

## 3.4 Planning and Legislation Framework

### NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLANS

#### The ACT NRM Plan

The 2004 ACT NRM Plan was developed by the then 'ACT NRM Board' to provide a strategic framework for natural resource investment at the Territory and local scale. The Plan provides an overarching context and direction for NRM investment over a ten year period and enables the ACT to assign funding to address issues of concern to the Territory as well as to participate in cross-border projects.

Target areas for the ACT NRM Plan include: community building, biodiversity, water quality and flow, soil health, and salinity. The ACT NRM Council, as the successor to the 'NRM Board', is currently reviewing the ACT NRM Plan to coincide with the post 2007-2008 NHT3 Program and to reflect progress already made in addressing the targets previously set.

#### The Murrumbidgee Catchment Action Plan

The NHT identifies 65 catchment regions across Australia. Although the ACT is identified as a distinct region, it must be recognised that it sits within the Murrumbidgee catchment. The Murrumbidgee Catchment Action Plan (CAP) was developed by the Murrumbidgee Catchment Management Authority (MCMA) in partnership with stakeholder groups in the catchment to provide strategic direction for investment in NRM for the Murrumbidgee Catchment over the next 10 years. The MCMA identified its management areas as community, biodiversity, water, and land assets and has assigned targets, actions and ways to monitor progress toward improvement. The ACT NRM Council has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the MCMA to work cooperatively on cross-border issues.

The SACTCG utilises funding from the Australian Government's National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality (NAP) and the Natural Heritage Trust (NHT). It is important that we develop our targets and actions in line with these programs and current plans for natural resource management. The ACT Natural Resource Management (NRM) Plan and the Murrumbidgee Catchment Action Plan (CAP) are the two catchment management plans that the southern ACT catchment area fits within. These plans have already developed targets and actions that are supported by the Australian Governments NAP and the NHT. By linking the targets and actions of our CMS with those outlined in the ACT NRM Plan, the SACTCG will be in a position to work toward regional targets.

## THE NATIONAL CONTEXT

### Commonwealth Legislation

- *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*

The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) provides a national framework for protecting the environment, particularly matters of National Environmental Significance. It streamlines the national environmental assessment and approvals process, protects Australian biodiversity and integrates management of important natural and cultural places.

### National Strategies, Policies and Frameworks

- National Strategy for the Conservation of Australia's Biological Diversity: provides the framework for protecting Australia's biodiversity.
- National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development: provides broad strategic directions and framework for governments to direct policy and decision-making. The Strategy facilitates a coordinated and co-operative approach to ecologically sustainable development (ESD) and encourages long-term benefits for Australia over short-term gains.
- National Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan: outlines a nationwide strategic approach to protect Australia's biodiversity from the impacts of climate change.
- National Framework for Natural Resource Management (NRM) Standards and Targets: establishes the principles and requirements for setting natural resource management standards and targets to guide investment through national natural resource management programs.
- National Framework for the Management and Monitoring of Australia's Native Vegetation: provides tools to help Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments to reverse the long-term decline in the quality and extent of Australia's native vegetation cover.
- National Water Quality Management Strategy: a joint initiative between the Australian Government and state and territory governments to protect and enhance the quality of water resources while maintaining economic and social development.
- National Weeds Strategy: provides the mechanism to reduce the impact of weeds on the sustainability of Australia's productive capacity and natural ecosystems.
- National Natural Resource Management Monitoring and Evaluation Framework: to assess progress towards improved natural resource condition through the development of accurate, cost-effective and timely information on the health of the nation's land, water, vegetation and biological resources plus the performance of programs, strategies and policies which provide national approaches to the conservation, sustainable use and management of these resources.

- National Framework for Natural Resource Management (NRM) Standards and Targets: establishes the principles and requirements for natural resource management standards and targets, to guide investment through national natural resource management programs, particularly investment through integrated regional NRM plans under the National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality and the Natural Heritage Trust.

## THE REGIONAL CONTEXT

### Regional Legislation

- The Environment Protection ACT 1997  
An Act to provide for the protection of the environment, and for related purposes.
- Native Conservation ACT 1980  
An Act to make provision for the protection and conservation of native animals and native plants, and for the reservation of areas for those purposes.

### Regional Strategies, Policies and Frameworks

- ACT Lowland Woodland Conservation Strategy (Action Plan No. 27): takes an integrated, territory wide approach within a regional context, to the protection of the remaining lowland grassy woodlands. The Strategy seeks to maintain and improve the natural integrity of the remaining lowland woodland ecosystems.
- ACT Lowland Native Grassland Conservation Strategy (Action Plan No. 28): takes an integrated, territory-wide approach within a regional context, to the protection of the remaining lowland native grasslands. The Strategy seeks to maintain and improve the natural integrity of the remaining lowland native grassland ecosystems.
- ACT Nature Conservation Strategy: conservation and protection on native plants and animals of the ACT, their ecological communities and their habitats.
- ACT Vertebrate Pest Management Strategy: : aims to provide a guide in developing a strategic approach to pest animal management based on the impacts caused by these pests, rather than focussing on reducing pest animal numbers as an end in itself. The strategy describes the key principles and processes to be followed when developing pest animal programs to ensure that sustained and cost effective outcomes can be achieved.
- ACT Weeds Strategy: aim to provide strategic Government and community partnerships to effectively and efficiently control weeds by developing a process for enabling weed management practices to take place.
- Bushfire Fuel Management Plan: establishes a framework of bushfire fuel management strategies. It identifies required actions and sets minimum standards for land management agencies. The Plan aims to establish a consistent and uniform standard of bushfire fuel management across a range of land tenures, including conservation reserves, plantation forests urban open space and unleased government lands.

- Canberra Nature Park Management Plan: addresses management objectives, policies, issues and actions specific to CNP and is consistent with the National Capital Plan and the Territory Plan.
- Draft Aquatic Species and Riparian Zone Conservation Strategy (Action Plan No. 29): a program to establish strategies for priority species and ecological communities in riparian zones. This is to ensure that resources are directed to achieving maximum effect in conservation activities.
- Ginini Flats Wetlands Ramsar Site—Plan of Management 2001: The Ginini wetlands are a significant site in terms of a representative upland Sphagnum peat wetland and are an important area within Namadgi National Park. The site has been listed as a Wetland of International Importance and a management plan has been prepared to meet the ‘wise use’ obligations of the Convention on Wetlands (the Ramsar Convention). The Management Plan details specific management programs and actions to be implemented over its seven-year span.
- Lower Cotter Catchment Draft Strategic Management Plan: to restore the lower Cotter catchment to a stable condition that supports the delivery of clean water and that also allows for a range of activities that are compatible with the protection of water resources.
- Murrumbidgee River Corridor Management Plan: identifies the function of the Corridor, and discusses management strategies in the context of contemporary planning and legislative guidelines and preferred longer-term management. while proposes management objectives, strategies and guidelines for management and proposals for further investigations, along with follow-up management planning for specific areas.



Landcare Helpers (Jackie Howe Rouseaboutsworkparty, May 2003)

- Namadgi National Park Management Plan Review 2003: A new management plan is being prepared for Namadgi National Park. This Plan is a legally binding instrument that shall define a range of overarching policies and detail strategies as to how Namadgi should be managed over the next 10-15 years.
- Nature Conservation Strategy: a framework for a coordinated and strategic approach for protection of our biological diversity and the maintenance of underpinning ecological processes. Implementation will be a continuing process subject to review and refinement in the light of progress made, challenges encountered and increasing knowledge about our natural environment.
- Willow Management Strategy for the Upper Murrumbidgee Catchment: proposes an appropriate policy for the management of willows in the ACT, based on an assessment of the role of willows in the ACT landscape, the appropriateness of particular species, eradication measures and the best ways of educating the public on the issue. It provides a source of information and potential actions for managing willows in the upper Murrumbidgee Catchment. This strategy is currently being reviewed.



**Southern Boobook** (*Ninox novaeseelandiae*)