



MEDIA RELEASE

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Conservation and land management jobs can stimulate economy, restore landscapes and support regional communities

[New report outlines economic, social and environmental benefits of large-scale investment in conservation and land management jobs](#)

Large-scale investment in practical conservation and land management work could provide jobs for thousands of people in regional communities hard hit by COVID-19, according to a new report released today.

The [Working With Nature](#) report outlines the diverse economic, social and environmental benefits associated with government investment in conservation and land management, illustrated with case studies, and outlines opportunities for further investment in hard-hit regional communities.

The report is based on an economic recovery proposal supported by over 100 conservation, farming and land management organisations, which advocates for thousands of workers to be employed to deliver practical conservation and land management work across the country.

“This initiative presents an opportunity to deliver targeted economic recovery support to regional communities while leaving lasting benefits for the environment, tourism, farm businesses and local communities,” said Jim Adams, CEO of National Landcare Network Australia.

“This would deliver timely, targeted and temporary support for unemployed workers and can be scaled as needed to meet the needs of regional communities, in the context of broader federal and state economic recovery priorities.”

Consistent with the Australian Government’s planned transition away from economy-wide support measures, this program presents an opportunity to assist those most impacted by the residual economic impacts of COVID-19, including young people in hard-hit communities.

“For some sectors of the community, recovery will be a slower, longer-term process. Youth unemployment remains high in many regional communities, with hundreds of thousands of young people currently out of work,” said Pepe Clarke, Deputy Director for the Pew Charitable Trusts.

“Investment in conservation and land management work provides an opportunity to provide timely and targeted support to vulnerable people in hard hit regions, including youth and unskilled workers,” said Mr Clarke.



In response to COVID-19, states across Australia have announced practical employment creation programs, including *Working for Victoria*, Western Australia's *Green Jobs Plan* and Queensland's *Reef Assist* initiative.

"The early success of state-funded programs announced in response to the economic impacts of COVID-19, and lessons learnt from previous similar initiatives, provides a strong foundation for further investment as Australia moves into the next phase of its economic recovery," said Kate Andrews, Executive Officer of NRM Regions Australia.

"This investment would build upon existing federal funding announcements such as Environment Minister Sussan Ley's investment in Australia's Commonwealth National Parks and Deputy Prime Minister Michael McCormack's Regional Relief and Recovery Fund."

"Large-scale investment in conservation and land management will provide enduring benefits for the environment and local communities, helping to ensure that we leave the best possible natural legacy for future generations of Australians," said Ms Andrews.

For further information or to arrange interviews, please call Tim Singleton Norton from the Pew Charitable Trusts on 0402 077 721.

Notes for editors:

- The [Working With Nature report](#) was developed by an alliance of more than 100 conservation, farming and land management organisations, including Landcare, National Farmers Federation, NRM Regions Australia, Australian Land Conservation Alliance, Australian Conservation Foundation and Pew Charitable Trusts.
- The report features case studies of programs already underway across Australia, as well as successful programs underway in the United States and New Zealand.
- The types of activities that would be undertaken include weed management, soil erosion control, tree planting, bushfire recovery, restoration of bushland, rivers and creeks, feral animal control, fence construction and restoration of coastal and marine habitats.
- Over 100,000 more young people were unemployed in January 2021 compared to March 2020 (Australian Bureau of Statistics). Young and unskilled workers have been disproportionately impacted by the COVID economic crisis and are particularly susceptible to the risk of long-term unemployment, even as the broader economy recovers.
- Economic analysis undertaken by Ernst & Young in 2020 found that a \$500 million investment in the program will deliver nearly 7,000 full-time jobs and \$1.2 billion in long-term economic benefits.