## Introduction

Biodiversity Response Planning (BRP) is a long-term area-based planning approach to biodiversity conservation in Victoria. It is designed to strengthen alignment, engagement and participation between government, Traditional Owners, non-government agencies and the community.

DELWP Regional staff have been working with stakeholders on actions to conserve biodiversity in specific landscapes, informed by the best available science and local knowledge.

These Fact Sheets capture a point in time, reflecting data and knowledge available in 2020. They provide information for many (but not all) landscapes across Victoria, containing general information on the key values and threats in each area, as well as the priority cost-effective actions that provide the best protection of biodiversity. Fact Sheets are intended to provide useful biodiversity information for the community, non-government and government organisations during project planning and development.

Further information and the [full list of Fact Sheets](http://www.environment.vic.gov.au/biodiversity/working-together-for-biodiversity) is available on the Department’s Environment website.

## Landscape description

The Avon Plains landscape consists of 32,705ha with 14% of the area covered in native vegetation. The area is made up of 4% public land with the Richardson and Avon Rivers running through the north and south of the area respectively. Refer to the map at the end of this Fact Sheet.

This landscape has an overlap with the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation RSA landscape. For more information, please refer to this Fact Sheet the [full list of Fact Sheets](http://www.environment.vic.gov.au/biodiversity/working-together-for-biodiversity).

## Cultural importance

We recognise that the entire landscape has high cultural value for Traditional Owners. Landscapes identified as having “notable” cultural importance is based on the density of recorded cultural heritage sites and knowledge shared by Traditional Owners. We also recognise that there are locations important to Traditional Owners not within these landscapes.

## Stakeholder interest

As part of the BRP process, in October 2020 stakeholders were asked to nominate focus landscapes and actions of interest. Buloke and Northern Grampians Landcare Network, Dja Dja Wurrung and Trust for Nature all nominated Avon Plains.

Possible future investment/project development in this landscape will be available to any interested stakeholders in addition to those who nominated this landscape.

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| Ecological values identified by Traditional Owners, partners and community within this landscape |
| Revegetation of Djandak with:   * Buwatji (grasses used for grain) * Witji (weaving grasses) * Gatjawil Matorm (tuberous plants with scented flowers) * Murnang (Yam Daisies) including Kangaroo grass, Lomandra and Dianella species, Chocolate Lily, Vanilla Lily, Bulbine Lily and Yam Daisy |
| Buloke Woodlands |
| Wi (cultural fire) authorised and lead by Dja Dja Wurrung on Djandak (Country) |
| York Plains Wetlands – Highly valued wetland complex on private land within the Avon-Richardson catchment |

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|  | Habitat Distribution Models identify 1 species with more than 5% of their Victorian range in this landscape | Traditional Owners, stakeholders and community groups identified the following species of interest within this landscape |
| Plant | 1 Plant:   * Mt Jeffcott Mallee-box (*Eucalyptus filiformis*), endangered, with 9% of its Victorian range in this area | * Spiny Rice-flower * Turnip Copperburr * Spiny Lignum * Swamp Buttercup * Marbled Marshwort * Buloke Mistletoe |
| Snake | Reptiles | * Lace Monitor * Eastern Snake-necked Turtle |
| Sparrow | Birds | * Brolga * Musk Duck * Barking Owl |
| Frog | Amphibians | * Growling Grass Frog |
| Other | Golden Perch | |

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| Traditional Owners, stakeholders and community groups identified the following threats within this landscape | |
| Exclusion of Dja Dja Wurrung leadership (governance) |
| Lack of listening, hearing and respect for Dja Dja Wurrung ability to talk to Country – not utilising Dja Dja Wurrung knowledge base tools and the bias toward western science decision support tools |
| Lack of enquiry and understanding of Dja Dja Wurrung customs and practice to provide an enabling and supportive environment so that Djaara can reconnect to land and reconnect stories and knowledge to place. Ask “How?” not “Why?” |
| Utilising past learnings and achievement to guide future effort – Dja Dja Wurrung participation in past and future biodiversity planning and delivery below the IAP2 level of ‘involve’ does not support Dja Dja Wurrung aspirations |
| Cropping |
| Weeds |
| Pest animals |

## Strategic Management Prospects

Strategic Management Prospects (SMP) models biodiversity values such as species habitat distribution, landscape-scale threats and highlights the most cost-effective actions for specific locations. More information about SMP is available in [NatureKit](https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/biodiversity/naturekit).

## Additional threats

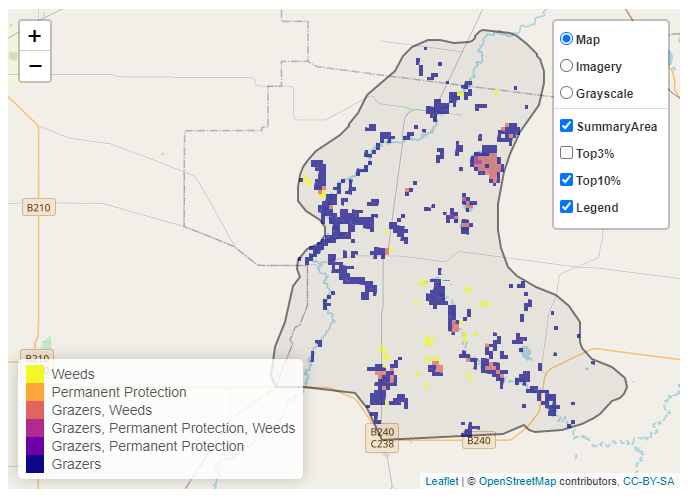
Threats identified (in addition to those modelled in SMP) through the consultation process were:

* alterations to hydrology
* land salinisation
* soil erosion
* habitat degradation due to extremes of climate and weather and lack of regeneration in some vegetation communities
* recreational activities causing fragmentation
* loss of vegetation, and erosion
* legacy use of public land
* private land use impacting biodiversity
* inappropriate land use planning
* inappropriate fire regimes (planned burning and bushfires)

Some individual threatened species may also require targeted intervention, beyond actions to manage landscape scale threats, to improve their future prospects.

## Which landscape-scale actions are most cost-effective in this landscape?

The coloured areas indicate where the identified landscape-scale actions and locations are most cost-effective and will maximise biodiversity benefit across Victoria for multiple species.

The SMP priority actions which rank among the top 10% for cost-effectiveness of that action across Victoria for much of the landscape are in order of the top 3 actions, see map and list below:

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| Rabbit | Control rabbits 3,549ha |
| Grain | Control weeds 633ha |
|  | Control pigs 1,635ha |

Of the top 10% of cost-effective actions, controlling rabbits provides the most cost-effective biodiversity benefits when considering all flora and fauna.

From the nomination process the following additional actions were also suggested for this landscape:

* permanent protection and revegetation

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| The most cost-effective action for flora and fauna | |
| FrogSparrowSnakeRatPlant | Plants, mammals, reptiles, amphibians - Control rabbits |

For a further in depth look into SMP for this landscape, please refer to [NatureKit](https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/biodiversity/naturekit).

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