Community Participation Plan

Regional Delivery Partner

MU-22 Limestone Coast Landscape LC Landscape Board

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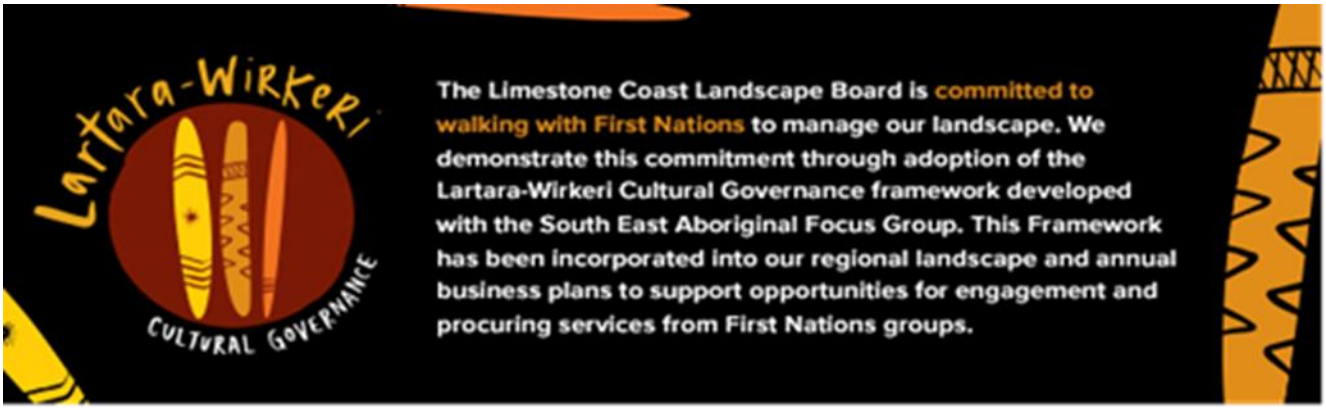
LANDSCAPE SOUTH AUSTRALIA LIMESTONE COAST

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Acknowledgement of Country

The Limestone Coast Landscape Board acknowledges and respects the traditional owners of the ancestral lands of the South East of South Australia. We acknowledge the elders past, present and emerging and we respect the deep feelings of attachment and relationships of Aboriginal Peoples to Country, including the language groups: Meintangk, Potaruwutij, Bunganditj, Tatiara/Ngarkat, Jardwadjali, Tanganekald (Southern Clans) and Ngarrindjeri.



LANDSCAPE SOUTH AUSTRALIA LIMESTONE COAST

1. Purpose

The Limestone Coast (LC) Landscape Board is committed to actively creating participation opportunities for the community in Australian Government projects as the Regional Delivery Partner for the Limestone Coast.

This Community Participation Plan has been developed to outline how the LC Landscape Board proposes to support and actively plan for the Community to participate in the delivery of projects (RCS2) in accordance with the conditions of the Deed of Standing Offer executed on 3 November 2023.

The core principle driving the LC Landscape Board's engagement practices is the belief that those affected by a decision should actively participate in the decision-making process to achieve the regional vision:

"To have a healthy, productive and biodiverse Limestone Coast landscape.
To be at the heart of the community, inclusive of First Nations and resilient to a changing climate."

Central to our vision is involving the community in the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment. We acknowledge that optimal outcomes for our natural resources, landscapes, primary producers and community are achieved through collaborative efforts. We work with the community, government at all levels, industries, and organisations to ensure the broadest possible community participation as the Regional Delivery Partner in the Limestone Coast.

2. Key Participation Activities, Objectives and Outcomes,

To guide its community participation objectives, the LC Landscape Board acknowledges the requirements of the Deed of Standing Offer as the Regional Delivery Partner.

To support Regional Capacity and Project Services, this plan outlines a consistent and thoughtful approach to community participation, aligning with:

- South Australian Government's Better Together Guidelines and Reforming Democracy policy, which lay down principles for community involvement in decision-making.
- International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum and Core Values, describing levels of community influence and decision-making power and tailoring engagement activities to suit.
- LC Landscape Board Walking Together Statement of Commitment for working with First Nations
- Joint Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statement of Commitment with all Landscape Boards in South Australia

The LC Landscape Board's strategic Limestone Coast Landscape Plan 2021-2026 and annual business plans have community at the centre. Many opportunities are provided for community and First Nations participation in planning, programs and projects including the following **activities**:

- Facilitating stakeholder advisory groups
- Organisation specific focus groups, such as the South East Aboriginal Focus Group
- Strategically engaging key representatives from peak industry and community groups that serve as advocates for landholders and community members.
- National Recovery Teams for threatened species
- Citizen science and monitoring
- Landscape Education programs in schools
- Community events
- Volunteer activities
- Grassroots Grants community grants program
- Contracted work
- Procured specialist and expert services

For example, since 2004 the LC Landscape Board has supported the South East Aboriginal Focus Group, which provides feedback and advice on matters related to cultural knowledge and caring for Country, essential elements in our work. LC Landscape Board staff regularly consult with the group during project planning and implementation, and integrate the group's feedback into their work, including in water allocation planning, habitat conservation, pest plant and animal control and other on ground works.

Through these opportunities, the LC Landscape Board is able to engage and support the community. This includes inviting landcare organisations, First Nations and industry groups to participate in funded project services, to prioritise and deliver Natural Resource Management (NRM) activities in the Limestone Coast with the following **objectives**:

- Cultivating collaborative spaces for Communities of Practice to create and develop project proposals. E.g. forming steering committees and advisory groups for project guidance aligned with community and industry expectations.
- Collaborating with established First Nations groups e.g. South East Aboriginal Focus Group (SEAFG), Burrandies Aboriginal Corporation (BAC), and Ngarrindjeri Aboriginal Corporation (NAC), and engaging First Nations groups for specific project insights.
- Aligning emerging opportunities with the identified priorities in NRM
- Creating tailored opportunities to facilitate landholder engagement, research, and innovation projects with Limestone Coast organisations
- The Sustainable Agriculture Facilitator (SAF) position is equipped to share information, collaborate and support project delivery with landholders, peak bodies, community groups and industries
- Participating in consultation and communication processes to build networks, manage relationships and bring information and innovation to the region
- Seeking and implementing effective communication tactics tailored to diverse community groups.
- Identifying and establishing partnerships to broaden the work and reach of the LC Landscape Board.

- Promoting community participation through the showcasing of activities and events.
- Crafting compelling media releases to tell the story of NHT projects.
- Applying adaptive management principles, and engaging partners and collaborators to participate, to continuously review and refine processes, concepts, and engagement strategies, ensuring ongoing evaluation and adaptive enhancement of community participation that strives to meet partner, collaborator and community needs.

The LC Landscape Board's broadest **outcomes**, from the 2021/26 Regional Landscape Plan, are to have accessible education and capacity building programs that increase knowledge of and involvement in landscape management, and that foster a sense of connectedness to the natural landscape. This includes:

- Mitigating the impacts of invasive species on the productivity, social fabric and biodiversity of the landscape, including compliance, technical advice and services
- Native vegetation, soils, wetlands, watercourses, and coastal habitats are protected and restored.
- Threatened species are monitored and supported to help mitigate against species decline.
- Water resource planning and management (including compliance) that addresses sustainable water use, while supporting environmental, industry, social and cultural water needs
- Primary producers are supported in responsible landscape management
- Walking together with First Nations people to manage our landscapes.

3. Stakeholders

Our stakeholders play a crucial role in achieving sustainable natural resources management in the region. We have identified key stakeholders with a vested interest or investment in NRM, assessing their significance for engagement in our projects including interest, capacity, and alignment of values, scientific rigour and community participation goals.

There is a diverse array of Limestone Coast, South Australian, and national environmental organisations, as well as industry groups, with capacity to contribute specific elements to our projects. The LC Landscape Board provides a wide range of opportunities for participation, some of which are listed below. This ensures as many people have awareness of our field of operations, and fair and equitable opportunities to participate.

These important organisations can be engaged, thanks to our development of successful communications and previous working relationships, in the NHT context, either as a 'partner' (key subcontractor and/or participation in advisory committees), engaged in co-designing project components, or as collaborators/contractors involved through a procurement process for on-ground works.

The partners and collaborators outlined in Figure 1 have been involved in co-design of NHT projects. Recognising the importance of co-design, we ensure that all parties understand the desired outcomes and contribute to the program logic. Emphasis has been placed on clearly

defining roles and responsibilities in partnerships. Depending on the relevance of their role in a project, there may be some movement to and from Partner and Collaborator columns (*partners in current NHT projects).

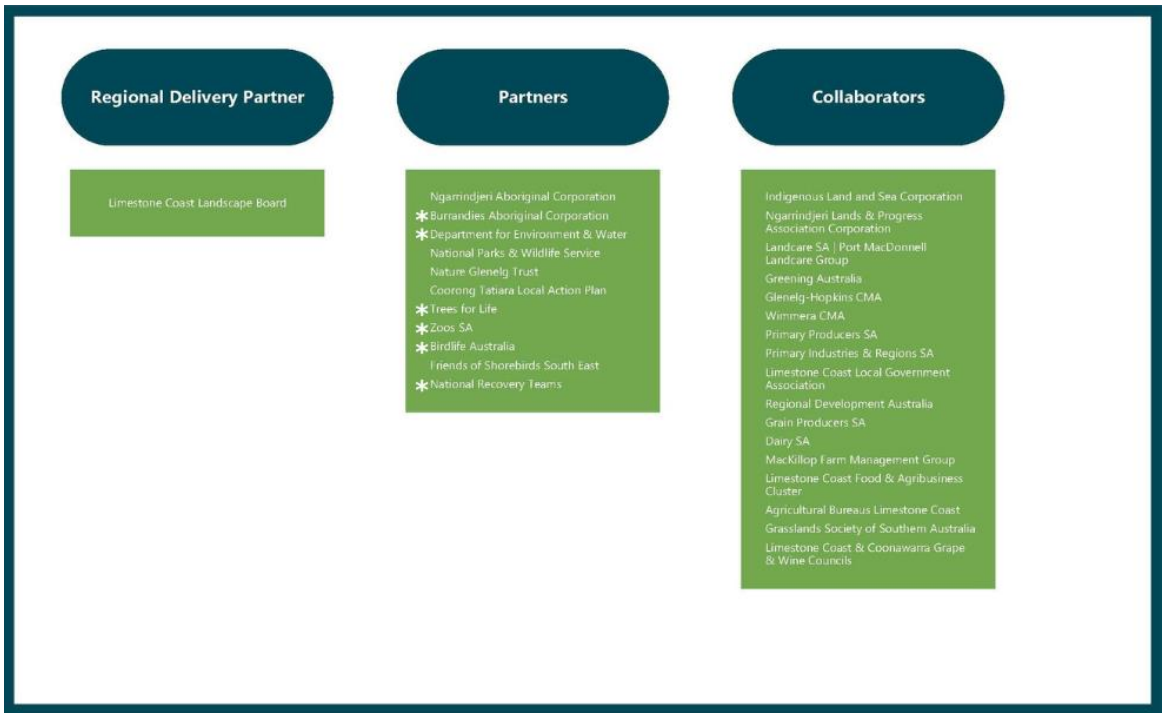


Figure 1 LC Landscape LC Landscape Board relationships

4. Community Participation Methods

To facilitate community participation in the planning, delivery and monitoring of projects, including engagement with landcare organisations, First Nations communities, industry groups, volunteer groups, and local landholders, the LC Landscape Board has implemented various methods with demonstrated effectiveness. This is consistent with our value and practice of community involvement in planning and leads to greater project ownership and active participation in implementation within the region.

Community engagement components are integrated into all project planning and design phases, encompassing the development of program logic, risk assessment, consultations with stakeholders, and the assessment of effective tactics for delivering project messages. Evaluation and review measures are also considered.

The selection of participation formats is guided by the IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum, aligning techniques with the best fit for creating a positive community response. To determine appropriate tools and techniques, the following will be taken into consideration:

- Participant expectations
- The level of public participation supported by decision-makers
- The scope of influence participants possess, and
- The assumptions and constraints impacting decision-makers' choices

The LC Landscape Board's website, interactive engagement platform ('Conversations Limestone Coast'), social media and project officers serve as information conduits and facilitators, ensuring cohesive and strategic communications during project implementation.

5. Implementation

Opportunities for community participation are integral to the successful implementation and delivery of NHT projects. A range of methodologies will be employed to ensure participation of a diverse mix of community individuals, organisations and industries, as well as targeted partners and collaborators.

Procurement of services serves as a significant avenue to actively involve First Nations and community organisations, not-for-profit and industry groups in project initiatives. This has the added benefit of building capacity within the contracted organisation, increasing skills and expertise for future works, whether or not they are engaged by the LC Landscape Board.

Robust engagement and communication activities are strategically planned for all community members, including volunteers. These implementation activities, outlined in project communication plans, may include but are not limited to:

- Public workshops and meetings
- Advisory committee meetings
- Targeted meetings
- Broadcast emails
- Website information
- Interactive engagement platform projects
- Social media engagement
- Local radio participation
- Newspaper stories
- Participation in relevant activities run by partner or collaborator organisations
- Participation in relevant public events in the Limestone Coast
- Involvement in on-ground works through volunteering and working parties

Project teams and advisory committees will maintain a flexible approach to embrace innovative methods, ensuring ongoing and meaningful community participation in projects.

Strategic partnerships with key organisations in the region and with an interest in our projects will be managed by the LC Landscape Board's project leadership, drawing on the existing positive relationships we have made and our excellent reputation for successful project delivery.

As detailed in the Indigenous Participation Plan, the LC Landscape Board has a 20-year relationship with the South East Aboriginal Focus Group. This group represents the interests of key First Nations families in the region and is a first and essential point of reference for natural resource management in the region. The LC Landscape Board is diligent in applying

the appropriate legislation and briefs project partners and participants on their responsibilities e.g. under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act (1988)*.

A small part of the northern part of the Limestone Coast landscape region intersects with the Ngarrindjeri Native Title area. Any access required or works carried out by the LC Landscape Board or any of our project partners in that area are negotiated with the Ngarrindjeri Aboriginal Corporation where appropriate.

6. Targets and Measures

Targets will be determined in the project co-design process and reflect the 'Key Participation Activities, Objectives and Outcomes' in Section 1 above. Actions towards these targets will focus on managing the important relationships between partners, collaborators, and community members in the region and beyond.

Outcomes	Measures of Success
Accessible education and capacity building programs that increase knowledge of and involvement in landscape management, and that foster a sense of connectedness to the natural landscape	Awareness and uptake of sustainable land management practices has increased, and more people feel a sense of connectedness to the landscape.
Partnerships are identified and established to broaden the work and reach of the LC Landscape Board. We are walking together with First Nations people to manage our landscapes.	We are innovative, supportive and provide inspiration to landowners, managers and community to contribute to positive biodiversity outcomes across all our priorities.
Native vegetation, soils, wetlands, watercourses, and coastal habitats are protected and restored. Threatened species are monitored and supported to help mitigate against species decline	Biodiversity has been maintained or enhanced across the landscape and capacity increased for environmental stewardship through partnering with First Nations, primary production, other industries, and the community
Primary producers are supported in responsible landscape management	The region's primary producers have integrated biodiversity and water sustainability practices, soil quality has improved and uptake of pest plant and animal management strategies has increased
Water resource planning and management (including compliance) that addresses sustainable water use, while supporting environmental, industry, social and cultural water needs	Water resources are managed for all purposes. First Nations, primary producers, environmentalists, communities and governments recognise and understand this balance.

Mitigating the impacts of invasive species on the productivity, social fabric and biodiversity of the landscape, including compliance, technical advice and services	Pest plants and animals are being collectively managed by First Nations, primary producers, environmentalists, communities and governments

We collect data from our activities, monitor the condition of the landscape and set targets that reflect the five key priorities. We analyse the effectiveness of our activities and whether our efforts have had the desired outcomes relevant to each priority and deliver value for investment. Outputs are collected at a project level, which will contribute to the delivery of these community participation outcomes.

Timelines: Our commitment to monitoring reporting, evaluating and improvement means that we are reporting to the LC Landscape Board governing body quarterly, conducting evaluation annually, completing a mid-term project review in 2025/26, and final outcomes reporting in 2027/28. Noting that at any time, improvements can be implemented, with an adaptive management approach.

Beyond numerical measures, such as the count of individuals and project MERI (Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting, and Improvement) metrics, other project engagement evaluation methods, including anecdotal feedback, serve as valuable checks and balances. These qualitative insights contribute to adaptive management, allowing for ongoing adjustments in project delivery. By incorporating anecdotal feedback, the evaluation process becomes more comprehensive, offering a richer understanding of community participation and facilitating positive developments in the outcomes achieved.

7. Review and Evaluation

This Community Participation Plan (CPP) will be provided to the Australian Government within six months of the Deed Commencement Date (being 3 November 2023).

To assess the effectiveness of community engagement and participation and support our continuous improvement, a multifaceted approach is employed, involving various methods. N.B. Some of these methods will be more relevant to evaluation of specific project elements:

- Annual, mid-term, and final project evaluations
- Quarterly reporting to the LC Landscape Board
- Project Advisory Team
- Participant feedback and surveys
- Community workshops and forums
- Social media and web traffic analytics
- Case studies and success stories

By combining these methods, we create a robust framework for assessing the effectiveness of community engagement, fostering continuous improvement, and ensuring that projects are responsive to the evolving needs of the Limestone Coast community.

The CPP will be reviewed annually from 1 July 2024, by the Australian Government and the LC Landscape Board, for relevancy and currency. If changes are required, an updated version will be provided on an annual basis.

8. References

South Australian Government's Better Together Guidelines and Reforming Democracy policy

International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum and Core Values

LC Landscape Board Walking Together Statement of Commitment for working with First Nations

Joint Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statement of Commitment with all Landscape Boards in South Australia

Limestone Coast Regional Landscape Plan 2021-2026.

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