

Australian Heritage   
Strategy

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# Table of Contents

Executive summary 5

1. Introduction 6

1.1 What is Australia’s heritage? 6

1.2 How is heritage managed? 7

1.3 Why do we need a strategy? 10

1.4 Developing the Strategy 10

2. A vision for Australia’s heritage places 11

2.1 Vision 11

2.2. Delivery of vision and outcomes 11

Outcome 1: National leadership 13

Outcome 2: Strong partnerships 22

Outcome 3: Engaged communities 30

Glossary 37

References 38

Key documents and websites 38

Relevant legislation 39

Appendices 40

Appendix 1: Commissioned essays 40

Appendix 2: Australia’s World and National Heritage Places 41

Minister’s foreword

The Hon Greg Hunt MP, Minister for the Environment

Australia’s magnificent natural, historic and Indigenous heritage places capture the moments and stories that shape our nation. Together they reveal the richness and diversity of Australia’s extraordinary natural environment, evoke the spirituality, lore and culture of Indigenous Australians, and tell the story of our colonial history and the development of a modern nation. The protection of this remarkable heritage is central to the Australian Government’s *Plan for a Cleaner Environment* and is a fundamental pillar of its vision for Australia. Our natural heritage places contribute to the natural capital that underpins our clean land, clean water and clean air.

The aim of the Australian Heritage Strategy is to ensure that the way in which we identify, conserve and protect our heritage is the best it can be. We want our nation’s heritage to be managed and protected according to world’s best practice and we want all Australians to celebrate and feel a sense of pride in our heritage.

This Strategy is built around a central vision of our natural and cultural heritage being valued by all Australians, cared for and protected for future generations by the community. It sets out a framework for the next ten years to address heritage priorities against three high level outcomes:

• national leadership

• strong partnerships

• engaged communities.

A range of specific objectives and actions are outlined under each outcome in the Strategy. The Strategy will be reviewed after five years to help ensure that targeted actions are being delivered.

In November 2013, I restarted the development of an Australian heritage strategy. Based on consultation through a series of group forums, meetings and written submissions I am pleased to present the final Strategy.

This consultation provided an opportunity for everyone involved with Australia’s heritage to provide input into how we come together and build partnerships to strengthen our heritage from the grassroots level.

I thank all Australians who have contributed their time, ideas and passion in shaping this Strategy. I look forward to seeing real heritage benefits achieved as we work together over the coming years.

Whether your area of interest or expertise is natural, historic or Indigenous heritage, I invite you to be part of this great national mission to conserve and celebrate our heritage.

Vision
Our natural, historic and Indigenous heritage places are valued by Australians, protected for future generations and cared for by the community

Outcome 1
National leadership 
Objectives:
1. Continue to support Australia’s iconic World Heritage properties
2. Ensure Australia’s National Heritage List truly reflects the Australian story
3. Effective management of the Commonwealth Heritage List
4. Contribute to international heritage standard setting and guidance

Outcome 2
Strong partnerships
 Objectives:
5. Improve heritage policy and process alignment across all levels of government 
6. Further develop heritage partnerships between government and other sectors 
7. Explore innovative funding, resource sharing and creative partnerships
8. Foster greater collaboration between the heritage and tourism sectors

Outcome 3
Engaged communities
 Objectives:
9. Focus protection efforts on Indigenous heritage
10. Promote greater awareness, knowledge and engagement with our national heritage
11. Provide consistent best practice standards and guidelines for heritage conservation and management



# Executive summary

Australia has a rich natural and cultural heritage that underpins our sense of place and national identity and makes a positive contribution to the nation’s wellbeing. We value our heritage and have a strong desire to see Australia’s significant heritage places recognised and protected.

The Australian Heritage Strategy recognises that heritage is diverse and encompasses natural, historic and Indigenous values. The Strategy considers ways in which Australia’s heritage places can be better identified and managed to ensure their long-term protection. It explores new opportunities to support and fund heritage places, including the potential for a national lottery. It considers how the community enjoys, commemorates and celebrates these special places and the stories that underpin them. The Strategy highlights how heritage can lead to increased tourism and economic returns to place managers or owners and their communities, and makes clear that heritage identification, protection and management is a shared responsibility with state and local governments, businesses and communities.

The Australian Government has engaged the community on what matters to Australians regarding their heritage. A diverse range of community groups, organisations, individuals and government agencies have contributed their ideas and helped to develop the vision, outcomes and objectives that make up this Strategy.

The vision of the Strategy is that:

*Our natural, historic and Indigenous heritage places are valued by Australians, protected for future generations and cared for by the community.*

This vision will be achieved through actions under three high level outcomes:

• national leadership

• strong partnerships

• engaged communities.

Policies and programmes relating to moveable cultural heritage objects or heritage collections are not included in the scope of this strategy.

The desired outcomes of this Strategy are defined through objectives which are to be realised through a series of specified actions. There are many opportunities for community involvement in the delivery of the Strategy and attainment of its goals. Many actions rely on collaboration and partnerships across state, territory and local governments, as well as with community organisations, business and individuals. The knowledge, skills and experience of all parties will contribute enormously to the effort required to ensure Australia’s heritage is valued and well cared for into the future.

The Strategy will be reviewed after five years by the Australian Government, with periodic monitoring, evaluation and revision of objectives and actions as required. Through these measures the Australian Heritage Strategy will help to ensure Australia’s natural, historic and Indigenous heritage places are valued by all Australians, protected for future generations and cared for by the community.

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 What is Australia’s heritage?

Australia has a rich natural and cultural heritage that underpins our sense of place and national identity, and makes a positive contribution to the nation’s wellbeing. Our heritage includes stories, traditions, events and experiences inherited from the past; it comprises natural, historic and Indigenous places with both tangible and intangible values.

Australia’s heritage is truly diverse. Some sites, such as the spectacular geological formations of Uluru-Kata Tjuta, are recognised internationally and are on the World Heritage List. Some sites, such as Bondi Beach, are nationally recognised and are in the National Heritage List. Other sites, such as the Miles Franklin award winning novelist Xavier Herbert’s cottage in Redlynch, Queensland are lesser known and are recognised in regional lists. All such sites, whether internationally, nationally or regionally recognised, form part of Australia’s rich heritage.

More than a legacy from our past, heritage is a living, integral part of life today. Understanding our heritage gives context to where we are now and where we are headed as a society. By protecting our heritage we conserve valuable community assets and ensure those places, traditions and stories can continue to be experienced and enjoyed by future generations.

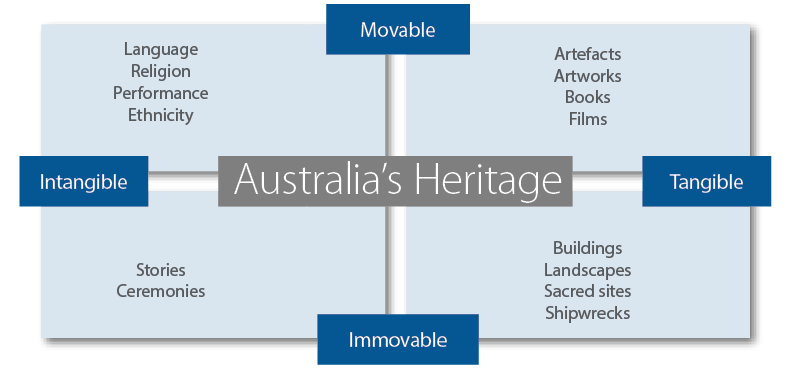
This Strategy considers the way we identify and manage heritage places, and the way the Australian community celebrates the values and stories these places represent. By identifying, managing and acknowledging Australian heritage places, the community decides which stories are important and which events we choose to remember and commemorate. While influenced by popular concerns and trends, the identification of places deserving of heritage protection is a complex process which must be approached with transparency, scholarship and a view to the long term.

The social value of heritage is important to contemporary Australian society and the link between heritage and strong communities is increasingly evident. For example, the Productivity Commission found that reinforcement and preservation of living culture has helped to develop identity, sense of place, and build self esteem within Indigenous communities.[[1]](#footnote-1) Heritage assists us in maintaining our connection to place, fosters pride in our community and is an important factor in building and maintaining community harmony. Strong communities are vibrant and forward-looking, with rich social and cultural experiences. In parallel with the social value of heritage (or cultural capital), natural heritage contributes to the natural capital that supports Australia’s clean land, clean air and clean water. This in turn underpins community health and wellbeing.

Recognition of Australia’s heritage acknowledges our complex natural and cultural history and reflects the diverse values and experiences of Australians. Interpretation, celebration and commemoration of our heritage places provides opportunities for communities to recognise, understand and be part of Australia’s stories. Heritage lists articulate the reasons we believe places are outstanding and why they are important and worth protecting. This recognition can in turn provide motivation for visitors to travel—in many cases great distances—to experience and build their own understanding of what makes such places special. In recent years studies have shown there are economic benefits associated with heritage sites. A comprehensive assessment of 15 of Australia’s World Heritage areas found the economic impacts to the nation were in the order of $15.4 billion in annual turnover and just over 79,000 direct and indirect jobs.[[2]](#footnote-2) At a more regional scale, a 2008 visitor survey undertaken in the City of Perth found direct tourist expenditure attributable to the city’s cultural heritage was estimated to be $350.2 million a year.[[3]](#footnote-3) Australia’s rich natural and cultural heritage can be measured in many different ways, collectively providing our nation with a social, spiritual, economic and environmental legacy for us to understand, appreciate and protect for future generations.

While acknowledging their importance, this Strategy does not directly address policies and programmes relating to moveable cultural heritage items or collections management. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) description of moveable cultural heritage is useful here in understanding what is not within scope of this Strategy: it includes objects such as paintings, sculptures, coins and manuscripts. Movable cultural heritage includes objects that people create or collect and forms an important part of a nation’s identity. These objects are known as ‘cultural property’ and can be artistic, technological, historical or natural in origin.

**Figure 1: The many facets of heritage**

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## 1.2 How is heritage managed?

At the national level, the introduction of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (the EPBC Act) was a significant reform in heritage policy. The EPBC Act established the National Heritage List in 2004, which currently recognises the outstanding Indigenous, historic and/or natural heritage values of more than 100 places across Australia.

Important milestones have been achieved in the protection of Australia’s heritage, beginning with the formation of the Australian National Trust movement in 1945 to Australia’s signing of the UNESCO Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Natural and Cultural Heritage in 1972 and the establishment of the Australian Heritage Commission in 1975. An important step was the clarification of federal, state and local government responsibilities for heritage in the *1997 Heads of Agreement on Commonwealth/State Roles and Responsibilities for the Environment*. This division of responsibilities is consistent with the ‘subsidiarity principle’.

Under this principle, national governments should make decisions about matters such as the protection of heritage only if the decisions cannot be made effectively at a more immediate or local level.

The year 2004 also saw the development of the National Heritage Protocol, which outlines the arrangements whereby the Commonwealth, state and territory systems for the protection of cultural, natural and Indigenous heritage are coordinated. State and territory governments have developed and subsequently updated their heritage legislation, established extensive registers and inventories of heritage places, protected significant areas of heritage in parks, reserves and Indigenous Protected Areas, and provided funding to support the community’s commitment to our heritage. Local governments have also embraced heritage protection and celebration within their community boundaries. The use of town planning instruments has resulted in numerous properties being covered by statutory protection, with communities using those provisions to contribute to sustainable natural and cultural environments.

Heritage peak bodies have made significant contributions to the management and protection of heritage through the development of key documents and guidelines such as the *Burra Charter* and the *Australian Natural Heritage Charter*. Individuals, community groups, businesses and non-government organisations continue to play an important role in heritage identification, management and celebration. Building owners and developers, and tourism and other business owners manage and preserve built heritage, demonstrating commitment to heritage values and contributing significant expenditure, and in doing so make a positive contribution to the places where we live and work. Through the efforts of traditional owners, community awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures continues to increase, with greater appreciation of Indigenous heritage values embodied in the sacred sites of Indigenous traditions and in archaeological and historical sites.

This Strategy recognises this diversity of heritage and the benefits that heritage brings to our community. The Australian Government’s roles and responsibilities for heritage are defined in the EPBC Act, other Australian Government legislation and in various intergovernmental agreements with the states and territories. These are underpinned by Australia’s commitment to international treaties, notably the World Heritage Convention. Through the EPBC Act, the Government identifies and protects the values of heritage places. It is supported in this work by the Australian Heritage Council. World Heritage properties, National Heritage places and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park are protected as Matters of National Environmental Significance under the EPBC Act.

The Australian Government recognises that heritage is broad in its scope. It is typically categorised as natural, historic or Indigenous heritage as detailed in Figure 2. Protected World, National and Commonwealth Heritage places include a combination of heritage values that relate to some or all of these heritage domains.

All state, territory and local governments have their own heritage policies and legislation. Indigenous heritage is often managed under special heritage legislation. Australian Government protection and management of moveable and immoveable heritage is managed administratively by a number of government departments. Moveable cultural heritage is managed under different legal instruments such as the P*rotection of Moveable Cultural Heritage Act 1986*, and administered by the Ministry for the Arts in the Department of Communications and the Arts. The listing, protection and in some cases the management of heritage places of outstanding value to the nation is the responsibility of the Department of the Environment.

The shared nature of heritage management in Australia can lead to two unintended consequences:

1. situations where there is duplication of effort and overlap of regulatory coverage, which can increase the burden on business and communities, and lead to inefficient allocation of scarce resources; and/or

2. situations where some heritage matters do not receive the attention or protection they deserve because there is an expectation that other parties, including private owners, are responsible.

**Figure 2: Heritage domains**

**Natural 
Natural heritage places demonstrate significant features of biodiversity, geodiversity, ecological processes and/or demonstrate significance from the point of view of science, conservation or natural beauty.
Examples:
Natural heritage places may feature exceptional species richness, such as the Stirling Range National Park in Western Australia. They may form a unique snapshot in time, such as the Dinosaur Stampede at Lark Quarry. They may show spectacular geological features, such as the volcanic landscape of the Warrumbungle National Park. 
Historic 
Historic heritage places tell us about the society we have formed in Australia over the past few centuries. These include the buildings, monuments, gardens, landscapes and/or archaeological sites which embody aesthetic, scientific, historic or social values, and provide us with a tangible link to past events, processes and people.
Examples:
Historic Heritage places may recognise the outstanding events in Australia’s history, such as the Eureka Stockade Gardens in Victoria. They may demonstrate outstanding achievements in engineering such as the Sydney Harbour Bridge or in mining technology as found in the City of Broken Hill. They may recognise those places most enjoyed by Australians, such as Flemington Racecourse, the Sydney Opera House or Bondi Beach.  
Indigenous 
Indigenous heritage places are landscapes, sites and areas that are particularly important to Indigenous people as part of their customary law, developing traditions, history and/or current practices. 
Examples:
Indigenous heritage places include traditional use sites, such as Kakadu National Park, the Brewarrina Fish Traps and Wurrwurrwuy’s stone arrangements and sites of protest, disquiet and historical significance such as Moree Baths and Swimming Pool, Wave Hill Walk Off Route, and the Hermannsburg and Coranderrk Mission sites.
**

## 1.3 Why do we need a strategy?

A strategy is needed to unite the efforts of Australian governments and communities in continuing to celebrate, commemorate and protect the heritage assets that are important to us in a manner which is consistent and forward looking. A strategy also assists in articulating the distinct roles of Australia’s governments and community and business partners in valuing, protecting and managing our heritage.

The *2011 State of the Environment Report* undertook an assessment of the state of heritage across Australia. It found that the overall condition was good, but generally that the effectiveness of management arrangements was difficult to measure. This report identified that improvements to heritage management require clear government leadership. It also identified that there is an increasing recognition of the importance of Australia’s Indigenous heritage, noting that such cultural heritage has been inadequately documented and protected.

The Australian Heritage Strategy has been developed in consultation with the heritage sector—practitioners, academics, peak organisations, government officials, and key advisory groups—to provide a framework for national heritage priorities that require focused action and commitment over the next 10 years. While a number of organisations, local governments, private bodies and some states and territories have heritage strategies, to date there has been no national strategy for heritage in Australia.

Heritage has benefited from the development of successful partnerships across the community. Many community groups put their time, energy and finances into caring for their local natural and cultural heritage environment. The Strategy recognises the important role community partnerships play and provides an opportunity to enhance this contribution. It is vital to build upon such partnerships to ensure heritage outcomes are achieved into the future. The Strategy documents the outcomes, objectives and actions that governments, organisations and individuals have identified for national attention over the next decade to promote increased recognition of the economic and social values of heritage.

The Australian Heritage Strategy is a strategy for all Australians. Across Australia community groups commit their time, energy and often finances to caring for their local heritage. Local governments identify and protect the heritage which is important to their communities. This effort is replicated through the state and national levels of government with each level having responsibility for and a commitment to the heritage which is of significance to it. This Strategy recognises the important role communities and governments play, and values their experience and ideas on how Australians can best benefit from our heritage.

The Australian Heritage Strategy presents an opportunity to develop and strengthen partnerships between everyone interested in heritage.

## 1.4 Developing the Strategy

The idea of developing a strategy to guide and enhance the protection of Australia’s heritage assets whether they are of local or world significance has been in circulation for a number of years.

On 1 November 2013, the Australian Government restarted the development of an Australian Heritage Strategy as one of Australia’s key heritage priorities.

A draft Australian Heritage Strategy was released for public consultation in April 2014 and was followed by meetings and forums with members of the heritage community in all capital cities. This draft was based on previous consultations on the concept of an Australian heritage strategy in April 2012, including a public consultation paper, ten commissioned essays (see Appendix 1) and 122 public submissions. An additional 124 public submissions were received in response to the April 2014 draft Strategy. These submissions varied in theme and style, and reflect the diverse range of organisations and individuals involved in the protection, management, conservation and promotion of heritage in Australia. All submissions have been taken into account in finalising the Australian Heritage Strategy.

All non-confidential public submissions are published on the Department of the Environment website: <http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/australian-heritage-strategy/getting-involved>

# 2. A vision for Australia’s heritage places

## 2.1 Vision

***Our natural, historic and Indigenous heritage places are valued by Australians, protected for future generations and cared for by the community.***

This vision is supported by three high level outcomes:

• national leadership

• strong partnerships

• engaged communities.

## 2.2. Delivery of vision and outcomes

The Strategy has relevance for the identification, protection and management of heritage places across all jurisdictions, with many of the identified actions relying on the collaboration and partnerships already in place across state, territory and local governments, and with the private sector and community organisations. The knowledge, skills and experience of all parties can contribute to the realisation of this Strategy’s vision.

The vision is supported by three outcomes, which are underpinned by three sets of objectives, as shown in Figure 3 below. These objectives are detailed over the following pages and are supported by a series of actions. Each action has a proposed delivery date. Lead organisations and partners are identified for each action. The list of partner organisations is not intended to be exhaustive. There are opportunities for anyone in the community to become involved in implementing actions.

The Strategy will be reviewed after five years.

**Figure 3: Strategic vision, outcomes and objectives**

**Vision
Our natural, historic and Indigenous heritage places are valued by Australians, protected for future generations and cared for by the community

Outcome 1
National leadership
Objectives:
1. Continue to support Australia’s iconic World Heritage properties
2. Ensure Australia’s National Heritage List truly reflects the Australian story
3. Effective management of the Commonwealth Heritage List
4. Contribute to international heritage standard setting and guidance

Outcome 2
Strong partnerships
Objectives:
5. Improve heritage policy and process alignment across all levels of government 
6. Further develop heritage partnerships between government and other sectors 
7. Explore innovative funding, resource sharing and creative partnerships
8. Foster greater collaboration between the heritage and tourism sectors

Outcome 3
Engaged communities
Objectives:
9. Focus protection efforts on Indigenous heritage
10. Promote greater awareness, knowledge and engagement with our national heritage
11. Provide consistent best practice standards and guidelines for heritage conservation and management**

Outcome 1: National leadership

The Australian Government is responsible for providing heritage leadership nationally. It has responsibility for the identification, protection, celebration and, in some cases management of Australia’s premier heritage assets—those found to have Outstanding Universal Value and inscribed in the World Heritage List or those found to have outstanding value to the nation and inscribed in the National Heritage List. The Australian Government provides some funding to places and organisations across Australia to support the maintenance of heritage practice and places, and provides advice internationally on heritage best practice.

Similarly the Australia International Council on Monuments and Sites, the Australian Committee for International Union for Conservation of Nature and the Australian Heritage Council all have national leadership roles. The Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Act 1999* (EPBC Act) provides for the protection of the World Heritage values of the Australian properties inscribed on the World Heritage List. Legislative protection is further supported through the development and implementation of policies consistent with existing international and national agreements. The Australian Government works closely with World Heritage property managers to support the effective management of these properties, and provides some funding support, to help ensure the Outstanding Universal Value and integrity of Australia’s World Heritage properties is sustained and passed on to future generations. In addition to its protections for World Heritage properties, the EPBC Act provides for the identification, listing and protection of natural, historic and Indigenous heritage values of National Heritage places. Places on the National Heritage List have been assessed as having outstanding heritage value to the nation. The Commonwealth Heritage List includes places on Commonwealth lands or in Commonwealth waters or owned or managed by the Australian Government that have significant heritage value.

The Australian Heritage Council is a key adviser to the Minister for the Environment on heritage matters. Operating since 2004, the Council is a body of heritage experts established by the *Australian Heritage Council Act 2003*. The Council assesses nominations for the National Heritage List and the Commonwealth Heritage List and makes recommendations to the Minister for the Environment. The final decision on listing is made by the Minister.

State, territory and local governments, as well as private property owners, have responsibility for the day to day management of the majority of places on the World and National Heritage Lists. The Australian Government and traditional owners jointly manage Kakadu and Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Parks, both of which are on these lists. State and territory governments also provide support for heritage owners and managers responsible for properties on state and territory heritage registers. The Australian Government works closely with state-based agencies to ensure best practice in heritage administration, management and conservation.

## Objective 1: Continue to support Australia’s iconic World Heritage properties

World Heritage places are places which have been found to have Outstanding Universal Value by the UNESCO World Heritage Committee. These places are the ‘best of the best’ having met the highest of significance thresholds to qualify for inscription in the World Heritage List. Australia has 19 World Heritage properties (see map in Appendix 2) on the World Heritage List, including the Wet Tropics of Queensland, the Greater Blue Mountains, Purnululu National Park and the Sydney Opera House.

The Australian Government is the Australian State Party for the purposes of the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage. The Convention aims to promote cooperation among nations to protect heritage from around the world that is of such value that its conservation is important for current and future generations globally. Most World Heritage properties in Australia are under state and territory government jurisdiction and are managed by them.

Issues and opportunities

The Australian Government, jointly with the states and territories, uses the best scientific, technical and community advice available to maintain and protect Australia’s World Heritage properties and plays a leading role in encouraging visitation and understanding of these places. Management of these properties is guided by the World Heritage Management Principles set out in the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Regulations 2000*. Cooperation across jurisdictions and engagement with local communities is essential in ensuring the principles are implemented effectively and that management standards remain world-best or cutting edge.

The Australian Government recognises the importance of our international priorities. Australia has an exemplary reputation and invests significantly in our World Heritage places, providing around $37 million over five years (2013–2018) through the World Heritage Grants programme. The Australian Government funds the World Heritage properties’ advisory committees and a range of activities with a focus on natural heritage, such as ranger programmes and the development of management plans. This has included funding over many years to support executive officers for World Heritage properties with natural heritage values. In 2015, Australian Government funding for the Port Arthur Historic Site Management Authority has allowed it to engage an executive officer for the first time to manage and administer the Australian Convict Sites World Heritage property.

Australia, as a State Party to the World Heritage Convention, maintains a Tentative List of properties which it considers have value of such significance that they are suitable for inscription on the World Heritage List. A place must be on the Tentative List for at least one year before being eligible for nomination to the Word Heritage List. Currently, Australia’s World Heritage Tentative List contains two properties and potential exists for it to be further developed. The high cost and effort in preparing future nominations for possible World Heritage inscription requires careful planning and measured advice. A range of actions are provided below to help manage current properties and guide future aspirations.

Under the Australian World Heritage Intergovernmental Agreement, the preparation of a World Heritage nomination is the responsibility of the state or territory in which the place is located. Any such nomination is developed with the support and guidance of the Australian Government. The World Heritage Intergovernmental Agreement commits the Australian Government to consult with the states and territories and to use its best endeavours to obtain agreement on properties for inclusion in Australia’s Tentative List. Where relevant, traditional owner engagement is also critical to the listing process.

Collaborative groups such as the Australian World Heritage Advisory Committee and the Australian World Heritage Indigenous Network also provide advice to Australian governments on policies, programmes and cultural protocols which benefit World Heritage properties.

For ongoing effective management of existing World Heritage properties, targeted funding, cooperation across jurisdictions and engagement with local communities will be essential. An important example of such cooperation is the Reef Trust, which is investing in action to improve water quality, restore habitats and protect threatened species in the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area (see Feature 1).

| **Proposed actions** | **Delivery** | **Lead** | **Partners** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Provide funding to state governments through the World Heritage Grants programme to support Australian World Heritage properties being managed in a manner consistent with World Heritage Convention obligations. | 2013–18 | Department of the Environment | State and territory governments  Property owners / managers |
| Provide $1.5 million to the Port Arthur Historic Sites Management Authority to support critical restoration works at the Port Arthur Penitentiary building (part of the Australian Convict Sites World Heritage property). | July 2015 | Department of the Environment  Port Arthur Historic Sites Management Authority | Australian Convict Sites Steering Committee  Tasmanian Government |
| Financially support engagement of an executive officer over three years to manage and administer the Australian Convict Sites World Heritage property. | 2015-17 | Department of the Environment  Port Arthur Historic Site Management Authority |  |
| Provide up to $32 million to research coastal water quality and coastal management focused on the Great Barrier Reef through the National Environmental Science Programme’s Tropical Water Quality Hub. | 2015-2020 | Department of the Environment | Reef and Rainforest Research Centre |
| Best practice management of Kakadu and Uluru-Kata Tjuta World Heritage properties | Ongoing | Department of the Environment | Traditional owners |
| Effectively manage the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area through implementation of the *Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan* so that it continues to demonstrate the Outstanding Universal Value for which it was listed as a World Heritage Area. | 2015–2050 | Department of the Environment  Queensland Government  Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority | Non-government organisations |
| Update Australia’s World Heritage Tentative List. | December 2016 | Department of the Environment | State and territory governments  Australia International Council on Monuments and Sites; Australian Committee for International Union for Conservation of Nature  Traditional owners |
| Progressively review existing World Heritage places that have been listed for natural values only to identify whether the areas may contain internationally significant cultural heritage. | Ongoing | Department of the Environment | Australian World Heritage Advisory Committee  Traditional owners and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with rights and interests in a place |
| Work cooperatively with property managers to ensure effective management arrangements are in place for each World Heritage property. | July 2020 | World Heritage property managers  Department of the Environment | Australian World Heritage Advisory Committee |

Feature 1

Reef Trust

Australia’s extraordinary Great Barrier Reef has been appropriately recognised through its addition to both the National and World Heritage Lists. In recent years both the Australian and Queensland governments have been working towards improved sustainable management of the Reef.

The Reef Trust is one of the key mechanisms to assist in the delivery of the *Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan*. It will provide cost effective, strategic investment to support on-ground action for the long-term protection and conservation of the Great Barrier Reef and focuses on known critical areas for investment: improving water quality and coastal habitat along the Reef, controlling the current outbreak of crown-of-thorns starfish, and protecting threatened and migratory species, particularly dugong and turtles.

This innovative approach to funding will improve coordination and add the benefit of scale to ensure environmental outcomes and protection of the Reef’s listed National and World Heritage values are improved.

Innovative funding model

The Reef Trust is an innovative mechanism designed to consolidate investments in the Reef and disburse funds strategically.

The Reef Trust started operation in 2014–15. In addition to a $140 million contribution from the Australian Government, funding may also be derived from pooling of offset funds that target specific impacts on the Reef from development activities. Over time, there will also be the opportunity for future funding through private investments and philanthropic contributions.

Financial offsets can contribute to the Reef Trust where development actions will have residual significant impacts on matters of national and state environmental significance. Any offsets delivered through the Reef Trust must deliver an environmental outcome and improve or maintain the same attributes or values that are impacted by any development actions.

## Objective 2: Ensure Australia’s National Heritage List truly reflects the Australian story

The National Heritage List showcases Australia’s most important heritage assets—those places that have been found to be of outstanding heritage value to the nation. The List links familiar and iconic places such as the Sydney Opera House and the Melbourne Cricket Ground with less known places such as Budj Bim, which is the site of one of the oldest Indigenous aquaculture systems in the world. It links sites of great national celebrations, such as Melbourne’s Royal Exhibition Building, with places of sorrow and disquiet such as Tasmania’s Port Arthur and the Myall Creek Massacre site. It also links places of great historic moments such as Captain Cook’s Landing Place and events that have taken mythological status such as the site of Ned Kelly’s last stand at Glenrowan and the Tree of Knowledge at Barcaldine. These and other places form part of the Australian story. Identifying them, telling their tales and providing a framework for their protection is the purpose of the National Heritage List.

The Australian Heritage Council plays an important role in building the National Heritage List. Key among its responsibilities is the assessment of nominated places against the National Heritage criteria and providing advice to the Minister for the Environment as to whether a place has national heritage values. To qualify for inclusion in the List nominated places must meet one or more statutory criteria which define why the place is important. For example, does the place possess uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Australia’s natural or cultural history or a special association with the life or works of a person of importance in Australia’s cultural history? If the Minister for the Environment agrees that a place has national heritage values, it is recorded in the List. As the List is a statutory instrument, the listed values of a place are afforded protection by the Australian Government under the EPBC Act.

Issues and opportunities

As the National Heritage List was established in 2004 and now comprises over 100 places (see map in Appendix 2), it is timely to consider how the List should develop into the future. Does the list include Australia’s most important heritage assets, the places that reflect our identity as a nation, that tell our story and which we want to protect and value into the future? Does the list inspire, educate and delight us as Australians and paint a picture for visitors to Australia as to who we are?

The strong public response to statutory calls for nomination of places to include in the National Heritage List suggests that some in the Australian community believe that the List is incomplete and should continue to grow. The best way to continue to build the List, however, remains to be determined. Should, for example, a thematic approach be taken to ensure the List is representative or should the List be balanced to showcase equivalent numbers of natural, historic or Indigenous places? Should the List be closed at some future point in time on the basis that the number of places of outstanding value to the nation is finite, or should the nomination process be made easier to enable more Australian community members to have their say in how it should grow? Given the level of maturity the National Heritage List has reached after ten years of development, should the threshold for the inclusion of new places be raised to taper its growth and allow a refocussing of resources onto the management of listed places? A consideration of these issues should underpin the activities designed to ensure Australia’s National Heritage List truly reflects the Australian story.

The Australian Government will continue to provide funding through the Community Heritage and Icons Grants and Protecting National Historic Sites programmes to support Australian communities to engage more effectively with their National Heritage places, especially with regards to conservation and celebration.

| **Proposed actions** | **Delivery** | **Lead** | **Partners** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Determine future directions for the National Heritage List. | July 2016 | Department of the Environment  Australian Heritage Council | State and territory governments |
| Streamline the existing National Heritage listing process through best practice administration of the EPBC Act requirements.  Review the National Heritage listing processes under the EPBC Act. | July 2016  July 2018 | Department of the Environment  Department of the Environment | Australian Heritage Council  Heritage Officials of Australia and New Zealand  Australian Heritage Council |
| Foster partnerships with jurisdictions, peak bodies and academic institutions to access current research to inform the identification of National Heritage values.  This includes reviewing the National Environmental Science Programme priorities to facilitate greater consideration of National and World Heritage property needs in the development of future hub research plans. | Ongoing | Department of the Environment  Australian Heritage Council | Universities  CSIRO  Heritage Officials of Australia and New Zealand  Australian World Heritage Advisory Committee  Australian World Heritage Indigenous Network |
| Support national heritage through grant funding provided by the Australian Government including:  • Protecting National Historic Sites (2014–18)  • Community Heritage and Icons Grants, including specific support to the Australian Heritage Council and the Federation of Australian Historical Societies (2014–18)  • National Trust Partnership Programme (2014–18). | July 2018 | Department of the Environment | National Heritage and World Heritage listed properties  Australian Heritage Council  Federation of Australian Historical Societies  National Trusts of Australia |

Objective 3: Effective management of the Commonwealth Heritage List

The Commonwealth Heritage List contains around 400 natural, historic and Indigenous heritage places owned or controlled by the Australian Government. These include places connected to defence, communications, postal services, customs and other government activities. The Commonwealth Heritage List, like the better known World and National Heritage Lists, also reflects important aspects of Australia’s development as a nation. The threshold for inclusion in this list is lower than that for the world and national heritage lists. To be included in the Commonwealth Heritage List a Commonwealth controlled property must have ‘significant heritage value’. This is in contrast to the Outstanding Universal Value level required for World Heritage listing and the outstanding value to the nation level required for National Heritage listing.

Commonwealth Heritage listing acknowledges and celebrates the heritage assets which the Commonwealth controls. It also brings with it management and reporting obligations for the Commonwealth agency responsible for the place. Under the EPBC Act, Commonwealth agencies are responsible for preparing plans to manage the Commonwealth Heritage values of places, including those that it sells or leases, for instance taking all reasonable measures to enter into a conservation agreement with prospective buyers or lessees.

Considerable numbers of Commonwealth Heritage-listed properties that are owned or leased by Australian Government agencies have heritage values that are of significance to local communities or specific stakeholder groups. Some have values that are found elsewhere.

Issues and opportunities

The future management of Commonwealth Heritage places needs to be carefully planned and resourced as the ongoing costs associated with maintaining the heritage values of these places can be significant. Australian Government agencies are developing and implementing strategies and plans for their heritage assets. These documents identify the heritage values that should be conserved and, where feasible, actions avoided that may adversely affect them. Difficult decisions face many Commonwealth Heritage listed place managers over the coming years. Through appropriate planning that includes collaborative community and stakeholder engagement these managers can better direct their limited resources towards the protection of the most important heritage values under their control.

| **Proposed actions** | **Delivery** | **Lead** | **Partners** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Australian Government agencies to finalise plans for Commonwealth Heritage places to allow for the:  • effective protection of places and assets identified as priority; and  • development of appropriate management and, if required, disposal strategies where appropriate. | Ongoing | Australian Government agencies | Department of the Environment  Australian Heritage Council |
| Streamline Commonwealth Heritage listing and management processes through best practice administration of EPBC Act requirements. | July 2016 | Department of the Environment | Australian Government agencies  Australian Heritage Council |

Objective 4: Contribute to international heritage standard setting and guidance

Australia has played a significant role in a range of international heritage matters. This includes serving on the World Heritage Committee four times. Australia has played a leadership role in strengthening the integrity of the World Heritage Convention, contributing expertise to improve the policies that conserve World Heritage, and supporting countries in our region to engage with, and share in, the cultural, economic and social benefits of World Heritage recognition and protection.

Issues and opportunities

In 1974, Australia became the seventh State Party to accede to the World Heritage Convention. The heart of the Convention is about protection of heritage through international cooperation. Many States Parties face constraints in the listing and conservation of their heritage, including inadequate legal protection and management mechanisms and insufficient human and financial resources. Australia has extensive experience in partnering with government and non-government organisations to support heritage managers worldwide. Australia has long been an active contributor to World Heritage policy discussions and will continue to play a leadership role in developing effective strategies which address the maintenance of the heritage values of inscribed properties but which also recognise the wider social, economic and environmental imperatives of countries.

UNESCO and its key cultural and natural heritage evaluators (the International Council on Monuments and Sites and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature) recognise the Australian Government as a strategic partner in World Heritage capacity development, particularly in the South-East Asian and Pacific regions.

| **Proposed actions** | **Delivery** | **Lead** | **Partners** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Provide strategic support for countries in our region to build management and governance capacity; for example, the Kokoda Track in Papua New Guinea. | Ongoing | Department of the Environment | Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade  Partner countries  Non-government organisations |
| Continue Australia’s active contribution to World Heritage policy discussions at international forums. | Ongoing | Department of the Environment | Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade |
| Explore application of lessons learned from the Great Barrier Reef Strategic Assessment for improved management of other World Heritage sites under the international contributions objective of the World Heritage Convention. | Ongoing | Department of the Environment | State and territory governments  Property managers |

Feature 2

Cockatoo Island—a convict-era and industrial heritage showcase

Cockatoo Island is the largest island in Sydney Harbour. In recent years it has been transformed from a dangerous, dilapidated industrial site into a major Sydney tourist attraction.

Added to the National Heritage List in 2007 and the World Heritage List in 2010, Cockatoo Island’s heritage significance lies in the presence of the only remaining dry dock in Australia built using convict labour, as well as buildings and fabric related to the administration, incarceration and working conditions of convicts.

In 1991 significant parts of the dockyard structures were demolished leaving desolate, contaminated open spaces. Carefully managed by the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust, the island was professionally decontaminated. Suitable treated waste was mounded, capped and grassed, thereby avoiding relocation on the mainland. Other sustainable actions include the adaptive reuse of existing buildings, storm and rainwater harvesting and the use of solar roof arrays.

Today it is possible to visit Cockatoo Island by ferry to appreciate the island’s convict and industrial heritage. Island visitors are met by volunteers and supplied with information about Cockatoo Island and its history. An enthusiastic group of volunteers also work to conserve and restore the island’s historic machinery and cranes.

The island’s campground, situated in the midst of a wonderful harbour side setting, is proving very popular for relaxed, affordable accommodation. In recent years this combination of heritage values and visitor experiences, such as special events including arts and music festivals, has helped Cockatoo Island to grow rapidly in popularity as a tourist destination.

Outcome 2: Strong partnerships

While it is recognised that the Australian Government plays an important role in national heritage leadership, heritage—as in many other areas of national governance—has benefited from the development of successful partnerships.

*It is clear that while specific groups can claim ownership of specific parts of Australia’s heritage, all Australians have rights to have a say in protection and management of the nation’s heritage. A shared responsibility approach to heritage protection and management can deliberately recognise all the relevant stakeholders—community, organisations and government agencies; at all relevant levels—local, regional, state, national and international. It is a deliberate multi party relationships approach to managing the heritage.[[4]](#footnote-4)*

Australia’s heritage places are owned and managed by all levels of government, by private and public organisations, and by individuals in the community. Cooperative partnerships are an important way to efficiently and effectively manage these places. While a partnership approach to heritage support is not new, there is benefit in exploring further practical and long-term collaborations on heritage matters. The actions included in this outcome invite the exploration of a range of new innovative partnership opportunities.

Objective 5: Improve heritage policy and process alignment across all levels of government

Legislation for the management of heritage places across Australia is sometimes complex and can be inconsistent. Legislative reforms, particularly in the area of Indigenous heritage, are being pursued by a number of state and territory governments. In late 2013 the Australian and state governments began working in partnership to deliver a One-Stop Shop for environmental approvals, by accrediting state planning systems, subject to clear assurance and accountability mechanisms, to manage environmental assessment and approval processes for Matters of National Environmental Significance protected under the EPBC Act. The goal of this approach is to simplify the approval process for businesses, lead to swifter decisions, and to improve cooperation while maintaining high environmental standards – including heritage conservation standards.

Issues and opportunities

Commonwealth, state and territory, and local government laws, regulations and policies must be taken into account by managers of heritage places. In some cases this can require interpretation of multiple layers of government legislation and can result in confusion and inconsistent application of the law. Improved communication and guidance within this legal and administrative environment is needed. This would help ensure heritage place management requirements are better understood by all, especially by local governments and private owners. Ways of improving this communication, across all levels of government will be explored over the coming years.

Heritage protection can benefit from the One-Stop Shop for environmental approvals. This policy will accredit state planning systems under the EPBC Act, to create a single environmental assessment and approval process for nationally protected matters. It is expected to result in regulatory savings to business of around $426 million a year, by reducing costs associated with delays to project approvals and administration. The One-Stop Shop policy will help ensure that government decisions take account of World and National Heritage matters, protected under the EPBC Act.

There is opportunity to reform the way Australia protects its maritime heritage. Australia currently protects its shipwrecks and their associated relics that are older than 75 years through the *Historic Shipwrecks Act 1976*. There are opportunities to modernise this Act, including by extending its reach to cover a broader range of underwater cultural heritage, including aircraft. In 2001, UNESCO adopted the Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage. The principles of the Convention are very similar to the way Australia protects and manages its historic shipwrecks. While the *Historic Shipwrecks Act 1976* mostly complies with the Convention, there are some gaps that would need to be addressed in order for Australia to ratify it.

There is also an opportunity to support the development of bilateral agreements with South-East Asian and Pacific region nations (such as Indonesia and Papua New Guinea) to better protect our shared underwater cultural heritage in the region, in particular for ships and aircraft lost during war.

Actions to meet this objective have been designed to strike the right balance between recognising the value and benefits of heritage, and increasing alignment of law and practice across jurisdictions, while minimising any unnecessary burden upon businesses and individuals.

| **Proposed actions** | **Delivery** | **Lead** | **Partners** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Implement the One-Stop Shop policy through bilateral agreements between the Australian Government and states and territories in order to make it easier to navigate heritage regulations. | As per bilateral agreements with states and territories | Department of the Environment | State and territory governments |
| Improve communication about the benefits of heritage laws, regulations and policies. | Ongoing | Department of the Environment  Australian Heritage Council | State and territory governments |
| Review and modernise the *Historic Shipwrecks Act 1976* to better align with international best practice. | December 2018 | Department of the Environment | State and territory governments  Shipwreck delegates |
| Progress ratification of the 2001 UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage. | December 2018 | Department of the Environment | Shipwreck delegates |
| Work with South-East Asian and Pacific region States (such as Indonesia and Papua New Guinea) to better protect our shared underwater cultural heritage. | December 2019 | Department of the Environment | Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade |

Objective 6: Further develop heritage partnerships between government and other sectors

Heritage outcomes are achieved through cooperation and partnership between governments and non-government organisations. One of the most significant cooperative achievements for heritage protection in Australia has been the creation of the *Burra Charter*, adopted by the Australia International Council on Monuments and Sites in 1979. The Charter defines the basic principles and procedures to be followed in the conservation of Australian heritage places. This document was initially developed, and subsequently improved over the years, through the collective knowledge and expertise of practitioners from across the heritage sector. The *Burra Charter* is recognised internationally as a best practice framework for heritage management. More recent examples include the release in 2013 of the *Cairns Communiqué* by the Australian Committee for International Union for Conservation of Nature, and the National Trusts’ Heritage Festival, which in conjunction with Australia’s Heritage Week, brings together up to 1,500 heritage events across Australia.

Issues and opportunities

The model of achievement through cooperation can be built upon through further partnerships—particularly those that can make use of the skills, knowledge and experience of both government and private organisations. A number of important reforms have been identified that could contribute to improved management, protection, promotion and celebration of Australia’s cultural heritage. These complex but worthwhile reforms require contributions from both government and non-government partners. The following actions will be pursued through the life of this Strategy, bringing together key industry partners to achieve long term conservation benefits for historic and Indigenous heritage.

| **Proposed actions** | **Delivery** | **Lead** | **Partners** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Explore the development and implementation of a heritage quality framework to provide more consistent heritage management guidance to the Australian building industry. | July 2020 | Australia International Council on Monuments and Sites  Heritage Officials of Australia and New Zealand | Department of the Environment  Building industry |
| Improve recognition of heritage buildings within Australian environmental rating tools to help improve their retention as part of future urban renewal activities. | July 2020 | Heritage Officials of Australia and New Zealand  Australia International Council on Monuments and Sites  Construction Industry peak bodies | Department of the Environment, Department of Industry, State and territory governments  Building industry |
| Encourage further development of trade and professional heritage conservation skills through:  • the construction/building industry, and technical education courses, and  • further education, college and university courses. | July 2020 | State and territory heritage councils  Department of the Environment | Universities  Technical and Further Education, and College of Advanced Education  Building industry, construction industry peak bodies  Australian Government departments: Industry, Education and Training |
| Continue support for Indigenous Australians to access training and career path development in heritage identification, management and promotion. | Ongoing | Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (Indigenous Affairs): Indigenous Advancement Strategy | Department of the Environment  Traditional owners  Aboriginal Land Councils and Corporations |

Objective 7: Explore innovative funding, resource sharing and creative partnerships

The heritage sector continues to engage with the challenge of accessing the resources needed to sustainably manage and conserve Australia’s cultural and natural heritage assets. Innovative place managers have developed alternative resourcing solutions in response to changes in the availability of government funding. Innovative partnerships in other community sectors have been highly effective in attracting new funds to help support their identified priorities. The arts and cultural sectors have been at the forefront of such endeavours and offer models that could be applied to the heritage sector.

Issues and opportunities

In the face of general budget pressures over many years the heritage sector has moved towards more cost effective strategies to achieve heritage outcomes. It has also led to more innovative thinking as heritage practitioners and managers explore alternate funding sources. Alternative funding options for the heritage sector range from established practices—such as philanthropic support and targeted lotteries (e.g. the United Kingdom’s National Lottery, Western Australia’s Lotterywest)—to social media-led crowd-funding campaigns. These and other approaches will be explored through cooperative and creative partnerships, with the values and benefits of each being fully considered before any decision is made regarding their implementation.

| **Proposed actions** | **Delivery** | **Lead** | **Partners** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Build the Reef Trust’s capacity and innovative approaches to consolidate investment for the long-term protection and conservation of the Outstanding Universal Value of the Great Barrier Reef. | July 2017 | Department of the Environment  Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority  Queensland Government | Philanthropists  Private investors |
| Explore and promote philanthropic success stories in the culture and arts sector, to inform innovation and the development of new partnerships within the heritage sector. | December 2016 | Department of the Environment  Heritage Chairs and Officials of Australia and New Zealand | Australian Government departments: Ministry for the Arts (Department of Communications and the Arts), Treasury, Australian Taxation Office  Philanthropy Australia |
| Explore new funding opportunities for the long-term protection and management of Australia’s heritage places, in particular the potential for a national lottery. | December 2016 | Department of the Environment  State and territory governments | Treasury, Australian Taxation Office  Property managers |
| Explore opportunities for partnerships to support the identification, protection and promotion of Indigenous heritage places. | July 2020 | Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (Indigenous Affairs): Indigenous Advancement Strategy  Australian Heritage Council | Department of the Environment  Philanthropists  Private sector  International non-government organisations |

Feature 3

The United Kingdom Heritage Lottery Fund

Money raised through the United Kingdom’s National Lottery has been funding a range of good causes, including heritage, since the lottery was established in 1994. Since then the National Lottery has raised a staggering $71 billion (£34 billion) for projects across the UK. This year an estimated $780 million (£375 million) will be spent on heritage projects.

While the Heritage Lottery Fund is a uniquely British institution, and there would be many issues to work through in seeking to establish a fund like this in the Australian federation, it is an example of the potential to harness new sources of funding to support Australian heritage.

Part of every pound spent on National Lottery tickets goes directly to benefit communities across the UK. The money is allocated in the following way: 20% to the arts; 40% to charities, health, education and the environment; 20% to heritage; and 20% to sports.

Responsibility for the UK-wide distribution of National Lottery proceeds allocated to heritage was given to the Trustees of the National Heritage Memorial Fund (NHMF). The distribution arm of NHMF is known as the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Decisions about individual Heritage Lottery Fund applications and policies are entirely independent of the UK Government.

The Heritage Lottery Fund has a broad suite of programmes offering funding from small grants of just a few thousand dollars to multi-million dollar grants for major heritage projects.

Funding is provided for projects in thematic areas such as: museums, libraries and archives; buildings and monuments; places of worship; land and natural heritage; cultures and memories; community heritage; and industrial, maritime and transport.

Source: [www.hlf.org.uk](http://www.hlf.org.uk)

Feature 4

A Green Army for heritage

Launched in 2014, the Green Army provides young people aged 17 to 24 years old with training and experience in a hands-on, practical action programme that supports local environment and heritage conservation projects across Australia.

Projects are carried out across urban, regional and remote Australia on public land, Indigenous-held lands, or private land where there is a clear community and environmental and heritage benefit.

Green Army team work focusing on increasing the area, connectivity and condition of native vegetation communities in Nightcap National Park, was approved for funding under Round 1 of the Green Army programme. Over two years, four Green Army teams will, in conjunction with professional bush regenerators, restore critically endangered lowland subtropical rainforest in the Nightcap and Goonengerry National Parks, Whian Whian State Conservation Area and the linking Wanganui Gorge.

Nightcap National Park forms part of the World Heritage listed Gondwana Rainforests of Australia, a serial property which comprises the major remaining areas of rainforest in southeast Queensland and northeast NSW.

The project involves bush regeneration works and control of serious weed threats including lantana, camphor laurel and exotic vines. Green Army participants will also mark horse and mountain bike riding trails, maintain walking tracks to improve public access, and redesign a car-park to minimise impact on environmentally sensitive areas. Annual field days will be held to showcase the works and develop environmental awareness in the local community.

Participants will gain important skills and experience while working to conserve a World Heritage Area. The project teams will be based out of Lismore and Byron Bay and surrounding smaller towns; areas of high youth unemployment.

There are a number of Green Army Projects that focus on Indigenous cultural heritage. The Bingara Travelling Stock Route Cultural Survey and Maintenance Project commenced in October 2015 and includes sites in the Terry Hie Hie Aboriginal Area, near Bingara NSW. The Project builds on previous work to map cultural remnants in the north-west of New South Wales, primarily Travelling Stock Routes.

Young Aboriginal participants will have the opportunity to collect and record Aboriginal artefacts on the Terry Hie Hie Reserve. Participants will help in the systematic survey, analysis and mapping of a large part of the entire work area and the works associated with the protection of significant Aboriginal Sites. The Green Army Project provides participants with the opportunity to gain skills and experience in a range of work environments and is building the capacity of the Local Land Services North West Aboriginal Advisory Group while engaging the local community.

Objective 8: Foster greater collaboration between the heritage and tourism sectors

Culture and heritage play a critical role in sustaining truly global cities and make an important contribution to regional and state economies. Australia has many heritage-listed destinations that both domestic and international tourists travel long distances to see. Some places are well loved by many, others are known to just a few. Internationally recognised Australian icons include the Great Barrier Reef, Bondi Beach, Uluru-Kata Tjuta, and the Sydney Opera House. Recently it has been estimated that the Great Barrier Reef, a World Heritage and National Heritage site, is worth over $3 billion per year to the Australian economy.[[5]](#footnote-5) While many places draw crowds because of their spectacular and iconic landscapes, tourists are increasingly seeking richer experiences. The growth in cultural tourism has shown that travellers want more personal engagement, including greater understanding of our Indigenous cultural heritage. Australia’s National Landscapes partnership between Parks Australia and Tourism Australia promotes to the world 16 spectacular regions offering uniquely Australian heritage experiences. Each of these Landscapes provide off the beaten track experiences and opportunities to personally engage with culture and heritage (www.tourism.australia.com/programs/national-landscapes.aspx).

Issues and opportunities

Tourism research suggests that cultural visitors stay longer and spend more than other visitors. There is a great opportunity to strengthen the role of tourism in communicating the stories of our natural and cultural heritage. This is especially true for the National Heritage List which, despite growing to more than 100 places, is still not widely known as a tourism brand by the Australian community. For some of Australia’s National Heritage places, a viable tourism market exists and can be further developed. Improved linkages between the heritage and tourism sectors could help to build greater awareness and appreciation of Australia’s natural, historic and Indigenous heritage, while also fostering new tourism business opportunities that help increase the supply of tourism products that support the Australian Government’s national long-term tourism strategy, *Tourism 2020*.

Lessons can also be learnt from the National Landscapes partnership, which has effectively supported local and regional partnerships to develop tourism business opportunities, build cultural awareness and create regional employment.

Increased tourist visitation does have the potential to impact upon recognised heritage values. Cooperative partnerships, quality frameworks for the tourism and heritage sectors, and the provision of infrastructure and professional services to support visitation, provide tourists with both an enjoyable and sustainable heritage experience. At a local level Australian Heritage Week is an opportunity for all Australians to join together to celebrate our shared and special heritage. Held in April each year, all communities are encouraged to get involved with planning and hosting a range of activities during this week to showcase local heritage to the rest of the country.

| **Proposed actions** | **Delivery** | **Lead** | **Partners** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Support and further develop community engagement with Australia’s Heritage Week. | Ongoing | Department of the Environment  National Trusts of Australia  Australian Heritage Council | State and territory governments  National Landscapes Programme  Tourism sector  Local governments |
| Promote the National Heritage List by providing more accessible information on heritage places through the National Heritage List website[[6]](#footnote-6) and through Australia’s Community Heritage website.[[7]](#footnote-7) | July 2016 | Department of the Environment  National Heritage List place managers | National Trusts of Australia  Local governments  Tourism sector  Non-government organisations (e.g. Federation of Australian Historical Societies, Aboriginal organisations)  Australian Heritage Council |
| Encourage partnerships between place managers and tourism bodies to better promote the values, experiences, and cultural stories associated with National and World Heritage places.  Support initiatives that enable sustainable community, national and international visitor access to heritage places. | Ongoing | Place managers  Australian Heritage Council  Tourism Australia | Tourism sector  Australian Committee for International Union for Conservation of Nature  National Landscapes  Department of the Environment |
| Help foster Indigenous heritage tourism activities and enterprises through specialist support and business advice. | July 2020 | Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (Indigenous Affairs): Indigenous Advancement Strategy | Austrade  Tourism Sector  Land councils, Aboriginal corporations, Indigenous tourism peak bodies  National Landscapes  Department of the Environment |

Outcome 3: Engaged communities

All Australians should be able to commemorate, celebrate and engage with their heritage. While many of our heritage assets are significant to a small or local community, such as an historic building or a sacred site, other places have values that resonate more widely and have significance to a larger number of people. Other places are significant to the entire nation.

The term ‘heritage’ encompasses natural, historic and Indigenous cultural domains with places having tangible, intangible, movable and site-based elements and values. However, public surveys have shown that many people see heritage as meaning only ‘history’ or ‘old buildings’.[[8]](#footnote-8) From such surveys and other forms of stakeholder feedback, it is clear there is a need to build a shared understanding of what Australian heritage is and why it is important. A shared understanding would help to build greater community awareness and appreciation of all aspects of our national heritage. This in turn helps empower communities to have an informed say as to how their heritage should be managed and protected.

The objectives of this outcome aim to build upon the existing efforts of communities in building awareness, appreciation and protection of the heritage places and stories that are important to us all.

Objective 9: Focus protection efforts on Indigenous heritage

The *2011* *Australia State of the Environment* report provided insight into the current and potential future condition of the environment. For heritage, the report showed that in general our heritage was well maintained, though some deterioration in our heritage estate was evident in recent years. The report identified a range of pressures that can impact upon the condition of our natural and cultural heritage places. The report also noted that assessing outcomes for Australia’s Indigenous heritage is hampered by the lack of national coordinated management approaches, a deficiency of comparable data, and the absence of formal monitoring and evaluation programmes. Overall, the report found that increasing regulation has not reduced the rate of destruction of significant Indigenous heritage sites. At the same time, the Productivity Commission has recommended various ways to reduce regulatory overlaps in the range of Commonwealth and state laws that protect Indigenous heritage sites.[[9]](#footnote-9)

The *Closing the Gap on Indigenous Disadvantage* strategy recognises that Indigenous communities can be empowered by building upon the strengths of Indigenous cultures and identities. This can help community leaders in their efforts to more quickly improve outcomes for Indigenous recognition, health and employment.

Issues and opportunities

Indigenous cultural heritage sites are carefully maintained from generation to generation by traditional owners. At times this work can be beyond a community’s capacity to deliver. One mechanism for supporting and communicating this rich heritage to all Australians may be by the inclusion of more Indigenous places in the National Heritage List. Currently there are more than 20 places in the National Heritage List for Indigenous values. They are places as diverse as Koonalda Cave (see photo) and the Moree Baths and Swimming Pool Complex (see photo).

There will be ongoing opportunities for assessing Indigenous cultural heritage values for inscription on the National Heritage List and other Australian Government registers, including as the Government determines future directions for the maturing of the National Heritage List (see Objective 2). There are many opportunities for governments, heritage organisations and philanthropists to provide support for the identification, protection and ongoing management of Indigenous cultural heritage, both financially and in-kind. This challenge is seen by the collective heritage sector as one of the greatest priorities.

Working on Country and Indigenous Protected Areas projects, with approved Australian Government funding over several years, are well placed to take advantage of opportunities for additional support for Indigenous cultural heritage activities.

The *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984* (ATSIHP Act) was enacted to protect sacred sites and objects. Its purpose was to address a gap in state laws and to encourage states to improve or enact legislation to protect traditional Aboriginal sites and objects. Three decades on, and despite significant changes in the Indigenous heritage protection laws of all jurisdictions, including passage of the *Native Title Act 1993* and the EPBC Act, the ATSIHP Act has not been updated to reflect the improvements in the legislative protections for Indigenous heritage. Any changes to the ATSHIP Act would require the support of Indigenous stakeholders.

| **Proposed actions** | **Delivery** | **Lead** | **Partners** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Promote a consistent approach to the recognition, protection and management of Indigenous heritage sites across all levels of government and other organisations. | July 2020 | Department of the Environment  Australian Heritage Council  State and territory governments | Local governments  Indigenous representative bodies  Traditional owners |
| Work with philanthropic organisations to focus increased resources toward the long-term protection of Indigenous heritage places. | July 2020 | Department of the Environment  State and territory governments | Traditional owners  Philanthropists  Private sector |
| Publish and promote a new edition of the best practice *Ask First* Indigenous consultation guidelines. | December 2016 | Department of the Environment  Indigenous Advisory Committee | Indigenous stakeholders |
| Green Army teams work with traditional owners to support the protection and management of Australia’s cultural heritage places. | Ongoing | Green Army project managers  Department of the Environment | Traditional owners  Indigenous representative bodies  Green Army Sponsors  Heritage place managers |
| Review the effectiveness of the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984.* | December 2017 | Department of the Environment | Indigenous Advisory Committee |

Objective 10: Promote greater awareness, knowledge and engagement with our national heritage

A fundamental requirement for effective management of heritage places is being able to access information in a timely manner. In recent years, heritage information has become more electronically available for use by heritage property owners, managers and visitors. While traditional forms of interpretation will always have a place in communicating about our heritage, new technology has allowed those who engage in heritage to share the stories in exciting new ways.

Issues and opportunities

Finding the right heritage information can be challenging. There are many opportunities to engage the broader community in heritage through the use of databases, websites, blogs, social media, Smartphone apps and other emergent technologies. New technologies can improve access to important information needed by place managers and be used to better communicate heritage values to new audiences, including about the National Heritage List. The National Trusts of Australia and other heritage advocates have begun to explore the potential of social media and specialised applications to present heritage stories in more interactive ways. There is still considerable potential to enhance the accessibility of these platforms and the quality of the knowledge and information they contain.

Australia’s Community Heritage website has been established as a site where individuals and groups can share information and stories about Australia’s heritage. The website has been designed to engage people in heritage more widely across Australian communities, and to encourage the collection and sharing of information, stories and anecdotes related to people, places and events that have contributed to Australia’s heritage. The website is an initiative of the Australian Government for all heritage organisations and individuals to engage with, and is supported by the Australian Council of National Trusts and the Federation of Australian Historical Societies.

The Australian Government will provide funding through the Community Heritage and Icons Grants programme to help National Heritage place managers and community groups raise awareness of the important heritage stories associated with these places within the Australian community. This new funding will help Australians and international visitors gain an improved understanding and appreciation of many of Australia’s important heritage stories.

| **Proposed actions** | **Delivery** | **Lead** | **Partners** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Enhance Australia’s Community Heritage website to facilitate greater public interaction, encouraging them to better share their heritage stories and events. | Ongoing | Department of the Environment  Community groups | Australian Heritage Council  Federation of Australian Historical Societies |
| Facilitate publication of project success stories by grant recipients and Green Army project managers on the Australia’s Community Heritage website. | Ongoing | Department of the Environment | Heritage grant recipients  Green Army project managers |
| Enhance the interactive nature of the National Heritage List website with a stronger social media presence. | July 2016 | Department of the Environment | National Trusts of Australia |
| Raise awareness of the National Heritage List and the values and stories of its included places including with support under the Community Heritage and Icons Grants programme. | Ongoing  2014-18 | Department of the Environment | Australian Heritage Council  Place managers  State and territory governments  Federation of Australian Historical Societies  Community groups |
| Support engagement with Australian Heritage Information website[[10]](#footnote-10) to enhance community access to heritage information. | July 2020 | Department of the Environment  Heritage Officials of Australia and New Zealand | State and territory governments  Universities  Ministry for the Arts (Department of Communications and the Arts) |
| Support stakeholder engagement with the Australia International Council on Monuments and Sites Heritage Toolkit.[[11]](#footnote-11) | Ongoing | Australia International Council on Monuments and Sites | Department of the Environment  Australia International Council on Monuments and Sites (Toolkit)  Heritage non-government organisations |
| Explore opportunities to improve public access to heritage information through new technologies and social media, for example, site-specific smart phone applications. | July 2020 | Department of the Environment  Heritage Officials of Australia and New Zealand | National Trusts of Australia  Place managers |
|  |  |  |  |

Feature 5

Fusing ancient Indigenous culture with new technology

The Dampier Archipelago (including Burrup Peninsula) in the Pilbara region of Western Australia is nationally recognised for the extraordinary extent, diversity and significance of its Aboriginal rock engravings. At the time of National Heritage listing in July 2007, the Australian Government entered into separate conservation agreements with Woodside Energy Limited, Rio Tinto, Hamersley Iron Pty Ltd and Dampier Salt Limited. Substantial industry funds are committed through these agreements to deliver benefits for the conservation of the National Heritage values.

The Rock Art Protection Project is one of a number of exciting and innovative projects sponsored under the Woodside agreement. The project uses Wi-Fi and Bluetooth-enabled proximity hotspots to communicate information about the Indigenous heritage values of the place. The content includes a video from the Murujuga Rangers—a local Aboriginal ranger programme that is also funded by the Woodside agreement—encouraging visitors to care for country. This video can be viewed at: <http://bit.ly/Murujuga>

In January 2014, pilot hubs were installed at nine locations including airports, local visitor centres, libraries and commercial offices. When a visitor arrives at Karratha airport, for example, the hub will detect the visitor’s phone and determine if the Bluetooth function is enabled and transmitting. The Bluetooth hub then sends the user a message giving them the option to accept the video and information. Should Bluetooth not be enabled then visible posters in the arrivals hall will prompt the user to join the Wi-Fi hotspot where the same message and content is available.

The Rock Art Protection Project is managed by the Indigenous-owned and operated multimedia business, Weerianna Street Media.

For further information and to keep up to date with other Weerianna Street Media projects go to: <http://www.icampfire.tv/>.

Objective 11: Provide consistent best practice standards and guidelines for heritage conservation and management

The majority of heritage conservation and management activities are undertaken by local governments, community groups and individuals. Heritage work can be a complex business that, at times, must be underpinned by expert advice. The provision of professional guidance by the Australian, state and territory governments, researchers and professional organisations can help ensure work undertaken is appropriate, cost efficient and effective. The release of the *Burra Charter*, the *Natural Heritage Charter* and more recently the *Ruins* guidelines has answered the call for best practice guidance in managing aspects of our heritage.

Issues and opportunities

Improved promotion of existing frameworks and guidelines, in part through electronic platforms discussed in Objective 10, would go a long way to providing the practical advice needed by heritage place managers for making long-term strategic and day-to-day operational decisions for the conservation of heritage places and assets. The development of additional frameworks to further enhance heritage guidance will also be explored over the next few years.

A significant challenge facing heritage place managers is the difficulty in understanding the ongoing condition of their places’ listed heritage values. The Australian Government’s National Environmental Science Programme will provide funding of up to $25.5 million per year (2015–2021) to support six research hubs: the Clean Air and Urban Landscapes Hub, Earth Systems and Climate Change Hub, Marine Biodiversity Hub, Northern Australia Environmental Resources Hub, Threatened Species Recovery Hub and Tropical Water Quality Hub. Research to be undertaken by each of these hubs will, in many cases, have direct relevance to identified World and National heritage values. Thus, there is considerable opportunity for the National Environmental Science Programme hubs to guide World and National Heritage place managers in more effective heritage value monitoring, evaluation and management. This in turn should provide an improved understanding of the condition of Australia’s heritage for future *State of the Environment* reports.

| **Proposed actions** | **Delivery** | **Lead** | **Partners** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Promote existing heritage sector best practice guidelines to empower community groups; for example, the *Burra Charter*, the *Natural Heritage Charter* and *Ruins* guidelines. | Ongoing | Department of the Environment | Australian Heritage Council; Australia International Council on Monuments and Sites, Australian Committee for International Union for Conservation of Nature  Heritage Officials of Australia and New Zealand |
| Support the development of the *Framework for Best Practice Management of Australian World Heritage Properties* to provide a common approach for the management of Australia’s World Heritage properties. | July 2016 | Australian World Heritage Advisory Committee | World Heritage property managers  Department of the Environment |
| Update the following best practice management guidelines for National Heritage and Commonwealth Heritage place managers:  *• Australia’s National Heritage, Working Together: Managing National Heritage Places—A guide for owners and managers*  *• Working Together: Managing Commonwealth Heritage Places—A guide for Commonwealth Agencies.* | July 2016 | Department of the Environment | Place managers |
| Provide guidance for regular, long-term monitoring, evaluation and reporting of World and National heritage value conditions, including. through the research outcomes of the Australian Government’s National Environmental Science Programme, which will consider World and National Heritage place management as a cross-cutting theme. | June 2021 | Department of the Environment  Australian Heritage Council  Australian World Heritage Advisory Committee | Heritage Officials of Australia and New Zealand  State and territory governments |

Feature 6

National Environmental Science Programme

The National Environmental Science Programme (NESP) is a six-year $145 million research programme (with equivalent co-investment from partners) to assist decision-makers to understand, manage and conserve Australia’s environment by funding world-class biodiversity and climate science.

Research will be delivered by six research hubs focused on threatened species recovery, tropical water quality, marine biodiversity, clean air and urban landscapes, earth systems and climate change and northern Australia’s environmental resources. Heritage is an important theme that is relevant across the research carried out under the NESP.

The NESP builds on the five-year National Environmental Research Program, which undertook more than 50 projects where research was focused on a World or National Heritage area, or delivered research directly relevant to World or National Heritage place management. Research already commenced under the NESP has clear links to World and National Heritage places and their related research priorities, including in the Great Barrier Reef, Kakadu National Park, Shark Bay, and the Wet Tropics of Queensland.

The NESP has a focus on collaborative research that delivers accessible results and informs decisions. Research plans for each of the hubs will be reviewed regularly to ensure that the research is well targeted and prioritised and addresses emerging needs. Relevant stakeholders will continue to be involved in the design and delivery of research projects and help ensure that the research produces meaningful results accessible to government, industry and the community. World and National Heritage managers are important stakeholders and end-users of the research undertaken by NESP.

# Glossary

This glossary of terms is designed to assist with those words that have particular and special meaning in heritage conservation:

**Condition:** means the state of the fabric of the place.

**Conservation:** means allthe processes of looking after a place so as to retain its cultural significance (*Burra Charter* 1999: Article 1.4).

**Cultural landscape:** an area of the landscape which may have been significantly modified by human activity. Cultural landscapes include rural lands such as farms, villages, mining sites and country towns.

**Cultural significance:** means aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for past, present or future generations. Cultural significance is embodied in the place itself, its fabric, setting, use, associations, meanings, records, related places and related objects. Places may have a range of values for different individuals or groups (*Burra Charter* 1999: Article 1.2).

**Heritage listing:** when a place of established cultural significance is included on a register or statutory list at Commonwealth, state, territory or local government level.

**Heritage quality framework:** consist of a series of Heritage Quality Measures for various conservation activities, but in particular for the conservation of significant heritage fabric. Provides for consistent heritage management; more certainty for owners and applicants when applying to carry out works at heritage places; assist in the streamlining of heritage applications; and provide a quality management vehicle for exempting certain works from the statutory approval process.

**Heritage significance:** of aesthetic, historic, scientific, social, archaeological, natural or aesthetic value for past, present of future generations. This term is used interchangeably with ‘cultural significance’.

**Integrity:** a heritage place is said to have integrity if its assessment and statement of significance is supported by sound research and analysis, and its fabric and curtilage are still largely intact.

**Interpretation:** means all the ways of presenting the significance of a place. It is an ongoing activity that integrates the understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of a place with its day to day use and management and also with works. It may include signs, brochures, tours, exhibitions, events and so forth.

**Movable cultural heritage:** includes all movable objects which are the expression of human creation or the evolution of nature that are of archaeological, historical, artistic, scientific or technical value and interest.

**Place:** means site, area, land, landscape, building or other work, group of buildings or other works, and may include components, contents, spaces and views (*Burra Charter* 1999: Article 1.1).

**Plan of Management:** establishes a framework for maintaining the heritage significance of a place and gives guidance on how a conservation policy can be implemented in relation to future developments. This may also be called a Conservation Management Plan, Conservation Plan or Conservation Masterplan.

**Preservation:** means maintaining the fabric of a place in its existing state and retarding deterioration (*Burra Charter* 1999: Article 1.6).

**Representativeness:** places having this value are significant because they are fine representative examples of an important class of significant places.

**Statutory**: to be required, permitted or regulated as a result of an Act of Parliament and therefore having legal force (e.g. statutory instruments such as the Victorian *Heritage Act 1995*).

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## Relevant legislation

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# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Commissioned essays

To support discussion of issues that could be addressed by the Australian Heritage Strategy, ten essays were written by a range of heritage experts. These commissioned essays are shown below:

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## Appendix 2: Australia’s World and National Heritage Places



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7. Australia’s Community Heritage <http://www.communityheritage.net.au> [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
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10. Australian Heritage Information <http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/info/index.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Australia International Council on Monuments and Sites Toolkit [australia.icomos.org/publications/australia-icomos-heritage-toolkit/](http://australia.icomos.org/publications/australia-icomos-heritage-toolkit/) [↑](#footnote-ref-11)