



Landcare
Victoria Inc.

LANDCARE PLAN FOR VICTORIA 2023-2033

Impact Report

**2024 & 2025 achievements, challenges
and recommendations**





We pay our respects to the Traditional Owners of the lands in Victoria.



We are inspired by the legacy of Victorian First Nations people, who have cared for the ecological systems that life depends upon for tens of thousands of years.

We recognise Traditional Owner rights to self-determination and to speak for and look after Country.

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The 2024 and 2025 Impact Report was funded by the Victorian Government through the Victorian Landcare Program.



Note: For ease of reference, we refer to Landcare Victoria Inc. as Landcare Victoria.

Message from the Chair



It is a pleasure to present the inaugural Impact Report demonstrating progress of the Landcare Plan for Victoria 2023–2033.

The Landcare Plan for Victoria (the Plan) represents the landcare community’s aspirations and priorities and recognises challenges facing the sector, to ensure landcare grows its impact and influence to achieve better environmental and social outcomes.

The Plan’s vision is local people working together for resilient, biodiverse and productive Victorian landscapes, through six focus areas that were developed after extensive engagement with the Victorian landcare community.

This Report is based on these key focus areas and provides a snapshot of data and information that meaningfully demonstrates the progress made by Landcare Victoria and the broader landcare community against activities outlined in the plan.

We know that partnerships and collaboration, both within and beyond landcare, are key to achieving the vision of the Plan. In this Report, we have aimed to show that when working towards a shared objective and collective goals, the landcare movement continues to grow and adapt, even in a time of constant environmental and social challenges.

This Impact Report is full of case studies about grassroots energy and successes for land and agricultural productivity across Victoria. It is a testament to how local action and collaboration can deliver real impact – from African Lovegrass control by Tom’s Creek Landcare Group to corporate tree planting with Cannibal Creek Landcare, and landcare education schools in Melbourne’s west. These initiatives sit alongside larger scale partnerships with Catchment Management Authorities’ and other partners who know the value of collaborating with landcare for on ground delivery.

Moving forward into the next two years of the Landcare Plan, the report outlines 10 recommendations that highlight the priorities for landcare, partners and stakeholders to focus on in 2026 and 2027, to continue the work towards the Landcare Plan for Victoria vision.

Jane Carney
Chairperson



Photo credit: Karli Duckett

Thank-you to the landcare community who provided case studies and data that supported the development of the 2024 & 2025 Impact Report.

Executive summary



Two years after the release of The Landcare Plan for Victoria 2023–2033, this Impact Report (the Report) demonstrates strong progress toward the Plan’s vision of resilient, biodiverse and productive landscapes supported by thriving communities.

Through 26 case studies, a set of impact statistics and an assessment of progress against actions from the Plan, the Report highlights the achievements of Victoria’s landcare movement in 2024 and 2025.

The Report identifies a robust landcare system, comprising more than 600 groups, 65 active networks, tens of thousands of volunteers and a suite of supporting government and non-government partners. Group health remains strong, with 88% of groups and networks reporting that they are functioning well. A surge in participation meant volunteers contributed over one million hours of service across 2024 and 2025 combined - equivalent to an estimated \$56.8 million in community-driven economic value.

The Report shows that landcare continues to deliver significant environmental, social and economic benefits across Victoria. Local actions are contributing to landscape-scale outcomes through habitat restoration, sustainable land management, climate adaptation initiatives and community-led environmental stewardship.

Community participation in landcare continues to grow, reflecting strong public interest

in environmental action and community connection. The Report highlights the expanding role of landcare in community education, wellbeing, climate adaptation and disaster preparedness and recovery. It also recognises that participation is growing faster than membership and volunteer leader capacity – highlighting the need for the landcare system to ensure key volunteer roles remain sustainable and rewarding.

Partnerships remain fundamental to success, as evidenced by case studies illustrating the unique co-delivery framework of landcare across all six focus areas of the Plan. The Report highlights how landcare is increasingly recognised as a trusted and cost-effective partner, capable of delivering outcomes across public and private land. More than half of Victoria has an active landcare group, with the network collectively covering three quarters of the state’s private land and one quarter of its public land.

The Report presents illustrative case studies on meaningful collaboration with Traditional Owner and First Nations communities. Impact data also highlights the opportunity to further develop culturally safe partnership capacity across the breadth of landcare groups and networks.

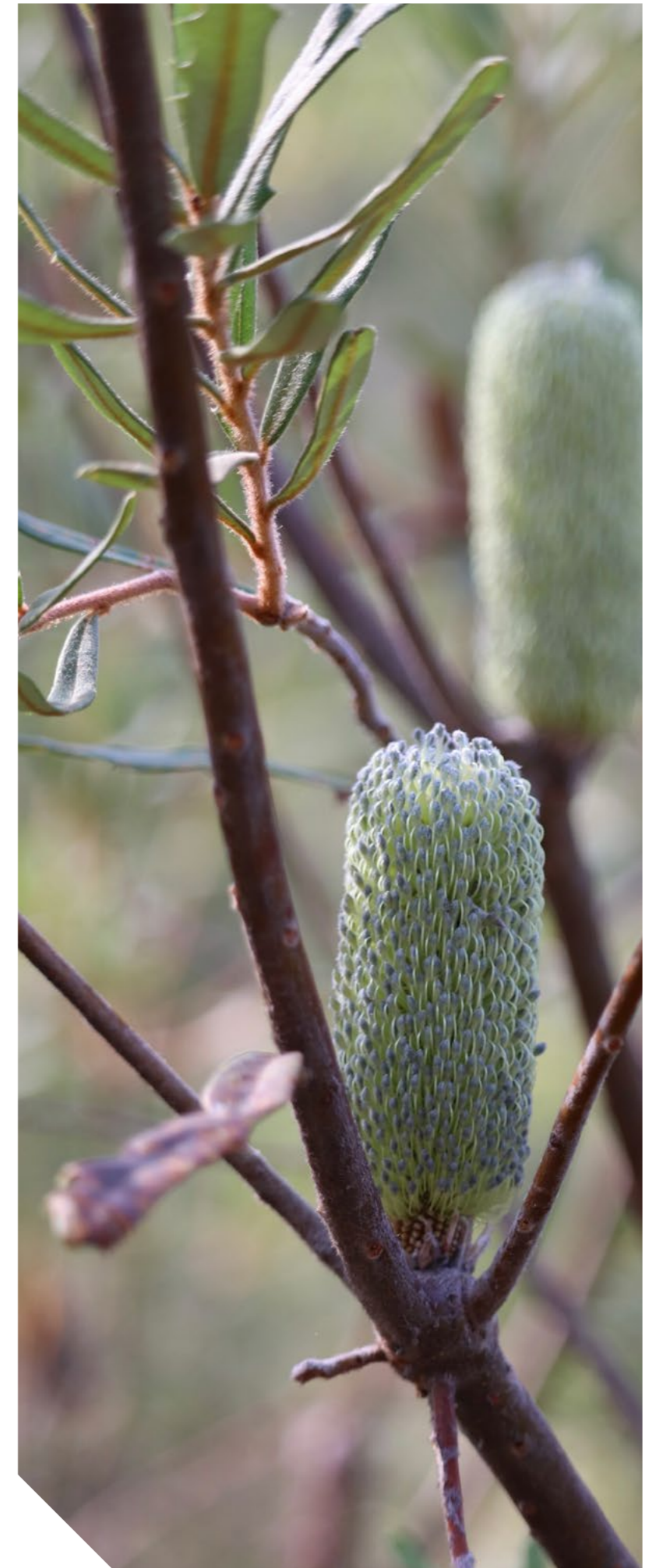
The Report also identifies several challenges that require attention if the movement is to achieve the full ambitions of the Plan, noting that without investment in professional supports and volunteer capability, the benefits of landcare – healthier farms, stronger communities, and thriving ecosystems – are at significant risk.

To address these challenges, the Report outlines 10 recommendations to guide system priorities across 2026 and 2027. These focus on increasing investment from public, corporate

and philanthropic sources; strengthening landscape-scale planning; expanding community education and resilience programs; improving impact measurement and reporting; supporting capacity to partner with First Nations communities; investing in volunteer leadership and professional landcare roles; and enhancing the capacity of landcare networks by enabling the development of governance models that meet evolving community needs.

Overall, the findings confirm that Victoria’s landcare movement remains a powerful force for environmental stewardship and community action. With targeted investment and strategic coordination, the system will be well placed to co-deliver priorities beside government and non-government partners in 2026 and beyond.

Claire Hetzel
Chief Executive Officer



Introduction

Released in November 2023, The Landcare Plan for Victoria outlines the landcare community’s collective priorities for the next decade and highlights key actions that require support to achieve these outcomes.

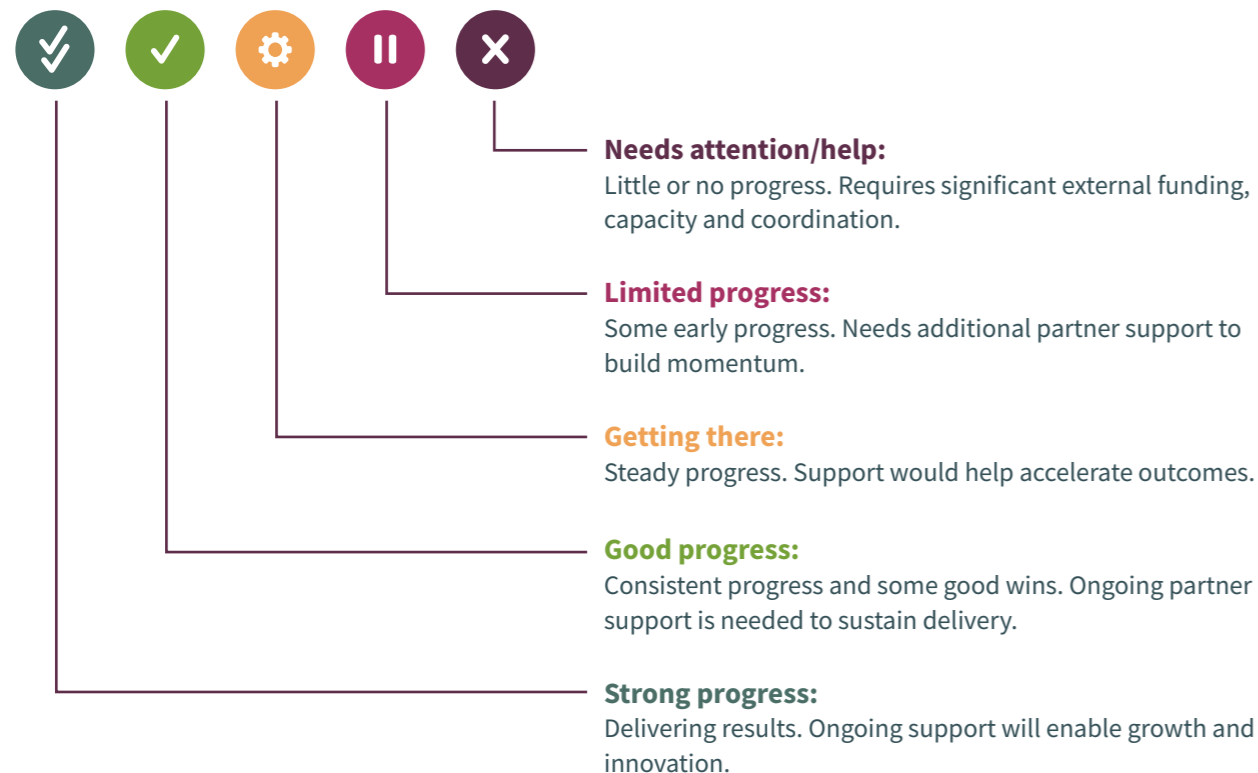
Two years on from its release, this Impact Report presents a snapshot of progress against the Plan through 26 case studies showcasing landcare achievements over this period. Together they demonstrate how this grassroots movement, comprising more than 600 groups that mobilise over 500,000 volunteer hours annually, is supporting resilient, biodiverse and productive Victorian landscapes.

While strong progress has been made, further work is needed to address ongoing challenges and enable the movement to reach its full potential in line with the Plan. This Report, therefore, tracks progress on the Plan’s actions and identifies priority recommendations to guide the next two years of implementation.



TRACKING PROGRESS AGAINST ACTIONS

Throughout the Report, tables summarise progress against actions from the Landcare Plan for Victoria, using the scale shown and described below.



Summary of recommendations

Ten recommendations to guide 2026 and 2027 implementation priorities and support requirements are outlined throughout this Report. These include:

- 1** The landcare system collaborates to broker public, corporate and philanthropic investment to address local landcare priorities.
- 2** The landcare system collaborates to deliver best practice landscape scale planning and implementation that contributes to state, national and global sustainability goals.
- 3** The landcare system develops, supports and delivers community extension and education across a range of priority topics, including climate adaptation, disaster preparedness, prevention and recovery.
- 4** The landcare system better recognises, supports and funds the role of landcare in community resilience and disaster recovery.
- 5** Landcare Victoria, the Victorian State Government and Catchment Management Authorities support the development of community aligned monitoring and reporting frameworks and tools to capture the full impact of landcare.
- 6** The landcare system collaborates to understand the barriers and drivers for partners and potential funders supporting landcare, and for volunteers participating in landcare.
- 7** Landcare Victoria, landcare groups and networks further develop culturally safe partnership capacity to enable collaboration with First Nations groups and individuals on shared priorities.
- 8** The landcare system develops programs to support community landcare leaders, develop their skills and prevent burn-out.
- 9** The landcare system invests in professional landcare roles to support a growing community landcare volunteer base and prevent volunteer burnout.
- 10** The landcare system invests in the capacity of landcare networks to trial and adopt revised administration and governance models in response to local needs.



Impact statement

PEOPLE POWER

Landcare participation

More than **89,000** people participated in landcare in 2025¹

Formal members of landcare organisations

There was more than a **25% increase** in formal members of landcare organisations between 2024 and 2025¹

Number of volunteer hours

Landcare volunteers contributed more than **1,000,000 volunteer hours** over 2024 and 2025¹

LANDCARE COMMUNITIES

Number of active environmental groups

There are more than **650 active groups** contributing to biodiverse, sustainable and productive landscapes in Victoria¹

Number of active environmental networks

There are more than **65 active landcare networks** supporting local groups and community participation in Victoria¹

Group Health

88% of groups and networks are healthy and functioning well³

Geographic coverage of landcare and environmental volunteer groups

>50%

More than half of Victoria has an active landcare group, with the network collectively covering three quarters of the state's private land and one quarter of its public land²



ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION

Economic Contribution of Volunteers

Total volunteer hours and unpaid work for public benefit valued at **\$56.8M** (2024 and 2025 combined)⁴

Return on investment (\$)

Return on State Government investment in Landcare Facilitators was more than **\$63M** over 2024 and 2025⁵

Collaborative investment in Landcare

Total combined income of landcare organisations across 2024 and 2025 was **\$64M** of which half was from non-government sources^{1,6}

ONGROUND ACTION

Ongoing data

Victorian State Government investment in the Victorian Landcare Program delivered **21,073 hectares per year** of onground habitat protection, revegetation, weed control and herbivore control⁷

PARTNERSHIPS

Groups engaging with Traditional Owners and First Nations communities

Landcare engaged **16 Traditional Owner and First Nations** communities across Victoria through 2024 and 2025³



DATA SOURCES:

1. Landcare Victoria 2026 Annual Report – 2025 Census data
2. Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action – Landcare Group boundary maps, December 2025
3. Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action – 2025 Group Health Survey
4. Based on the Cost of volunteering calculator <https://www.volunteering.com.au/resources-tools/cost-of-volunteering-calculator>
5. Landcare Victoria Return on Investment – cost-benefit analysis of the Victorian Landcare Facilitator Program, RPS Group 2020
6. Landcare Victoria 2025 Annual Report – 2024 Census data
7. Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action – Grants, awards and achievements <https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/landcare/grants-and-awards>





10-YEAR OUTCOME STATEMENT

Local and landscape scale planning and action supports resilient, biodiverse and productive landscapes.

IMPACT IN ACTION - CASE STUDIES



Locally driven agriculture networks

A partnership between Far East Victorian Landcare and East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority embeds government-funded agricultural support directly within a trusted community network. The Sustainable Agriculture Facilitator position, funded by the Australian Government, is guided by seven local farmers from diverse industries, ensuring that projects are shaped by local knowledge and remain relevant to the agricultural landscape.

This partnership has resulted in several unique groups and initiatives, including the East Gippsland Women in Agriculture Network, which helped promote self-reliance on local farms during bushfire season. The Small Property Landcare Network Program fosters confidence in sustainable farming practices, along with the TopSoils Program, which provides East Gippsland farmers with practical support to future-proof their operations and improve their farms' sustainability.

Activity link: 1.2

Facilitate access to and sharing of knowledge, expertise, and scientific information to enable the development of best-practice local solutions.

INTRODUCTION

Landscape repair to create resilient, biodiverse and productive landscapes is a long-term, intergenerational project that requires careful planning, coordination and resourcing.

Landcare has been delivering results for decades, and our achievements highlight how layers of local action can be felt on national and global scales. As we remain committed to sustaining our way of life in the landscapes we love, it is important to turn our attention and efforts towards scaling up, while continuing to invest in local actions that, together, can deliver significant impact.



Finding and protecting Malleefowl

Using laser mapping (LiDAR technology) in partnership with Traditional Owner knowledge, Malleefowl nesting locations around Wedderburn were identified to support habitat restoration, monitoring and improved fox control. Representing strong collaboration between the Wedderburn Conservation Management Network, Dja Dja Wurrung Enterprises Pty Ltd Biocultural team, and two Malleefowl recovery groups, this program highlighted efforts to work together on Country, on shared priorities.

The extent of the Malleefowl population and nest locations were identified and confirmed using LiDAR, which reveals features invisible to the human eye. This enabled the identification of protection measures to support improved breeding success for this ground dwelling species. The Malleefowl protection work has been a strong collaboration between community volunteers, Traditional Owners, conservation organisations, and private landowners.

Activity link: 1.4

Working together with Traditional Owners to deliver shared priorities on Country.

IMPACT IN ACTION - CASE STUDIES

20-year farm transformation

The Hamilton Coleraine Railway Line Landcare Group, with the commitment of farmers Hamish and Kate Bailey and supported by the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority, have improved climate adaptation and land management at Park Hill on the Wannon River. This project integrates improved farming practices with environmental conservation through widespread re-fencing and revegetation efforts.

Since 2005, six gullies and two creeks have been regenerated, and over 20 kilometres of shelter belts have been created. Strategic infrastructure includes 60 kilometres of fencing, 45 water troughs, and 13 kilometres of poly piping to enable improved stock movement and rotational grazing. Revegetated gullies now harbour healthy undergrowth, prevent erosion and have attracted wildlife previously unseen on the property.

Activity Link: 1.5

Support community climate adaptation planning and action across landscapes and on individual properties.

Coordinated bushfire support

Landcare groups and facilitators have partnered with the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority to support communities recovering from bushfires, by identifying and resourcing solutions to shared priorities in the landscape.

In the summer of 2024, landcare facilitators were the instrumental link between community and CMA bushfire recovery efforts in the wake of the Bayindeen bushfires. This partnership with landcare has seen help get to those most in need. The collaboration enabled safe agistment of livestock and sediment management activities to protect water supplies and high-quality wetlands. A similar partnership emerged in 2025 in response to the Grampians/Geriwerd bushfire, during which 16 dams and wetland areas were protected across 12 properties.

Activity Link: 1.7

Facilitate collaboration across landcare networks to identify, resource and deliver best practice landscape-scale projects that are shared priorities.

New Futures for Victorian Landcare

The New Futures for Victorian Landcare pilot project supported four Victorian communities to undertake landscape-scale planning and explore sustainable funding opportunities. Landcare Victoria led the pilot program in collaboration with a consortium of landcare networks in each location. Local and international partners supported the design and delivery of the pilot, including Landscape Finance Lab, Regen Farmers Mutual, ANU Sustainable Farms Program, Ian Potter Foundation and Natural Resources Conservation Trust.

More than 1,300 people participated in the project, working through collaborations of landcare groups and networks, including the Buloke and Northern Grampians Landcare Network, Granite to Goulburn Group, Kiewa Catchment Landcare Groups and Wodonga Urban Landcare Network, and the Heytesbury District Landcare Network, to develop four landscape-scale action plans and 39 individual property assessments.

A Landscape Action Plan Handbook, outlining the key steps that landcare organisations can take to develop their own landscape action plan, was released at the completion of the project.

Activity link: 1.8

Undertake landscape-scale planning and seek funding for regionally delivered multiyear projects that enable landcare to support resilient, biodiverse and productive landscapes and contribute to national and global sustainability goals.

HOW ARE WE TRACKING?



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2026 AND 2027

1

The landcare system collaborates to broker public, corporate and philanthropic investment to address local landcare priorities.

2

The landcare system collaborates to deliver best practice landscape scale planning and implementation that contributes to state, national and global sustainability goals.



10-YEAR OUTCOME STATEMENT

Landcare driven education and community connections support resilient, biodiverse, and productive landscapes and knowledgeable, culturally inclusive communities.

IMPACT IN ACTION - CASE STUDIES



Small Blocks, Big Dreams

Designed to increase small landholder skills, knowledge and confidence in natural resource management, the Small Blocks, Big Dreams project has activated a new cohort of land stewards. Funded by the Victorian State Government and delivered in partnership with local landcare networks on the ground, the program is coordinated by the Corangamite Catchment Management Authority and was co-designed with many partners, including local landcare facilitators, local government, Traditional Owners, Agriculture Victoria and universities.

Since 2022, over 160 small producers, bush block owners and horse/livestock owners have engaged in the program, which includes a series of tailored workshops, support to develop a land stewardship action plan and a personal site visit from an expert with land management knowledge. Participants are also eligible for land management incentive funding to help deliver their new action plan.

Activity link: 2.1

Partner to develop, support and deliver community extension and education on sustainable agriculture, biosecurity, land restoration, eco-literacy and other landcare priorities.

INTRODUCTION

Landcare has made it a priority to increase its role in community education and community wellbeing through meaningful programs and volunteering opportunities.

Through education, extension, and community activities, landcare helps more Victorians build stronger connections with nature and their neighbours, while increasing their knowledge of the landscape and how to care for it. The role of landcare in fostering community resilience continues to evolve, with an increasing focus among many groups on climate adaptation and disaster recovery.



African Lovegrass research and extension

A decade-long African Lovegrass control initiative started by the Tom's Creek Landcare Group, has involved multiple partners to build knowledge of control methods under East Gippsland conditions. Supported by funding from the Australian and Victorian governments, the project has involved the East Gippsland Landcare Network (EGLN), Gippsland Agricultural Group Inc., and many local landholders.

Research between 2022 and 2024 included nearly 80 trial control and treatment plots for African Lovegrass and has led to the development of four fact sheets, as well as a ute guide focused on control under East Gippsland conditions. In 2025, new funding from the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action's Partnerships Against Pests Program was provided to the EGLN, which will extend the more promising treatments to paddock-scale demonstration sites on three properties with different soil types. For the first time during the research period, one of the demonstration sites is an organic farming operation and will trial chemical-free treatments.

Activity link: 2.1

Partner to develop, support and deliver community extension and education on sustainable agriculture, biosecurity, land restoration, eco-literacy and other landcare priorities.

IMPACT IN ACTION - CASE STUDIES

Carbon Farming Outreach Program

The Carbon Farming Outreach Program provided Victorian farmers with the opportunity to improve their knowledge of carbon farming and on-farm sustainability. Events across the state focused on how farms can remain productive and sustainable into the future. The program worked with landcare groups and local communities to provide tailored training that presented the benefits of carbon farming and addressed confusing carbon information. It was a collaborative initiative of Landcare Victoria, Agriculture Victoria and Victoria's Catchment Management Authorities, funded by the Australian Government.

More than 100 events were delivered to 5,426 participants between April 2024 and December 2025. These events included workshops, farm walks and webinars to help farming communities understand carbon farming opportunities and risks. Topics included soil health, biodiversity, new agri-technology, carbon credits and on-farm adaptation. In addition to increased participant knowledge, landcare developed resources are now available to the Victorian farming community as a result of the program.

Activity Link: 2.3

Support the community to understand opportunities and risks of carbon and environmental services markets.

Soiling your undies

Students were encouraged to 'soil their undies' in a fun, school-based educational program led by Friends of Mallee Conservation, which aimed to demonstrate how regenerative agriculture practices can improve soil health.

Two hundred students from Carey Baptist Grammar conducted experiments in which they buried 100% cotton undies with various soil amendments for a five-month period. Results demonstrated that biostimulants activating soil microbes increased decomposition, whereas decomposition was lower in degraded areas.

Activity link: 2.4

Engage and partner with schools to deliver education on priority landcare issues and to involve students in landcare projects.

Yarrilinks Women's Wellness Day

To support women's mental health and wellbeing, Yarrilinks Landcare, Hindmarsh Shire Council, Wimmera Catchment Management Authority and the Centre for Farmer Health partnered to deliver the 'Let it Breathe' Women's Wellness Day in the Wimmera. The program focused on building connectedness and wellbeing in the natural environment and provided space for participants to pause and connect with their rural peers.

Approximately 20 women participated in the Wellness Day in October 2025. With activities for all ages, including yoga, artistic journaling and presentations by experts on the health benefits of nature-based activities. By connecting with peers and experts, participants were able to develop wellness tools that can be utilised at home and in the community.

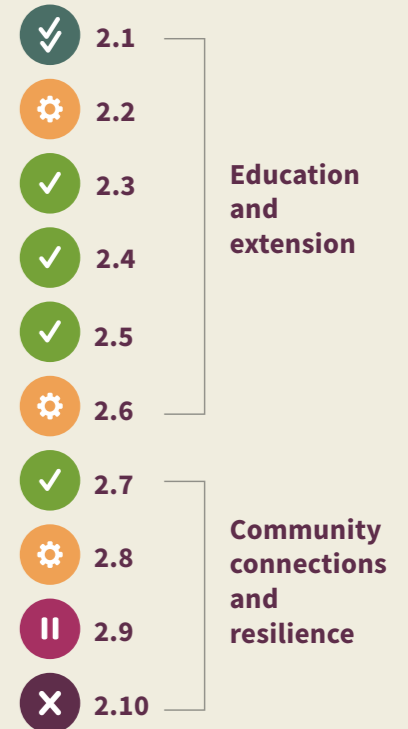
Activity Link: 2.7

Support the delivery of activities that contribute to building community capacity, connectedness, wellbeing, and resilience.



Photo credit: Marney Durie

HOW ARE WE TRACKING?



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2026 AND 2027

- The landcare system develops, supports and delivers community extension and education across a range of landcare priority topics, including climate adaptation, disaster preparedness, prevention and recovery.
- The landcare system better recognises, supports and funds the role of landcare in community resilience and disaster recovery.



10-YEAR OUTCOME STATEMENT

Landcare demonstrates its significant value and positive impact on communities and landscapes.



INTRODUCTION

Landcare succeeds when communities and investors are confident that the effort and funding they contribute creates positive impacts for landscapes and communities.

New technologies are adding value to established monitoring programs and helping to keep a closer eye on our landscape repair and sustainable land management progress. Continuing to communicate and demonstrate progress will promote further investment, participation and support for landcare.

IMPACT IN ACTION - CASE STUDIES

Towards data rationalisation

A statewide landcare Monitoring Evaluation Reporting and Improvement Working Group is developing streamlined processes to capture data that communicates the value and achievements of landcare, while making it easier for stakeholders to collect and share information. In 2024, the Group, including Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA), CMA Regional Landcare Coordinators and Landcare Victoria, undertook a review of their landcare related data collection and reporting processes to consider duplications and gaps.

As a result of the review, additional questions were incorporated into the Victorian Landcare Program annual reporting, allowing DEECA to discontinue the Group Health Survey for groups supported by a Landcare Facilitator. The stocktake showed minimal overlap between the Landcare Victoria Census and DEECA data and highlighted opportunities to better target data collection to demonstrate the true value and impact of landcare.

Activity link: 3.3

Collaborate with State Government partners to avoid or reduce duplication in reporting, increase data sharing and target the collection of data that demonstrates the value and impact of landcare.

IMPACT IN ACTION - CASE STUDIES

Showcasing the quiet achievers

The South Gippsland Landcare Network has showcased unsung landcare volunteers through the publication of a book titled 'Our Quiet Achievers – Celebrating People who have contributed to the South Gippsland Landcare Network over the past thirty years'.

To recognise the efforts and accomplishments of dedicated landcare volunteers, the book features nearly 30 landcare heroes who have significantly improved the South Gippsland landscape over the past 30 years, many of whom have not previously been formally recognised.

Activity Link: 3.6

In social and traditional media, utilise storytelling and landcare champions to showcase volunteers and promote the value and impact of landcare.

Awards for landcare

Showcasing volunteers' stories and highlighting the impact of landcare, the Victorian Landcare Awards celebrate and recognise the work and dedication of groups, networks, First Nations people, schools and individual volunteers.

Supported by the Victorian State Government, in 2024, a record 146 award nominations were received. Social media posts by Landcare Victoria around the Award nominees and winners were viewed more than 28,250 time. Nine winning groups and individuals went on to represent Victoria at the 2025 National Landcare Awards, where three representatives won their category. Congratulations to all the award winners and nominees and thank you for showcasing your stories and ongoing commitment to landcare.

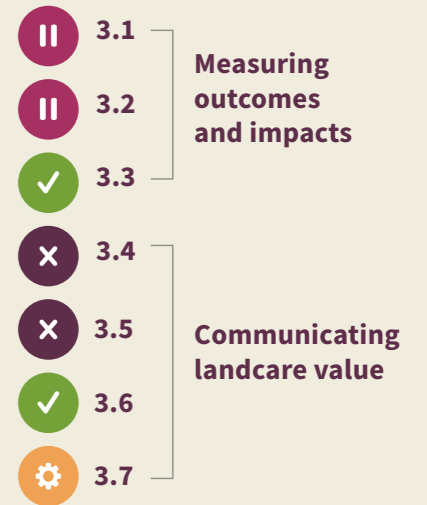
Activity link: 3.6

In social and traditional media, utilise storytelling and landcare champions to showcase volunteers and promote the value and impact of landcare.



Photo credit: Karli Duckett

HOW ARE WE TRACKING?



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2026 AND 2027

5

Landcare Victoria, the Victorian State Government and Catchment Management Authorities support the development of community aligned monitoring and reporting frameworks and tools to capture the full impact of landcare.

6

The landcare system collaborates to understand the barriers and drivers for partners and potential funders supporting landcare, and for volunteers participating in landcare.

10-YEAR OUTCOME STATEMENT

Landcare maintains diverse and healthy partnerships that support landcare priorities.

IMPACT IN ACTION - CASE STUDIES

Victorian Parliamentary Friends of Landcare

Formed in 2024, the Victorian Parliamentary Friends of Landcare (VPFL) is co-convened by Member for North-Eastern Metropolitan Region Richard Welch and Member for Ripon Martha Haylett, with Member for Eastern Victoria Tom McIntosh serving as secretary. These advocates for landcare spearhead the cross-partisan group, which has around 35 members from across the political spectrum, including Labor, Liberal, The Nationals and the Greens.

The group provides a valuable avenue for Members of Parliament (MPs) to connect with and offer support to landcare at both the state level and locally in suburbs, regional towns and farming communities.

Several events have been hosted by the VPFL, including a two-day event in March 2025, which saw more than 120 environmental volunteers filling Queen's Hall to share their stories and showcase on-ground achievements with Members of Parliament.

During 2025 Landcare Week (August) Gecko CLaN held a bake-off, inviting their local state and federal MPs to attend. Martha Haylett MP hosted a special morning tea for landcare volunteers in her electorate - to say a big thank you for putting in countless hours to better the local environment.

Activity link: 4.1

Develop and maintain government and political relationships at the federal, state, and local levels to ensure the value and impact of landcare is recognised and adequately funded.

INTRODUCTION

At a time when urgent action is required to save irreplaceable landscapes and maintain food production for a growing population, it is critical that we continue to work together.

Due to our legacy, scale, ability to work across public and private land, and high return on investment, governments increasingly recognise that landcare is an invaluable, cost-efficient partner. It is important that landcare continues to have strong government backing, while increasingly expanding partnerships across the private and philanthropic sectors. Equally important is our need to continue learning and partnering with First Nations groups and individuals.



Nugal Biik Junior Rangers

The Nugal Biik Junior and Mini Rangers program was centred around connecting First Nations children to Country. Delivered at Wollert Community Farm, the program helped young people learn about nature, land, and waterways and explore relevant employment pathways.

The program involved students from prep to year 6 (Mini Rangers) and year 7-12 (Junior Rangers), offering education in plant and animal identification, native seed gathering, cultural understandings, traditional foods and medicinal knowledge as well as nursery and horticultural experience. Activities enabled students to learn about land care and the importance of the environment through both a cultural and conservation lens.

Activity link: 4.6

Explore opportunities to meaningfully engage with Traditional Owners and First Nations people to identify and document shared priorities and partnership opportunities.



IMPACT IN ACTION - CASE STUDIES

North East Cool Burns Partnership

Duduroa Dhargal Aboriginal Corporation (DDAC) partnered with the Kiewa Catchment Landcare Groups (KCLG) to deliver cool burns and cultural access to sites across the area during the 2024 and 2025 seasons.

The program included a cultural burning workshop and cultural burns involving DDAC Elders, landholders, and partners. KCLG has had a strong relationship with DDAC since 2012, and together they have designed and delivered projects, including cultural burns, cultural conversations, cultural burn site monitoring, weaving, and stone tools workshops. Landcare helps Traditional Owners to look after Country, and by doing so, help to develop long lasting working relationships, and importantly friendships.



Photo credit: Chontelle Bourne (North East Cool Burns Partnerships)

Activity Link: 4.7

Explore opportunities to facilitate access to privately owned land for Traditional Owners engaging in cultural practices.

Korumburra's natural connections

Focussed on linking existing patches of vegetation across the landscape, the Korumburra Landcare Group worked with five properties as part of the Korumburra Natural Connections project. To build connections with local Traditional Owners, Bunurong Land Council's Balirt Biik team were also engaged to complete tree plantings.

Over four community days, 42 participants planted 800 plants on private property. A rise in nursery prices posed a challenge for the project, but local landcare groups stepped in by donating over 1,800 plants to address the shortfall.

Activity link: 4.8

Develop and promote a database of Traditional Owner and First Nations people work crews and their services relevant to landcare. Support utilisation of these crews wherever feasible.

Cannibal Creek corporate partnerships

For Cannibal Creek Catchment Landcare Group, partnerships with the corporate sector have added much-needed resources and support to deliver targeted revegetation. Corporate volunteers from organisations such as Chobani, Ausnet, Emerson Engineering, Holcim and Cummins Pakenham, along with funding from Landcare Australia, have bolstered the landcare group's resources to achieve planting targets.

In total, over 5,740 plants were planted by 95 corporate volunteers in 2025, revegetating areas that would otherwise be overlooked. The initiative has fostered lasting relationships, evidenced by three companies planning to return for a third year. Return volunteers are excited to observe the growth of their previous plantings and hear about the increased sightings of native wildlife.

Activity Link: 4.9

Identify and build relationships with the corporate sector willing to support landcare through corporate philanthropy and sponsorship.



Photo credit: Pam Cunningham

HOW ARE WE TRACKING?



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2026 AND 2027

7

Landcare Victoria, landcare groups and networks further develop culturally safe partnership capacity to enable collaboration with First Nations groups and individuals on shared priorities.



10-YEAR OUTCOME STATEMENT

Landcare is driven and supported by an active and diverse community of volunteers and land stewards.

IMPACT IN ACTION - CASE STUDIES

Young people creating change

Intrepid Landcare provides a setting where young people can come together and create the change they want to see in the world. In 2025, Intrepid Landcare partnered with Birdlife Australia and Landcare Australia to deliver a coordinated endangered Glossy Black Cockatoo project across Victoria.

The project involved collaboration and coordination across Intrepid Landcare groups. It supported educational webinars featuring Birdlife Australia experts and a Glossy Black Cockatoo planting event on the Mornington Peninsula.

The planting event attracted 25 individuals who collaborated with a landholder from Watson Creek Landcare Group to transform an old paddock into a habitat with 550 Sheoaks and other habitat species. The group overcame participation barriers by incorporating multiple webinar times and on-site events into the project.

Activity link: 5.1

Implement approaches, based on market research, that make landcare a welcoming and attractive option for volunteering and participation.



INTRODUCTION

With landcare participation thriving, a stable and active volunteer leadership base within the groups and networks is a necessary foundation.

One of the challenges of volunteerism is that cycles of boom and bust, burnout and aging membership can affect stability, outcomes and ambition.

It's critical that the landcare community continues to strengthen volunteer culture by engaging a broader cross-section of the Victorian community and ensuring key volunteer roles are sustainable and rewarding.

The Multicultural Community Farm

Located on two hectares of land on the banks of the Murray River, the Multicultural Community Farm, part of the Wodonga Urban Landcare Network, is a place to build social connections and share cultural experiences among the diverse people living in Albury-Wodonga.

Operating for over 10 years, the farm offers 240 organic garden plots shared by members of seven nationalities from the local area, including Bhutanese, Congolese, Kenyan, Nepalese, Fijian, Filipino, and Bahai communities. The farm provides a safe place for people to learn about their new country, exchange skills and knowledge, improve language and employment skills, socialise and share their culture, all while producing organic vegetables. With the farm at capacity and a long waiting list for garden plots, the Management Committee is seeking to expand into adjoining paddocks.

Activity link: 5.3

Create diverse and inclusive landcare activities and volunteering options, based on market research, that encourage new people to engage with landcare, e.g., young people, Traditional Owners and First Nations people, new and absentee landholders, large-scale agriculture, multicultural communities, students and urban residents.

IMPACT IN ACTION - CASE STUDIES

Day of planting and celebration

Landcare Victoria joined forces with landcare groups and networks to coordinate a day of planting events across Melbourne, supported by generous funding from Bupa Australia and Melbourne Water.

Nine events were held during September to November 2025, involving over 360 new and long-term volunteers from many cultural backgrounds, who contributed 1,000 hours to plant 10,400 plants! In the afternoon of 7 September 2025, volunteers joined Creative Climate at Federation Square for a 'Planting Party', where they connected over food, music and art as part of RESET, a festival for greener living.

Activity Link: 5.3

Create diverse and inclusive landcare activities and volunteering options, based on market research, that encourage new people to engage with landcare, e.g., young people, Traditional Owners and First Nations people, new and absentee landholders, large-scale agriculture, multicultural communities, students and urban residents.



Supporting school education in Melbourne's west

NatureWest Landcare Network runs a popular program with schools, featuring on-campus and off-campus events that raise awareness about the value and importance of native habitat in our life. Delivered in eight primary schools, the program is funded by Brimbank City Council and Wyndham City Council.

Three hundred students benefit from five visits a year to their primary school, where engaging curriculum-linked lessons focus on delivering habitat and biodiversity education. At the end of the program, students have the opportunity to plant a tree, with each school planting 200 plants in a selected and prepared garden bed. This program is only one small element of the educational activities offered. There is a wide range of nature activities aimed at children, across the entire year, including nature craft, and beach and inland walks.

Activity Link: 5.3

Create diverse and inclusive landcare activities and volunteering options, based on market research, that encourage new people to engage with landcare, e.g., young people, Traditional Owners and First Nations people, new and absentee landholders, large-scale agriculture, multicultural communities, students and urban residents.

HOW ARE WE TRACKING?

- 5.1
- 5.2
- 5.3
- 5.4
- 5.5

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2026 AND 2027

8

The landcare system develops programs to support community landcare leaders, develop their skills and prevent burn-out.





10-YEAR OUTCOME STATEMENT

Landcare volunteers and professionals use their connections, knowledge, skills and effective governance to positively impact their communities and landscapes.

IMPACT IN ACTION - CASE STUDIES



Advocating for landcare facilitators

Part-time landcare facilitators, funded by the Victorian State Government, play a vital role in providing landcare volunteers with the support they need to deliver positive results across the state. Landcare Victoria advocates for the Victorian Landcare Facilitator Program on behalf of the landcare community.

Leading up to the May 2025 budget, Landcare Victoria, with pro bono support from Deloitte, prepared and launched the advocacy paper, 'A fair go for Landcare Facilitators', supported by a webinar, radio interviews and other media coverage. This was complemented by community-wide advocacy, which secured funding for the program until March 2028.

Urgent action is still required to address the funding cliff that threatens the continuity of landcare's professional support network. Without new investment in the Victorian Landcare Facilitator Program the entire delivery network is at risk.

Activity link: 6.1

Advocate to increase the number of landcare facilitators and project managers funded and for an increase in resourcing, to allow facilitators to support project delivery.

Photo credit: Karli Duckett

INTRODUCTION

Landcare facilitators and professionals are the glue that holds landcare together. Uncertainty about funding that supports regional landcare jobs undermines the foundations and success of landcare groups and networks.

By better supporting landcare networks with a bolstered facilitator program and an investment in volunteer skills and capacity, volunteers are better supported to apply their skills, connections and knowledge to make a positive impact. Without investment in professional supports and volunteer capability, the benefits of landcare - healthier farms, stronger communities, thriving ecosystems - are at risk.



Upskilling the future of extension

In 2024 and 2025 Up2Us Landcare Alliance and Gecko Clan Landcare Network collaborated to deliver a program for dozens of university students and recent graduates, to deepen their understanding of extension and ways to support farmers in improving drought preparedness and resilience.

Targeting university students and recent graduates in agricultural or natural resource management fields, the program received overwhelmingly positive feedback from participants. Each year the program attracted a lot of interest, with the number of applicants outweighing the 30 available positions.

The program included farm visits and workshops on farm planning, water budgeting, cultural experiences and leadership. Building networks among students, landcare members and industry professionals was also a strong focus of the program's delivery. The networks are seeking additional funding to continue the program.

Activity link: 6.2

Partner with universities and research organisations to link landcare with the best practice and scientific information.

IMPACT IN ACTION - CASE STUDIES

Advancing Landcare

Advancing Landcare is a Landcare Victoria initiative that aims to build governance, management and administrative skills, and improve leadership capability within the landcare community. During 2024 and 2025, Landcare Victoria engaged external expertise, including Maddocks, the Australian Tax Office, Accounting for Good, and many others, to deliver training, webinars and resources to support the landcare community in meeting the challenge of increased administrative and governance burdens.

The Advancing Landcare program delivered six webinars, with 569 participants and 730 views of the webinar recordings. One focus area was supporting landcare to meet new income tax concession requirements. More than 237 groups and networks have since taken the necessary steps to be endorsed as income tax exempt, while there are still some groups whose charity registration is outstanding.

Activity Link: 6.3

Develop and deliver training and capacity building focused on governance, administration, volunteer recruitment, health and safety, measuring and communicating impact, leadership, partnership development and employee management.

Gathering to grow landcare

Held over three days in Bendigo, the 2024 Victorian Landcare Forum brought together environmental professionals, volunteers, and landcare stakeholders to promote best practice and share stories, to grow landcare across the state.

Day one supported 70 landcare professionals in learning from peers and experts on topics including carbon, big-picture projects, mental health, burnout, and professional relationships. The second day of the event, which was targeted more broadly at anyone with a connection to environmental volunteering saw over 160 people attend to hear about examples and opportunities for improved land management and landscape scale impacts. On the final day, two field trips showcased landcare in urban and peri-urban areas and partnerships with Traditional Owners.

Activity link: 6.4

Provide professional development, knowledge sharing, career progression opportunities and support for landcare professionals.

Matching landcare mentors

Launched in 2022, the Caring for Landcarers Mentoring Program supports new landcare facilitators in connecting with and learning from more experienced staff across the state, who serve as mentors. Funded by DEECA and supported by Victoria's Regional Landcare Coordinators, the program builds confidence and connection for emerging landcare professionals.

Run annually, the program provides three face-to-face workshops and encourages mentoring partnerships to meet at least five times over a nine-month period. In 2024, 20 mentors and mentees were matched. The program aims to nurture both the mentor and mentee, giving everyone involved the chance to demonstrate leadership and collaboration, share knowledge and stories, and make connections for ongoing learning.

Activity Link: 6.6

Support landcare networks and groups to mentor each other and share knowledge, skills and experience across the state.

HOW ARE WE TRACKING?



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2026 AND 2027

9 The landcare system invests in professional landcare roles to support a growing community landcare volunteer base and prevent volunteer burnout.

10 The landcare system invests in the capacity of landcare networks to trial and adopt revised administration and governance models in response to local needs.



Landcare
Victoria Inc.



This Report provides a snapshot of case studies illustrating the work of landcare in 2024 and 2025. Landcare Victoria acknowledges that there are many more stories of on-ground action, collaboration, community building and leadership that could not be included in these pages.

The next Impact Report will showcase landcare's achievements during 2026 and 2027, and is anticipated to be published in 2028.

Landcare Victoria acknowledges the long-term commitment of landcarers to people, place and practice. We thank each of you for continuing to give your time, expertise and skills to improving Victoria's environment.

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