant carbon emissions. As a result managing carbon stores, taking into account the effects of fire, the clearing and thickening of vegetation,¹⁰ and the benefit of improving agricultural productivity, will be an ongoing challenge.

Economic and cultural benefits of the rangelands

Much of Australia's mineral wealth, worth approximately \$12 billion annually, comes from the rangelands.¹¹ In addition, grazing of sheep and cattle (\$1.8 billion in 2001) and other non-pastoral agriculture provide substantial sources of income (\$627 million in 2001).¹² The rangelands also present opportunities for harvesting wild animal and plant products. Tourism generates annual revenue estimated to exceed \$2 billion.¹³

About 600 000 people live in the rangelands and its cities including Darwin, Alice Springs and Mt Isa.¹⁴ The cultural heritage and landscapes of inland Australia provide 'intrinsic social value for all Australians.'¹⁵ The rangelands are also important for providing a 'sense of place and identity for many Indigenous Australians.'¹⁶

6 NLWRA in Bastin, op. cit., p xviii.

7 *ibid*, p3.

8 *ibid*, p4.

9 *ibid*, p5.

10 *ibid* pg 5.

11 *ibid*, p3.

12 *ibid*, Chudleigh and Simpson 2004, p3.

13 *ibid*, NLWRA 2001a, p3.

14 *ibid*, ABS 2001, p4.

15 *ibid*, p3.

16 *ibid*, p3.

Key issues for the rangelands

Some of the key issues for Australia's rangelands, including those identified in the ACRIS report, are:

- improved sustainability of agricultural practices in the face of highly variable climatic conditions
- maintaining biodiversity
- fire regimes
- invasive weeds
- total grazing impact—including feral animals
- extraction and ownership of water
- climate change
- mining and other land uses
- Indigenous aspirations
- tenure variations across areas (for example, freehold, leasehold, Indigenous use)
- absentee landlords and management of large, leasehold areas
- community engagement
- role of environmental non-government organisations in rangelands management
- information and monitoring.

These issues are discussed further in the ACRIS report, which is available at www.environment.gov.au/land/rangelands/acris/index.html



Storm burn (Stephen Garnett)

Rangeland features affecting management

Distinguishing characteristics of rangelands relevant to their management include:

- Rangelands cover a large contiguous area of the Australian continent, crossing state, territory and many local government boundaries. This means that ecologically sustainable development in the rangelands requires policy and strategic planning which can be implemented across state and territory boundaries, and in a number of local government areas, by many land managers
- Issues relevant to SRM in rangelands regions often have more in common with similar areas in other states than with other regions within the same state
- The human population of the rangelands includes a high proportion of Indigenous Australians and is sparse and spread across large areas and many government boundaries. This increases the importance of inter-governmental policy attention to the unique issues of the region
- As climate is highly variable and bio-physical time frames are long, the development of local knowledge relevant to natural resource management requires long experience which can only be achieved by relatively stable populations or businesses
- Adaptive management is essential and must be informed by monitoring feedback since climate variability, long bio-physical time frames and limited resources prevent the development of a more traditional regulatory approach

- Episodic events such as flooding will have major impacts on the landscape and biota
- Climate change is likely to impact more severely on net primary production in the drier parts of the rangelands than in the higher rainfall zones
- Climate change is predicted to increase the frequency of extreme weather events such as droughts and floods, which will adversely affect primary production in much of the rangelands.

Assessing rangeland condition

Active investigation and monitoring of rangeland condition has mostly been undertaken in Australia over the past 30 years. Before this period, rangeland condition was not necessarily assessed in a systematic way.

In developing management strategies and frameworks for the future of the rangelands, managers and policy makers should be aware of the assessed accumulated impacts of past rangelands management practices. In particular, in striving for ecological sustainability it is important to consider the decline in native species habitat values of much of the rangelands over the past two millennia and not just the vegetation and inferred habitat changes that have been documented in the last three decades.

This is an ongoing challenge and, in some regions, it may be difficult to make comparisons to past rangeland condition without local supporting evidence.



Simpson Desert Flood (AAP Image/Bush Heritage Australia/Adam Kerezszy)

Principles for Sustainable Resource Management in the Rangelands

1. Ecologically sustainable development (ESD) of natural resources should be the underlying principle for sustainable resource management (SRM) in the rangelands.

- a. *Implementation of the core objectives of ecologically sustainable development should be applied across the rangelands, irrespective of how the land is held and used in order to:*
 - enhance individual and community well-being and welfare by following a path of economic development that safeguards the welfare of future generations
 - provide for equity within and between generations
 - conserve biodiversity and maintain essential ecological processes and life-support systems
- b. *The sustainable use of natural resources in the rangelands is recognised for its contribution to long and short-term economic, environmental and social outcomes, including enhancing the capacity of ecosystems to provide services including fresh water and the production of food and fibre.*
- c. *ESD in the rangelands relies on the premise that public benefit and private benefit are both important and considered in policy and strategy development.*

2. Building resilience in rangeland ecosystems is critical to managing uncertainty in the landscape.

- a. *Building resilience in the rangelands should focus on maintaining and restoring ecological processes, particularly at the landscape scale; and maintaining the diversity of genes, species and ecosystems as the underpinning of the resilience of ecosystems and biodiversity-based sectors of the economy.*
- b. *Building resilience in the rangelands will be critical to adapting to short-term and long-term changes such as seasonal conditions and climate change. It requires ongoing improvement in the knowledge of current land management practices and risks, of the drivers of change, and of land managers' capacity to change.*

3. The precautionary principle should be adopted so that decisions do not result in irreversible loss of opportunity.

- a. *If there are threats of serious or irreversible environmental damage, lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing measures to prevent environmental degradation.¹⁷*

4. Prevention of resource degradation is more effective than rehabilitation.

- a. *Land requires management, even if it is removed from a particular commercial use, including land that has been abandoned, is significantly degraded, or is sub-marginal for pastoral use.*
- b. *Adoption of sustainable land management practices is a cost effective way of ensuring a sustainable future for the rangelands.*

¹⁷ Section 391 of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

5. While legislative responsibility for ensuring ecologically sustainable development resides with government at all levels, primary responsibility for sustainable resource management rests with landowners and users, in accordance with relevant planning processes and relevant legislation.

- a. *Sustainable management in the rangelands involves understanding and working with the uncertainties of climate, controlling total grazing pressure, managing invasive species and protecting important ecological processes to optimise the full suite of environmental services—such as critical habitats provided by waterholes, mound springs, and the production of food and fibre.*
- b. *A high level of community engagement is required in managing the natural resources as large areas involve sparse populations and the rangelands economy and its communities are highly dependent on the use of natural resources.*

6. Rangeland landowners, managers, users, Indigenous peoples, special interest groups, communities and administrators should be consulted in the development of relevant national strategies, where appropriate.

- a. *Special arrangements for consultation may need to be made because the rangelands are sparsely populated and access to consultation forums and technologies may be limited.*
- b. *A wide range of values (ecological, social, cultural, economic and aesthetic) need to be considered when developing strategies for making balanced decisions about the management of the rangelands.*
- c. *Regional natural resource management (NRM) processes are already in place and could be utilised to identify rangeland priorities and engage communities to achieve outcomes.*
- d. *Regional NRM processes and networks are well placed to ensure achievement of national policy and strategy objectives.*

7. The varying tenure arrangements across the rangelands and the impacts on the ability, rights and responsibilities of landholders to access and manage natural resources need to be taken into account.

- a. *SRM strategies should recognise the obligations of different tenures. Expert advice regarding development and implementation of strategies in some rangeland areas may be required.*

8. The aspirations and inherent rights of Indigenous peoples and traditional owners, their relationship with the rangelands, and the need for culturally appropriate engagement and consultation processes must be taken into account.

- a. *Indigenous communities in the rangelands currently have full ownership or responsibility for 27 per cent of the rangelands and some management responsibilities for a further 10 per cent.*
- b. *To gain a better understanding of the aspirations and inherent rights of traditional owner groups and to engage Indigenous communities in the rangelands, it may be appropriate to utilise existing NRM networks when drafting policies and strategies.*

9. Coordination, collection and synthesis of rangeland specific data and the provision of information to national data sets should be actively encouraged.

Strategies should include actions to collect information and provide it to rangelands wide data sets such as the Australian Collaborative Rangelands Information System (ACRIS). This will support better understanding of cross jurisdictional SRM issues and the identification of data gaps.

10. Decisions impacting on the rangelands need to take account of interdependencies and inter-relationships between components of the ecosystems within and between regions, and between the rangelands and the rest of Australia.

- a. *The ecological, economic and social characteristics of some areas adjacent to the rangelands are similar to those of the rangelands.*
- b. *Due to the inter-relationship of the Great Artesian Basin and other resources within the rangelands, consideration should be given to the effects of the offsite impacts of resource use.*
- c. *Consideration should be given to the effects of episodic events, the spatial variability of processes and the generally long-term biophysical time frame of the rangelands.*

11. Rangeland landscapes are not all the same and will respond differently to changes in the environment, and management regimes may need to be adapted for local or regional conditions.

- a. *Flexible management practices should be encouraged in order to respond to changes in the landscapes, seasonal conditions and long-term climate.*
- b. *Changes in rainfall over the past decade in Australia have been documented and future projections predicted. For example:*
 - In recent decades there has been an increase in rainfall in the north and north-west of Australia and a widespread decrease in eastern Australia.¹⁸
 - Rainfall changes in eastern and northern Australia show a projected change of +5% to -10% by 2030¹⁹ with eastern Australia predicted to show stronger rainfall declines.²⁰

¹⁸ Smith, 2004 in CA McAlpine; J Syktus; JG Ryan; RC Deo; GM McKeon; HA McGowan; and SR Phinn (2009): A continent under stress: interactions, feedbacks and risks associated with impact of modified land cover on Australia's climate, Global Change Biology (2009) 15, p2209.

¹⁹ *ibid*, CSIRO 2007, p2211.

²⁰ *ibid*, Smith and Chandler in press, p2211.



Indigenous Land Management in the Angas Downs IPA, NT (Bruce Rose & the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts)

Further information

Further information regarding Australia's rangelands can be obtained from:

- Australian Collaborative Rangelands Information System (ACRIS):
www.environment.gov.au/land/rangelands/acris/index.html
- Sustainable natural resource management:
www.daff.gov.au/natural-resources/land-salinity/rangelands
- Desert Knowledge Cooperative Research Centre:
www.desertknowledgecrc.com.au/research/
- The Terrestrial Ecosystem Research Network (TERN) is a national data project which aims to:
 - assist in establishing a national, collaborative infrastructure that will facilitate enhanced ecosystem research
 - establish the necessary cooperative and data frameworks for a national, collaborative approach to ecosystem infrastructure and research.
<http://ncris.innovation.gov.au/Capabilities/Pages/TERN.aspx>
- The Lake Eyre Basin Intergovernmental Agreement is a joint undertaking of the Australian, Queensland, South Australian and Northern Territory governments, in close communication with the Basin community and with the assistance of world-class scientific and technical advice.
www.lebmf.gov.au/
- Wetlands provide habitat for animals and plants and many contain a wide diversity of life, supporting plants and animals that are found nowhere else. Australia currently has 65 Ramsar wetlands and more than 900 nationally important wetlands, some of which are located in the rangelands.
www.environment.gov.au/water/topics/wetlands/index.html
- Under the Great Artesian Basin Sustainability Initiative (GABSI) governments are investing to accelerate work to repair these uncontrolled artesian bores and replace open earthen bore drains with piped water reticulation systems.
www.environment.gov.au/water/policy-programs/gabsi/index.html



Vintage steam roller at Truscott Airfield, WA (Dragi Markovic & the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts)

- The National Reserve System is Australia's network of protected areas, conserving representative examples of our natural landscapes and native plants and animals for future generations. The reserve system includes more than 9000 protected areas covering more than 11 per cent of the country.
www.environment.gov.au/parks/nrs/index.html
- An Indigenous Protected Area is an area of Indigenous-owned land or sea where traditional owners have entered into an agreement with the Australian Government to promote biodiversity and cultural resource conservation.
www.environment.gov.au/indigenous/ipa/index.html
- A map outlining all Natural Resource Management (NRM) regions in Australia, including those located in the rangelands, can be found at:
www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/threatened/nrm-regions-map.html
- The Australian Natural Heritage Assessment Tool (ANHAT) is a map-supported database which helps identify and prioritise areas for their natural heritage significance, focusing on biodiversity. Significance is determined based on rigorous comparisons of specific natural values, and ANHAT is an important tool to aid an evolutionary understanding of Australia's biodiversity.
www.environment.gov.au/heritage/anhath/index.html

The following publications provide more information about climate change:

- *Climate change in Australia* provides essential tools for government, industry and the community to understand the likely magnitude of climate change in Australia and the possible impacts.
www.climatechangeinaustralia.gov.au/
- *Australia's biodiversity and climate change* (the biodiversity vulnerability assessment or BVA), and *Summary for policy makers* (2009) provide guidance on developing climate change adaptation strategies for Australia's biodiversity.
<http://www.climatechange.gov.au/publications/biodiversity/biodiversity-climatechange.aspx>
- *Climate change impacts on the National Reserve System*:
<http://www.climatechange.gov.au/publications/adaptation/nrs-report.aspx>
- Impacts on Australia's agriculture:
<http://www.climatechange.gov.au/climate-change/impacts/agriculture.aspx>

Appendix A

History of national rangelands initiatives in Australia 1999–2009

Date and initiative	Description
1999—release of <i>National Principles and Guidelines for Rangeland Management</i>	The Australian Government and all state and territory governments, traditional owners, industry, the farming community and conservation groups agreed to the publication of <i>National Principles and Guidelines for Rangeland Management</i> (1999). The principles and guidelines were designed to build on existing national strategies, particularly the <i>National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development</i> (1992) and the <i>National Strategy for the Conservation of Australia's Biological Diversity</i> (1996).
2001—National Land and Water Resources Audit (NLWRA) publishes <i>Rangelands – Tracking Changes</i>	The NLWRA report defined elements of a comprehensive monitoring and reporting program and proposed establishing the Australian Collaborative Rangelands Information System (ACRIS) as a coordinating mechanism to collate and interpret relevant rangelands information.
2002—The Australian Collaborative Rangelands Information System management committee convened	In 2003 the Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council (NRMMC) asked the ACRIS management committee to investigate the impact of environmental, economic and social change across the rangelands. ACRIS was asked to coordinate, collect and synthesise rangelands information on a national scale.
2008— <i>Rangelands 2008—Taking the pulse</i> (the ACRIS report) published	In 2008, ACRIS published the report <i>Rangelands 2008—Taking the pulse</i> (the ACRIS report) on change in conditions of Australia's rangelands based on a 1992–2005 monitoring and reporting period. Following this, the Natural Resource Policies and Programs Committee (NRPPC) ²¹ requested that the Australian Government develop a paper to 'identify and report on what the problems are [in the rangelands] and why the NRM Ministerial Council (NRMMC) should address them in an integrated way'.
2008—[NRMMC] Rangelands task group convened	The rangelands task group, comprising the Australian Government and all state and territory governments except the ACT and Tasmania was convened in order to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analyse gaps in jurisdictional rangelands policy and program responses to SRM problems in the rangelands • consider options for proceeding with development of a national approach to SRM in the rangelands which address the current policy gaps.

²¹ The NRPPC is part of the committee structure which reports to the NRMMC.

<p>February to April 2009 —The rangelands task group completes a policy gap analysis and proposes options for proceeding with the development of a national approach to NRM in the rangelands</p>	<p>The task group analysed current government responses to each of the rangelands NRM issues identified in the ACRIS report and found that there:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are a range of policies and programs across all jurisdictions • is little explicit focus on rangelands NRM issues in existing national policies and strategies. <p>The task group considered options for proceeding with development of a national approach to NRM in the rangelands and noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a policy response to the themes identified is required but this does not necessarily need to be a separate, place-based strategy • relevant national strategies are issue-based not place-based • there is a need to ensure sufficient rangelands focus in existing and developing national strategies • if a separate, new policy were to be developed for rangelands there would be a large content overlap with existing policies and strategies.
<p>May 2009— NRPPC agrees to the development of National Principles for NRM in the rangelands.</p>	<p>NRPPC agreed that the rangelands task group should ‘further develop national principles, including assessing information needs for NRM in the rangelands, taking into account the <i>National Guidelines and Principles for Rangelands Management</i> (1999) and other relevant materials’.</p>

Appendix B

Relevant national strategies / publications

Council of Australian Governments 1992, *National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development*.

Department of the Environment, Sport and Territories 1996, *National Strategy for the Conservation of Australia's Biological Diversity*, Australian Government, Canberra.

The Australian and New Zealand Environment Conservation Council (ANZECC) and the Agriculture and Resource Management Council of Australia and New Zealand (ARMCANZ) 1999, *National Principles and Guidelines for Rangelands Management*, Australian Government, Canberra.

Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council 1999, *National Framework for the Management and Monitoring of Australia's Native Vegetation*, Australian Government, Canberra.

Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council 2002, *Australia's National Framework for Environmental Management Systems in Agriculture*, Australian Government, Canberra.

Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council 2007, *The Australian Weeds Strategy: A National Strategy for Weed Management in Australia*, Australian Government, Canberra.

Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council 2007, *Australian Pest Animal Strategy: A National Strategy for the Management of Vertebrate Pest Animals in Australia*, Australian Government, Canberra.

National Reserve System Task Group 2009, *Australia's Strategy for the National Reserve System 2009–2030*, Australian Government, Canberra.

Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council (NRMMC) and Primary Industries Ministerial Council (PIMC) 2009, *Critical Success Factors for Engaging Indigenous People and Communities in Natural Resource Management and Primary Industries*.

Relevant international conventions

United Nations (UN) Convention to Combat Desertification

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora

Convention on Biological Diversity

The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (the Ramsar Convention)

UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous People

UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).