

Local Land Services



North Coast Local Land Services Natural Resource Management Plan

2022–2026



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North Coast Local Land Services Chair's Foreword

On behalf of my fellow Board members and staff, I am pleased to present the North Coast Local Land Services Natural Resource Management Plan 2022-2026.

The Plan sets out how North Coast Local Land Services will focus its effort and resources to deliver natural resource management, in partnership with public and private landholders, staff and Board, current and future investors, our regional community and other stakeholders, over the next 5 years.

The Plan delivers key regional NRM priorities, including those of the Australian Government's Matters of National Environmental Significance. It is also tightly linked to statewide NRM directions set by LLS and our own North Coast Local Strategic Plan.

We live in a region of outstanding natural values. A diversity of natural landscapes and a mix of temperate and subtropical climates provide nationally recognised biodiversity and wilderness and wetland areas, and complex and diverse soil systems. Large river systems with extensive floodplains have strong connections through to estuarine and marine environments. Our region is the most biologically diverse region in New South Wales and the third most diverse in Australia. This Plan seeks to maintain and improve these natural values.

The North Coast supports a range of dynamic and productive natural resource-based livelihoods, including beef, dairy, horticulture, fishing, timber production, nature conservation and tourism. Our iconic natural landscapes and seascapes support the region's reputation as a tourist and lifestyle destination sought by people from all over the world. This Plan seeks to ensure that our natural resources can continue to support our diverse and vibrant communities, industries, and markets and the contribution they make to the NSW economy.

Our NRM Plan addresses many of the significant challenges expected to impact the North Coast over the next five years. Loss of habitat driven by growing population and expanding production activities poses a considerable challenge. New and existing biosecurity risks, farm based diffuse water pollutants, the need to offset carbon emissions, biodiversity decline, and the increasing frequency and severity of natural disasters already impact our communities.

This Plan supports landholder adoption of best practice natural resource management, to improve farm production, increase economic returns, and improve landscape health. Landholders will realise these returns through improvement in existing practices as well as participation in new environmental markets, including carbon. Preparing our communities to respond to and recover from the impacts of natural disaster events will also form a significant part of our NRM focus moving forward.

We partner with the region's public landholders to facilitate strategic planning, program co-design, community engagement and coordination of program delivery (e.g., for pests and weed management) across public and private lands. This approach promotes a coordinated, strategic, tenure neutral approach to threat management that improves the condition of natural resources at a landscape scale.

We must take a risk and evidence-based approaches that allow us to justify future investment bids, focus our finite resources to have the greatest impact, and create value for our customers. We must also be flexible and quick to engage with other partners if we are to cope with regional threats that so often need addressing at a moment's notice.

We will maintain existing as well as create novel partnerships that allow us to spread the breadth and impact of our service to improve landscape health and help communities prepare for uncertain futures. Tapping into new investment streams and creating novel partnerships will allow us to add value to our existing services, exploit untapped NRM opportunities, achieve outcomes that we can't realise by ourselves and move into NRM ventures not traditionally occupied by government. And our highly skilled staff will deliver extension, advisory and partnership services that deliver beneficial NRM outcomes for the North Coast that directly align with this Plan's priorities.

We thank our staff, customers, industry and other stakeholders for engaging in consultation on the NRM Plan, providing us with valuable insights into your priorities and enabling us to identify actions that will address your NRM aspirations.

We invite you to continue to engage with us as we move forward with our NRM Plan. Our local teams on the ground look forward to working in partnership with you over the next five years to progress the sustainability and productivity of North Coast land and water resources to benefit our communities.

Bob Smith
North Coast Local Land Services Chair



Macleay River

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Executive summary

Overview

This NRM Plan sets out how North Coast Local Land Services will focus its effort and resources to deliver natural resource management (NRM), in partnership with landholders, staff, the North Coast LLS Board, current and future investors, our regional and Aboriginal communities and other stakeholders, over the next 5 years.

The Plan is a requirement under the North Coast's Regional Land Partnership (RLP) Agreement with the Australian Government's Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water. It provides an investment framework for key regional natural resource management priorities, including those of the Australian Government's Matters of National Environmental Significance. The Plan's actions and approach provide a response to the Australian Government's environmental agenda of Protect, Restore and Manage our natural capital and the services it provides. Our focus is on improving biodiversity conservation and the ability of landscapes and waterways to withstand the impacts of changing climate.

The Plan is also tightly linked to outcomes from the LLS statewide *Natural Resource Management Framework 2021–2026* and directions set by our *North Coast Local Strategic Plan 2021–2026*.

Our role is twofold:

1. To collaborate with partners and stakeholders to co-design, facilitate and implement programs and projects that align strategic and investment priorities with the needs and aspirations of local communities
2. To provide advisory, partnership and extension services that enable landholders to adopt best practice land management that meets their needs and aspirations.

The Plan is the outcome of extensive collaboration with the region's NRM community. While we deliver services that support landholder adoption of best practice, we have an equally strong role working with landholders in strategic planning, program coordination and partnership development.

We live in a region of outstanding natural values. A diversity of natural landscapes and a mix of temperate and subtropical climates provide nationally recognised biodiversity and wilderness and wetland areas, and complex and diverse soil systems. Large river systems with extensive floodplains have strong connections through to estuarine and marine environments. Our region is the most biologically diverse in New South Wales and the third most diverse in Australia. This Plan seeks to protect, manage and restore this natural diversity.

The North Coast supports a range of dynamic and productive natural resource-based livelihoods, including beef, dairy, horticulture, fishing, timber production, nature conservation and tourism. Our iconic natural landscapes and seascapes support the region's reputation as a tourist and lifestyle destination sought by people from all over the world. This Plan seeks to ensure that our natural resources can continue to support our diverse and vibrant communities, industries, and markets and the contribution they make to the NSW economy.

Our NRM Plan addresses the many threats to the North Coast,

including habitat loss caused by growing population and expanding production activities; new and existing biosecurity risks; the need to offset carbon emissions; diffuse source water and sediment pollutants; altered fire regimes; the cumulative impacts of recent drought, fire, flood; biodiversity decline; and the increasing frequency and severity of natural disasters.

These threats create ongoing and cumulative stress on the North Coast's communities. North Coast LLS recognises the cost and strain that drought, flood, fire and Covid events have placed on the region over the past 5 years, the fatigue experienced by local communities in a constant state of disaster response and recovery, and the critical link between healthy landscapes and people's well-being. The Plan contributes to the remediation and recovery of landscape and community health across the North Coast region.

Five themes taken from the LLS statewide NRM Framework capture our objectives and actions to protect, manage and restore the region's natural resources and the services they provide:

1. Enabling land manager adoption of practice change
2. Realising returns from best practice NRM, new opportunities and changing practice
3. Healthy and resilient landscapes and catchments
4. Aboriginal communities caring for healthy and resilient cultural landscapes
5. NRM service provider of choice.

North Coast LLS will partner with the region's public landholders (e.g. Crown Lands, Forestry Corp, local government) to facilitate strategic planning, program co-design, community engagement and coordination of program delivery (e.g., for pests and weed management) across public and private lands. With this approach, LLS will promote a coordinated, strategic, tenure neutral approach to threat management that improves the condition of our natural capital and the services it provides at a landscape scale.

We will also deliver this Plan by promoting the returns of managing natural capital, through improvement in existing landholder practices as well as participation in new environmental markets, such as carbon. Our highly skilled staff will provide extension, advisory, referral, partnership, and delivery services that facilitate the uptake of best practice NRM (primarily addressing threat management) by landholders. This approach will help landholders to realise returns from improving their practices, including improved farm production, increased economic returns, and improved landscape health. Helping our communities to prepare for and recover from the impacts of natural disaster events will also form a significant part of our NRM focus moving forward.

Our best practice extension will be delivered through our two flagship programs – the Landscape Restoration Program will deliver integrated landscape scale NRM programs, complemented by the Future Ready Farms Program which will deliver private land whole-of-farm scale sustainable agriculture best practice extension and training activities. Monitoring, evaluation and sunrise governance approaches will be critical to proactive detection and response to changing regional conditions, which will be integral to the services we offer through the Flagships.

The short term success of these NRM practice change programs will be measured by the area of land under best practice management. We assume that maintenance of the gains from on-ground works will lead to the longer term outcome of improvement in biodiversity, landscape and natural capital condition, farm health and profitability and landholder wellbeing.

Providing customer focussed, high value services will require us to:

- Better understand the aspirations of our customers
- Broaden our services to accommodate an increasingly diverse landholder customer base
- Target limited resources for greater impact
- Adapt to new entrants in a busy NRM space
- Provide culturally safe practices that allow Aboriginal communities to engage and participate in our business.

We will maintain existing as well as create novel partnerships that allow us to spread the breadth and impact of our service to improve landscape health and help communities prepare for uncertain futures. Other NRM providers, the corporate sector and investors are now offering new and unique opportunities and markets that can deliver local environmental and sustainable agriculture outcomes here on the North Coast. Tapping into new investment streams and creating novel partnerships will allow us to add value to our existing services, exploit untapped NRM opportunities, achieve outcomes that we can't realise by ourselves and move into NRM spaces not traditionally occupied by government.

To facilitate these partnerships, North Coast LLS will host a new NRM Advisory Committee that will facilitate a whole of government, stakeholder and community driven approach to the delivery of this Plan. The statutory and legislative responsibilities and roles of our partner agencies will be recognised by the Committee and reflected in the co-design and co-delivery of the partnerships and projects that underpin implementation of the Plan.

This Plan allows us to take a risk and evidence-based approaches to justify innovation and future investment bids, focus our finite resources to have the greatest impact, and create value for our customers. We will also need to be flexible and quick to engage with other partners if we are to cope with regional threats that so often need addressing at a moment's notice.



Eastern Bristle Bird weed survey



Soil earth worm



We will maintain existing as well as create novel partnerships that allow us to spread the breadth and impact of our service to improve landscape health and help communities prepare for uncertain futures.

North Coast LLS NRM Plan on a Page

NORTH COAST LOCAL LAND SERVICES NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN 2022-2026

We collaborate with partners and stakeholders to co-design, facilitate and implement programs and projects that align strategic and investment priorities with the needs and aspirations of landholders to achieve shared outcomes

Landscape Restoration Flagship

Delivers integrated landscape scale programs that promote stakeholder collaboration, landholder uptake of best practice land management, healthy landscapes and biodiversity, preparedness for natural disasters, and resilience to changing climate

GROW

Our NRM programs and partnerships grow primary industry productivity and healthy environments

PROTECT

Our NRM services and partnerships play a vital role in helping to protect against pests, weeds and diseases

CONNECT

We connect with our community and connect our customers with the best NRM services, advice and networks

SUPPORT

We play a vital NRM role in helping primary industries prepare for natural hazards and are on the ground to respond and support when they occur

Our Goal: By 2026, 80% of customers receiving our NRM services have adopted improved NRM practices on their properties

Obj. 2. Helping customers realise returns from improved NRM practices

PRIORITIES

- Landholders improving their existing practices to realise both economic returns and increase biodiversity, ecosystem services and the ability of landscapes to withstand impacts to climate change
- Capacity to provide extension and advice on emerging environmental markets
- Assisting landholders to understand costs and benefits of emerging environmental markets

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

- ✓ No. of landholders engaged in environmental market programs
- ✓ No. of landholders engaged in advisory services
- ✓ Increases in knowledge and attitudes
- ✓ Area of improved practices

Obj. 3. Taking action on threats to the health and resilience of landscapes

PRIORITIES

- Biodiversity conservation, corridors and biodiversity hotspots
- Threatened species and ecological communities
- Implementing the native vegetation Land Management Framework
- World Heritage Areas
- Waterways and coastal environments
- Travelling Stock Reserves
- On-farm soil health, native vegetation, water quality
- Natural disaster recovery
- Sustainability accreditation

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

- ✓ Area of threatened species managed
- ✓ Area of native vegetation rehabilitated, or protected
- ✓ Stream length river/estuary rehabilitated or protected
- ✓ Area of wetlands rehabilitated or protected
- ✓ Area of notifications, certificates and setasides
- ✓ No. of Landholders engaged in, and area of, best practice
- ✓ No. of Landholders engaged in best practice Emergency Management activities
- ✓ No. of landholder advice consultations
- ✓ No. of landholder training events and participants

Obj. 4. Supporting Aboriginal communities to care for Country

PRIORITIES

- Yarning Circles as a culturally safe practice for engaging stakeholders
- Restoration and conservation of cultural assets
- Education, skills and knowledge development
- Supporting connections to viable agricultural enterprises and sustainable business opportunities
- Employment and opportunities for Aboriginal Businesses to Work on Country

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

- ✓ No. of programs that involve Aboriginal people and communities in NRM
- ✓ No. of Aboriginal owned businesses participating in LLS business
- ✓ Area of improved practices

Obj. 5. Being NRM service provider of choice and a trusted broker of partnerships

PRIORITIES

- Being a lead partner and facilitator with key stakeholders such as government, industry and philanthropic organisations
- Existing and novel partnerships that deliver collaborative, co-designed programs and projects that align with investment priorities and respond to landholder needs and aspirations
- Skilled extension and advice
- Accessible partnership and collaboration business approaches

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

- ✓ Maintain and increase revenue for NRM services
- ✓ Increase in investor and partner satisfaction
- ✓ Increase in novel partnerships

Obj. 1. Driving NRM best practice adoption by understanding needs and aspirations

PRIORITIES

- NRM advisory services and practice change programs aligned to strategic outcomes and meeting landholder needs and aspirations
- Governance and collaboration driving coordinated, strategic and resilience based NRM

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

- ✓ Customer satisfaction and net promoter scores
- ✓ Increases in knowledge and skills
- ✓ Area of improved practices

Summary of NRM Plan actions

[AusGov] = Australian Government priority



THEME 1: Enabling landholder adoption of practice change

OBJECTIVE 1: To drive widespread NRM best practice adoption by understanding and addressing our customers' social and behavioural drivers

North Coast LLS actions

1. Design and implement practice change programs that respond to the drivers and enablers of landholder adoption of best practice land management.

Performance narrative

Services will include provision of extension, advice, referrals and opportunities to acquire funding for NRM projects; consultation with individuals and groups; industry and community partnerships, group events and project field days.

We will measure our success through customer satisfaction with our services, the number of partnerships and programs we have updated to better reflect aspirations, needs and preparedness for change; and the ensuing projects that achieve increased area (hectares) of improved land management practice across our customer segments.



THEME 2: Realising returns from best practice NRM, new opportunities and changing practices

OBJECTIVE 2: To help our customers realise returns from adoption of improved NRM practices

North Coast LLS actions

2. Support landholder adoption of best practice management of natural assets and ecosystem services that increases farm production, profitability and economic returns and improves landscape health. [AusGov]
3. Deliver a concierge approach between customers and the emerging markets industry so that landholders understand the risks, costs and benefits of approaches. [AusGov]

Performance narrative

Services will include facilitation of on-ground NRM works; provision of NRM extension, advice and referrals; collation and dissemination of information; consultation with individuals, groups and networks; industry and community partnerships, group events, project field days; development of partnerships.

We will measure our success through customer satisfaction with our services; increases in land manager knowledge of and participation in environmental market programs and more traditional best practice programs; the number of new market partnerships and programs we have developed; the uptake of traditional best practices; and the ensuing projects that allow customers to realise economic returns through hectares of improved land management practice.



Jali native seed collection



Native vegetation regrowth



THEME 3: Healthy and resilient landscapes and catchments

OBJECTIVE 3: To take action on the top threats to the health and resilience of NSW landscapes and catchments

North Coast LLS actions

4. Promote the Landscape Restoration and Future Ready Farms flagship programs as North Coast LLS's integrated approach to delivering adaptive, future-ready, landholder focussed actions to increase biodiversity and the ability of landscapes to withstand impacts of climate change [\[AusGov\]](#)
5. Participate in governance and collaboration processes that drive strategic implementation of the North Coast LLS NRM Plan. [\[AusGov\]](#)
6. Support adoption of best practice threat management by landholders and partner with key stakeholders to contribute to:
 - a) threatened species recovery outcomes [\[AusGov\]](#)
 - b) threatened ecological community recovery outcomes [\[AusGov\]](#)
 - c) conservation outcomes adjacent to NPWS protected areas including Gondwana Rainforests World Heritage Areas [\[AusGov\]](#)
 - d) conservation outcomes and/or agreements for native vegetation, habitats and biodiversity in corridors, biodiversity hotspots and other areas of high biodiversity value. [\[AusGov\]](#)
7. Implement best practice land management and threat management programs that maintain and improve biodiversity, cultural and production assets on travelling stock reserves. [\[AusGov\]](#)
8. Support adoption of best practice land management by landholders and partner with key stakeholders to deliver waterway and coastal environment health outcomes. [\[AusGov\]](#)
9. Support adoption of best practice land management by landholders and partner with key stakeholders to deliver flood recovery activities that benefit impacted communities and waterways. [\[AusGov\]](#)
10. Deliver integrated pest and weed management to deliver social, cultural, economic, biodiversity and other environmental outcomes. [\[AusGov\]](#)
11. Work with North Coast industry networks, peak bodies, cooperatives and grower groups to better understand land manager NRM best practice needs. [\[AusGov\]](#)
12. Implement the LLS Land Management Framework to facilitate lawful, best practice on-farm native vegetation management. [\[AusGov\]](#)
13. Support adoption of best practice management of key threats by landholders and partner with key stakeholders to deliver improvements in the condition of on-farm soil health, native vegetation, biodiversity and water quality. [\[AusGov\]](#)
14. Support landholder participation in extension and training events that allow them to demonstrate the provenance and sustainability credentials of their agricultural produce. [\[AusGov\]](#)

Performance narrative

Services will include provision of extension, advice and referrals; collation and dissemination of information; consultation with individuals, groups and networks; industry and community partnerships, group events and project field days; development of partnerships; delivery of on-ground actions.

We will measure our success through customer satisfaction with our services; the sharing of knowledge with land managers; land manager participation in the recovery and rehabilitation of landscapes and their ability to withstand impacts of climate change, and biodiversity conservation agreements; the number of partnerships developed that result in hectares of best practice on-farm management of native vegetation, threatened species and ecological communities, soil and biodiversity, including the value this adds to neighbouring public and private landholders. Success will also be defined by hectares under best practice that support preparation for natural disasters, other major disruptor events and changing climate.



THEME 4: Aboriginal communities caring for healthy and resilient cultural landscapes

OBJECTIVE 4: To champion opportunities for Aboriginal people and communities to care for Country and enhance contemporary land management practices

North Coast LLS actions

15. Coordinate Yarning Circle conversations as a culturally safe practice where Aboriginal stakeholders can identify and co-design programs that address healthy Country aspirations. [AusGov]
16. Participate in the Caring for Country cross-agency community of practice to identify and promote options and partnership opportunities for achieving the NRM aspirations of Aboriginal communities. [AusGov]
17. Support Aboriginal land managers and communities to participate and partner in NRM. [AusGov]

Performance narrative

Services will centre on the co-design and co-delivery of culturally appropriate engagement, project delivery and involvement of Aboriginal communities and stakeholders in the North Coast LLS business. We will cater for communities in our use of language and approach; and we will adopt Yarning Circle approaches where community can participate in respectful and culturally safe conversations. The identification of local cultural needs and healthy Country aspirations will drive the co-design of the services we provide to Aboriginal stakeholders. The Department of Planning and Environment's community of practice will be central to a whole-of-government and stakeholder approach to identifying partnership options for consideration at Yarning Circles.

Services include design of programs and projects; advice and referrals; consultation with individuals and groups; government, industry and community partnerships and project delivery; group events; ongoing partnership development; project field days that showcase Traditional Knowledge and culture.

We will measure our success through customer satisfaction with our services; Aboriginal participation within Yarning Circles and the LLS business; Aboriginal and LLS participation in capacity building events and cultural heritage advisory forums; hectares of Country being managed with cultural knowledge and under best cultural practice; LLS participation in Department of Planning and Environment's community of practice.



THEME 5: NRM service provider of choice

OBJECTIVE 5: To be the NRM service provider of choice and a trusted broker of NRM partnerships

North Coast actions

18. Collaborate with key partners to design and deliver programs and projects that align with agreed strategic outcomes, meet investment priorities and respond to landholder needs and aspirations.
19. Provide collaboration and partnership services that support streamlined, accessible and effective NRM interactions with North Coast LLS.
20. Promote the business and partnership services unique to North Coast LLS, our role in a whole-of-government approach to NRM, and the value it brings to those wishing to invest in the adoption of NRM best practice.

Performance narrative

Services will include strategic design of evidence-based, outcomes focused programs and projects, provision of advice and media communications; innovation in NRM services and leadership of thought and practice; collaboration and engagement with individuals, industry and community groups, and investors; development of business partnerships; technical and promotional products and events that showcase our role and investment achievements in North Coast NRM.

We will measure our success through number of novel partnerships created; investor and partner satisfaction with LLS as a provider of unique services to the region's NRM customers; maintenance and increase in our NRM revenue streams and the allocation of NRM funds to collaboration and engagement; and increase in our profile and recognition of our investment achievements.

Acknowledgement of Country

The North Coast Local Land Services Board, management and staff wish to acknowledge Traditional Owners – the Bundjalung, Yaegl, Githabul, Gumbaynggirr, Dunghutti and Biripi peoples – of the land and waters on which we meet, live and work.

We recognise the significance that Wajaar (Country) holds for the many Aboriginal nations of the North Coast. We recognise the importance of the songlines that travel along the East Coast of Australia and express the many values, beliefs and traditional ways of nurturing Wajaar. We recognise the continuous connection to the land and the waterways of its traditional custodians and acknowledge the Yuludarla (Dreaming) for maintaining this connection.

We pay respects to the Elders of these nations; past, present and emerging. We acknowledge their ongoing traditions, beliefs and lores that have maintained the North Coast for tens of thousands of years. We recognise their continued connection to their Jagun (homeland) and acknowledge the continued practices of ceremony and language.

North Coast Local Land Services is proud to work with the peoples of these nations to nurture, protect, restore and maintain the lands and waters of the region. The North Coast Local Land Services Board, management and staff have a culture of inclusion and diversity, and we continue to build a culture of listening, understanding and supporting the aspirations of Aboriginal peoples.

Kira Duroux

Gumbaynggirr Nyami of the Taylor and Duroux families from Red Rock, Corindi and Grafton.



1. The North Coast's natural resource management challenge

A region under pressure

Healthy natural environments are vital to the productivity of the agricultural sector, the wellbeing of rural and urban communities, and the connection of Aboriginal people to culture and Country.

Natural resource management (NRM) involves the integrated management of the land, water, soil, plants and animals that make up the region's landscapes. People and their livelihoods rely on the health and productivity of our landscapes, and the actions of the stewards of the land play a critical role in maintaining this health and productivity.

The North Coast region's landholders, community and industry groups, NRM organisations and government agencies have a significant track record of achievement, working together as an NRM community to restore and protect our unique natural resources and the social, cultural, production and environmental services they provide.

Our landholders are receptive to change – many have adopted best practice NRM that balances land use with land capability and the conservation of their natural resource base which underpins their production. Beef, dairy, berry, macadamia and other farmers work diligently to apply scientifically based production methods that conserve the natural capital that supports their production base – their native vegetation, soil, water and biodiversity. For good reason, farmers are able to capitalise on the region's production potential and 'clean green' image and achieve premium returns for their products.

Yet the health of the North Coast environment is under increasing strain and will be further challenged by the impacts of changing population, land use and the recently experienced and expected future increases in droughts, floods, bushfires and other climatic changes (EPA 2021).

North Coast landholders have traditionally made significant local contributions to managing the threats and protecting the assets that occur across our region. Their efforts are focussed by the following trends in natural resource condition:

- Threatened species and ecological communities and native vegetation are in decline and under increasing stress from local areas of population growth, habitat fragmentation, invasive species, altered fire regimes, changing land use, overgrazing and climate change.
- Waterway health is declining locally due to riparian vegetation clearing and stock trampling, diffuse source water and sediment pollution and invasive species.

The capacity of the land to sustain a range of productive uses and support natural ecosystems in the long term is at risk from declining soil fertility and erosion (EPA 2021).

Natural resources are expensive, or often impossible, to replace or return to a healthy state. If the health of our soils, water, biodiversity and native vegetation continues to decline, there will be significant losses to agricultural and fisheries productivity, costs to the broader economy including tourism, and a decline in the wellbeing of the region's communities.

Our NRM community recognises these challenges and has provided long-standing support to a whole-of-community and whole-of-government approach to the sustainable management of the region's natural resources.

This NRM Plan outlines how North Coast Local Land Service (LLS) will work in partnership with landholders to deliver its NRM role across the North Coast region. We will take an active leadership and participatory role in the NRM community, by:

- Actively seeking novel partnerships and revenue streams that meet shared strategic outcomes
- Enabling and supporting adoption of best practice land management by landholders and
- Partnering with key stakeholders to deliver programs that ultimately maintain and improve the region's natural resources, improve biodiversity and the ability of the landscape to withstand impacts of climate change.

We also recognise the significance of participating in a whole-of-government approach and acknowledge the role of the statutory and legislative responsibilities of our partner agencies in doing so.

North Coast LLS recognises the cost and strain that drought, flood, fire and COVID-19 events have placed on the region over the past 5 years, the fatigue experienced by local communities in a constant state of impact response and recovery, and the critical link between healthy landscapes and people's wellbeing. We present this NRM Plan as a key instrument that will contribute to the remediation and recovery of communities across the North Coast region.

Our strategic response

Our NRM priorities

Development of a regional NRM Plan that guides how North Coast LLS will provide NRM services for the next 5 years is a requirement under the North Coast's Regional Land Partnership (RLP) Agreement with the Australian Government's Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water.

The Plan provides an investment framework for key regional natural resource management priorities, including those of the Australian Government's matters of national environmental significance and the Regional Land Partnership Agriculture Program (AG 2022). Its actions and approach also provide a response to the Australian Government's environmental agenda of Protect, Restore and Manage where our focus is on improving biodiversity conservation and the ability of landscapes to withstand the impacts of climate change.





Our NRM priorities

Plan identifies the information, extension, advisory, referral and partnership services North Coast LLS will provide over the next 5 years that will contribute to an improvement in the following priorities:

1. Native vegetation and habitats, including:
 - a. the trajectory of State and Federally listed Threatened Species *
 - b. the condition of State and Federally listed Threatened Ecological Communities *
 - c. the natural heritage value of World Heritage Areas *
 - d. areas of high biodiversity value (including corridors and hotspots)
2. The condition of waterways (rivers, estuaries, wetlands) and coastal environments
3. The condition of on-farm soil, biodiversity, and native vegetation *
4. The capacity of natural and agricultural landscapes to cope with change, including changing climate,* and meet market demand for sustainability credentials *.

(* The NRM Plan supports delivery of the Australian Government matters of national environmental significance and Regional Land Partnerships Program priorities. Note that there are no Ramsar sites in the North Coast LLS region.)

North Coast LLS will source outside investment to support delivery of the plan's priorities.

The LLS statewide *Natural Resource Management Framework 2021–2026* (LLS 2021a; referred to as the 'statewide NRM Framework' in this plan) provides an aspirational goal for NRM services, which this NRM Plan also adopts:

By 2026, 80% of customers receiving our NRM services have adopted improved NRM practices on their properties.



The NRM Plan will implement state and regional LLS commitments under the *North Coast LLS Local Strategic Plan 2021–2026* (NCLLS 2021a, 2021b; referred to as the ‘North Coast Local Strategic Plan’), the statewide NRM Framework and LLS statewide *Agricultural Services Framework 2021–2026* (LLS 2021b). Actions will be delivered at 2 scales:

1. local actions that North Coast LLS has responsibility for
2. statewide foundational actions taken from the statewide NRM Framework and LLS Sustainable Agriculture Framework that involve multi-region collaboration for delivery.

The plan is the outcome of extensive collaboration with the region’s NRM community and aligns with the collective NRM aspirations of our regional partners. It captures their priorities, identifies roles, responsibilities, gaps and desired outcomes that will enable us to provide more and relevant strategic NRM services.

The development of this NRM Plan was guided by Australian Government criteria, ensuring that sound evidence, inclusive stakeholder and community engagement and collaborative consultation processes underpin the plan (see Appendix I).

Our delivery approach

Our role is to collaborate with partners and stakeholders to co-design, facilitate and implement programs and projects that align strategic and investment priorities with the needs and aspirations of landholders to achieve shared outcomes.

North Coast LLS will deliver this Plan by providing the following services that facilitate the uptake of best practice NRM (primarily threat management) by private landholders:

- **Extension services** – proactive provision of service and/or technical information
- **Advisory services** – reactive response to a request
- **Referral services** – redirection towards another service provider
- **Partnership services** – an arrangement to co-design and co-deliver a shared outcome
- **Delivery services** – participating in on-ground activities.

With this approach, LLS seeks to increase the adoption of best practice land management by landholders that improves, restores, rehabilitates and avoids future damage to natural systems.

The short-term success of these NRM practice change programs will be measured by the area (hectares) of land under best practice management. We assume that maintenance of the gains from on-ground works will lead to the longer term outcome of improvement in natural resource condition.

We partner with the region’s public land managers (e.g. Crown Lands, National Parks and Wildlife Service, Forestry Corp, Transport NSW, local government) to facilitate strategic planning, program co-design, community engagement and coordination of program delivery (e.g., for pests and weed management) across public and private lands. With this approach, LLS will promote a coordinated, strategic, tenure neutral approach to threat management that improves the condition of natural resources and natural systems at a landscape scale.

Our services will be prioritised and delivered holistically at a catchment scale with a focus on helping private landholders to ‘keep their soil, biodiversity and water on their land’ by managing their ground cover, riparian buffers and native vegetation.

The foundations of our service delivery will include:

- Better understanding the needs of our customers and linking their aspirations to the NRM services we provide
- Broadening our services to accommodate an increasingly diverse landholder base, streamlining our services so that they are accessible, targeting limited resources for greater impact, and actively seeking novel partners and revenue streams
- Recognising the role of Aboriginal land management practices in contemporary NRM
- Promoting the returns of managing natural capital on public and private land, through improvement in existing practices as well as participation in new environmental markets
- Providing services that allow customers to prepare for and recover from more frequent and extreme weather events and other ongoing changing climate impacts.

The land management sector is a shared, complex and dynamic space where many government and non-government organisations have unique priorities and play key roles. We recognise the valuable role that all sectors play in supporting the NRM and agricultural sectors in NSW. To achieve the best outcomes from the NSW Government’s investment, LLS focusses on providing best practice extension services to private landholders, working with public land managers where there are shared outcomes, and where there is a gap or market failure that we can address.



North Coast LLS
customer service

Being responsive in a rapidly changing region

North Coast LLS has worked hard over the years in partnership with the NRM community to refine its delivery of NRM services to a standard that suits ever-changing regional conditions and the needs of the region's landholders.

As the region enters a more carbon-constrained and disaster-prone future, and as the need for our socio-ecological systems to cope with change grows, North Coast LLS will continue to reshape how it provides NRM services to landholders, improve biodiversity and ecosystem services, and the ability of the landscape to withstand the impacts of climate change.

North Coast LLS is committed to providing services within a business model that can cope with and respond to a suite of changing regional conditions. Our commitments include:

- **Being well connected** to the regional NRM community by developing new and maintaining existing trusted partnerships that we can draw on quickly
- **Staying customer focussed** by listening to landholders, identifying their needs and responding with local solutions
- **Maintaining existing and developing novel partnerships** and approaches in response to changing policy, regional circumstances, stakeholder needs and changes in investment
- **Being flexible and quick to engage** with stakeholders and establish partnerships that address regional needs as they arise
- **Taking a resilience-focussed approach** that allows our communities to prepare for, respond to and recover from change and seize new opportunities
- **Taking a risk- and evidence-based approach** that focusses our finite resources to have the greatest impact and create value for our customers
- **Embracing innovation** by developing new and novel partnerships that address challenges
- **Being accountable** for delivery that inspires confidence through robust governance and transparency.

We will use 'sunrise' governance approaches (see Section 6) that allow us to monitor for, anticipate and detect the need to respond to changing regional conditions. This will be critical to North Coast LLS maintaining this business approach and how we respond to change.

Novel partners and revenue streams

Novel approaches are required because the environment and agriculture sector is changing and expectations around natural asset protection and sustainable production are growing from the greater community, consumers and shareholders. New investors such as local and global corporates are entering the traditional, government-led NRM space, offering new and unique opportunities and markets that can deliver an uplift in environmental and sustainable agriculture outcomes.

We will maintain existing as well as seek novel partnerships that allow us to spread the breadth and impact of our service to improve landscape health and help communities prepare for uncertain futures. This will add value to our existing services, by allowing us to:

- Exploit untapped NRM opportunities
- Achieve outcomes at scales we can't realise by ourselves
- Move into NRM ventures not traditionally occupied by government
- Tolerate and learn from risk
- Better demonstrate both progress and accountability back to community
- Build our capacity to offer more agile service
- Demonstrate better value for money
- Meet gaps in community needs.



North Coast LLS is committed to providing services within a business model that can cope with and respond to a suite of changing regional conditions



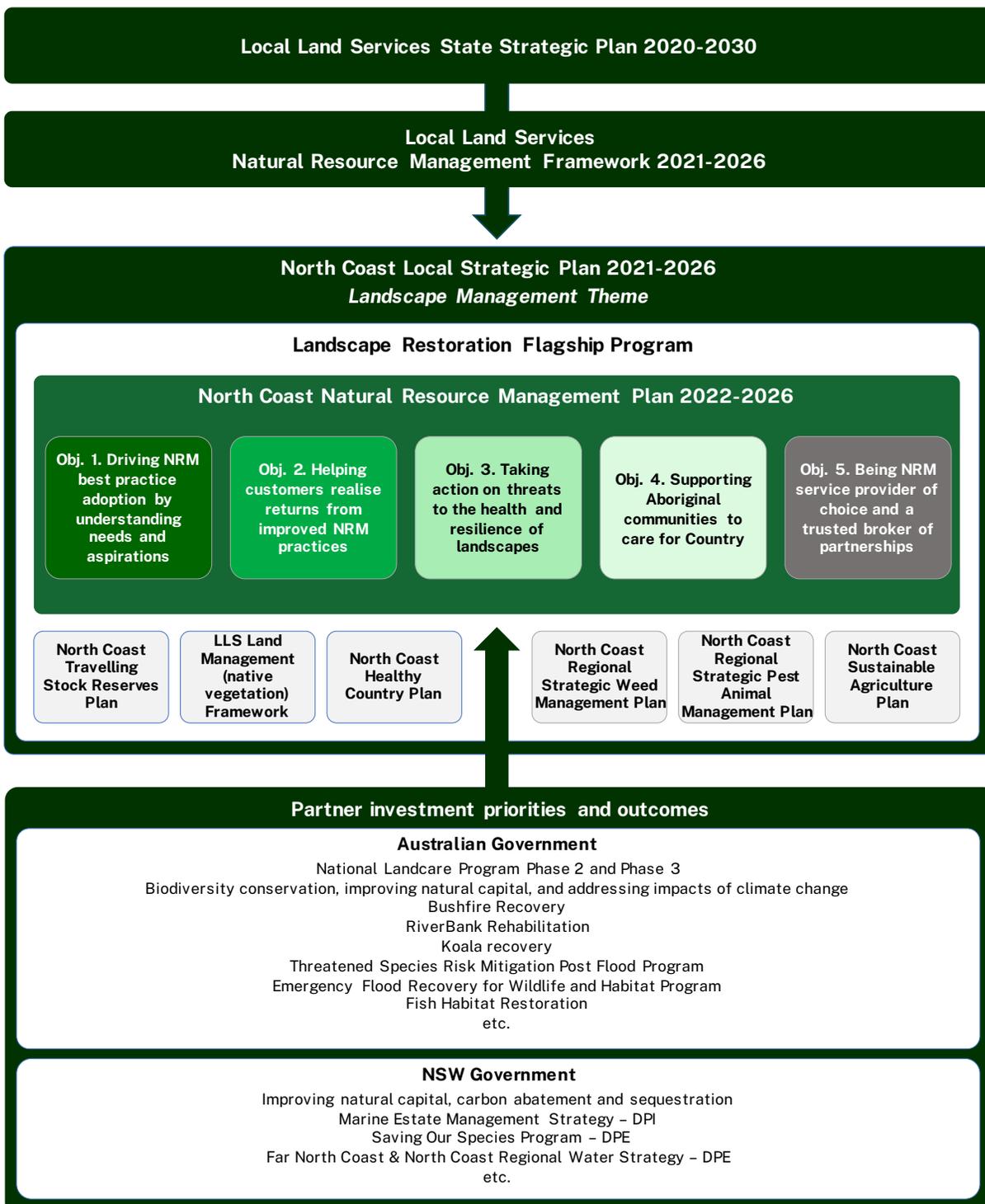
Flood fodder lift, Casino

2. Strategic natural resource management service framework

Service alignment

The North Coast Local Strategic Plan, statewide NRM Framework and Department of Regional NSW outcomes provide the strategic framework for this NRM Plan. The statewide NRM Framework defines the strategic direction for NRM services and its 5 objectives, along with key investor priorities, frame the actions, priorities and outcomes of this NRM Plan (Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1 Relationship of North Coast LLS NRM Plan to other LLS plans and partner priorities (Where DPI is Dept of Primary Industries, DPE is Dept of Planning and Environment)



The North Coast Local Strategic Plan defines how LLS will focus its effort and resources over the next 5 years to ensure our landscapes are healthy and productive, our primary industries are sustainable, and our communities are prepared for risk and change. We recognise that to engage in targeted partnerships and programs we need to integrate the 4 core LLS service themes – Landscape management, Biosecurity, Emergency management and Primary production – from local to catchment scales. Figure 2.1 shows the relationship between the statewide plans and frameworks, the North Coast Local Strategic Plan and this NRM Plan. It illustrates the link to the Landscape management service theme and the Landscape Restoration flagship program. Various North Coast plans that also guide our work are included (e.g. the North Coast Travelling Stock Reserves Plan and the North Coast Land Management Framework).

We integrate the 4 statewide service themes by connecting our core service delivery areas through our 2 flagship programs: Future Ready Farms and Landscape Restoration (see Figure 2.2).

The LLS Agriculture Services Framework 2021–2026 defines the organisation’s approach to providing extension and advisory services that support adoption of improved on-farm land management, productivity, natural asset protection, and preparedness for risks associated with climatic and market/business disruptor events. The NRM Plan supports the objectives and outcomes of this framework.

A suite of federal and state legislation, policies and engagement strategies provide further direction to the delivery of the plan’s objectives (Table 2.1)

Table 2.1 Legislation, policies and engagement strategies providing direction to the delivery of NRM across our region

Legislative, policy and engagement obligations
Legislation
<i>Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016</i> <i>Crown Land Management Act 2016</i> <i>Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act)</i> <i>Fisheries Management Act 1994</i> <i>Forestry Act 2012</i> <i>Local Land Service Act 2013</i> <i>Marine Estate Management Act 2014</i> <i>National Parks Act 1974</i> <i>Native Title Act 1993</i> <i>NSW Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983</i> <i>NSW Biosecurity Act 2015</i> <i>NSW Coastal Management Act 2016</i> <i>Quarantine Act 1908</i> <i>Water Act 2007</i> <i>Water Management Act 2000</i>
Policies and engagement opportunities
Aboriginal Outcomes Strategy 2020–2023 Agricultural Competitiveness White Paper 2015 Australia’s Biodiversity Conservation Strategy 2010–2030 Australian Weeds Strategy 2007 Biodiversity Conservation Investment Strategy 2018 Closing the Gap 2014 Coastal management plans and programs Far North Coast Regional Water Strategy 2022–2040+ LLS Aboriginal Engagement Strategy 2022 [draft] Marine Estate Management Strategy 2018–2028 National Plant Biosecurity Strategy 2010 National Soil Strategy 2021 North Coast Regional Water Strategy 2022–2040+ NSW Blue Carbon Strategy 2022–2027 Our Place on Country 2022–2025 Regional Land Partnerships – National Landcare Program 2018–2023 Stronger Primary Industries Strategy 2022–2030 Threatened Species Strategy 2021–2031
International agreements
Japan–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement China–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement Republic of Korea–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement

How our customers and stakeholders will benefit

Our customer focus and service links to the Department of Regional NSW ‘Productive and sustainable landuse’ outcome and extends across all 5 themes in this NRM Plan, with a clear emphasis on facilitating landholder uptake of best practice

land management Figure 2.3 shows the benefits our services provide to our customers across each of the 5 themes in this NRM Plan (NCLLS 2021c).

Figure 2.2 The North Coast Landscape Restoration and Future Ready Farms flagship programs

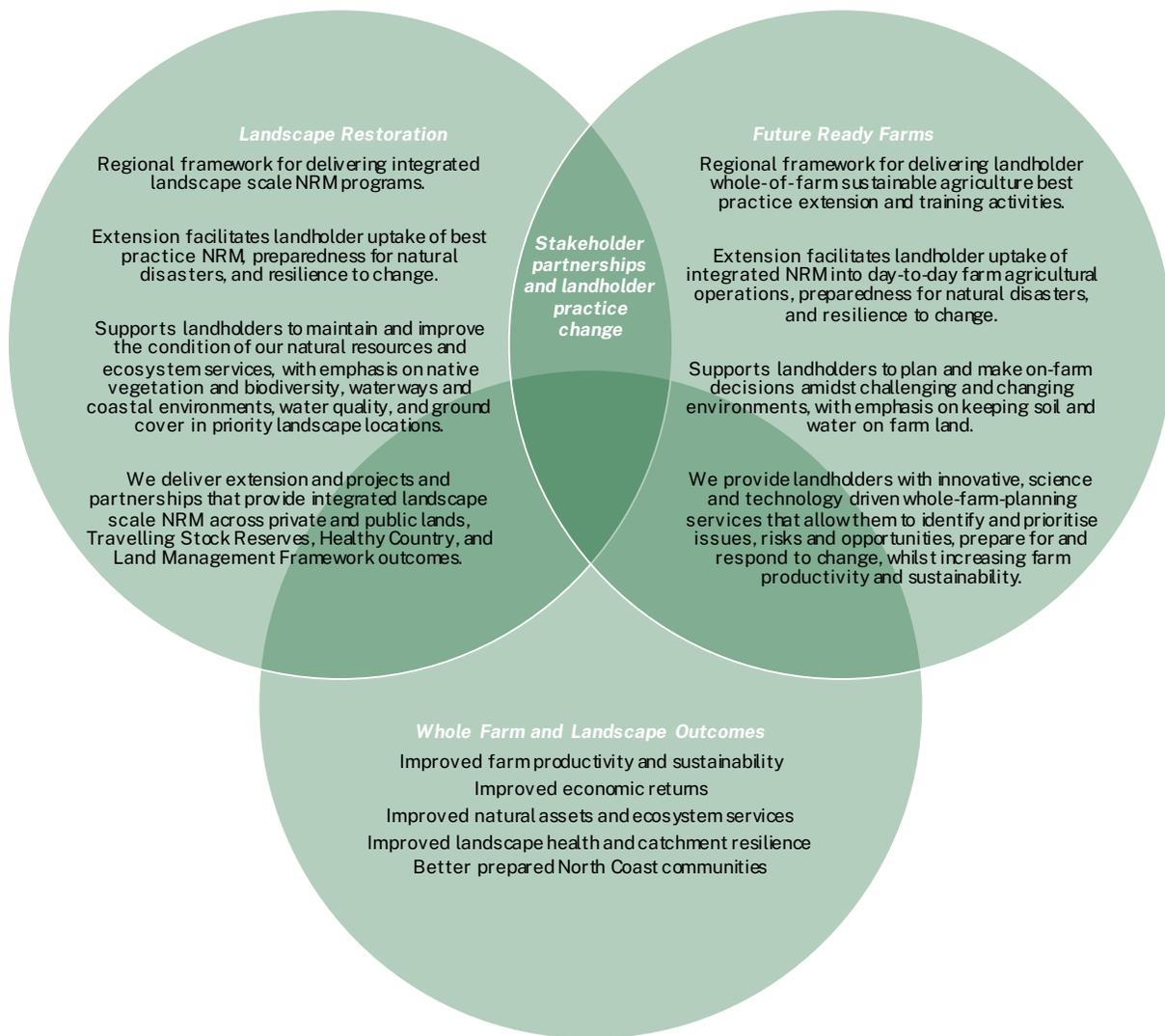


Figure 2.3 LLS NRM Framework objectives and the benefits our customers can expect to see



3. The North Coast region

Our regional values

The North Coast Local Strategic Plan, statewide NRM Framework and Department of Regional NSW outcomes provide the strategic framework for this NRM Plan. The statewide NRM Framework defines the strategic direction for NRM services and its 5 objectives, along with key investor priorities, frame the actions, priorities and outcomes of this NRM Plan (Figure 2.1).

North Coast landscape values

A diversity of natural landscapes and a typically subtropical climate provide for nationally recognised biodiversity, wilderness and wetland areas; combined with complex and diverse soil systems and a range of vegetation formations (Figure 3.2). The escarpment ranges and midland hills to the west support the headwaters of the 9 large river systems that drain onto extensive coastal alluvial floodplains, which have intricate connections to headland, beach, estuarine and marine environments. North Coast LLS is home to 50% of the state's marine parks (DECCW 2010b; NRCMA 2013a).

The North Coast region includes major biodiversity corridors and one of Australia's 15 biodiversity hotspots (the Border Ranges, see Figure 3.3). The Border Ranges are considered the most biodiverse area in NSW, support the greatest number of native plant and animal species of any area in NSW and include the greatest number of threatened species (DECCW 2010a).

The North Coast region also includes some of the Gondwana Rainforests of Australia World Heritage property and the Lord Howe Island World Heritage Area located 585 kilometres east of Port Macquarie (Figure 3.4). The main island is 14.5 square kilometres with picturesque natural landscapes and rich biodiversity.

Regional land management and tenure includes (Figure 3.1):

- national parks and reserved state forest – 6,590 square kilometres (or 20.5% of the region)
- unreserved state forest – 4,036 square kilometres (or 12.5% of the region)
- Crown land, urban and other private land – 20,505 square kilometres (or 64%)
- Indigenous protected areas – 32 square kilometres (or 0.1%) and
- other Aboriginal-owned land – 269 square kilometres (or 0.84%).
- Native Title exists across 52.54 square kilometres (or 0.16%).

North Coast LLS operates across a diverse and distinct mixture of landscape, livelihood and lifestyle values. While a significant proportion of the region is within terrestrial and marine protected areas, there are many threatened species and ecological communities that occur on private land (NRCMA 2013a).



Koala detection dog



Scrub turpentine with myrtle rust

Figure 21 The North Coast LLS region



In summary, the livelihood values of the region include



9 River systems
Tweed, Brunswick, Richmond, Clarence, Bellinger, Kalang, Nambucca, Macleay, Hastings



Border Ranges
Biodiversity Hotspot



2 World Heritage Areas
Gondwana Rainforests of Australia and Lord Howe Island Group



3 marine parks
Cape Byron, Solitary Islands and Lord Howe Island



national parks



state forests



Indigenous protected areas



Donkey Orchid

Figure 3.2 The natural landscapes of the North Coast region

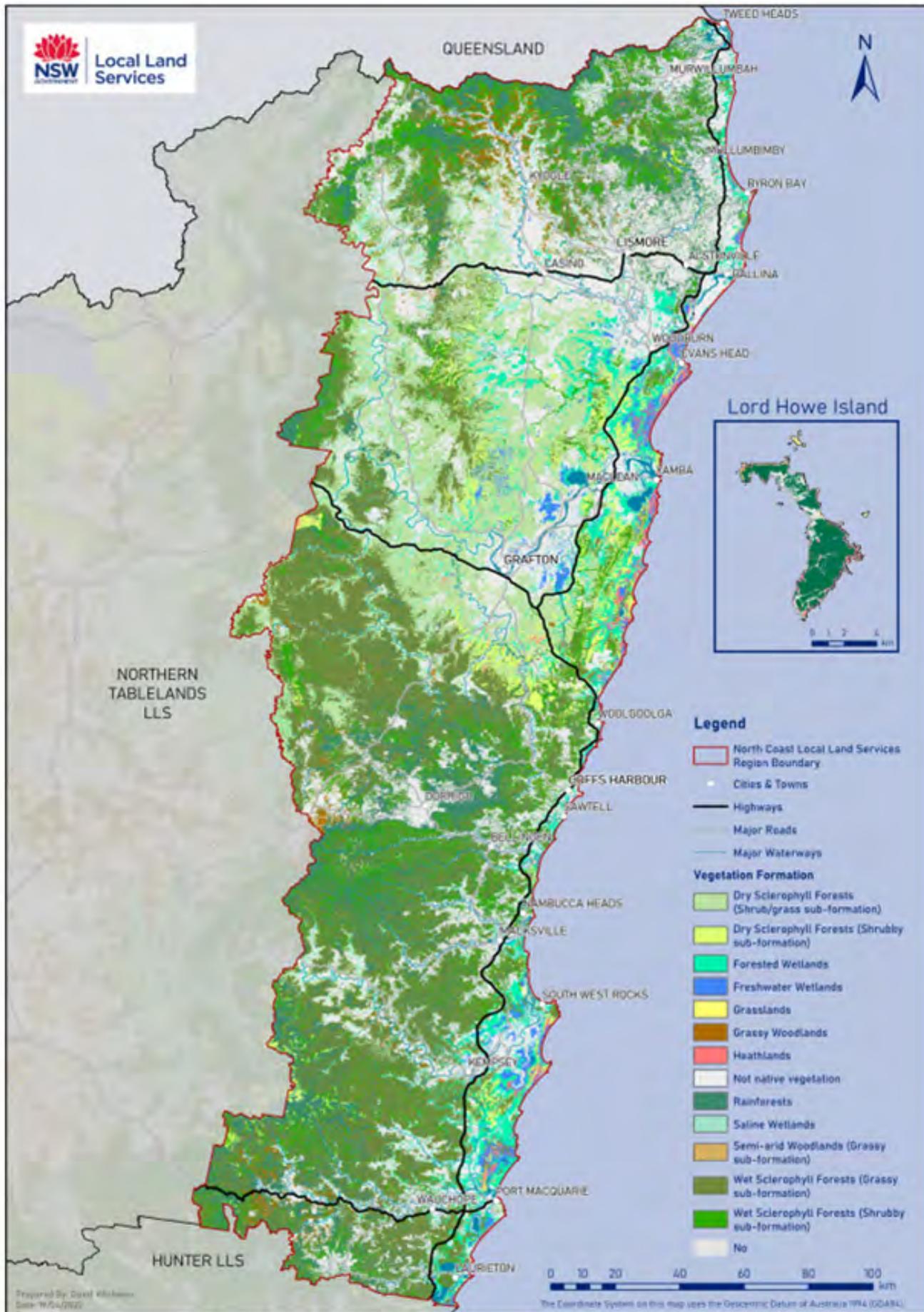


Figure 3.3 Biodiversity corridors and biodiversity hotspots that will provide a focus for North Coast LLS private land conservation



Figure 3.4 World Heritage Areas in the North Coast region



North Coast lifestyle values

Approximately 533,000 people reside in the many vibrant towns, villages and communities of the North Coast. The natural setting supports diverse coastal and hinterland lifestyles. An iconic and densely populated coastline provides a focus for recreational pursuits and much sought-after sea change and tree change lifestyles. The major population centres are located on or near the coast and are connected primarily by coastal transport routes. They include Tweed Heads, Lismore, Murwillumbah, Grafton, Coffs Harbour, Nambucca, Kempsey and Port Macquarie (Figure 3.1). (NRCMA 2013a)

There are 12 local government areas (LGAs) in the region across the 3 North Coast LLS 'subregions':

- northern subregion – Tweed, Byron, Lismore, Ballina, Kyogle, Richmond Valley LGAs
- central subregion – Clarence Valley, Coffs Harbour, Bellingen LGAs
- southern subregion – Nambucca, Kempsey and Port Macquarie – Hastings LGAs and the Lord Howe Island Board.

North Coast LLS recognises that the region's northern, central and southern subregions have unique social, economic and environmental characteristics that define their socio-ecological landscapes. Each landscapes will require tailored management actions if local NRM objectives and community aspirations are to be met. The NRM Advisory Committee will be instrumental in coordinating the identification and delivery of local management actions (NRCMA 2013b).



North Coast cultural values

The North Coast region is the traditional home to 6 Aboriginal nations (Figure 3.5). Throughout the region there are cultural sites, special places and physical evidence of traditional land use. Continued use of wild foods and medicines is an important activity highly valued by Aboriginal people.

There are currently approximately 30,000 Aboriginal people on the North Coast which is 6% of the region's population. There are 8 Registered Native Title Bodies Corporate, 23 Local Aboriginal Land Councils in the region and numerous other organisations representing Traditional Owners reflecting the diversity of the region's communities.

Four Indigenous protected areas containing biodiversity and cultural resource values are in the region. Almost 6% of the region is subject to determined (non-exclusive) Native Title and a further 15% is currently under registered claim.

Previously, North Coast LLS had a legislatively prescribed Aboriginal Community Advisory Committee, whose membership consisted of key Aboriginal stakeholders and a North Coast LLS Board Director. The committee had a pivotal role in co-designing projects and co-delivering projects undertaken on Local Aboriginal Land Council land. North Coast LLS is currently working with Aboriginal stakeholders and the Department of Planning and Environment to develop new 'Yarning Circles' as a culturally safe practice for bringing stakeholders together to discuss their healthy Country aspirations. Aboriginal partners currently deliver projects with a focus on the rehabilitation of cultural and biodiversity assets (e.g. using cultural burning, weed control, pest control), and the improvement of land and sea cultural connections.

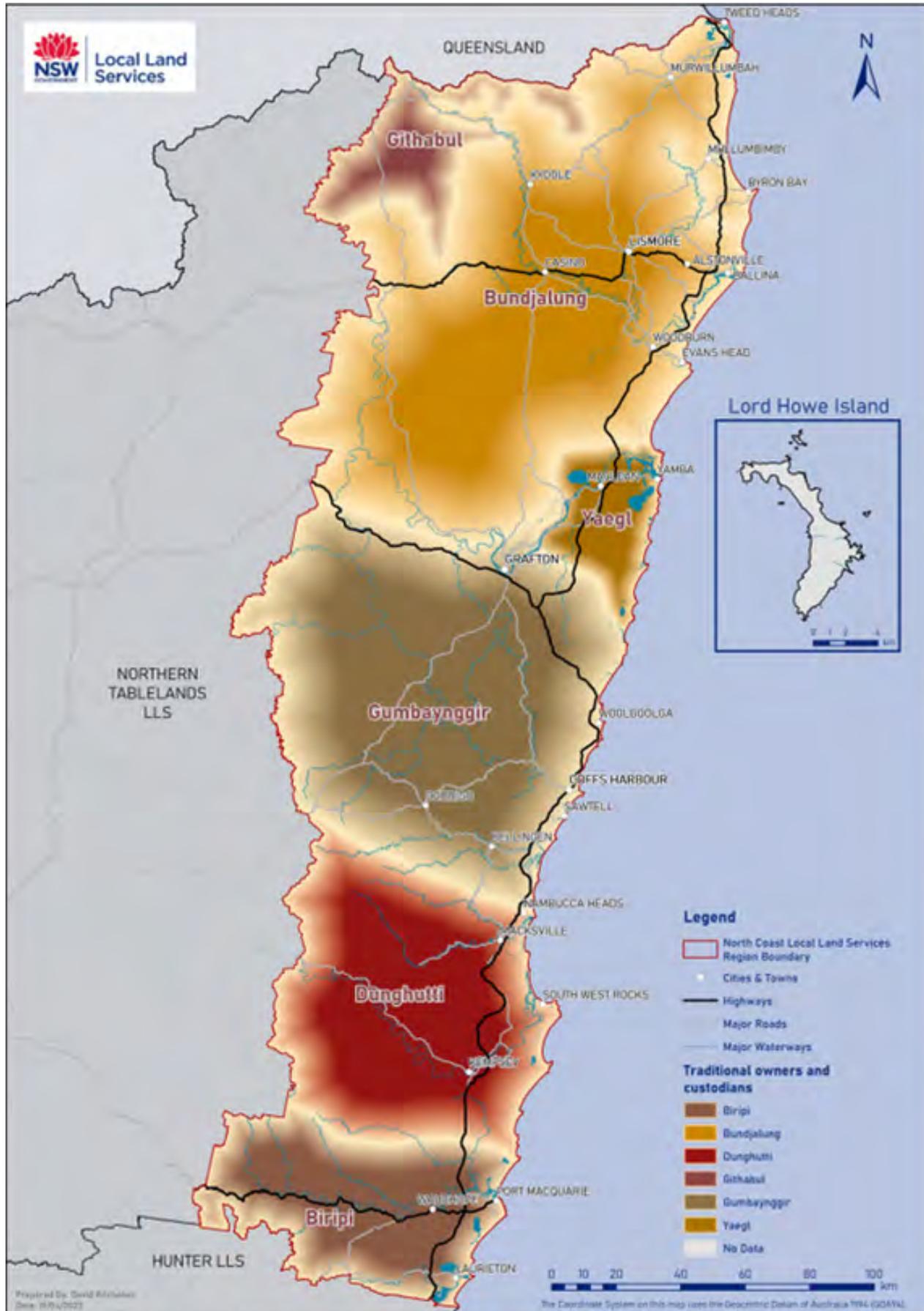
Traditional owners include peoples from the following nations:

- Bundjalung
- Yaegl
- Githabul
- Gumbaynggirr
- Dunghutti
- Biripi.



Four Indigenous protected areas containing biodiversity and cultural resource values are in the region. Almost 6% of the region is subject to determined (non-exclusive) Native Title and a further 15% is currently under registered claim.

Figure 3.5 Aboriginal nations of the North Coast region



North Coast livelihood values

The region has a diverse economy that reflects the provision of services to an ageing population, agricultural production, those that chose to live here for lifestyle reasons and the popularity of the North Coast as a tourist destination.

The diverse landscapes—including coastal, riparian, floodplain, hinterland, escarpments and ranges—provide a range of soil types, many highly fertile and desirable for agriculture (Figure 3.6).

The North Coast supports a range of natural resource-based industries which underpin the prosperity of the region. These include the beef, dairy, blueberry, macadamia, sugar, bananas, intensive horticulture, fishing and aquaculture, timber production and tourism industries (Figure 3.7) (NCLLS 2021c).

The region has a large and capable NRM community and industry base that is actively engaged in sustainable resource management. While agriculture, forestry and fishing make a significant contribution to employment across the region, there has been a decline in the contribution of this sector to the regional economy in recent years (ELA 2014).



Beef cattle

Figure 3.6 The soil types of the North Coast region

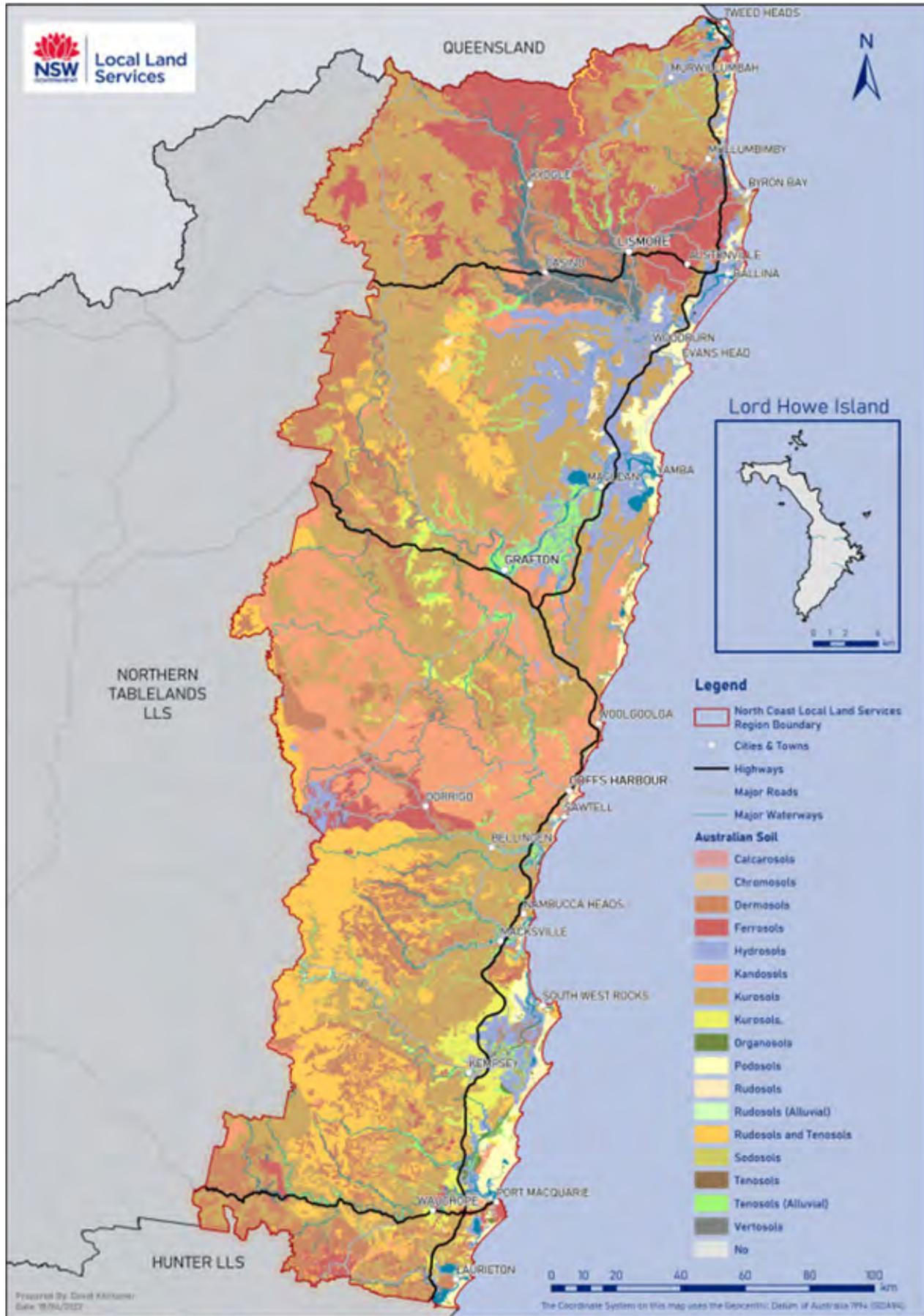
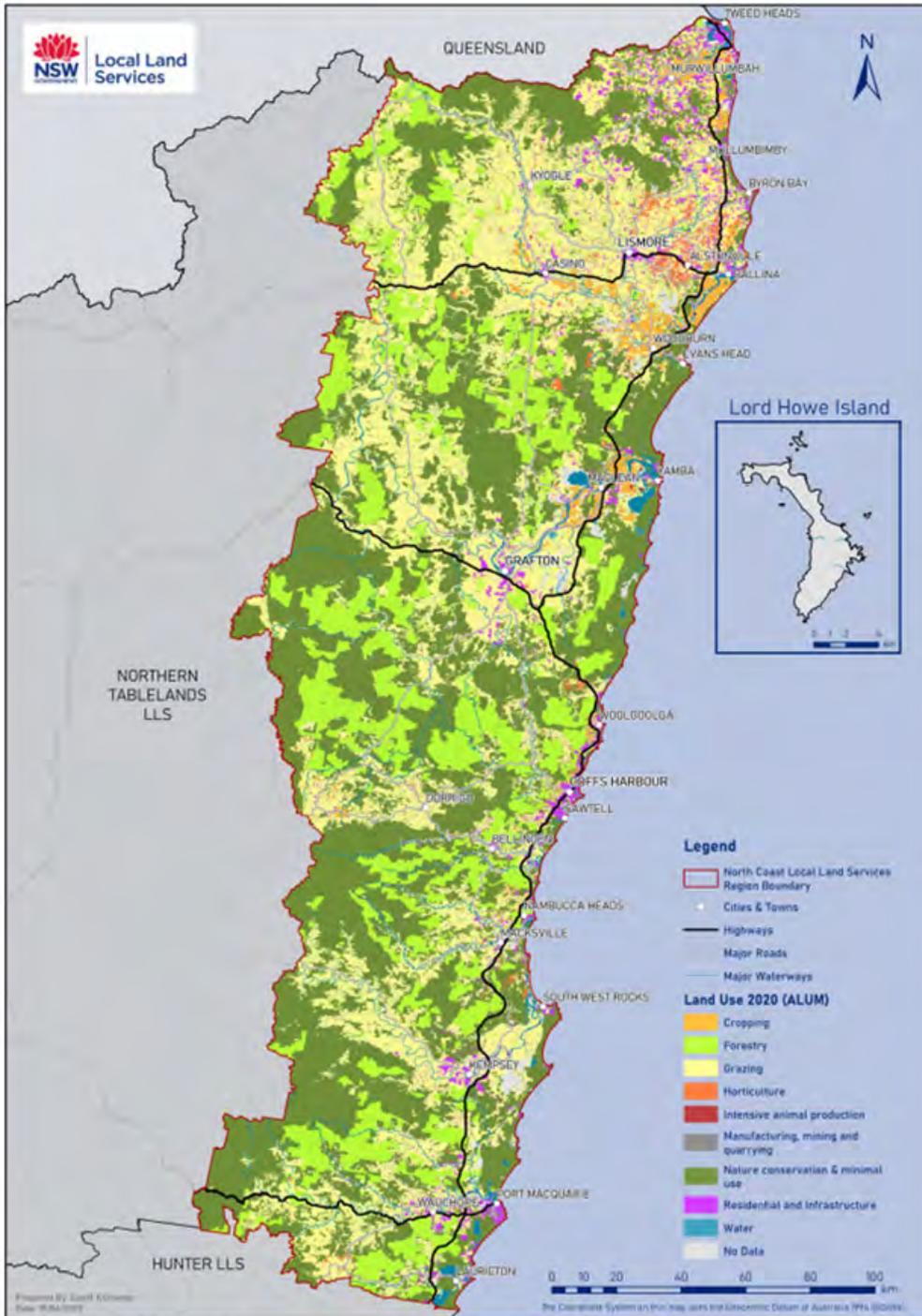


Figure 3.6 The soil types of the North Coast region



In summary, the livelihood values of the region include



average annual rainfall –1,366 mm



total area of region –32,030 km²



high value North Coast agricultural products – macadamias, blueberries, beef, sugar, bananas, dairy



contribution of North Coast agribusiness to NSW economy (including growing and processing) is valued at A\$2.5 billion



contribution of North Coast fruit and nuts to NSW by gross value is 30%



number of holdings –22,522. Local Land Services only rates landholders with holdings of 10 hectares or above and therefore we cannot provide an accurate estimate of the number of holdings below 10 hectares. Given the land use transition in the North Coast, our expectation is that this is a significant number. The number of holdings by size in the North Coast are as follows:

10–50 hectare = 14,346

50–100 hectare = 4,214

100–150 hectare = 1,563

150–500 hectare = 1,847

over 500 hectares = 552



Blueberry farmer, Coffs coast

Agricultural products and sustainability credentials

The North Coast region is experiencing the national and global shift from quantity-oriented agriculture to an emphasis on production quality and sustainability. Meeting these market demands is requiring supply chains that can be traced from the farm to consumer. The uptake of tracing systems varies from industry to industry.

Some national and statewide industry groups have developed food safety programs to support member’s access to markets. However, the development and implementation of agricultural products with demonstrable sustainability credentials is not as widespread, and where it does exist it is not well adopted. Barriers to the adoption of these systems include their complexity, cost and risk of diminished return on investment.

The macadamia and blueberry industries are examples where the North Coast’s industry groups support their members to implement best practice management systems with varying degrees of traceability, but the uptake of those systems by producers is low. Across most industries, there are few enterprises that can demonstrate and verify the actual use of best practices on-farm.

North Coast LLS will work with industries and individual producers to support the uptake of best practice programs (e.g. Prograze, Hort360) that provide clear sustainability measures and credentials.

Private landholder values

- Understanding private landholder land management priorities is a strength for LLS. It allows us to tailor our services to meet landholder aspirations and drive change that delivers positive NRM outcomes. North Coast land managers have told us that they consider the following to be important:
- undertaking sustainable land use practices
- conserving soils
- improving water quality
- protecting crops and livestock from pests, weeds and diseases
- conserving habitat and wildlife (NCLLS 2021a, 2021b, 2021c, 2021d).

We have reflected these priorities in the plan’s actions (Section 5), where the overarching intent is to support landholders to adopt best practices that help them meet these priorities.

Key regional threats

The North Coast is experiencing significant social, economic and environmental change, which presents challenges to the sustainable management of our landscapes:

- Climate change is resulting in more frequent and severe weather events, often adversely impacting local communities and economies, landscapes and biodiversity

- Lifestyle, population and primary industry shifts are driving land-use changes
- Changing climate, changing land use and the proximity to major air and seaports is bringing the risk of new incursions of plants, pests and diseases.

These challenges present us with key regional threats and the need to identify opportunities for addressing these threats (Table 3.1) (EPA 2021; North Coast LLS 2021a, 2021b, 2021c).

Table 3.1 Key regional threats to landscape, lifestyle and livelihood values

Our key regional threats	Our regional opportunities to address these threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate change and associated natural disasters • Loss of habitat and land clearing as a result of land-use change and growing population, particularly on the coast • Degradation of natural systems, including loss of biodiversity • Diffuse water pollutants from agricultural activities and floods • Ongoing, new and emerging biosecurity risks • Wildfire and changing fire regimes • NRM project funding uncertainty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being future-focused and taking a risk-based approach to enhancing the resilience of natural assets • Working with landholders to help them prepare for and respond to ongoing change • Working with new landholders to help them understand and address threats to natural resources • Advising landholders on lawful clearance of native vegetation under the Land Management Framework that achieves on-farm production and NRM goals • Helping landholders to improve existing practices and also identify new and emerging markets and diversify their income streams • Strengthening and integrating our core service delivery through our flagship programs • Being flexible, adaptive and quick to establish partnerships that respond to needs and changing conditions

(EPA 2021; NCLLS 2017a, 2017b, 2018, 2021c)

Changing climate

The North Coast's natural and agricultural landscapes are now experiencing the impacts of changing climate (NCLLS 2017b; OEH 2016; 2019). The management of our natural resources will need to adapt to increases in:

- temperatures, frequency of hot days and duration of hot spells
- average temperatures in all seasons
- intensity of extreme rainfall events and drought
- sea surface temperatures
- ocean acidification
- mean sea level and height of extreme sea-level events
- harsher fire-weather and decreases in frost risk, especially on the western edges of the region.

The plan identifies the adaptation-based services that North Coast LLS will provide to support landholders to prepare for changing climate conditions, particularly in relation to the recovery from the cumulative impacts of droughts, floods and fires.

Most of the region's catchments are subjected to sudden, short, severe rainfall events resulting in high water flows that cause significant damage and erosion, and climate change is predicted to exacerbate this.

Larger catchment floodplains contain significant wetlands and freshwater and estuarine systems that provide habitat for fish nurseries and also serve as highly productive agricultural lands. Farms on the floodplains are often located within acid sulphate soil priority areas and in medium and high zones of soil carbon capture and retention. Floods can cause leeching of acid into waterways and loss of fertile soils. The Clarence, Richmond and Wilsons catchments in particular are flood-prone and support major regional centres that service diverse agricultural industries, including beef, dairy, sugar, native and plantation forestry, cropping, horticulture (macadamias and blueberries) and bananas (NRCMA 2013a).

Recent bushfire events have highlighted how sensitive the region's native vegetation is to wildfire and the impact it can have on biodiversity at a landscape scale. Bushfire impacts to threatened species and ecological communities, landscape connectivity and biodiversity hotspots, vegetative ground cover, riparian vegetation and farm runoff water quality are addressed by this plan, primarily through habitat protection, remediation and restoration measures.

We recognise that new and emerging markets accelerate the adoption of better land management practices, improve biodiversity and mitigate and ameliorate the impacts of carbon. We will broaden the scope of our services to include the investigation of innovative options for developing partnerships and projects that ultimately generate credits (e.g. carbon, biodiversity, waste, natural capital) and stimulate stewardship. This approach will deliver better returns for landholders, while progressing the process of regional de-carbonisation (i.e., abatement through reduction in regional emissions and sequestration through plantings). Nil-tenure approaches where seamless management across public and private lands provide the opportunity for cost effective implementation of NRM.



Recent bushfire events have highlighted how sensitive the region's native vegetation is to wildfire and the impact it can have on biodiversity at a landscape scale.





4. Customer-focussed NRM services

A commitment to delivering value

The North Coast’s NRM community is diverse, dynamic and driven by partnerships that involve many government agencies, non-government organisations, industry and community groups (Table 4.1).

Our unique connection with landholders, the investment that we attract and the partnerships we form allows us to deliver value and have the greatest impact through:

- Direct action –where we deliver NRM practice change extension, advisory and on-ground partnership services to landholders that enables them to manage key threats
- Partnership and connection –where we facilitate the delivery of outcomes at the landscape scale by forming cross-boundary partnerships, collaborating across private and public land, coordinating effort locally and statewide, and connecting with the region’s 250,000+ customers.

Table 4.1 North Coast LLS’s customers and stakeholders

Our key regional threats	
Private landholders	Primary producers or farmers Hobby or lifestyle landholders Aboriginal landholders Over 22,000 landholders (>10 ha land holdings) Corporate landholder
Our key regional threats	
Govt agencies –public land manager	Local governments, Crown Lands, National Parks and Wildlife Service (part of Department of Planning and Environment), Forestry Corporation of NSW, etc.
Investors/ funding bodies	Organisations for whom we provide services and deliver programs on their behalf e.g. NSW and Australian government agencies, Philanthropic organisations
Advisors	Specialist providers of expertise on whom we rely to deliver our services e.g. other NSW government agencies (e.g. Department of Planning and Environment, Aboriginal Affairs, Department of Primary Industries)
Local and regional networks and partners	Organisations we work with to provide services and implement programs e.g. Landcare, Local Aboriginal Land Councils, Registered Native Title Bodies Corporate, Traditional Owner groups, conservation consortiums and alliances, education and research institutions
Non-government organisations	Volunteers, EnviTE, Greening Australia, Bush Heritage, Nature Conservation Council
Beneficiaries	People of NSW, the environment and its natural and cultural resources

The community has a significant history of sourcing investment, developing enduring initiatives, providing a workforce to carry out on-ground delivery and banding together to deal with significant events such as drought, fire and flood. Volunteers have for many years played a significant role in maintaining the on ground gains from NRM activities (NRCMA 2013a).

The community comprises stakeholders with varying roles and capacities (geographically and through time) to deliver NRM.

We need to support each other to build and share that capacity if we are to develop the partnerships fundamental to NRM delivery on the North Coast, particularly in the face of changing climate impacts.

North Coast LLS services create value for our customers and our landscapes and define our role as an NRM partner (Table 4.2).

Table 4.2 North Coast LLS's high value customer services and livelihood values

High value NRM services	What our customers will see
Tailored advice	Advice tailored to a customer's values, aspirations, needs and land management context – a whole-property approach matching landholder aspirations to land capabilities and best practice
Trusted partnerships	Partnerships with trusted providers that deliver production, natural asset and ecosystem service outcomes
Responsive services Network support	Seamless, coordinated and prompt interactions with our services Collaborative social networks that facilitate change
Demonstration of benefit	Customers connected to local examples that demonstrate the environmental, economic, social and cultural benefits of NRM best practices
Market connections	Connecting customers to market-based stewardship and certification schemes that improve the ecological, social and economic return from NRM
Financial facilitation	The administration of carefully targeted grants, where there is a demonstrated need for financial incentives to catalyse change
Coordinated action	Facilitating coordinated action that informs local, state and national NRM initiatives and policy



We need to support each other to build and share that capacity if we are to develop the partnerships fundamental to NRM delivery on the North Coast, particularly in the face of changing climate impacts.



Oyster farming, Nambucca River



5. The NRM Action Plan

Actions, priorities and measures of success

Our NRM Action Plan identifies the extension, advisory and partnership services North Coast LLS will provide to customers and stakeholders and how we will measure successful delivery of those services.

Actions are grouped according to the themes and short-term outcomes from the *Natural Resource Management Framework 2021–2026* (the ‘statewide NRM Framework’) (LLS 2021a) and are also linked to the outcomes of the North Coast Local Land Services Local Strategic Plan (NCLLS 2021a).

Measures of success reflect what will be achieved against the short-term outcomes over the plan’s 5-year period.

The objective, actions and measures of success presented in the themes below contribute to the Australian Government, statewide LLS NRM Framework and North Coast Local Strategic Plan outcomes presented in Table 5.1.

Partnership Profiles

Partnership Profiles describe how regional partnerships will contribute to the delivery of actions in the NRM Action Plan:

- What do our partners do that is relevant to the North Coast LLS NRM Plan? What are their responsibilities and what policy guides them?
- What are North Coast LLS’s responsibilities in the partnership?
- How does the partnership contribute to the NRM Plan’s actions, priorities and outcomes?
- What tools are used to define and set priorities?
- What does a successful partnership look like?

The partnership profiles can be found in the *North Coast LLS Natural Resource Management Plan Partnership Profiles-Support Information Document 1*, (NCLLS 2022a).

The mapping that underpins the actions and many of the prioritisation processes captured in the Partnership Profiles can be found in the *North Coast LLS Natural Resource Management Plan Map Book-Support Information Document 2*, (NCLLS 2022b).

Evidence Plan

An Evidence Plan gives an account of the consultation, analyses, decision-making processes and evidence base used to develop the NRM Plan. It also provides detail on how this plan meets the Australian Government’s NRM Plan development criteria (See Appendix I)

The Plan’s evidence can be found in the *North Coast LLS Natural Resource Management Plan Evidence Plan-Support Information Document 3*, (NCLLS 2022c).



Arrowhead Violet

NRM Action Plan

[AusGov] = Australian Government priority

 THEME 1: Enabling land manager adoption of practice change	
OBJECTIVE 1: To drive widespread NRM best practice adoption by understanding and addressing our customers' social and behavioural drivers	
North Coast LLS action 1. Design and implement practice change programs that respond to the drivers and enablers of landholder adoption of best practice land management.	Priority activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and resource an LLS NRM extension model that allows LLS to better deliver the breadth of the priorities identified in the flagship programs • Review and map customer segments, NRM aspirations and drivers of change • Update practice change programs with a focus on building social networks and the capacity to prepare for and respond to natural disasters, changing climate and other disturbances • Deliver the Accelerating preparedness and resilience within natural disaster fatigued communities program to address barriers and enablers to community participation in resilience-building initiatives and deliver extension programs accordingly.
Delivery partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LLS NRM Statewide Advisory Group, LLS SusAg Statewide Advisory Group, Department of Primary Industries (DPI) –Emergency Management, Dept of Customer Service –Behavioural Insights, DPE –Social Research, industry networks, Private landholders 	
Performance narrative Services will include provision of extension, advice, referrals and opportunities to acquire funding for NRM projects; consultation with individuals and groups; industry and community partnerships, group events and project field days. We will measure our success through customer satisfaction with our services, the number of partnerships and programs we have updated to better reflect aspirations, needs and preparedness for change; and the ensuing projects that achieve increased area (hectares) of improved land management practice across our customer segments.	
Measures of success <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer satisfaction and net promoter scores • Number of partnerships • Increases in knowledge and skills • Area (hectares) of improved practices 	
Contribution to Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The objective, actions and measures of success presented in this theme will contribute to the Australian Government, statewide LLS NRM Framework and North Coast Local Strategic Plan outcomes below - See contribution to outcomes below 	



Dairy cows



THEME 2: Realising returns from best practice NRM, new opportunities and changing practice

OBJECTIVE 2: To help our customers realise returns from adoption of improved NRM practices

<p>North Coast LLS actions</p> <p>2. Support landholder adoption of best practice management of natural assets and ecosystem services that increases farm production, profitability and economic returns and improves landscape health.</p> <p>[AusGov]</p>	<p>Priority activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide extension and advisory services that allow landholders to improve their existing NRM practices • Provide extension and advisory services that support landholder participation in new and emerging environmental markets • Establish a new Environmental Markets Extension and Advisory Program • Develop proposals for investment in the natural capital market
<p>3. Deliver a concierge approach between customers and the emerging markets industry so that landholders understand the risks, costs and benefits of approaches.</p> <p>[AusGov]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support emerging local and regional carbon economy initiatives and form strategic partnerships with industry, corporate, non-government organisation (NGO) and environmental market providers • Develop capacity to participate in the Federal Blue Carbon Accreditation and Accounting Program • Promote participation in emerging alternative markets • Develop and deliver partnerships and projects (including carbon, blue carbon, biodiversity) on the North Coast • Investigate options and develop partnerships for developing projects that generate credits (e.g. waste recycling, sediment, nutrient credits)
<p>Delivery partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private landholders and public land managers, DPI Productivity and Abatement Program, local government, carbon market providers, Landcare, DPI – Fisheries (Marine Estate Management Authority) 	
<p>Performance narrative</p> <p>Services will include facilitation of on-ground NRM works; provision of NRM extension, advice and referrals; collation and dissemination of information; consultation with individuals, groups and networks; industry and community partnerships, group events, project field days; development of partnerships.</p> <p>We will measure our success through customer satisfaction with our services; increases in land manager knowledge of and participation in environmental market programs and more traditional best practice programs; the number of new market partnerships and programs we have developed; the uptake of traditional best practices; and the ensuing projects that allow customers to realise economic returns through hectares of improved land management practice.</p>	
<p>Measures of success</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land managers engaged in environmental market programs • Land managers engaged in advisory services • Land managers engaged in best practice management • Increases in knowledge and attitudes • Area (hectares) of improved practices 	
<p>Contribution to Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The objective, actions and measures of success presented in this theme will contribute to the Australian Government, statewide LLS NRM Framework and North Coast Local Strategic Plan outcomes below - See contribution to outcomes below 	



THEME 3: Healthy and resilient landscapes and catchments

OBJECTIVE 3: To take action on the top threats to the health and resilience of NSW landscapes and catchments

<p>North Coast LLS actions</p> <p>4. Promote the Landscape Restoration and Future Ready Farms flagship programs as North Coast LLS's integrated approach to delivering adaptive, future-ready, landholder focussed actions to increase biodiversity and the ability of landscapes to withstand impacts of climate change.</p> <p>[AusGov]</p>	<p>Priority activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscape Restoration flagship program: Deliver programs that address landscape-scale threats and provide improvements in the condition of soil, water, native vegetation and biodiversity, and preparedness for natural disasters and other major disruptor events including climate change. • Deliver extension programs that support the Flagship's outcomes • Develop and implement a preparedness and climate change adaptation framework that supports both flagship programs and implementation of this Plan <p>Delivery partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All NRM delivery partners listed in this action table <p>Priority activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future Ready Farms flagship program: Provide extension and training services that support landholder adoption of best practice whole-farm planning that matches best practice NRM to land use, land capability, preparedness for natural disasters and resilience to climate change. <p>Delivery partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All delivery partners listed in this table that deliver sustainable agriculture actions
<p>5. Participate in governance and collaboration processes that drive strategic implementation of the North Coast LLS NRM Plan.</p> <p>[AusGov]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish an NRM Advisory Committee that supports implementation of the NRM Plan, by enabling stakeholders to collaborate, leverage opportunity, coordinate activities and monitor and respond to change and opportunity • Support subregional, integrated catchment-based NRM governance arrangements (e.g. Richmond) <p>Delivery partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local governments, key government agencies and authorities, public land managers, conservation alliances and groups, key industry sectors, Aboriginal stakeholders, private landholder representatives, community representatives, NSW Farmers Federation
<p>North Coast LLS actions</p> <p>6. Support adoption of best practice threat management by landholders and partner with key stakeholders to contribute to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) threatened species recovery outcomes [AusGov] b) threatened ecological community recovery outcomes [AusGov] c) conservation outcomes adjacent to NPWS protected areas including Gondwana Rainforests World Heritage Areas. [AusGov] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support landholders to manage key threats to EPBC Act listed threatened species: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Koala (via NSW Koala Strategy (DPE 2022)) • Manage threatened species in collaboration with Saving our Species (SOS) species program coordinators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brush-tailed Rock-wallaby • Australasian Bittern • Eastern Curlew • Bellinger River Snapping Turtle • Green Turtle • Smooth Davidson's Plum • Native Guava • Lord Howe Island Mount Lidgbird Charopid Land Snail • Lord Howe Island Phasmid • Lord Howe Island Little Mountain Palm • Pink Under-wing Moth



THEME 3: Healthy and resilient landscapes and catchments

OBJECTIVE 3: To take action on the top threats to the health and resilience of NSW landscapes and catchments

d) conservation outcomes and/or agreements for native vegetation, habitats and biodiversity in corridors, biodiversity hotspots and other areas of high biodiversity value.

[AusGov]

- Support landholders to manage key threats to Fisheries Management Act listed threatened species:
 - Eastern Freshwater Cod
 - Oxylean Pygmy Perch
 - Black Rock Cod
 - Marine Brown Algae
 - Purple spotted Gudgeon
- Build on existing partnerships and support landholders to manage key threats to Biodiversity Conservation Act listed SOS threatened species:
 - Eastern Bristle Bird
 - Beach Stone Curlew

Delivery partners

- Private landholders, Saving Our Species program, DPE –Biodiversity, Conservation and Science, DPE –Water, Biodiversity Conservation Trust, NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, DPI –Fisheries, Crown Lands, DPI –Fisheries (Marine Estate Management Authority), Forestry Corp NSW, local government, Lord Howe Island Board, Traditional Indigenous owners, Indigenous Ranger groups, Landcare, conservation alliances, specialist conservation groups (e.g. Northern Eastern Bristlebird Working Group, Northern Rivers Fire and Biodiversity Consortium, Birdlife Australia, Hastings Bird Observers, Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary, Melbourne Zoo, Australian Museum, Queensland Healthy Land and Water, OzFish)

Support landholders to manage key threats to EPBC Act listed threatened ecological communities in collaboration with SOS species program coordinators:

- Coastal salt marsh
- Coastal swamp oak
- Subtropical lowland rainforest
- Littoral rainforest

Delivery partners

- Private landholders, Saving Our Species program, DPE –Biodiversity, Conservation and Science, DPE –Water, Biodiversity Conservation Trust, Soil Conservation Service, NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, DPI –Fisheries, Crown Lands, DPI Fisheries (Marine Estate Management Authority), Forestry Corp NSW, local government, Lord Howe Island Board, Traditional Indigenous owners, Indigenous Ranger groups, Landcare, Dunecare, Conservation Alliances, specialist conservation groups (e.g. Northern Eastern Bristlebird Working Group, Northern Rivers Fire and Biodiversity Consortium, Birdlife Australia, Hastings Bird Observers, Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary, Melbourne Zoo, Australian Museum, Queensland Healthy Land and Water)

Support private and private landholders to manage key threats to neighbouring protected areas and World Heritage Areas (e.g. pests, weeds, fire, Bell Miner Dieback)

Delivery partners

- Private landholders, Saving Our Species program, DPE –Biodiversity, Conservation and Science, DPE –Science, Economics and Insights, Biodiversity Conservation Trust, NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, Crown Lands, Lord Howe Island Board, local government, Traditional Indigenous owners, Indigenous Ranger groups, Landcare, conservation alliances, specialist conservation groups (e.g. Northern Eastern Bristlebird Working Group, Northern Rivers Fire and Biodiversity Consortium, Birdlife Australia, Hastings Bird Observers, Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary, Melbourne Zoo, Australian Museum, Queensland Healthy Land and Water)

 **THEME 3: Healthy and resilient landscapes and catchments**

OBJECTIVE 3: To take action on the top threats to the health and resilience of NSW landscapes and catchments

<p>7. Implement best practice land management and threat management programs that maintain and improve biodiversity, cultural and production assets on travelling stock reserves. [AusGov]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement best practice management programs in high conservation value travelling stock reserves (TSRs) that include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administer stock grazing permits • Manage stock pasture • Undertake weed control • Protect riparian areas and stock water • Protect cultural heritage • Collaborate with Aboriginal teams that deliver cultural burning on TSRs <p>Delivery partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public land managers, private landholders, DPE –Biodiversity, Conservation and Science, Saving Our Species program, Crown Lands, Aboriginal stakeholders, Landcare, conservation alliances
<p>8. Support adoption of best practice land management by landholders and partner with key stakeholders to deliver waterway and coastal environment health outcomes. [AusGov]</p>	<p>Implement priority programs that include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support adoption of riparian zone and ground cover best practice management that keeps soils, water and nutrients on farms and out of waterways (as directed by regional water strategies) • Support development of local government coastal management programs (CMPs) and develop and deliver projects that independently support key CMP actions • Deliver Marine Estate Management Strategy projects, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Richmond catchment water quality and diffuse pollutant management (road, riverbank and riparian zone projects and monitoring) • Expand the identification of priorities for waterway diffuse pollution management to all remaining catchments in the North Coast region • Deliver projects that address horticultural source pollutants including erosion, sediment, pesticide and nutrient runoff • Protect and restore high value aquatic areas, including fish habitat, riverbanks, mangroves and ri-parian corridors • Manage catchment-based threats to regionally important Clybucca, Kinchela and Tuckean Swamp wetlands and adjacent marine protected areas such as Cape Byron and Solitary Islands Marine Parks • Undertake shellfish reef restoration in North Coast estuaries to support important fish species, im-prove water quality and increase biodiversity • Establish industries on estuaries floodplain management agreements • Develop riparian zone carbon capture projects • Build the resilience of riverine habitats to drought and flood by identifying flood attenuation options and instream drought refugia they conserve riparian communities and fish populations. <p>Delivery partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private landholders, local government, Saving Our Species program, DPE – Biodiversity, Conservation and Science, DPE –Environment, Energy and Science, DPE –Water, Biodiversity Conservation Trust, DPI –Horticulture, DPI –Livestock, Soil Conservation Service, NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, Forestry Corp NSW, DPI –Fisheries, Crown Lands, DPI –Fisheries (Marine Estate Management Authority), local government, Transition North Coast Adap-tation Group, Lord Howe Island Board, Traditional Indigenous owners, Indigenous Ranger groups, Landcare, Dunecare, conservation alliances, Great Eastern Ranges Initiative, specialist conservation groups (e.g. OzFish, tree planting volunteers, oyster and shellfish aquaculture industries, Pappinbarra Land Managers Conservation Group, bush regenerators, Queensland Healthy Land and Water, Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for Aus-tralian Biodiversity and Heritage), industries (sugarcane, blueberry, hothouse, macadamia, aquaculture, oyster, beef, dairy), Southern Cross University, Macquarie University



THEME 3: Healthy and resilient landscapes and catchments

OBJECTIVE 3: To take action on the top threats to the health and resilience of NSW landscapes and catchments

<p>9. Support adoption of best practice land management by landholders and partner with key stakeholders to deliver flood recovery activities that benefit impacted communities and waterways.</p> <p>[AusGov]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritise, design and implement practice change and other projects that contribute to the recovery of natural, production and cultural assets from recent floods; and improve the long-term resilience of catchments to future natural disaster events, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement RiverBank Rehabilitation Program projects to remediate the impacts of recent floods on damaged riverbanks in the Hastings, Macleay, Nambucca, Clarence and Richmond catchments • Identify Threatened Species Risk Mitigation Post Flood Program priorities for remedial action to address the impacts of 2022 floods on EPBC Act listed threatened species, threatened ecological communities and World Heritage areas across the Tweed, Brunswick and Richmond River catchments • Deliver the Emergency Flood Recovery for Wildlife and Habitat Program Stage 1 project to identify priorities for remedial action to address the impacts of 2022 floods on matters of national environmental significance • Deliver the Early Needs Recovery project to support recovery of farms from the 2022 flood events and improve long-term resilience of catchments to future natural disasters • Programs directed by actions within local government coastal management programs and flood-plain risk management studies and plans <p>Delivery partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public land managers, private landholders, DPI – Fisheries, DPE – Biodiversity, Conservation and Science, Saving Our Species program, DPE – Water, NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, Aust Govt RiverBank Rehabilitation Program, Aust Govt – Threatened Species Risk Mitigation Post Flood Program, Aust Govt – Bushfire Recovery Program, Aust Govt – Emergency Flood Recovery for Wildlife and Habitat Program Stage 1, local government, DPI, Resilience NSW, Biodiversity Conservation Trust, DPI – Fisheries (Marine Estate Management Authority), Crown Lands, industries (sugarcane, blueberry, hothouse, macadamia, aquaculture, oyster, beef, dairy), Aboriginal stakeholders, Landcare, conservation alliances, specialist conservation groups, LLS Business Partners – emergency management and recovery
<p>10. Deliver integrated pest and weed management to deliver social, cultural, economic, biodiversity and other environmental outcomes.</p> <p>[AusGov]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support delivery of the priorities within the North Coast Regional Strategic Pest Animal Management Plan (RSPAMP) and North Coast Regional Strategic Weed Management Plan (RSWMP), including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support private and public landholder participation in best practice pest animal control programs, coordinated by LLS including Wild Dog, Wild Deer, Cane Toad and Feral Pig, Red Fox, Feral Cat (as directed by the North Coast RSPAMP) • Support private and public land managers participation in best practice weed control programs coordinated by LLS, including Tropical Soda Apple, Groundsel Bush, Red Lantana, Cockspur Coral Tree, Giant Devils Fig, Cats Claw • Implement best practice communication and engagement approaches that raise landholder awareness of their general biosecurity duty obligations and participation in best practice programs (in particular to new landholders and landholders on small properties) • Implement best practice monitoring of the impact of pest and weed control on biodiversity and cultural values (e.g. Wild Dogs on Koalas, using land managers and citizen science) • Deliver pest and weed control programs directed by actions within local government coastal management programs • Support participation in emergency incident response to animal and plant pests and disease incursions that have an impact on natural resources (e.g. Red Fire Ant) <p>Delivery partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public land managers, private landholders, Biodiversity Conservation Trust, NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, Crown Lands, DPI – Horticulture, DPI – Livestock, NSW Forestry Corp, Transport NSW, DPI – Vertebrate Pests Biosecurity, DPE – Biodiversity, Conservation and Science, DPE – Water, Saving Our Species program, local government, conservation alliances, specialist conservation groups, local community control groups, Aboriginal stakeholders, Landcare



THEME 3: Healthy and resilient landscapes and catchments

OBJECTIVE 3: To take action on the top threats to the health and resilience of NSW landscapes and catchments

<p>11. Work with North Coast industry networks, peak bodies, cooperatives and grower groups to better understand land manager NRM best practice needs. [AusGov]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult with the North Coast Agricultural Industry Consultative Committee and other industry networks, peak bodies, cooperatives and grower groups on the development and delivery of practice change programs that meet industry needs (e.g. macadamia, beef, dairy, blueberry) and to resolve issues and reconcile competing priorities • Promote industry-based private land best practice programs through industry networks <p>Delivery partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Coast Agricultural Industry Consultative Committee, industry networks, peak bodies, cooperatives, grower groups, DPI–Horticulture, DPI–Livestock
<p>12. Work with North Coast industry networks, peak bodies, cooperatives and grower groups to better understand land manager NRM best practice needs. [AusGov]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide extension and advice to landholders on how they can lawfully clear native vegetation to achieve their on-farm production goals, whilst also delivering significant NRM gains, including for threatened species and ecological communities. • Respond to notifications and provide certifications for land clearing and set-aside areas. • Implement a best practice framework that supports land manager monitoring of the condition of set-aside areas. • Develop partnerships with other native vegetation management and conservation groups that facilitate opportunities for conservation of priority native vegetation • Assist landholders to secure development application approvals within State and Local Government constraints <p>Delivery partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private landholders, Biodiversity Conservation Trust, DPE–Biodiversity, Conservation and Science, Saving Our Species program, local government
<p>13. Work with North Coast industry networks, peak bodies, cooperatives and grower groups to better understand land manager NRM best practice needs. [AusGov]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide extension, advisory and project services to improve ground cover and soil health in priority areas impacted by key threats, with a focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • soil organic carbon • hillslope erosion (nutrient loss) • wind erosion • soil acidification • ground cover • soil fertility • soil drainage • fertiliser use • Projects addressing some/all of these threats include the RLP Upper Richmond Vegetation, Erosion and Soil Health Projects, the Marine Estate Management Strategy's Clean Coastal Catchments Projects • Provide extension and advisory services to improve biodiversity and native vegetation condition in priority landscape, corridor and threatened ecological community areas impacted by key threats, with a focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pests • weeds • disease • recent bushfires • recent floods (see also action 9)



THEME 3: Healthy and resilient landscapes and catchments

OBJECTIVE 3: To take action on the top threats to the health and resilience of NSW landscapes and catchments

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide extension and advisory services on the management of pasture dieback • Deliver the Farming for Nature: Biodiversity on Farms Program as a whole-farm approach to private land conservation. • Deliver the LLS best practice Farming Forward program which includes drought planning and preparedness (farm water, carbon capture and stock management); soil intelligence (health); and animal production (sustainable grazing) • Deliver the Adaptive Farming Systems – Horticulture Program which promotes best practice whole-farm planning and soil, water and fertiliser management to deliver improved ground cover, reduced runoff and erosion, reduced nutrient loss and improved water retention • Deliver the Adaptive Farming Systems – Livestock Program which promotes best practice beef cattle and dairy whole-farm planning and grazing and pasture management to deliver improved ground cover and soil health <p>Delivery partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public land managers, private landholders, DPE – Biodiversity, Conservation and Science, DPE – Water, DPI – Fisheries (Marine Estate Management Authority), Aust Govt – Bushfire Recovery Program, local government, DPI – Horticulture, DPI – Livestock, Biodiversity Conservation Trust, Crown Lands, industries (including sugarcane, blueberry, hot-house, macadamia, beef, sheep, dairy), Landcare, conservation alliances, specialist conservation groups, North Coast Agricultural Industry Consultative Committee, Southern Cross University, Australian Macadamia Society, Berries Australia, Australian Pecan Growers Association, Australian Banana Growers Council, Avocado Growers Australia
<p>14. Support landholder participation in extension and training events that allow them to demonstrate the provenance and sustainability credentials of their agricultural produce.</p> <p>[AusGov]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support landholder participation in training programs (e.g. Prograze and Hort360) that allow them to demonstrate that they are an accredited agricultural producer that grows sustainability certified products <p>Delivery partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private landholders, DPI – Horticulture, DPI – Livestock, Hort360, Prograze, industry networks, North Coast Agricultural Industry Consultative Committee, local government, DPE – Biodiversity, Conservation and Science, Biodiversity Conservation Trust

Performance narrative

Services will include provision of extension, advice and referrals; collation and dissemination of information; consultation with individuals, groups and networks; industry and community partnerships, group events and project field days; development of partnerships; delivery of on-ground actions.

We will measure our success through customer satisfaction with our services; the sharing of knowledge with land managers; land manager participation in the recovery and rehabilitation of landscapes and their ability to withstand impacts of climate change, and biodiversity conservation agreements; the number of partnerships developed that result in hectares of best practice on-farm management of native vegetation, threatened species and ecological communities, soil and biodiversity, including the value this adds to neighbouring public and private landholders. Success will also be defined by hectares under best practice that support preparation for natural disasters, other major disrupt or events and changing climate.

 THEME 3: Healthy and resilient landscapes and catchments	
OBJECTIVE 3: To take action on the top threats to the health and resilience of NSW landscapes and catchments	
Measures of success Improved practices with respect to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area of native vegetation enhanced, rehabilitated or protected • Stream length of river/estuary enhanced, rehabilitated or protected • Area of wetlands enhanced, rehabilitated or protected • Area of land managed for improved ground cover and soil condition • Area of notifications, certificates and set-asides • Customer satisfaction • Land managers engaged in, and area of, best practice invasive species management • Land managers engaged in, and area of, best practice native vegetation management • Land managers engaged in, and area of, best practice soil health management • Land managers engaged in best practice emergency management preparation, response and recovery activities, and climate change adaptation activities • Land manager advice consultations • Land manager training events and participants • Land manager awareness raising events/capacity building events and participants 	
Contribution to Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The objective, actions and measures of success presented in this theme will contribute to the Australian Government, statewide LLS NRM Framework and North Coast Local Strategic Plan outcomes below - See contribution to outcomes below 	

 THEME 4: Aboriginal communities caring for healthy and resilient cultural landscapes	
OBJECTIVE 4: To champion opportunities for Aboriginal people and communities to care for Country and enhance contemporary land management practices	
North Coast LLS actions <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 15. Coordinate Yarning Circle conversations as a culturally safe practice where Aboriginal stakeholders can identify and co-design programs that address healthy Country aspirations. [AusGov] 16. Participate in the Caring for Country cross-agency community of practice to identify and promote options and partnership opportunities for achieving the NRM aspirations of Aboriginal communities. [AusGov] 17. Support Aboriginal land managers and communities to participate and partner in NRM. [AusGov] 	Priority activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and coordinate Yarning Circle conversations as culturally safe, respectful and responsive spaces for identifying and co-designing programs that address healthy Country aspirations and priorities • Participate in the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) cross-agency Caring for Country community of practice to identify, co-design and promote partnership options that allow communities to meet their healthy Country aspirations • Build agency capacity to service ongoing engagement with community that facilitates the co-design and co-delivery of opportunities that will flow from the Yarning Circle–community of practice relationship • Work with Aboriginal stakeholders to establish processes where they can have meaningful, culturally safe input into the NRM Advisory Committee Support participation in cultural NRM activities, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of Healthy Country Plans • Delivering threatened species, habitat restoration and cultural corridor projects • Implementing cultural burning projects with Traditional Owners



THEME 4: Aboriginal communities caring for healthy and resilient cultural landscapes

OBJECTIVE 4: To champion opportunities for Aboriginal people and communities to care for Country and enhance contemporary land management practices

- Connecting Indigenous groups to viable agricultural enterprises and sustainable business opportunities
- Providing education and training that increases capacity to deliver conservation and agricultural projects
- Connecting to employment and other opportunities for Aboriginal businesses to work on Country and operate commercial enterprises that support community
- Promoting arts, culture and heritage that influence management of Country
- Participating in the NCLLS TSR Ranger Pilot Program
- Identifying options for managing cultural heritage impacted by changing climate

Delivery partners

- Aboriginal land managers across the North Coast region, Private landholders, LALCs, Indigenous Business Australia, Elders groups, Indigenous Ranger Teams, Indigenous Protected Area Rangers, Aboriginal businesses, DPE – Biodiversity, Conservation and Science, Saving Our Species program, DPE – Water, NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, Biodiversity Conservation Trust, DPI, Aboriginal Affairs, DPI – Fisheries, DPI – Fisheries (Marine Estate Management Authority), Landcare, conservation alliances, local government, Crown Lands, Forestry Corp NSW, Registered Native Title Bodies Corporate / Prescribed Bodies Corporate

Performance narrative

Services will centre on the co-design and co-delivery of culturally appropriate engagement, project delivery and involvement of Aboriginal communities and stakeholders in the North Coast LLS business. We will cater for communities in our use of language and approach; and we will adopt Yarning Circle approaches where community can participate in respectful and culturally safe conversations. The identification of local cultural needs and healthy Country aspirations will drive the co-design of the services we provide to Aboriginal stakeholders. The Department of Planning and Environment's community of practice will be central to a whole-of-government and stakeholder approach to identifying partnership options for consideration at Yarning Circles.

Services include design of programs and projects; advice and referrals; consultation with individuals and groups; government, industry and community partnerships and project delivery; group events; ongoing partnership development; project field days that showcase Traditional Knowledge and culture.

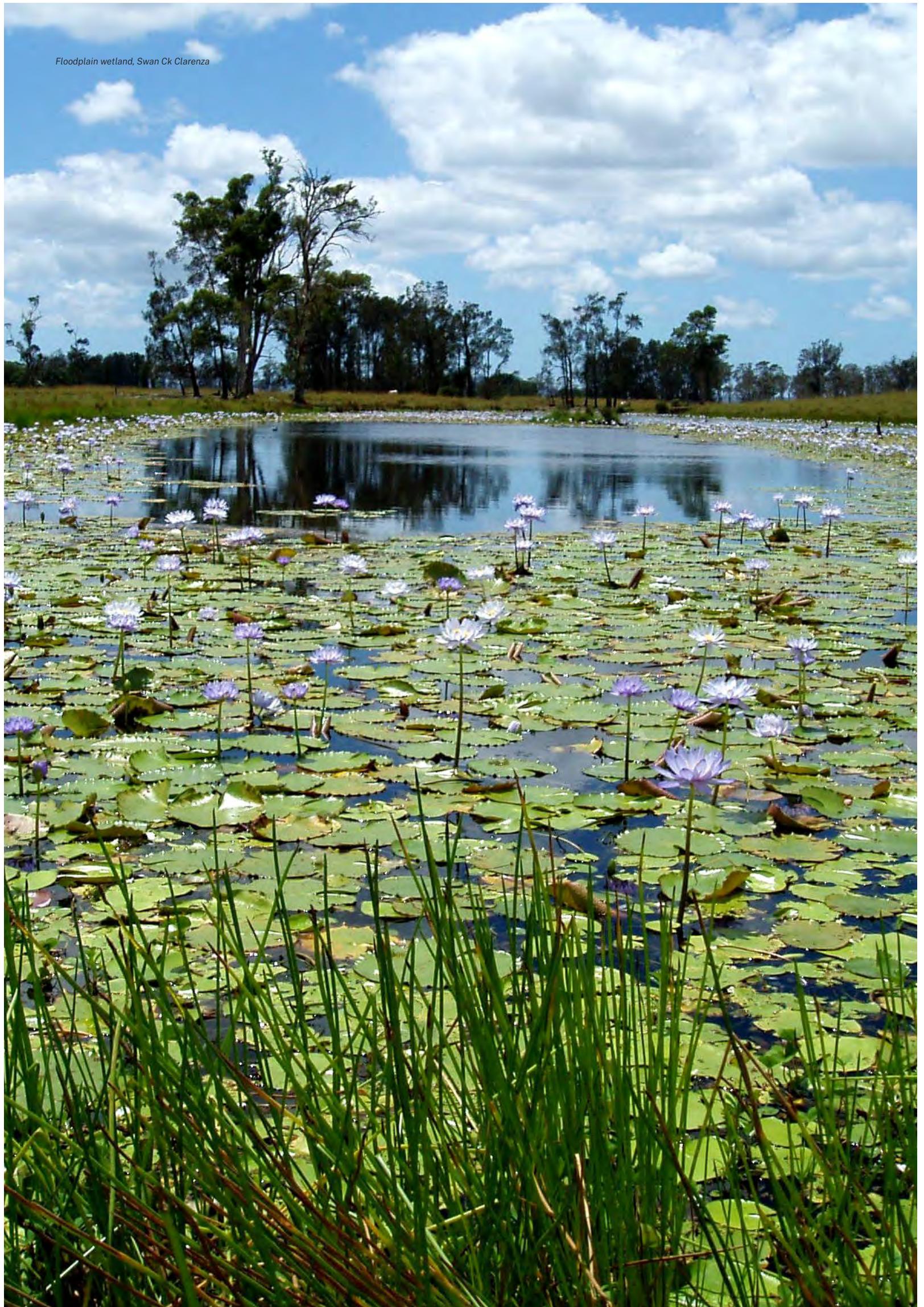
We will measure our success through customer satisfaction with our services; Aboriginal participation within Yarning Circles and the LLS business; Aboriginal and LLS participation in capacity building events and cultural heritage advisory forums; hectares of Country being managed with cultural knowledge and under best cultural practice; LLS participation in Department of Planning and Environment's community of practice.

Measures of success

- Programs that involve Aboriginal people and communities in NRM
- No. of Aboriginal owned businesses participating in LLS business
- Area of improved practices

Contribution to Outcomes

- The objective, actions and measures of success presented in this theme will contribute to the Australian Government, statewide LLS NRM Framework and North Coast Local Strategic Plan outcomes below - [See contribution to outcomes below](#)





THEME 5: NRM service provider of choice

OBJECTIVE 5: To be the NRM service provider of choice and a trusted broker of NRM partnerships

North Coast LLS actions	Priority activities
<p>18. Collaborate with key partners to design and deliver programs and projects that align with agreed strategic outcomes, meet investment priorities and respond to landholder needs and aspirations.</p> <p>19. Provide collaboration and partnership services that support streamlined, accessible and effective NRM interactions with North Coast LLS.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain existing relationships and actively seek novel partnerships and revenue streams • Improve business and operational arrangements so that they are easily adopted by customers and investors • Build staff capacity to provide extension and advisory services to private landholders in new NRM business areas (e.g. environmental markets, climate change)
<p>20. Promote the business and partnership services unique to North Coast LLS, our role in a whole-of-government approach to NRM, and the value it brings to those wishing to invest in the adoption of NRM best practice.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the service needs of our customers, our role in providing those services and identify the value proposition we bring to the land management market • Develop and implement evidence-based communication and engagement tools that promote our NRM priorities and services, and the niche that we occupy in the land management market • Demonstrate our impact and track record of performance and achievement, and promote our value accordingly

Performance narrative

Services will include strategic design of evidence-based, outcomes focused programs and projects, pro-vision of advice and media communications; innovation in NRM services and leadership of thought and practice; collaboration and engagement with individuals, industry and community groups, and investors; development of business partnerships; technical and promotional products and events that showcase our role and investment achievements in North Coast NRM.

Measures of success

- Maintain and increase revenue for NRM services
- Increase in investor and partner satisfaction
- Increase in novel partnerships

Delivery partners

- Public and Private landholders, Australian Government investors, NSW Government investors, industry investors, LLS Communications and Engagement Team, LLS NRM Statewide Advisory Group, LLS SusAg Statewide Advisory Group

Contribution to Outcomes

- The objective, actions and measures of success presented in this theme will contribute to the Australian Government, statewide LLS NRM Framework and North Coast Local Strategic Plan outcomes below - [See contribution to outcomes below](#)

Contribution to outcomes

Table 5.1. The objectives, actions and measures of success presented in the NRM Action Plan (above) will contribute to the Australian Government, statewide LLS NRM Framework and North Coast Local Strategic Plan outcomes below.

Outcomes	Objective 1	Objective 2	Objective 3	Objective 4	Objective 5
Australian Government: 5-year outcomes					
By 2023, the trajectory of species targeted under the Threatened Species Strategy, and other <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> priority species, is stabilised or improved.	☑		☑	☑	☑
By 2023, the implementation of priority actions is leading to an improvement in the condition of <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> listed threatened ecological communities.	☑		☑	☑	☑
By 2023, invasive species management has reduced threats to the natural heritage outstanding universal value of World Heritage properties through the implementation of priority actions.	☑		☑	☑	☑
By 2023, there is an increase in awareness and adoption of land management practices that improve and protect the condition of soil, biodiversity and vegetation.	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑
By 2023, there is an increase in capacity of agriculture systems to adapt to significant changes in climate and market demands for information on provenance and sustainable production.	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑
Australian Government: Long-term outcomes					
1. The trajectory of species targeted under the Threatened Species Strategy, and other <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> priority species, is improved.	☑		☑	☑	☑
2. The condition of <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> listed Threatened Ecological Communities is improved.	☑		☑	☑	☑
3. The natural heritage Outstanding Universal Value of World Heritage properties is maintained or improved.	☑		☑	☑	☑
6. The conditions of soil, biodiversity and vegetation are improved.	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑
7. Agriculture systems have adapted to significant changes in climate and market demands.	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑
LLS Natural Resource Management Framework					
5-year outcomes (Key results)					
1.1 Our NRM services are aimed at reducing the barriers and strengthening the enablers of NRM practice adoption, and are tailored to customers' specific needs and desired outcomes	☑				☑
1.2 Our customers are empowered to seize opportunities arising from change, and to manage natural resources to adapt to change	☑				☑
1.3 Our customers increasingly adopt sustainable natural resource management practices	☑				☑

Outcomes	Objective 1	Objective 2	Objective 3	Objective 4	Objective 5
Australian Government: 5-year outcomes					
2.1 Increased engagement of land managers in extension and advisory services that enable customer participation in carbon, biodiversity, or other environmental goods and services markets (and other relevant schemes)	☑	☑			☑
2.2 Our customers are increasing their understanding, awareness and willingness to trial or adopt evidence based NRM practices that have both environmental and economic/ financial benefits	☑	☑			☑
2.3 Our customers increasingly adopt sustainable NRM practices	☑	☑			☑
3.1 Our customers are improving and restoring native vegetation (enhancing habitat quality, connectivity and biodiversity)	☑		☑		☑
3.2 Our customers are rehabilitating waterways, their riparian zones and coastal environments	☑		☑		☑
3.3 Our customers are maximising vegetative ground cover (as a surrogate for improving soil and waterway health and reducing erosion, flood and drought risk) and maintaining and improving on-farm soil, vegetation, biodiversity	☑		☑		☑
3.4 Our customers are managing weeds, pests and disease and their impacts on environmental values	☑		☑		☑
3.5 Our land managers are preparing their properties and natural resources for natural disasters and emergencies	☑		☑		☑
3.6 Our land managers are adopting sustainable agricultural practices that increase their resilience to changing climate	☑		☑		☑
4.1 Our NRM programs are increasing Aboriginal community partnerships and participation within service delivery and decisions, leading to increased Aboriginal employment and/or Aboriginal-owned business procurement	☑			☑	☑
4.2 Increased number of opportunities for Aboriginal people and other land managers to promote, showcase and share traditional and contemporary land management knowledge and practices, including cultural fire practices, while ensuring the protection of cultural rights and knowledge	☑			☑	☑
5.1 Our investors and partners are increasingly confident in local land services	☑				☑
5.2 Our enabling functions such as partnership brokering and collaboration are highly valued, and are supporting the delivery of the state outcome	☑				☑
North Coast Local Strategic Plan					
5-year outcomes					
Grow: Our programs and partnerships grow primary industry productivity and healthy environments	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑
Protect: Our services and partnerships play a vital role in helping to protect against pests, diseases and environmental threats	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑
Connect: We connect with our community and connect our customers with the best services, advice and networks	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑
Support: We play a vital role in helping primary industries prepare for natural hazards and are on the ground to respond and support when they occur.	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑

6. NRM Plan implementation

Coordinated plan delivery

NRM is a core business function for North Coast LLS and the organisation takes responsibility for coordinating the delivery of the NRM Plan's actions. This plan will be implemented through the NRM and Sustainable Agriculture services provided by North Coast LLS. Many of the actions require external resourcing to be delivered.

The organisation will also be an active participant in the delivery of statewide initiatives from the statewide NRM Framework (e.g. whole-farm planning), foundational to this plan, which will be led by the LLS NRM Statewide Advisory Group.

North Coast LLS will engage and partner with agencies, industry, communities and landholders to refine and further set priorities, source funds and coordinate the use of investment, to progress implementation of the plan. The NRM Advisory Committee will play a pivotal role in guiding the implementation of this NRM Plan.

Delivery partners

The capacity of North Coast LLS and that of our existing and new partners to contribute to the delivery of this Plan's actions will vary throughout the life of the Plan.

Changes in available resourcing, expertise, partnership opportunities, organisational priorities and risks and community values will all influence the extent to which partners can collaborate to deliver the Plan.

As such, the Plan acknowledges that any commitment from partners to participate in action delivery is contingent upon resource availability at a given point in time.

Our enabling business services support delivery

North Coast LLS's business systems enable delivery of this NRM Plan. They will give our customers and investors confidence that we can deliver the plan.

The systems embrace change and adaptation through collaboration, innovation and continual improvement, and commit us to having the infrastructure, decision-making and business approaches in place that support the delivery of outcomes-based and customer-focused NRM services. Our strategic planning, governance, investment planning, monitoring, evaluation, reporting and improvement (MERI), partnership and communication and engagement enabling services will underpin delivery of the NRM services that our customers and stakeholders receive.

Principles will further guide North Coast's resilience-based approach to decision-making, design of investment approaches and priorities, development of practice change programs and community engagement.



Wild dog

The North Coast NRM Advisory Committee

The North Coast NRM Advisory Committee (see Action Plan – Action 5) will provide a whole-of-government, stakeholder and community approach to overseeing the implementation of this plan.

The Committee will put advisory, engagement and governance structures in place that bring people together, so that they can:

- communicate their needs and aspirations
- participate in the co-design of partnerships and projects
- collaborate on the sourcing and leveraging of investment
- co-deliver on-ground programs
- monitor implementation progress of the plan
- apply sunrise governance approaches to the monitoring of changes in regional conditions and circumstances, to guide the need to adjust to change and opportunity
- drive a resilience-based approach to implementation.

The NRM Advisory Committee will be critical to keeping all partners informed and involved in Plan implementation, regardless of their actual capacity to participate in delivery.



Principles for building resilience

Resilience principles will guide North Coast’s approach to organisational and NRM Advisory Committee decision-making. They will guide the co-design and co-delivery of programs,

including the development of investment approaches, enabling practice change programs and community engagement programs (adapted from Biggs, Schlüter and Schoon 2015).

Resilience principle	Guiding influence
Maintain diversity and redundancy	Systems with many different components (e.g. species, stakeholders or sources of knowledge) are generally more resilient than systems with few components. Redundancy provides ‘insurance’ within a system by allowing some components to compensate for the loss or failure of others. Redundancy is even more valuable if the components providing the redundancy also react differently to change and disturbance.
Recognise Aboriginal land management practices	Traditional Owners have efficiently managed natural resources through perpetual cycles of droughts, fires, floods and other natural disturbances for millennia. Reinstating Indigenous NRM activities, such as cultural burning, is integral to building resilience to natural catastrophes as well as maintaining and improving biodiversity.
Manage connectivity	Connectivity may enhance or reduce the resilience of social-ecological systems and their ecosystem services. Well-connected systems can overcome and recover from disturbances more quickly, but overly connected systems may lead to the rapid spread of disturbances across the entire system so that all components of the system are impacted.
Manage slow variables and feedbacks	Identify the key slow variables and feedbacks (e.g. soil organic matter) that maintain the social-ecological regimes which produce desired ecosystem services and identify where the critical thresholds lie that can lead to a reconfiguration of the system.
Foster complex adaptive systems thinking	Acknowledge that social-ecological systems are based on a complex and unpredictable web of connections and interdependencies as the first step towards management actions that can foster resilience.
Encourage learning	Learning and experimentation through adaptive and collaborative management is an important mechanism for building resilience in social-ecological systems. It ensures that different types and sources of knowledge are valued and considered when developing solutions and leads to greater willingness to experiment and take risks.
Broaden participation	Broad and well-functioning participation can build trust, create a shared understanding and uncover perspectives that may not be acquired through more traditional scientific processes.
Promote governance involving multiple stakeholders	Collaboration across institutions and scales improves connectivity and learning across cultures. Well-connected governance structures can swiftly deal with change and disturbance because they are addressed by the right people at the right time.
Foster partnerships	Take a non-competitive approach; partner with entities who provide critical knowledge and services that LLS doesn’t possess or provide and that are needed to deliver a mutual outcome.
Seek local input	Local leaders are the best driver of resilience in their community. Local input will guide planning, coordination and implementation.
Work across scales	Resilience occurs at multiple scales – local, subregional and regional.
Adopt best practice customer service	Adopt a diversity of novel and proven socioeconomic incentives to facilitate practice change when designing and delivering projects.
Adopt best practice	Adopt a blend (diversity) of novel and proven socioeconomic incentives to facilitate practice change when designing and delivering projects.

Priorities are dynamic

Partner-specific approaches and tools for prioritising investment and effort are captured in Support Information Documents 1, 2 and 3.

This Plan draws on priorities already set by the Programs captured in the action plan. Where there are gaps, priorities will and are being developed. Our plan's priorities will always be in various stages of development and update. Some are set, others require refinement, while others are under construction, for example:

- priorities exist and are captured in the action plan (e.g. threatened species and threatened ecological communities)
- priorities are set as the need arises to suit current prevailing circumstances (e.g. managing pests and weeds in response to fire).
- priorities are in their early stages of development as they are waiting on information that is currently being collected (e.g. flood impacts)
- priorities are currently under construction (e.g. private land threat management for biodiversity outcomes, based on the geographic intersection of Mitchell landscapes, existing corridors, threatened ecological communities, past landholder engagement –and which key threats are present)
- priorities cannot yet be determined as investor preferences are not yet unknown.

Some priorities are more sensitive to regional change, be it social, economic or environmental. To stay relevant, some priorities (and the partnerships that drive them) will need to be in a constant state of update.



Monitoring the effectiveness of management actions

Our commitment to measuring and reporting success will allow us to demonstrate accountability to our customers, investors and stakeholders and the effective implementation of this NRM Plan. North Coast LLS will coordinate annual regional monitoring and reporting across our NRM agencies and partners that focuses on the extent to which the actions and measures of success in this plan have been completed.

Detailed MERI plans will be developed for funded projects in line with the Australian Government's investment requirements. These plans will detail the indicators and methods for assessing the effectiveness of management actions.

Annual reports and regular dashboard reports that capture our performance against this plan's outcomes will be available to community, stakeholders and investors.



Our commitment to measuring and reporting success will allow us to demonstrate accountability to our customers, investors and stakeholders



Detecting and responding to change

Sunrise governance

Our continuous improvement of our NRM services and customer experience will be driven by ‘sunrise governance’ approaches that will allow us to:

- monitor social, economic, environmental and policy signals to detect the need for changes in NRM management approach and priorities (including both threats [e.g. drought, fire index] and opportunities [e.g. new emerging markets]).
- identify options for changing management approach.
- change our services and how we work with landholders to respond to change, uncertainty and opportunities.

North Coast LLS will work with the LLS NRM Statewide Advisory Group to deliver sunrise governance processes.

Learning and continual improvement

The NRM policy, planning and delivery arenas are dynamic operating environments that will change throughout this plan’s lifespan. There is a real risk that unplanned changes, drivers and shocks – be they social, environmental or economic in origin – will influence the plan and it could quickly lose its relevance as a plan that guides regional NRM activity.

The plan will need to be in a constant state of update if it is to be adaptive to this change. The NRM Advisory Committee will drive a whole-of-government approach that facilitates adaptive and continuous refinement of governance, management methods and delivery approaches to integrated catchment management. This will require new strategic approaches and an increase in our capacity to undertake strategic planning.

Ongoing evidence-based NRM learning and evaluation of the plan’s performance will ensure that we provide adaptive decision-making and delivery approaches responsive to community needs, and a resilience-based approach to delivery.

This plan will take a nested, resilience-based approach to responding to change at all levels of the region’s NRM business:

- policy – overall resilience
- program – regional resilience
- project – subregional, subcatchment, local resilience.

Our learning and adaption objectives are underpinned by questions that guide our evaluation processes (Figure 6.1).



North Coast LLS will coordinate reviews and updates of the plan at the 3 months, the midpoint and at the end of its implementation period.

Plan review

Reviewing this plan is fundamental to identifying the need for improvement and making adjustments that will ensure effective implementation. North Coast LLS will coordinate reviews and updates of the plan at the 3 months, the midpoint and at the end of its implementation period.

The 3-month update will commence immediately after the plan is submitted to the Australian Government for their first review (i.e. throughout August–October 2022). North Coast LLS will take this opportunity to seek final input from our Board and key stakeholders to confirm that the plan’s directions, actions and priorities are sound in the face of the rapidly changing conditions the region is currently experiencing.

The midpoint review will focus on implementation progress and achievement of the plan’s NRM outcomes, including those of the Australian Government, and will make recommendations for improving the plan.

The plan’s actions and priorities will be updated throughout the life of the plan in response to changes in regional conditions, including:

- changes to government policies, strategies, programs and investment priorities
- the occurrence of natural disasters such as bushfires, drought and floods
- changing aspirations and capacity of Aboriginal community groups
- shifting priorities identified by stakeholders and the community
- new research, science or evidence impacting on information
- the outcomes of the NRM works described in the plan.



Topical Soda Apple



Eastern Fresh Water Cod

Figure 6.1 The NRM Plan’s learning and adaptation approach

Business improvement scale	Learning objective	Key learning questions
<p>Organisational</p> <p>Overall resilience</p>	<p>To transform our NRM goals, strategic directions and governance</p>	<p>Learning for NRM transformation</p> <p><i>Changes in governance and values</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are our processes right for setting objectives? • Do we have the right processes in place to achieve our vision and goals? • Are our governance structures appropriate?
<p>Program</p> <p>Regional resilience</p>	<p>To reframe our NRM program designs, strategies, targets and assumptions</p>	<p>Learning for NRM reframing</p> <p><i>Changes in strategies, targets and underlying assumptions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are our objectives right? • Are we asking the right questions? • Are our strategies and desired outcomes appropriate? • Are our assumptions sound?
<p>Project</p> <p>Sub-regional / local resilience</p>	<p>To improve our NRM project design</p>	<p>Learning for incremental NRM change</p> <p><i>Improvements in project design and practices</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are we meeting our objectives? • Are we achieving our desired outcomes? • Are we doing things appropriately? • Are there ways to do things more effectively/ efficiently?

7. Appendices

Appendix I. The Australian Government’s NRM Plan development criteria

The Regional Land Partnerships Program (RLP) is a core component of Phase 2 of the Australian Government’s National Landcare Program from July 2018 until June 2023.

The Regional Land Partnerships Program (RLP) is a core component of Phase 2 of the Australian Government’s National Landcare Program from July 2018 until June 2023.

Government investment under the RLP is being delivered through a regional model that supports a range of projects contributing to 4 environment and 2 sustainable agriculture outcomes.

The Australian Government has engaged the North Coast as a service provider to deliver projects through to 2023.

Under this arrangement, North Coast LLS is required to maintain the currency of natural resource management planning and the prioritisation of management actions. This involves ensuring that the region’s Natural Resource Management Plan (i.e. this NRM Plan) is consistent with a set of specific Australian Government requirements. These requirements are presented below.

An evidence plan gives a full account of the consultation, analysis decision-making processes and evidence base used to address these criteria (see NCLLS 2022c).

Australian Government requirements – Regional Land Partnerships Program

Does the new Natural Resource Management Plan complement, rather than duplicate, any existing Natural Resource Management Plans for the region and address the following requirements:

- (i) identify and describe the 5-year Outcomes and Investment Priorities that are relevant to the region;
- (ii) describe stakeholder aspirations for natural resource management in the region, and where possible, how these align with the 5-year Outcomes and other relevant Australian Government priorities;
- (iii) identify and prioritise natural resource management actions based on knowledge of:
 - (A) location and condition of natural resources, including the Investment Priorities.
 - (B) threats to, or impacts on, natural resources.
 - (C) prioritisation methods for determining the most cost-effective management actions, including decision support and spatial mapping tools; and
 - (D) methodologies for assessing the effectiveness of management actions;
- (iv) identify how the delivery of Projects will contribute to 5-year Outcomes and Investment Priorities for the Management Unit;
- (v) identify how the Natural Resource Management Plan(s) will be implemented with comprehensive community participation;
- (vi) identify Indigenous peoples’ land and sea management aspirations for the relevant Management Unit, including how they relate to 5-year Outcomes, and strategies to prioritise and implement them;
- (vii) incorporate traditional ecological knowledge, where appropriate, in accordance with agreed protocols and with prior approval of the Indigenous custodians of the knowledge;
- (viii) describe key collaborations, for example between the Service Provider, industry and/or Community groups, for delivery of 5-year Outcomes;
- (ix) identify the monitoring and reporting processes in place and how they are utilised to measure the achievements and the effectiveness of the Natural Resource Management Plan(s);
- (x) Include any other content relevant to the Service provider’s obligations under clause 4.2(a) include any other relevant content.

Abbreviations

AG	Australian Government	LLS	Local Land Services
DECCW	Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water	MEMA	Marine Estate Management Authority
DPE	Department of Planning and Environment	NCLLS	North Coast Local Land Services
DPI	Department of Primary Industries	NRCMA	Northern Rivers Catchment Management Authority
ELA	Eco Logical Australia	OEH	Office of Environment and Heritage
EPA	Environment Protection Authority		

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