



National
Landcare
Network

2024- 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

WORKING TOGETHER TO PROTECT
LANDS AND WATER



www.nln.org.au

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Photo credit: Nick Hanson

Acknowledgement

The National Landcare Network acknowledges that Indigenous people have cared for and managed this continent for millennia and continue to care for their country today.

We respect Traditional Owners' knowledge, skills and responsibilities in land and sea management and their role in leading the planning and caring for country across Australia. Their lands were never ceded. The National Landcare Network supports all aspects of the Uluru Statement from the Heart – Voice, Truth and Treaty.



Photo credit: Nick Hanson

About the National Landcare Network

The National Landcare Network is the peak representative body for community Landcare groups across Australia, providing a united voice for over 2000 active State and Territory Landcare Organisation members, representing more than 6000 individual Landcare groups and over 160,000 Landcarers. Our Landcarers are represented and supported in the National Landcare Network through the eight State and Territory Landcare Organisations.

The driving purpose of the National Landcare Network is to represent, support and foster the community Landcare movement. We achieve this by being trusted and valued by our members, by the community and by the Federal Government as the national peak body. [Learn more about our work here.](#)

OUR VISION

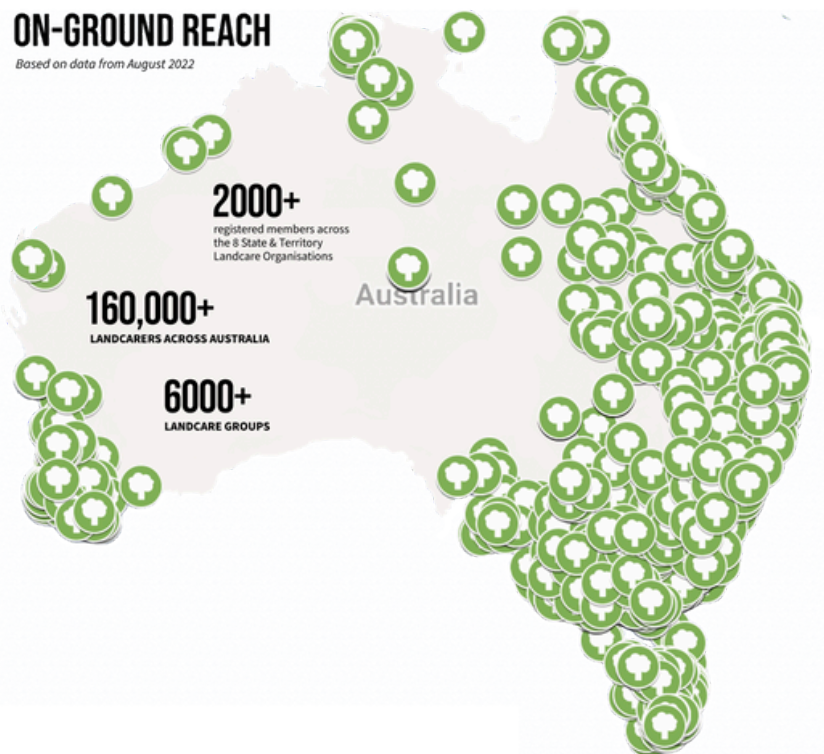
Communities acting to improve and sustain healthy productive landscapes

OUR MISSION

To be the representative, effective and trusted national voice for the Landcare community

ON-GROUND REACH

Based on data from August 2022



Chair's Reflections

Steve Bunnell, Chair (November 2024 - present)



Dear Landcare Community, Partners, and Supporters,

The past year has been one of both achievement and reflection for the National Landcare Network (NLN).

Across Australia, Landcare continues to demonstrate the unique strength of community-led action that delivers real environmental outcomes. The dedication of grassroots volunteers and the collaboration between the State and Territory Landcare Organisations remain the foundation of this success, and we are proud to represent such an extraordinary movement.

At the same time, the NLN has faced significant challenges during 2025, as we continued to navigate through a period of significant transition. These difficulties have not been easy, but they have provided invaluable learning opportunities. They have prompted us to take a hard look at how we operate and the NLN Board has committed to reforms that will strengthen our capacity to represent and support our sector effectively whilst having an eye to the future in terms of collaboration at all levels.

We welcomed the appointment of our new CEO, Michelle Young, we have already begun implementing changes to enhance operational performance and deliver strong outcomes under our current funding contracts. This includes a renewed focus on governance excellence, improved systems for financial and performance management, and a commitment to supporting our Members Council as a vital voice in shaping national policy. These steps will ensure NLN is not only meeting its contractual obligations but also delivering value to the Landcare network, our partners and the communities we serve.

Building on the work of our predecessors we will prioritise not only our representation and support for grass roots Landcare groups but extend that focus to include strategic partnerships and collaborations to amplify their voices, advocate effectively for environmental volunteering, and invest in knowledge-sharing and capacity building. We are determined to turn lessons learned into lasting improvements that position NLN as a trusted influential leader and partner.

The Federal Government's commitment of \$5.5 million over four years continues to support us to act as the national voice for community Landcare until mid 2028. Their investment is a testament to the strength of our network and the enduring value of community-led stewardship. There is a tremendous amount of trust placed in our collective capacity—from the Board and Members Council to the dedicated staff and volunteers across the country – and our potential to contribute through environmental volunteers to the achievement of Australia's 2030 goals is unmatched.

Thank you to our volunteers, State and Territory Landcare Organisations, partners, stakeholders and our hard working staff for your continued support. Working together we will ensure that Landcare remains a force for positive change whilst connecting people with the land, and communities with each other.



CEO's Message

Michelle Young (September 2025 - present)



Dear Landcare Community, Partners, and Supporters,

Over the last year across Australia, thousands of volunteers, community groups, and partners have been working together to deliver lasting environmental outcomes. These inspiring efforts continue despite the challenges posed by climate variability, resource constraints, and shifting policy landscapes. This is a testament to the value of both community and the connections Australian's have to our lands, sea and waters.

As the newly appointed CEO of the National Landcare Network (NLN), I am honoured to lead an organisation that represents the voices of the grassroots Landcare communities. Stepping into this role strengthens my belief in the power of collaboration and community-led action. My priority is to ensure that NLN continues to amplify these voices in national policy forums and create opportunities for volunteers to thrive.

In the coming months we will accelerate our efforts to support our State and Territory Landcare Organisations and their Landcare communities. Working together we will look at how we can integrate new technologies, seek new investment and build the capacity of our communities to respond to the rapid declines we are experiencing in the health of the ecosystems upon which we all depend.

Our success will be built on the values that define Landcare: inclusivity, collaboration, and a commitment to making a real difference for our environment and communities.

As part of this commitment, we acknowledge that healing landscapes and communities must go hand in hand. One example is the role that the NLN has in facilitating reconciliation across State and Territory and regional and community Landcare networks. This work will build on and advance relationships, respect and understanding between First Nations and non-Indigenous Australians.

As we look ahead, to working with the Australian government to meet their commitments for 2030, the National Landcare Network will continue to advocate for policies that support volunteerism, strengthen partnerships, and deliver tangible outcomes for the landscapes we cherish.



Our People

Board Members

The National Landcare Network Board is comprised of eight members, with one Director from each Member State and Territory. This year we farewelled former Chair and WA member Louise Duxbury, Dr. Maxine Cooper member for ACT, Bill Harvey in Tasmania and Annie Andrews in the NT. We thank them for their energy, time and valuable contributions! We were pleased to welcome new members Anne-Marie Offer representing WA, Karen Denny in ACT, Andy Kenyon in NT and Peter Voller in Tasmania. We also welcomed Steve Bunnell, representative for NSW, into the role of Chair.



Anne-Marie Offer
WA



John Chester
SA



John Brisbin
QLD



Karen Denny
ACT



Beth Ripper
VIC



Peter Voller
TAS



Andy Kenyon
NT



Steve Bunnell
NSW



Image Credit: Mylanggari Grassland Nature Reserve, member of Landcare ACT.

Committees and Sub-Committees of the Board

Finance, Audit and Risk Committee

- John Brisbin (Chair)
- John Holley (Independent Member, WA)
- Gerry Butler (Independent Member, SA)
- Steve Bunnell

Selections Committee

No current members

Governance Subcommittee

- Beth Riipper (Chair)
- Peter Voller
- Andy Kenyon
- John Brisbin

Landcare 2030: Walking together for a climate-smart, nature positive future

The National Landcare Network (NLN) continued to play a critical role throughout 2024–25 in representing the collective interests of Australia's community-based Landcare organisations at the national level. Over the year, NLN maintained a strong advocacy position on key national policy issues, including environmental law reform, sustainable agriculture and the emerging nature repair and environmental markets. Through active engagement with the Australian Government and other national partners, NLN worked to ensure that community Landcare voices and on-ground experience remain central to national decision-making.

Throughout the year, NLN hosted engagement activities such as national webinars and participated in the preparations for the Gold Coast 2025 National Landcare Conference as part of the Conference Steering Committee, ensuring community Landcare had opportunities to share stories, learn from peers, and showcase our collective impact.

NLN also maintained and amplified a strong national narrative around the social and cultural benefits of Landcare. This included ongoing respect for and recognition of First Nations leadership in Caring for Country, as well as highlighting the wellbeing, inclusion and community-building outcomes arising from large scale volunteer participation.

At the National Landcare Network's AGM on 22 November, we welcomed new Board members Peter Voller (TAS), Mick Davis (WA), and Andy Kenyon (NT), with Steve Bunnell appointed as Chair and Dr. Maxine Cooper continuing as Vice-Chair. Bill Harvey (TAS), Anne Maree Andrews (NT), and former Chair Louise Duxbury (WA) stepped down. We thank them all for their outstanding service and contributions to Landcare.

In early February we saw the culmination of more than six months of activity involving all NLN members, Directors, Chairs, staff and other stakeholders in a 'Theory of Change' process. This significant piece of work fed into the planning event and Board meeting held in Sydney in February. NLN board members, staff and Landcare peak body representatives from across Australia gathered to talk about our collective work, current issues in Landcare and ways that we can continue to work together as a resilient, responsive and vibrant community. Allan Parker, a behavioural scientist and organisational change expert, skilfully facilitated the two-day process helping navigate the complex space of each State and Territory's unique needs and define a clear path forward for the NLN during a time of transition.

Practical evolutions of organisational tools were introduced across the NLN. A new website was launched. The move to a cloud-based accounting system was welcomed by the Finance Audit and Risk Committee. In moving to a cloud-based Board and Director engagement and management tool this was also seen to be a positive contribution to continuous organisational governance improvements.

Throughout the year, NLN Directors and staff strengthened ongoing engagement with Landcare Australia to address a number of priority national issues. We also progressed membership of the Australian Land Conservation Alliance.

The National Landcare Facilitator Program

In July 2024, the National Landcare Network welcomed a \$2 million investment from the Australian Government in Community Landcare for the Strengthen Landcare - Deliver Nature Repair Program, a crucial initiative aimed at uplifting the Landcare sector and promoting sustainable environmental practices.

Delivered by the National Landcare Network in collaboration with State and Territory Landcare Organisations, the Program takes an integrated approach to ensure that Community Landcare remains a dynamic and inclusive nationwide community movement.

The key objectives of the program are:

- **First Nations Engagement:** Support the engagement of First Nations People in NRM, and enhance cross-cultural collaboration and two-way learning, through building relationships in communities.
- **Volunteering Community Development:** Grow, engage, support and report on the impact of the Landcare volunteer base
- **Knowledge Sharing:** Foster collaboration to support information sharing and provide targeted education and resources to improve expertise, skills and capacity of the Landcare Volunteer base.
- **Promotion & Corporate Engagement:** Build partnerships, attract funding, and enhance visibility of Landcare initiatives to increase reach and impact of community Landcare.

Partnership agreements were designed and considered by all of the peak State and Territory Landcare Organisations. These agreements laid the foundations for the support and delivery of the NLFP.

First Nations Engagement:

Our relationship with the Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation progressed as we met to develop a Statement of Collaboration detailing how we would work together and what we hope to achieve during the life of the two-way initiative project. A big thanks to John Chester for his drive and passion in keeping this important relationship in the forefront of our minds.

The statement was signed by the CEO of the ILSC and Chair of the NLN.

One of the early events of note in this area was the celebration of the conclusion of the World Intellectual Property Organization's (WIPO) Treaty on Intellectual Property, Genetic Resources and Associated Traditional Knowledge (GRATK Treaty). Thanks to Bibi Barber for highlighting this important work. NLN attended this event at Australia's Parliament House, and heard from the Director General of WIPO, Mr Daren Tang, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Senator the Hon Penny Wong, and Australia's Ambassador for First Nations People, Mr Justin Mohameds.

After 25 years of negotiation, the GRATK Treaty is a groundbreaking outcome, and establishes a new form of legal recognition for Indigenous Peoples' traditional knowledge and is a foundational step in respecting and recognising First Nations millennia of innovation in the IP system.

National Landcare Facilitator Program continued

Volunteering and Community Development:

During this year the National Landcare Network proudly became a supporter of the National Strategy for Volunteering. By embracing this important initiative, we are dedicated to advancing the National Strategy's vision and strategic objectives.

First steps included convening the National Landcare Volunteering Initiative working group which held its first meeting in April, bringing together STLO representatives from across the country. The session surfaced shared challenges and opportunities, from reducing the administrative burden on volunteers to strengthening recruitment pathways and measuring our collective impact.

Knowledge Sharing:

During the year the NLN held a Lunch and Learn webinar for the sector celebrating the science behind Landcare as part of National Science Week. Featuring expert speakers Alice Ryder and Meredith Hall from Inspiring Australia, the session explored ways Landcare groups can engage with STEM, access small grants, and celebrate Indigenous science and First Nations knowledge. It was a powerful call to action for communities to connect, educate, and showcase the environmental impact of Landcare through science.

The NLN launched a new online webinars calendar in June. The calendar allows community organisations or groups to submit their Landcare related webinars to enhance community efforts in caring for our natural assets. A knowledge hub of past recordings was also created on the website to provide additional resources on topics of interest to Landcarers.

The National Landcare Network developed Landcare Stakeholder Maps for STLOs - visually engaging, state-specific tools that illustrate the complex ecosystem of Landcare groups, government bodies, non-profits, and community partners across Australia. Originally designed to support facilitators and coordinators, these maps have become valuable resources for policymakers, volunteers, and advocates by simplifying the intricate relationships within the movement, fostering understanding, and enhancing collaboration. They help clarify roles, showcase regional diversity, and strengthen national advocacy efforts.

Funding for NLFP supported the delivery of a Beta version of an online project bank to highlight the great work of Landcarers across the country as well as to look at potential project opportunities to invest in.

More work is being undertaken to continue to refine this project. We have met with the CEOs to map a way forward and we will continue working on this deliverable until the completion of this project. The project bank may serve many purposes, including providing a platform for corporate and philanthropic investment and increasing volunteering.

Photo: February 2025 NLN and STLO 2-day Planning Session in Sydney. Credit: Tina Griffith



Communication Highlights

Amplifying our reach and impact:

The National Landcare Network delivered a diverse range of communication initiatives to elevate public awareness of the Landcare movement's remarkable contributions, foster knowledge exchange, and inspire greater volunteer engagement. Communications and social media strategies focused on encouraging volunteer participation by showcasing the social, cultural, environmental, and wellbeing benefits of Landcare, while prompting people to connect with their local groups.

These efforts amplified community voices, celebrated diversity, and reinforced the value of collective action in caring for Australia's natural resources. A parallel strategy increased awareness of First Nations culture and custodianship by highlighting stories of cultural collaboration and championing First Nations expertise and traditional knowledge in land management.

By leveraging these and other key themes through national awareness campaigns across multiple platforms—including events, social media, monthly newsletters, and the NLN website—the organisation strengthened sector visibility and shared compelling stories that demonstrate the breadth and impact of community Landcare.

"This is an excellent newsletter which is very heartening to read. It would be greatly appreciated if you can please include our story in your next issue."

Australian Association of Bush Regenerators, June 2025

Highlights:



Relaunch of our monthly **e-bulletin** in March with 11% audience growth (418 subscribers)



Steady growth in followers and page visits across all of our **social media platforms**



Increased visibility with **new promotional materials** including a brochure, banner, and promotional video



Website enhancements including national webinars calendar & knowledge hub, programs page, newsletter archive, donations page and an impact page

Capacity building through knowledge exchange:

To help achieve the communication and national advocacy goals of the community Landcare network and to meet the deliverables of the Australian Government funded Landcare 2030 and National Landcare Facilitator Programs the National Landcare Network and State and Territory Landcare Organisations formed a communications working group.

Highlights:

Through regular meetings, planning and collaboration, the group functions to drive impact, grow support and build capacity for Landcare groups and networks.

The group provides a platform for knowledge sharing, and drives coordinated efforts across joint campaigns and national events, promoting the important work of our peak body members and their grassroots Landcare groups.



Network collaboration in delivering Landcare Week and National Landcare Conference campaigns with Landcare Australia



Shared messaging amplified through Communications Kits created for National Awareness Campaigns and surveys



Increased collaboration, knowledge exchange and resource sharing through national Communications Working Group with STLOs

National Partnerships - Strengthening Collaborations for Impact

Through partnerships Landcare builds capacity to reach greater scale and make greater impact for communities, for agriculture and for the environment to achieve local and global outcomes. Our partnerships and collaborations continue to enrich our network providing additional expertise, resources, and an extended national and international community of practice. We proudly acknowledge our foundational history and work closely with Landcare Australia, the National Farmers Federation, the Australian Conservation Foundation, and Global Landcare.

Each of our State and Territory Organisations brings valued partnerships – together we can make a difference and have all hands-on deck to ensure a community-led, nature-positive future for Australia. There is deep community engagement across the network at the local level. The National Landcare Network Board is embarking on a significant program to increase our Indigenous engagement at the national level.

To support the delivery of the National Landcare Facilitator Program the NLN is working closely with the Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation (ILSC). With support from both the ILSC and NLN Board Members John Chester and Karen Denny we are embarking on a significant program at the national level to better connect community Landcare with First Nations people, their knowledge, culture and experience in Caring for Country. The partnership with ILSC will develop regional two-way pilots to provide Land carers with the resources they need to respectfully engage with First Nations peoples and cultural land management practices.

Our community-led approach is supported by science, and we value our relationship with the National Environmental Science Program and research partners including the Australian National University, University of Canberra and the University of Tasmania.

The National Landcare Network collaborated with the University of Tasmania, Western Sydney University, and the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water in delivering a Resilient Landscapes Survey, supported by the National Environmental Science Program. This national study explores the success factors behind effective natural resource management—such as tree planting, species protection, and sustainable farming—and invites land managers, environmental stewards, and community groups to share their experiences. The insights will help shape future strategies for building more sustainable and resilient landscapes across Australia.



Network Impact: Driving Change Together

The National Landcare Network (NLN), in partnership with State and Territory Landcare Organisations (STLOs), works across key areas to strengthen the Landcare movement and deliver lasting environmental and community outcomes. From supporting sustainable agriculture and biodiversity conservation to advancing citizen science, disaster recovery, and mental wellbeing, Landcare plays a vital role in building resilient landscapes and communities.

The Network also champions grassroots advocacy, fosters respectful First Nations engagement, and helps position Australian agriculture for a sustainable future. Regular updates on these initiatives are shared via NLN's [blog](#) and [monthly newsletter](#).



Photo: STLO CEOs at the 2025 National Landcare Conference in Gold Coast. Credit: Sarah Vella, Landcare Victoria

Learn More About the Network

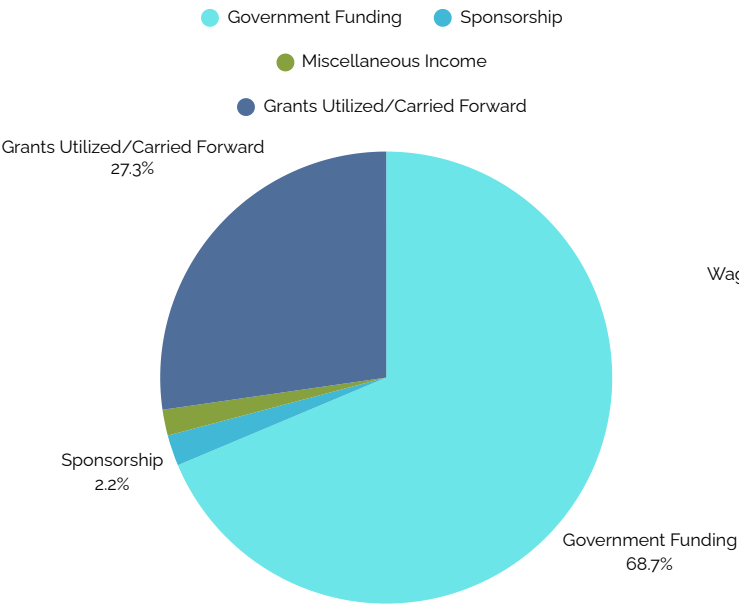
The National Landcare Network is proud to work collaboratively with the State and Territory Landcare Peak Bodies to lead, strengthen, promote and empower grassroots Landcare participation in Australia.

Contact your Landcare Peak Body for details of local groups, events, resources and learning opportunities specific to your State or Territory [HERE](#) or by clicking on the icons below.

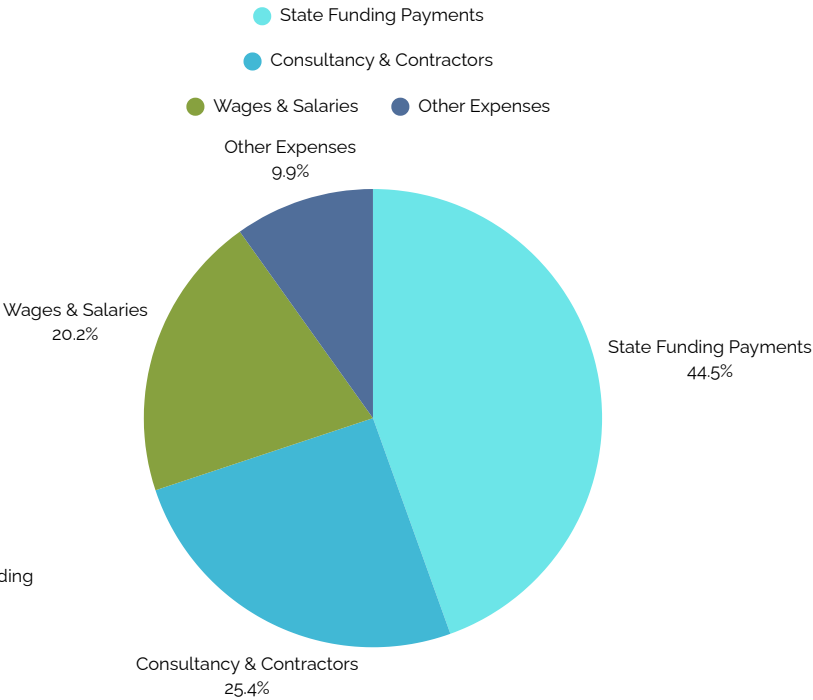


Financial Overview

Total Revenue: \$1,694,590



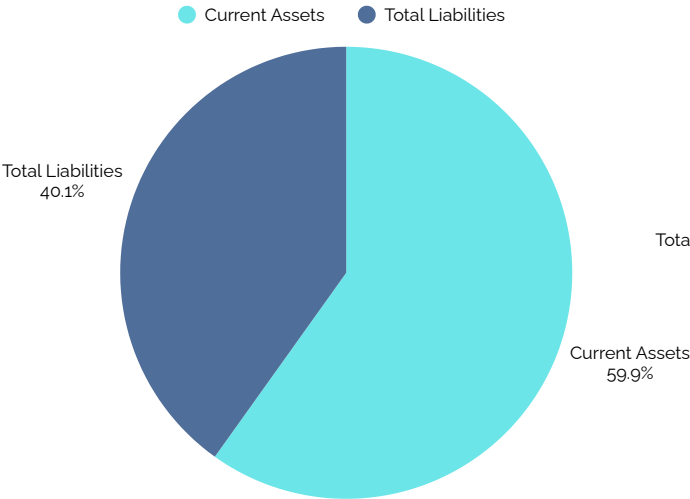
Total Expenses: \$1,611,584



Net Profit: \$83,006

2024

Current Assets: \$519,615
Total Liabilities: \$348,249
Net Assets/Total Equity: \$171,367



2025

Current Assets: \$985,308
Total Liabilities: \$896,947
Net Assets/Total Equity: \$88,361

