

Media release

Future of \$1 billion National Landcare Program secure

Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources, Barnaby Joyce

Minister for the Environment and Energy, Josh Frydenberg

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- **The Coalition Government is investing more than \$1 billion over 5 years in the National Landcare Program (NLP)**
- **The NLP is jointly administered by the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources and the Department of the Environment and Energy**

The Coalition Government has underlined the importance of Landcare by investing more than \$1 billion in the National Landcare Program (NLP).

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources, Barnaby Joyce, and Minister for the Environment and Energy, Josh Frydenberg, said the NLP was a key demonstration of the Coalition's commitment to supporting strong natural resource management and the environment.

Minister Joyce said the program continues to focus on practical, on-the-ground ways to improve issues like soil health, erosion management and water quality, making the program relevant to all land managers—but especially farmers.

“Our farmers manage about 53 per cent of our landmass and with global demand for food and fibre set to double by 2050 it's important that we keep Landcare front and centre to assist them to manage our natural resources,” Minister Joyce said.

“Every farming family I know wants to pass on their land in better shape than when they got it and our investment through this Budget will help them achieve those goals.

“The NLP will focus on applying well researched and innovative land and water management techniques and tools on the ground, including an Agriculture small grants program and ongoing investment in regional delivery.

“My intention is to use a component of the NLP funding to eradicate Red Imported Fire Ants from south-east Queensland, because this work offers a strong return on investment for all Australians.

“Sixteen years' worth of shared eradication and containment efforts can be brought to a close through this investment that will increase the intensity of treatment and surveillance for these ants, considered one of the world's worst invasive species due to their devastating economic, environmental and social impacts.

“This is worth doing because modelling shows that without the combined efforts of the states and territories that allowed us to contain this pest the ants would have spread further south than Sydney and north of Rockhampton by now.”

Minister Frydenberg said for more than 25 years, the Landcare movement has been protecting, restoring and sustaining soils, water and the diversity of Australia's unique plants and animals and its threatened species.

“The \$1 billion in funding we have delivered today is further evidence of this government's commitment to continue this important work of looking after our environment,” Mr Frydenberg said.

“We will continue to support on-ground community projects that harness local know-how and deliver practical and tangible results.

“This funding will put the NLP in an even stronger position to continue to deliver for our nation’s environment, including the Great Barrier Reef.

“Resources for Indigenous Protected Areas will also be boosted to help provide employment, education and training opportunities for Indigenous people in remote areas while protecting our cultural heritage into the future.”

Fast facts:

- **In Australia, there are around 5400 Landcare groups and 100,000 active volunteers in those groups.**
- **Over 80 per cent of Australian farmers are involved in Landcare.**
- **The annual economic cost of managing pest animals in Australia is estimated at about \$1 billion. The cost of managing weeds in Australia is four times that, at \$4 billion.**
- **More than 80 per cent of our mammals and 90 per cent of our trees, ferns and shrubs occur nowhere else on earth.**
- **The Great Barrier Reef is a World Heritage Site encompassing 3000 coral reefs. It is worth approximately \$5.2 billion to the tourism economy alone.**