

SECTION 4

Monitoring, evaluation,
reporting and improvement



4.1 Measures of success

A simple, efficient, reliable and cost-effective mechanism for measuring and reporting on outcomes from Caring for our Country investment will occur through the monitoring, evaluation, reporting and improvement (MERI) strategy.

How will achievements be measured?

The Australian Government is taking a strategic approach to measuring achievement of Caring for our Country investment. Monitoring, evaluating and reporting on project performance will provide evidence about the appropriateness, impact, effectiveness, efficiency and legacy of investment made at any point in time.

The Caring for our Country MERI strategy will enable us to:

- » effectively monitor and report on performance against the five-year outcomes
- » support learning and improvement in the design and delivery of Caring for our Country investment
- » provide advice to the community on monitoring and reporting on the state and trends of biophysical, social and economic assets relevant to Caring for our Country.



PHOTO: Ian Oswald-Jacobs

The Caring for our Country MERI strategy is available on the Caring for our Country website at www.nrm.gov.au.

Successful proponents will be required to meet high standards of accountability and to provide performance information on the results of their actions.

Funding deeds with proponents will clearly identify the results that the Australian Government is expecting to be delivered for its investment. All proponents with projects over \$80 000 in value will be required to develop and implement a MERI plan as described in the Caring for our Country MERI strategy. Projects under \$80 000 are required to develop a program logic.

Guides on how to develop a MERI plan and a program logic can be downloaded from the Caring for our Country website at www.nrm.gov.au. These documents explain the step-by-step processes for developing a MERI plan and program logic, including examples, in the context of natural resource management.

Monitoring and reporting on the state and trend of assets where the investment is made, and at a broader scale through defining baseline conditions of selected assets, will enable us to be confident that our investments are appropriate and will help in future investment choices.

The Australian Government and the community will be kept informed of progress of the Caring for our Country initiative and the delivery of its outcomes through the release of an annual report card.



4.2 Communications requirements

All successful proponents are required to incorporate communication activities into their projects to help promote their development and outcomes, particularly at key milestones.

Successful proponents with projects over \$80 000 will be required to develop a communication plan (which will be listed as a milestone in the project) outlining activities and products to promote the development of the project and communicate its key milestones and outcomes.

Communications activities should be costed as part of the monitoring, evaluation, reporting and improvement (MERI) budget for the project.

Examples of activities that successful proponents may include in their communications plan are:

- » promotional activities that engage the community and raise awareness about the benefits of the project
- » engagement with local media such as radio and newspapers to promote the project through media releases or local radio or TV interviews
- » newsletters
- » brochures
- » signage
- » events such as local field days
- » content on websites including digital photography recording key milestones and results of the project.

A communication activity plan template is available on the Caring for our Country website at www.nrm.gov.au, along with examples of activities that may be included.

Projects under \$80 000 should still plan for communications activities that are proportionate to the size of the project.

Proponents will also be required to acknowledge the Australian Government's contribution through Caring for our Country in any promotional activities. Recognition of Caring for our Country Guidelines are available on the Caring for our Country website at www.nrm.gov.au



PHOTO: Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry