

Native Vegetation



Project Fact Sheet :

DAV40

Managing landscapes to meet public biodiversity and farm business goals

Principal Investigators:

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Host Organisation:

Department of Primary Industry and Department of Sustainability & Environment, Catchment and Water, Victoria

Duration of project:

May 2002 to December 2004

Project Summary

Conserving biodiversity in production environments is an issue of national significance, and of particular importance in the Murray-Darling Basin. The Basin accounts for an estimated 41 per cent by value of Australia's agricultural production, but the legacy of past land use in the Basin includes many threatened plant and animal species, and poor representation of some vegetation types.

Most producers face significant challenges in maintaining real incomes, and continue to seek increases in farm productivity and profitability. At the same time biodiversity loss is one of Australia's most serious environmental problems with habitat fragmentation and habitat loss on private land being a major cause. Many ecological communities are now highly restricted in extent and heavily dependent on private land managers for their continued existence.

Biodiversity

Biodiversity is the diversity at all levels of the biological hierarchy, from genes to ecosystems, that is involved in agriculture and food production. The fundamental and distinct property of agricultural biodiversity is that it is largely created, maintained and managed by humans. Organisms making up agricultural biodiversity include plants, birds, mammals, soil microorganisms, pests & pathogens.

Project Objectives

The project is part of the Native Vegetation R&D Program, managed by Land & Water Australia. It will provide information to landholders, large and small, in the Upper Goulburn Catchment of Central Victoria.

The objectives of the project are:

- To identify the capacity of commercial and non-commercial landholders to invest in conservation of native biodiversity, using current resources;
- To assess the impact of investing in conservation work on the landholders' cash flow and farm business profitability;
- To determine what is required (such as resources, dollars, information etc) for landholders to invest in conservation of native biodiversity;
- To identify the best, most practical ways of managing native biodiversity while maintaining cash flow, productivity and other management goals; and
- To assess the on-farm costs and benefits of undertaking any conservation work

Approach and Methods:

The project team will focus on eight commercial and non-commercial properties in two regions of the Goulburn river catchment. The Upper Goulburn river catchment region bordered by Broadford, Kilmore, Mansfield, and Nagambie, and the Honeysuckle creek catchment region bordered by Euroa, Warrenbayne, Tarnook and Kialla.



On each case study property, a detailed vegetation survey will be carried out. Farm financial and production figures, personal goals and objectives will be collected and analysed.

This information will be used to assess the capacity to invest in biodiversity conservation, and to develop practical on-farm solutions to address financial, personal and biodiversity goals.


Benefits


There will be some important outcomes for landholders in the region, and Australia, not just landowners on the case study properties.

- An active network of landholders in the Goulburn River catchment will share information about managing for agricultural production and profitability, and native biodiversity.
- Understanding of landholders' attitudes and their management practices that conserve and enhance on-farm biodiversity will be improved.
- An array of practical and profitable management solutions for preserving native biodiversity will be pinpointed.
- A profile of leading landholders in the Goulburn River Catchment will be developed including their economic and biodiversity characteristics and their innovative practices.
- Best management practices, options and alternatives will be identified and published in brochures, booklets, web-based material, manuals, and the like.


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
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