



Sustainable resource management

Taking action to help the environment

Farming relies on healthy soils, quality water supplies and active management of pests and diseases.

Farmers are faced with:

- competing uses for natural resources;
- variable and changing climate, including extended drought;
- increasing risks from pests, diseases and weeds; and
- high community expectations about how the land is managed.

The Government is helping farmers to manage natural resources.

Managing soils for ongoing productivity

Soils underpin Australia's agricultural productivity.

To help Australian farmers improve their soil management practices, the Government is delivering:

- a **National Research, Development and Extension Soil Strategy** to set national strategic direction for soil research;

- a **National Advocate for Soil Health** to provide strong leadership to improve our soil;
- **Ground Cover Monitoring for Australia**, using satellite imagery to develop reliable ground cover mapping; and
- a **CSIRO project, partnering with farmer groups, to increase digital connection between climate, soil and other information.**

Community driven

The National Landcare Programme is about people making a real difference to our natural environment. It's based on the principles of simple, local and long-term.

The passion and commitment of volunteers around Australia makes a positive difference to the long-term productivity of our agriculture sector.

The Government is supporting local communities and farmers by investing **\$1 billion over four years from 2014–15 in the National Landcare Programme.**

This includes over \$450 million to Australia's 56 regional National Resource Management organisations to deliver natural resource management in regional areas. This funding will support communities to take practical action to protect and manage Australia's productive landscapes and water catchments.

National Environmental Science Programme

The National Environmental Science Programme (NESP) is a long-term commitment to environment and climate research with funding of \$142.5 million committed over the life of the programme (2015-2020).

The NESP supports decision-makers to understand, manage and conserve Australia's environment with the best available information, based on world-class science.

Further Information

[environment.gov.au /science/nesp](http://environment.gov.au/science/nesp)

Green Army

The Green Army programme fixes environmental problems by taking hands-on, practical environmental action.

From 2015–16 the Government is providing **\$704 million over four years for the Green Army**. This provides opportunities for young Australians (aged 17-24) to get training and experience in conservation work while helping the environment. Already more than 700 projects are ready to go, with 486 of these in regional Australia.

Projects can include a range of activities focusing on land and waterway rehabilitation on public and private land where there are clear public benefits. For example, fencing, revegetation and weed removal can be undertaken to support conservation management efforts, delivering improvements in our natural capital for the whole community.

The Green Army is creating Australia's largest-ever environmental workforce. Over the course of the programme we will build up to 15,000 young people each year from 2018-19, and deliver 1,500 on-ground environmental projects.

Direct action on climate change

The Government is committed to reducing Australia's carbon emissions under its Direct Action Plan. We are investing **\$2.55 billion in the Emissions Reduction Fund (ERF)** to help achieve Australia's long-term emissions reduction targets.

The Clean Energy Regulator held the first ERF auction in April 2015 and awarded contracts for projects that will deliver more than 47 million tonnes of emissions reductions. Farm projects accounted for over half of the 107 contracts, worth \$600 million. Contract activities include destroying methane from piggery waste, vegetation sequestration projects and building soil carbon in grazing systems.

Under the Carbon Farming Futures programme, the Government is delivering research, on-farm trials and information. This information will help landholders reduce on-farm emissions, while delivering innovative and improved business outcomes for farmers.

Pests and weeds

Pest and weed management is one of the critical natural resource battles facing farmers. The Government will provide **\$50 million over four years to improve the way pest (including feral) animals and weeds are managed** and to increase the capacity of farmers to deal with these threats. Information about what the White Paper is delivering is in Fact Sheet — *Fighting pests and weeds*.

Further Information

- agwhitepaper.agriculture.gov.au