



# Caring for our Country

## Caring for our Country: regional delivery

**From 1 July 2008, the Australian Government will take an integrated approach to environment protection and natural resource management. For the first time it will work towards one clear goal with clearly defined outcomes and investment priorities.**

### What does this mean for regions?

The highly valued skills and expertise of regional natural resource management organisations will be central to achieving the outcomes of Caring for our Country.

The Australian Government is continuing to work with regions, states and territories to better protect Australia's unique natural environment assets and make real and measurable progress towards sustainable management of our productive natural resources.

### Will regional groups still receive funding?

Regional groups will continue to receive funding from the Australian Government to assist them in delivering on natural resource management outcomes.

The Government will provide regional bodies with a combination of secure base-level funding, specific assistance to help regions adjust to the new Caring for our Country priorities and the opportunity to bid for additional money from within the overall fund.

Funding may, for example: help purchase new properties for the National Reserve System; manage weeds and feral animals; improve soil management on farms; or help protect World Heritage values.

### How much funding will regional groups receive?

#### Secure base-level funding

\$636 million will be provided over the five year life of Caring for our Country as a secure base-level of funding to regional bodies to invest in actions that complement and contribute to the Government's six national priorities.

In the transition year (2008-09) each region will receive no less than 60 percent of the average annual allocation it received under previous natural resource management programs.

In the following four years, \$127.2 million per annum will be provided as guaranteed base-level funding for regional natural resource management organisations.

### Specific assistance to help regions adjust

The Government will provide up to a further \$31.8 million in 2008-09 to help regions that experience difficulties in making the transition to the new initiative. This funding can be used to ensure natural resource management knowledge and capacity is retained in the regions, and help deliver Caring for our Country's six national priorities.

An additional \$10.8 million per annum will be available in each of the following four years to further assist regional organisations in adjusting to the new arrangements.

### Opportunity to bid for additional money

Regional natural resource management organisations will, for the first time, be able to bid for additional money from the overall Caring for our Country fund.

Regions are likely to be well placed to bid for funds to help achieve the Government's priorities potentially accessing a significantly larger pool of funds than was available under previous natural resource management programs.

### What will happen to the facilitator network?

Caring for our Country will operate a more streamlined, integrated network of facilitators. Australian Government Facilitators and Indigenous Land Management Facilitators will continue to be based in each state and territory to help implement the new initiative. Their roles will be more clearly defined than under the previous programs and they will work more closely within state-based teams.

From 30 June 2008, the Australian Government will not directly contract facilitators and coordinators hosted in regional bodies and Local Government agencies (affecting Community Landcare Coordinators, Strategic Regional Facilitators and Local Government Facilitators). The Government may support these activities through regional investments or other Caring for our Country projects where they are part of an investment package that is addressing the national priorities and outcomes.

### Further information

Ring the information hotline on 1800 552 008 or visit [www.nrm.gov.au](http://www.nrm.gov.au)