



Nature Conservation Society
of South Australia



Strategic Plan

2021 – 2030





Our Vision

South Australia's Biodiversity and People
Thrive in Resilient Landscapes



Context

The Nature Conservation Society acknowledges First Nations peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the natural systems which sustain all South Australians.

We value and respect First Nations People's deep and continued spiritual and cultural connections to Country, and will work to engage and support them as the original nature conservationists.

speaking and acting for nature

The Nature Conservation Society of South Australia (NCS) is South Australia's leading not-for-profit advocate for engagement with and protection of nature. The NCS leads advocacy, research and action for the protection of South Australia's wildlife, habitats and natural values. The NCS has been a passionate, evidence-based advocate for the conservation of nature for over 60 years. NCS programs have influenced thinking about conservation, legislation, policy and led to the protection of large areas of South Australia in the National Parks reserve system and elsewhere.

The NCS continues to advocate for the protection and management needed to maintain and restore South Australia's unique biological diversity and landscape function. Programs of the NCS work to engage South Australians with nature, educate about the unique richness and vulnerability of our natural heritage and advocate for protections of all types.



Pillars

NCS is committed to achieving the three objectives of this strategic plan through its three key pillars of action:

Research

The conservation of nature requires an evidence-base and we undertake research and partner with others to build and use compelling evidence.

To conserve nature we build the evidence, engage and inform the population and speak for the conservation of biodiversity

Advocacy

Native species and ecosystems need a voice to speak for them and we are engaging people in choices to protect nature.

Engagement

The people of South Australia gain from connecting to nature and understanding the beauty and complexity of South Australia's native species and ecosystems.

Mission

To inspire all South Australians to value and protect the native species, ecosystems and landscapes of our State.

"The NCSSA will work to engage government, partners, members and the South Australian public in the enjoyment, care and protection of South Australia's natural biological diversity and natural systems. We will engage, educate and advocate to connect South Australians to nature and raise awareness of the local impacts and solutions to the global extinction crisis and the local loss of ecosystem services and natural heritage values. We will strive to protect biodiversity and function in every South Australian landscape through protection of a comprehensive, adequate, representative network of natural ecosystems."

Principles



The NCSSA is guided by the following principles

1. Respect First Nations Peoples and their unique and enduring connection to Country
2. Facilitate participation in nature conservation for all sectors of the South Australian community
3. Advocate for protection of biodiversity from a strong evidence base
4. Maintain a systems approach to optimising protections within productive landscapes
5. Collaborate and partner to drive innovation and programs
6. Act with and encourage boldness, passion and commitment to positive outcomes for biodiversity conservation
7. Maintain trustworthiness and transparency as a leading subject matter authority
8. Prioritise the protection and enhancement of existing biodiversity and facilitate the strategic expansion of habitats where required

Framing our strategies & objectives

South Australia's nature is in decline: the scale and speed of change is large and accelerating.

Globally, many scientists and commentators believe we have entered a new geological era –the Anthropocene – in which human activity has become the dominant influence on the earth's environment and systems. Recent evidence strongly supports local, national, and global climate projections that the planet is warming at an unprecedented rate as a result of human activity.¹

Simultaneously, an extinction crisis is sweeping the globe, with scientists estimating that we are losing species at 1,000 to 10,000 times the natural background rate, with some suggesting we could lose up to half of all species by the end of this century. The main causes of this decline are changes in land and sea use, direct exploitation, climate change, pollution and invasive alien species.²

In this context, the NCS's efforts over the past 60 years have contributed to important conservation achievements in South Australia, but more is needed, faster and at a larger scale. The NCS is uniquely placed to make this contribution as a passionate, evidence-based advocate for the conservation of nature. The Society developed a logic to link its strengths in action to the outcomes that must be achieved. From this, three key objectives have been prioritised to frame our work for this coming decade and contribute to reversing the decline in biodiversity and our vision of *South Australia's Biodiversity and People Thriving in Resilient Landscapes*.

Our objectives are for natural ecosystems and species to be:

1

Protected

we aim to increase the area of the remaining natural ecosystems under formal protection in South Australia, as the current area is inadequate to protect the full diversity of native systems and species,

2

Managed

we aim to actively manage (and where needed, restore) these natural ecosystems to protect biodiversity, landscape function and productivity, and

3

Replaced (revegetated/repopulated)

we aim to support and improve revegetation and repopulation to overcome historical clearing of landscapes and local loss of species and systems.

Nature Conservation

Objective 1

INCREASE THE AREA OF PROTECTED NATURAL SYSTEMS
AND HABITATS TO SECURE FUNCTIONAL LANDSCAPES
FOR SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S FUTURE

Our Strategies

ENGAGE:

- Work with First Nations Peoples to ensure cultural knowledge and authority informs conservation practice
- Communicate the value of biodiversity and natural systems, and threats to nature conservation
- Connect South Australians with natural systems, habitats and species through outreach programs

RESEARCH:

- Collaborate and drive research to underpin the evidence-base for nature conservation advocacy

ADVOCATE:

- Report the state of biodiversity conservation to South Australians
- Advocate for legislative and policy reform, and investment, to protect South Australia's biodiversity and natural systems

Nature Conservation Objective 2

ENSURE SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S NATURAL SYSTEMS AND
HABITATS ARE RESTORED AND MANAGED TO PROTECT
BIODIVERSITY AND LANDSCAPE FUNCTION

Our Strategies

ENGAGE:

- Work with First Nations Peoples to ensure cultural knowledge and authority informs conservation practice
- Partner South Australian organisations to improve the standard and extent of appropriate management of biodiversity

RESEARCH:

- Document the threats and management solutions for maintaining South Australia's biodiversity
- Collaborate on research to underpin the evidence-base for the conservation of biodiversity in South Australian landscapes

ADVOCATE:

- Communicate the need, opportunities, and methods for managing biodiversity and landscape function
- Advocate for legislative and policy reform, and investment, to manage South Australia's biodiversity and natural systems

Nature Conservation

Objective 3

SUPPORT AND IMPROVE REVEGETATION TO OVERCOME
HISTORICAL OVER-CLEARING OF LANDSCAPES

Our Strategies

ENGAGE:

- Partner South Australian organisations to improve the standard and extent of revegetation for conservation of biodiversity and landscape function

RESEARCH:

- Document the standards and methods for revegetation for conservation of South Australia's biodiversity
- Collaborate on research to underpin the evidence-base for conservation of biodiversity through revegetation in South Australian landscapes

ADVOCATE:

- Communicate the need, opportunities, and methods for revegetation for biodiversity conservation and landscape function
- Advocate for investment to revegetate for conservation of South Australia's biodiversity and natural systems

Our Outcomes

1

South Australians connect with and value the State's biodiversity and natural heritage and understand the importance of its protection and management for their economic and social wellbeing,

2

Adequate legislative and regulatory protection and investment for long-term management of South Australia's unique biodiversity in functional landscapes

3

The area of natural systems and habitats protected and managed in each South Australian landscape is increased to be sufficient for long-term conservation of biodiversity and ecosystem function

4

Adequate investment for high-quality revegetation of South Australia's over-cleared landscapes

1. <https://www.natureofsa.org/case-for-change>

2. <https://ipbes.net/news/Media-Release-Global-Assessment>