

Southern

Fleurieu

Coastal

Action Plan

2026



Southern Fleurieu Coastal Action Plan 2026

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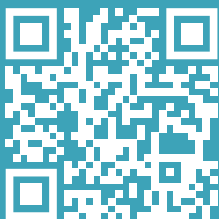
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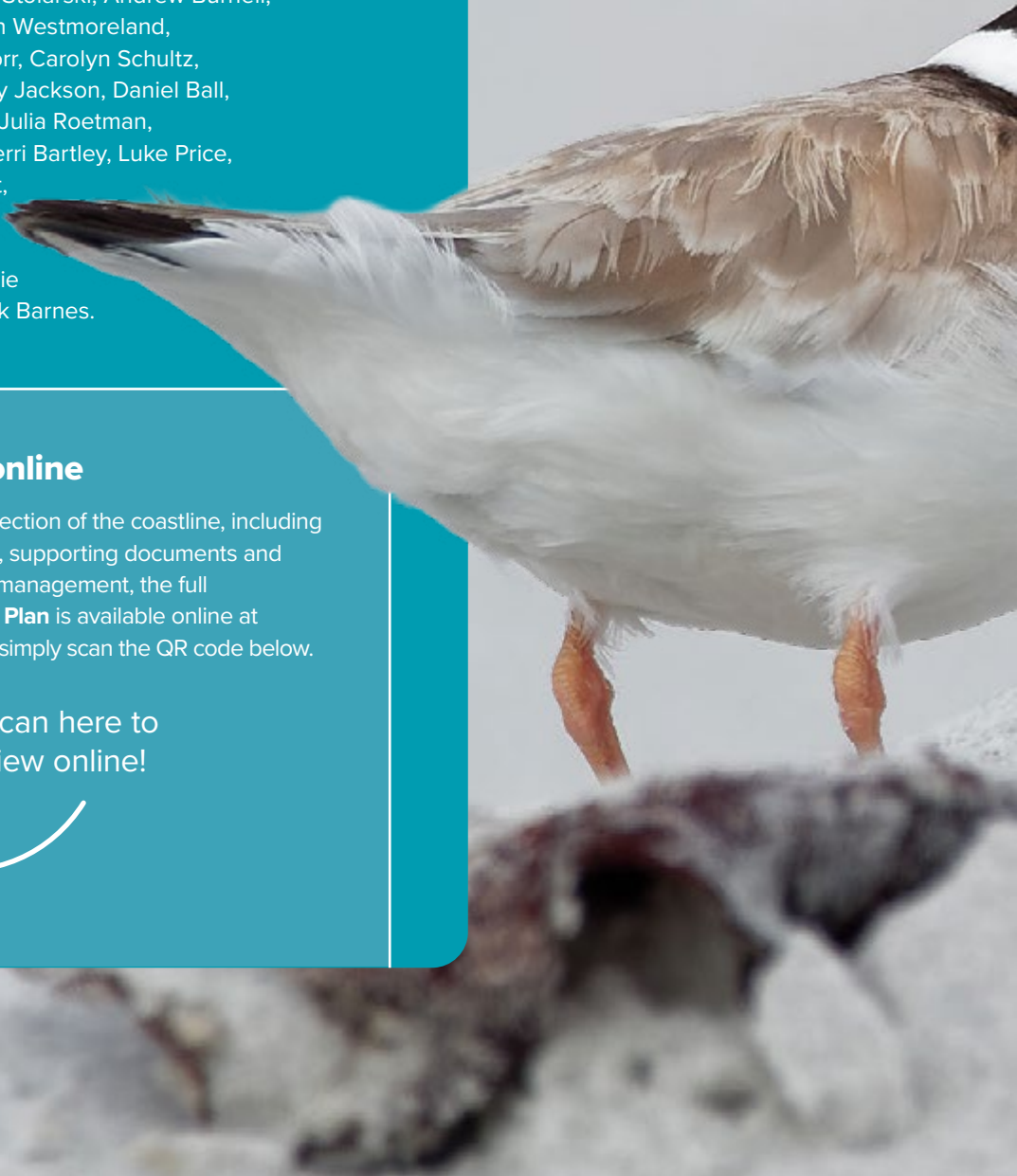
Thank you to the many staff, community members, technical experts, and individuals who generously shared their knowledge and experience to help shape this plan. In particular, we acknowledge Alex Stolarski, Andrew Burnell, Ben Greeneklee, Ben Simon, Ben Westmoreland, Bronson Symmonds, Caroline Dorr, Carolyn Schultz, Cedric Varcoe, Claire Lock, Corey Jackson, Daniel Ball, Darryl Cowan, Jeremy Freeman, Julia Roetman, Karl Winda Telfer, Keith Jones, Kerri Bartley, Luke Price, Martin Stokes, Matthew Endacott, Matthew Turner, Megan Harper, Monika Rhodes, Raechel Lewis, Sam Sutherland, Seiji Iwao, Sophie McKay, Tony Flaherty and Warrick Barnes.

Explore the full plan online

For detailed information on each section of the coastline, including the 27 cells, site-specific guidance, supporting documents and resources to help with on-ground management, the full **Southern Fleurieu Coastal Action Plan** is available online at hf.landscape.sa.gov.au/SFCAP, or simply scan the QR code below.



Scan here to view online!





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Technical documents Available online only

Introduction

Our coast is a special place, with uniquely biodiverse and remarkable ecosystems, and is home to numerous species found nowhere else on Earth. Together, as land managers caring for the coast and its nearshore environments, we recognise how valuable it is, and how vulnerable it can be to a range of threats.

Extending from Sellicks Cliffs to the Murray Mouth, this plan includes the entire Fleurieu Peninsula and seven offshore islands, spanning more than 170 kilometres, around five percent of South Australia's coastline. It is rich in ecological, social, and cultural diversity. It has been a special place for Ngarrindjeri/Ramindjeri and Kurna First Nations for over 65,000 years, with their dreaming and cultural identity deeply connected to the coastal features and seascapes we see today.

Building on the original Southern Fleurieu Coastal Action Plan and Conservation Priority Study (2007), this updated plan provides a framework to guide the conservation and management of the Southern Fleurieu coast's natural resources, as well as the preservation and acknowledgement of cultural values. It identifies priority conservation areas for protection and recommends practical, on-ground actions to address key threats. Designed for government agencies, councils, First Nations organisations, community groups, and other coastal land managers, it supports a collaborative and consistent approach to management.

The plan divides the coastline into 27 sections, or 'cells', each presenting site-specific information, roles and responsibilities, and recommended management actions. This structure helps land managers focus on the most important actions for each area while keeping the broader coastline in view.



Green Bay headland, Port Elliot



An underwater photograph showing a large school of silver fish swimming in clear blue water above a dense bed of green seagrass. The fish are moving in various directions, and the seagrass blades are visible in the foreground and middle ground.

Acknowledgements

The update of this plan would not have been possible without the contributions and support of many organisations and individuals.

We thank everyone who provided input and acknowledge the shared responsibility we all have in caring for the Southern Fleurieu coast.

We acknowledge the Ngarrindjeri and Kaurna First Nations communities, Elders and cultural leaders for sharing cultural knowledge and guiding care for Sea Country. We also thank government agencies, councils, landholders, and technical experts for their input, expertise, and continued commitment to collaborative coastal management.

In addition, we acknowledge all of the coastal community groups and Friends of groups across the Fleurieu Peninsula and their ongoing contributions to caring for our coast and nearshore marine environments.

Special acknowledgement is given to the authors and contributors of the Southern Fleurieu Coastal Action Plan and Conservation Priorities (2007), whose work provided the foundation for this updated plan.

Likewise, to the land managers and community members who implemented actions from within the 2007 plan, your work has informed this update, building an adaptive and collaborative plan for the next decade.

We also extend our gratitude to the photographers, staff, community members, researchers, and volunteers, who generously shared images of the coast and its diverse species, helping to visually capture the beauty and ecological richness of the Southern Fleurieu region.



District Council of
YANKALILLA



WAVY LANDSCAPE
SOUTH AUSTRALIA
HILLS AND FLEURIEU

**GREEN
ADELAIDE**





Traditional Owners and First Nations cultural statement

Ngurunderi the Creator, designed by Ngarrindjeri man, Kevin Kropinyeri and sculpted by Karl Meyer, at Granite Island, Victor Harbor

The Fleurieu coast is a place of deep cultural, spiritual and historical significance for Traditional Owners and tribal Aboriginal clans people. Extending from the Murray Mouth and the Coorong through Encounter Bay, the rugged southern coastline and cliffs of the Fleurieu Peninsula, sweeping beaches and headlands of the Fleurieu's western side - this coastline forms part of an ancient landscape that has sustained and Aboriginal life and culture for thousands of years.

These land, sea and sky countries are woven together through language, creation and deep time dreaming - with places of spiritual and ceremonial practise. The

cultural obligations to care for country and maintain identity and connection still exist today.

The Fleurieu region is of shared cultural significance to the Ramindjeri (part of the Ngarrindjeri Nation) and Kurna Patpa Meyunna tribal clans people. Each group maintains distinct connections to particular language places, while also recognising stories that cross over country through cultural lore and protocol. Native Title has been a colonial law process that has determined parts of coastal country, though it is well understood as an area of overlapping cultural authority and connection.



Tjilbruke Dreaming Track Cultural Marker at Carrickalinga Beach. The cultural and spiritual renewal of these Tjilbruke cultural markers come back home to Country through the cultural authority and leadership of Nganki Burka Mekauwe - Senior Woman of Water, Georgina Katanya Yambo Williams in 1986.

The Ngurunderi story follows the journeys of the ancestral being Ngurunderi as he travelled down the River Murray, shaping the Lower Lakes, Coorong, Encounter Bay, islands and the southern seas.

The Tjilbruke Dreaming traces the path of the ancestor Tjilbruke from southern Patpa Meyunna Kurna Country all the way north to Mudlangga (Outer Harbour – Mouth of the Port River). The story then travels back along the coast inland to Warriparringga (Marion) then to Tulukandagga - Kingston Park then all the way down south to Tunkalilla Beach and then to Nairne at Brukkungga, creating freshwater springs through the Dreaming Track songline.

These stories and songlines connect the Fleurieu to broader cultural landscapes across southern Australia, linking places, people and Country.

Along the coastline, many places, still hold their traditional names which reflect an unbroken connection to country and tribal traditions - every beach, reef, dune, cliff and estuary are part of a landscape that holds story of Country and its people.

Acknowledgement

The *Southern Fleurieu Coastal Action Plan* acknowledges that all lands and waters of the region are Aboriginal lands and waters. It recognises and respects the continuing relationship of Traditional

Owners and First Nations peoples with Country, and their knowledge, authority and custodianship that guide cultural and environmental care. The plan seeks to uphold these relationships through ongoing collaboration, respect and recognition of Aboriginal peoples as the first and continuing custodians of the Fleurieu coast.

Cultural engagement and input

The preparation of this plan has been informed by engagement with Aboriginal organisations, cultural advisors and community representatives. The Hills and Fleurieu Landscape Board acknowledges and thanks the Ngarrindjeri Aboriginal Corporation, local Ramindjeri and Kurna Meyunna Elders and cultural leaders for their guidance, cultural knowledge and continuing commitment to caring for Country. Their perspectives have shaped the understanding of place, values and priorities reflected throughout this plan.

Please respect that cultural concepts and content included in this plan are the Aboriginal Cultural and Intellectual property (ACIP) of the Ramindjeri people of the Ngarrindjeri Nation (provided by Cedric Varcoe, Ramindjeri Cultural Leader living on Country) (cells 1-20) and Karl Winda Telfer of the Mullawirra Meyunna (Kurna Meyunna) (cells 20-27). They may not be used or adapted by any other parties without consent.

How this plan was developed

This plan was developed through a collaborative process involving a wide range of stakeholders responsible for managing the Southern Fleurieu coast. Its preparation was based on scientific research, ecological data, cultural knowledge, and on-ground technical skills and management experience.

While the Hills and Fleurieu Landscape Board coordinated the update, this final product is very much a plan for the whole region, with all coastal land managers responsible for the development of the actions and delivery of the plan.

Key steps in the process included:

Data review – collating existing ecological, cultural, and land management information relevant to the coast and nearshore environments.

Technical reviews and document content updates – specific reviews were undertaken with key experts and land manager staff to identify important inclusion and gaps from the original document.

Stakeholder consultation – engaging government agencies, councils, Traditional Owners and First Nations organisations, local community groups, and landholders to ensure the plan reflects on-ground conditions, local knowledge, and shared priorities.

Expert input – seeking advice from ecologists, coastal managers, and cultural heritage specialists to inform recommended actions and priorities.

Collective refinement – Engaging with stakeholders to finalise recommendations through collaboration, ensuring they are actionable and regionally appropriate.

It is important to note that this update did not include all components of the previous plan, such as GIS data layers and flora and fauna species assessments, but introduces new elements including vegetation associations, estuary and nearshore habitats, and a stronger focus on land-based impacts to the marine environment.

Scope of the plan

The Southern Fleurieu Coastal Action Plan focuses on the coastal environments of the Hills and Fleurieu Landscape region, extending from Sellicks Cliffs to the Murray Mouth. It includes nearshore marine environments, seven offshore islands, and up to 500m inland from the high-water mark. In some areas the inland boundary of the cell aligns with the outer limits of an existing conservation area (national park, council reserve) or the upper reaches of an estuary. This has been done to ensure consistent and realistic on ground management across these areas rather than stopping at an arbitrary line.

The plan aims to assist and guide decisions related to the conservation and management of environmental assets, as well as the protections and preservation of cultural heritage along the coast. It does not extend to built infrastructure (jetties, sea walls, boat ramps, buildings or private dwellings) or consider budgeting or financial requirements.

The plan aims to improve coordination and integration across the region's public and private land managers by providing site-specific ecological information, regional priorities, roles and responsibilities, and recommended management actions.

The coast has been divided into 27 sections, or 'cells'. Each cell presents localised data and recommendations to help managers identify priorities, guide investment, and coordinate on-ground works. The cells vary in size and character, reflecting logical management areas, such as stretches between headlands or entire beaches within conservation parks, and are defined by environmental boundaries rather than administrative ones. While each cell can be viewed individually, the plan is most effective when applied collectively, recognising the interconnected nature of the coast and its ecosystems.

Land managers and stakeholders caring for our coast

We're all in this together. Through strong and growing partnerships, agencies, land managers, First Nations and Traditional Owners, and local groups work together to enhance, protect, and restore coast, estuarine and nearshore habitats.

This collaboration supports efforts to sustain biodiversity, strengthen resilience, and manage our coast in ways that respect cultural knowledge and environmental values.

Department for Environment and Water (DEW)

– leads environmental policy and investment, manages public coastal land and assets, and provides the science, regulation and land-management functions that underpin coastal stewardship.

DEW's Coast Unit – delivers science-based coastal management through monitoring, data, and expert advice. It supports the Coast Protection Board and guides councils and communities in coastal hazard and climate adaptation planning.

Coast Protection Board (CPB) – safeguards South Australia's coastline under the *Coast Protection Act 1972*, overseeing coastal development, protection works and responses to erosion and hazards. The Board sets policy direction for sustainable coastal use and conservation across six areas – development, hazards, protection works, conservation, heritage and landscape, and access – and provides grants to councils and community groups for coastal protection and adaptation projects.

Department for Infrastructure and Transport (DIT) – manages beaches, jetties, boat ramps, harbours and marine safety.

Environment Protection Authority (EPA) – regulates coastal water quality and pollution.

SA Water – Land manager of Sir Richard Peninsula and oversight of several wastewater treatment plants.

Local councils – maintain beaches, dunes, access points and local coastal infrastructure, provide education, and enforce compliance on council reserves including beaches.

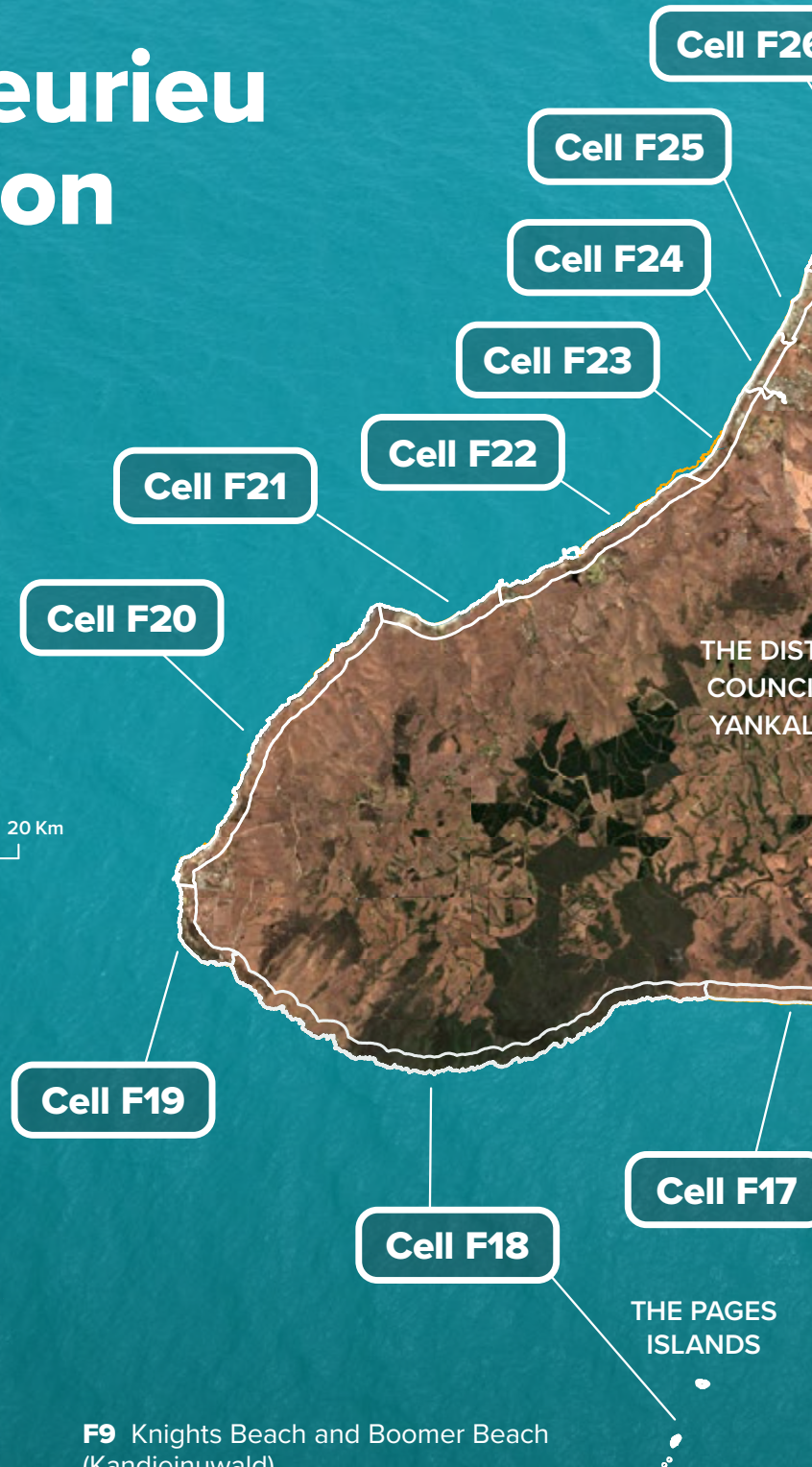
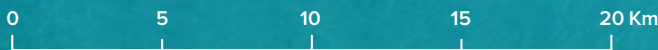
Hills and Fleurieu Landscape Board and Green Adelaide – support and develop monitoring programs, coastal restoration and planning initiatives, and build partnerships with community nurseries, land managers, volunteers, and coastal communities.

Community, coastal community groups and NGOs – care for local coastal areas through on-ground projects, education, and volunteer efforts.

The Kurna and Ngarrindjeri/Ramindjeri – communities hold deep cultural, spiritual, and traditional connections to Sea Country and play a central role in the ongoing care and management of coastal lands and waters. The plan recognises and supports continued collaboration with First Nations communities to guide culturally informed management and decision-making.

Murray Mouth

Southern Fleurieu Coastal Action Plan Cells



F1 Murray Mouth (Kandukang (west) and Tapalwora (east)), and southern shore of Hindmarsh Island (Kumarangk)

F2 Goolwa (Beach Road) (Kuitangk) to the Murray Mouth (Kandukang (west) and Tapalwora (east)); the Sir Richard Peninsula

F3 Goolwa (Kutiangk): Beach Road to Treleaven Place

F4 Tokuremoar (Tokuremoar) Reserve

F5 Surfers Beach, Middleton (Tokuremoar to Ratalang)

F6 Middleton (Ratalang) including Middleton Creek estuary (Ratalwar)

F7 Ratalang Bashams Beach (Ratalang) Conservation Reserve

F8 Fisherman Bay Headland (Camp Kondili) to Knights Beach (Port Elliot)(Kaindjeinuwald) including Pullen Island (Witung)

F9 Knights Beach and Boomer Beach (Kandjeinuwald)

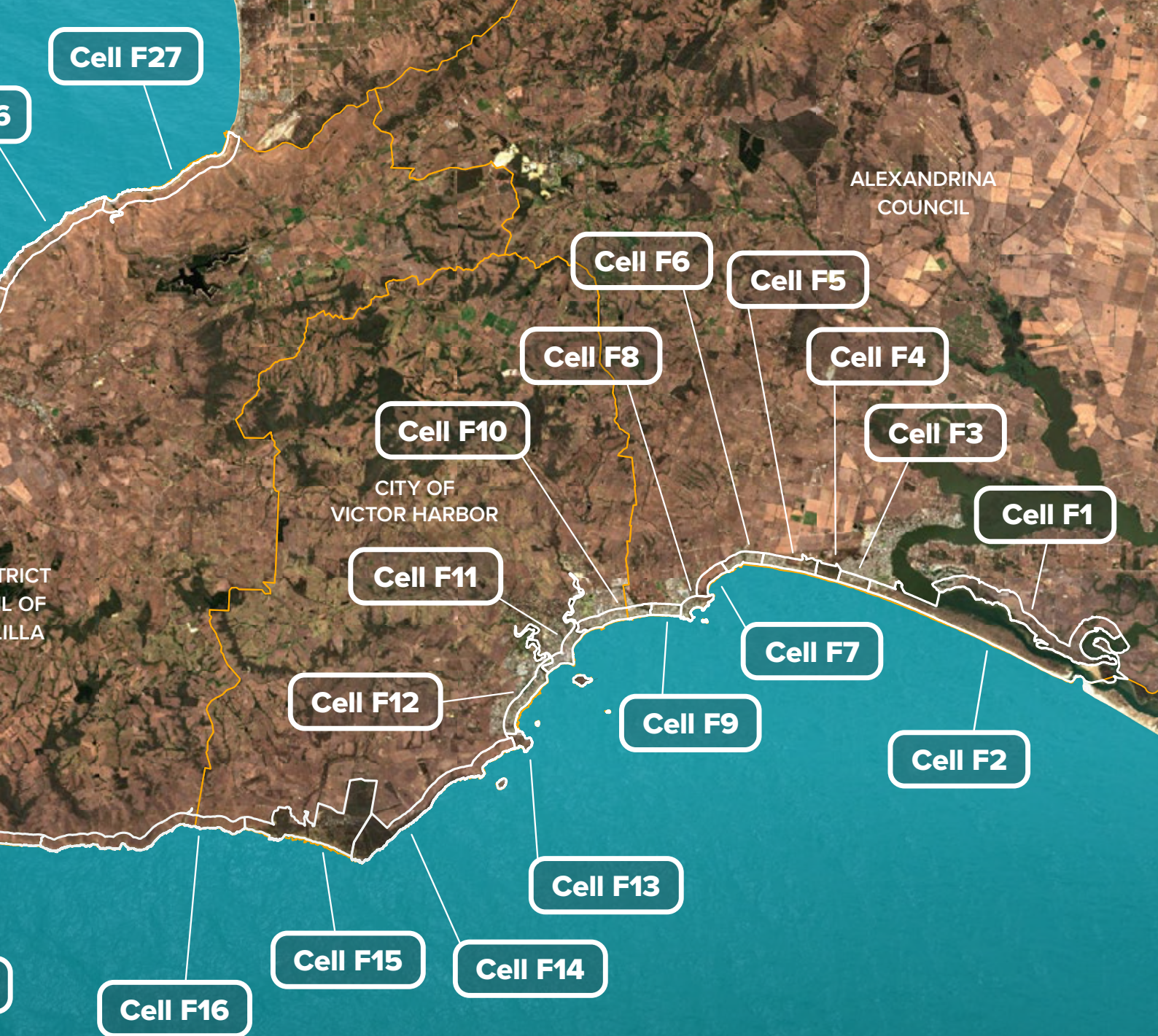
F10 Watson's Gap to the Hindmarsh River (Kaindjeini)

F11 Victor Harbor (Pultang) (Hindmarsh River (Latung) to Inman River (Muwerang) including Granite (Kaiki) and Seal (Yandi) Islands)

F12 Inman River (Muwerang), Encounter Bay (Rosetta Harbour) (Ramong) and Wright Island (Ikirriwar)

F13 The Bluff (Longkewar)

F14 Petrel Cove (Longkewar) to Newland Head (Ngarakerung)



F15 Newland Head (Ngarakerung) to Parsons Beach (Waipingga)

F16 Parsons Beach (Waipingga) to Tunk Head (Tangkalang)

F17 Tunk Head to Tunkalilla Beach (west) (Tangkalang)

F18 Deep Creek National Park (Konggaratingga) to Fishery Beach (including the Pages Islands (Maralangk and Meruwi))

F19 Fishery Beach (Parrewar-angk) to Cape Jervis (Pariwa)

F20 Cape Jervis (Pariwa)(Patpangga) to Rapid Head (Witawateng) (Yerta Kulangga)

F21 Rapid Bay- Rapid Head (Yerta Kulangga) to Boat Harbor, Second Valley (Kauweyerlongga)

F22 Second Valley (Kauweyerlongga) to Lady Bay (Yangkalyilla)

F23 Lady Bay (Yangkalyilla) to Bungala River (Pangkarla)

F24 Bungala River (Pangkarla) to SW bank of Carrickalinga Creek (Karrapootungga)

F25 Carrickalinga Creek (Karrapootungga) to Carrickalinga (Karrakalingga) Head

F26 Carrickalinga (Karrakalingga) Head to Myponga (Maitpangga) Head

F27 Myponga (Maitpangga) to Sellicks Cliffs (Witawali)

How to use the Southern Fleurieu Coastal Action Plan

Each of the 27 cells in the plan presents site-specific information to help land managers make informed decisions about the conservation and management of natural coastal assets. While each cell can be considered individually, they can also be viewed collectively, recognising the interconnected nature of the coast.

The structure is consistent across all cells to make it easy to compare areas and plan coordinated actions.

Each cell includes:

Cell name and location – identifies the section of coastline and its position within the regional framework.

Overview – summarises the key features and values, landforms and land managers of the cell.

First Nations cultural heritage and connection to land and sea Country - acknowledges cultural values and knowledge systems.

Conservation values, threats and opportunities – outlines habitats, cultural and ecological values, pressures, and opportunities for improvement.

Climate change - describes likely impacts and areas of conservation value vulnerable to climate-related pressures.

Cell Action tables - lists local issues and proposed actions, plus key players involved in decision making or managing the area.

Cell biota – summarises native and introduced species, including conservation-rated species and declared weeds.

Practical application of the plan:

- Use individual cells to identify local priorities and guide on-ground management.
- Refer across multiple cells and regional priorities to coordinate works and align efforts.
- Draw on ecological data and recommended actions for planning, reporting, and funding applications.
- Apply the plan collaboratively - actions are most effective when coordinated across neighbouring land managers and supported by the wider community.



Fairy terns

Implementation and delivery

Delivery of the Southern Fleurieu Coastal Action Plan relies on a collaborative, region-wide approach. Implementation of the plan focuses on how land managers and stakeholders work together to achieve shared outcomes.

Key implementation functions include:

Regional coordination and oversight – ensuring alignment across agencies, councils, and community groups.

On-ground delivery – carrying out restoration, threat mitigation, and monitoring activities within each cell.

Cultural leadership and integration – led by First Nations communities to guide culturally informed management.

Technical support and data management – including ecological assessments, mapping, and adaptive planning.

Community engagement and stewardship – fostering local involvement through education, citizen science, and volunteer programs.

Each function is supported by the relevant land managers and stakeholders that have roles tailored to their expertise, jurisdiction, and connection to place.





Regional priorities and outcomes

The following regional priorities highlight key focus areas for improving the health and resilience of the Southern Fleurieu coast over the next decade. Each priority outlines clear outcomes and practical actions to guide land managers, support collaboration, and inform investment.

Together, these priority actions will restore habitats, reduce threats, protect biodiversity and assist climate adaptation, while also helping communities understand and contribute to the long-term care of our coastal, estuarine and marine environments.

- 
- 1** Improve connectivity and condition of coastal ecosystems
 - 2** Restore ecological connectivity between land and sea environments
 - 3** Conserve threatened species and ecological communities
 - 4** Strengthen Traditional Owner and First Nations partnerships and integrated land and sea Country planning
 - 5** Plan for sustainable growth and development in coastal areas
 - 6** Improve community understanding and care for coastal ecosystems
 - 7** Address climate change impacts on conservation values

1 Improve connectivity and condition of coastal ecosystems

Improving connectivity between coastal habitats supports species movement, enhances ecological processes, and strengthens resilience to environmental stress. By linking key areas such as islands, dunes, clifftops, saltmarshes, and estuaries, connected landscapes enable biodiversity to thrive and adapt more effectively to change. Strategic restoration and investment play a critical role in establishing these ecological linkages.

Improving condition of coastal ecosystems focuses on reducing direct pressures such as invasive species, erosion, pollution, and recreational impacts. Healthier habitats are better able to support native species, deliver ecosystem services, and recover from disturbances. Targeted management actions, including habitat restoration and threat mitigation will improve the overall quality and function of these environments.

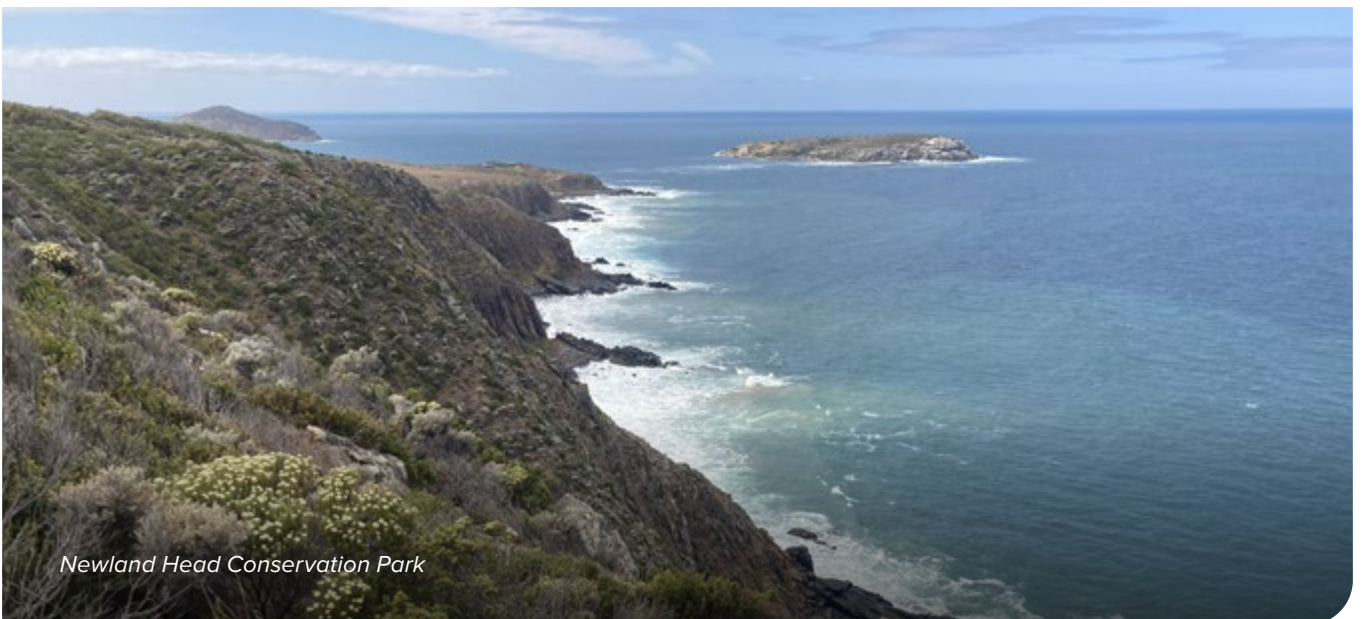
Together, improved connectivity and improved condition create more resilient coastal ecosystems. Enhanced monitoring and data collection, especially

for under-represented species, is needed to inform adaptive management and ensure long-term effectiveness. These efforts also expand opportunities for blue and teal carbon restoration, contributing to climate mitigation and nature-based solutions.

Outcomes

Long term (10+ year) - Enhanced connectivity, ecological function, and long-term protection of biodiversity across coastal habitats and ecosystems.

Medium (5 year) - Threats to priority coastal habitats are actively reduced, ecological condition and species diversity are measurably improved, and restoration efforts are scaled to strengthen habitat connectivity and resilience.



Newland Head Conservation Park

Priority actions

- 1.1 Targeted threat reduction programs** to manage pest plant and animal populations, recreational activities, and implement erosion control and disturbance mitigation strategies in priority habitats.
- 1.2 Implement ecological restoration projects** across islands, dunes, clifftops, saltmarshes, and estuaries to improve habitat condition and support increased species diversity.
- 1.3 Allocate funding and resources** to expand existing conservation areas and enhance the resilience of coastal ecosystems through strategic restoration and management.
- 1.4 Introduce land-based impact mitigation measures** such as improved stormwater management, vegetation buffers, and pollution controls to protect coastal, estuarine and nearshore.
- 1.5 Scale up large-scale habitat restoration initiatives across the coastline**, including coastal heath restoration along the Fleurieu cliff lines and offshore islands, with sustained investment and cross-sector collaboration.
- 1.6 Establish and maintain robust biodiversity assessments and monitoring systems** to track ecosystem condition and change, including data collection for underrepresented species groups such as reptiles and invertebrates.
- 1.7 Identify and restore blue and teal carbon habitats**, leveraging opportunities to expand their coverage and enhance protection through blue carbon restoration programs.

2 Restore ecological connectivity between land and sea environments

Coastal and marine ecosystems are closely linked to the surrounding landscapes and catchments that flow into them. Strengthening ecological connectivity between land and sea is vital for maintaining the health of water-dependent ecosystems, especially as pressures from land use, climate change, and water quality increase.

Estuaries and nearshore zones act as key transition areas, supporting biodiversity, nutrient cycling, and habitat function. Marine ecosystems also rely on the integrity of upstream processes such as the flow of clean water, sediments, and nutrients from rivers and catchments to maintain ecological balance. Restoring these connections through improved catchment management, better water quality, and sustainable flow regimes builds resilience across both terrestrial and marine environments.

Refer to Estuaries of the Fleurieu Peninsula map in online appendices.

Outcomes

Long term (10+ year) - Improved connectivity between land and sea systems to support water-dependent ecosystems, achieved through improved catchment management, enhanced water quality, and sustainable flow regimes.

Medium (5 year) - Improved understanding, coordination, and management of terrestrial, estuarine, coastal, and nearshore environments as interconnected systems, supported by biodiversity assessments and enhanced monitoring, clarified responsibilities, and targeted restoration activities that strengthen biodiversity, habitat values, and ecological connectivity.



Hindmarsh Rivery Estuary

Priority actions

- 2.1 Increase understanding of estuarine function and ecological requirements** for long-term health and resilience.
- 2.2 Conduct ecological assessments** to improve understanding of species diversity and community distribution within coastal and nearshore environments.
- 2.3 Improve and enhance monitoring programs** to guide adaptive management of estuaries as vital connectors between terrestrial and marine systems.
- 2.4 Clarify governance roles and responsibilities** for estuary management to support coordinated and effective decision-making.
- 2.5 Assess and address land-based impacts** such as stormwater runoff, pollution, and sedimentation on nearshore marine environments.
- 2.6 Strengthen coordination across land and sea management frameworks,** promoting integrated planning and conservation of interconnected ecosystems.
- 2.7 Identify and implement habitat restoration opportunities** across terrestrial, estuarine, coastal, and marine ecosystems, including seagrass rehabilitation, shellfish reef development, saltmarsh restoration, riparian corridor repair, and artificial reef installation to enhance biodiversity, ecosystem services, and climate adaptation.

3 Conserve threatened species and ecological communities

Protecting and conserving threatened species and ecological communities is critical to reversing decline and supporting long-term recovery. Many species and habitats of ecological significance are under increasing pressure from habitat loss, invasive species, climate change, and human disturbance.

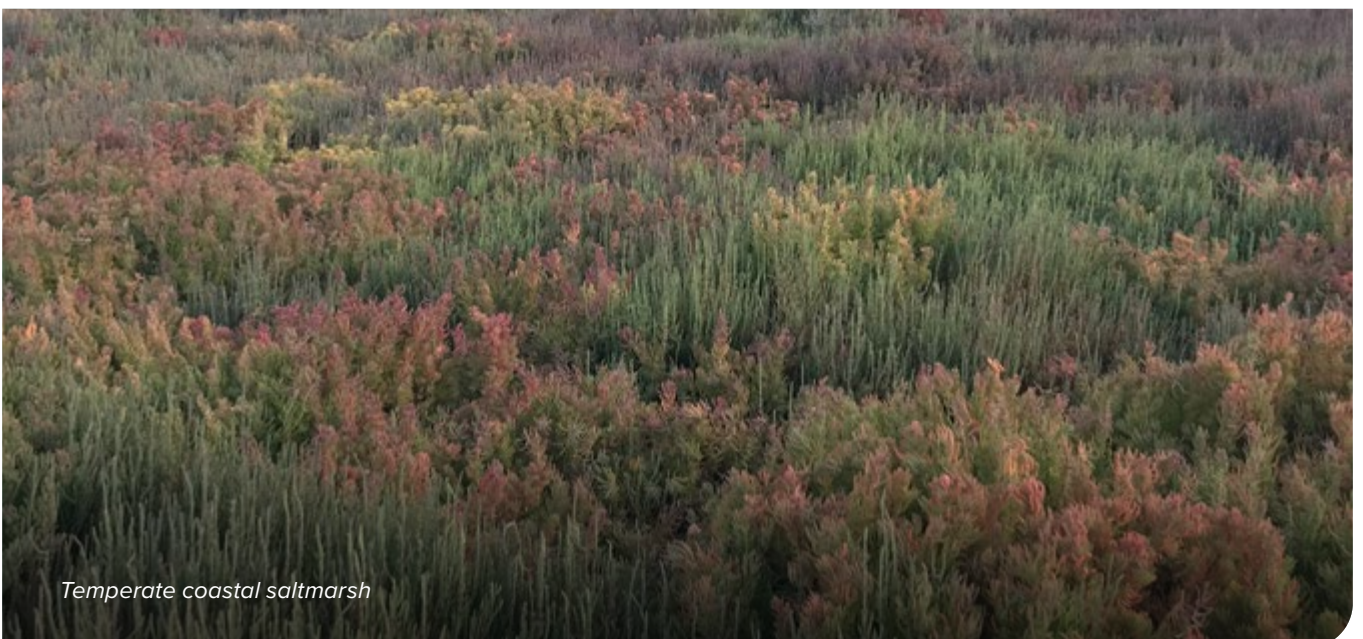
Without targeted action, these values continue to face further degradation or risk extinction. Strategic efforts such as habitat restoration, threat reduction, and improved monitoring, are essential to stabilise populations, build ecological resilience, and guide adaptive management. By focusing on priority species and communities, conservation efforts will ensure that resources are directed where they are most needed to achieve meaningful outcomes.

The Hills and Fleurieu Landscape Board's Action Plan for Threatened Species and Ecological Communities 2026-2040 sets out a coordinated, long-term roadmap to halt and reverse biodiversity loss through targeted investment, on-ground action, research, and partnerships.

Outcomes

Long term (10+ year) - Improved trajectory of conservation rated species and communities of ecological significance.

Medium (5 year) - High-value coastal habitats receive increased protection and restoration to expand species distribution, improve ecological understanding, and increase active community involvement in conservation and rewilding actions.



Temperate coastal saltmarsh

Priority actions

- 3.1 Strengthen protection of high-value reserves and threatened ecological communities** across coastal, estuarine, and marine environments through targeted management and policy measures, including improved statutory protections, enhanced water-quality and land-use controls, climate-resilient planning, and active ecological management to safeguard biodiversity and ecosystem function.
- 3.2 Expand the distribution of conservation-significant species and suitable habitats** via habitat restoration, connectivity enhancement, rewilding initiatives, and reduction of threats.
- 3.3 Improve ecological knowledge** by conducting biodiversity assessments, research, and mapping of species and

habitat distribution to better understand species requirements and community distributions.

- 3.4 Elevate and formalise long-term protection of key conservation areas** such as Tokuremoar Reserve, Morgans to Fishery Beach, Wright Island, and the Normanville Dunes through strengthened planning and management mechanisms that recognise and secure their high ecological value.
- 3.5 Support and resource volunteers and community nurseries** to enhance and support conservation efforts, to propagate native coastal species (including species of conservation value) for habitat restoration and species recovery programs.

4 Strengthen Traditional Owner and First Nations partnerships and integrated land and sea Country planning

Traditional Owners hold deep cultural, spiritual, and ecological connections to land, sea and sky Country, with knowledge systems that support coastal environments over thousands of generations.

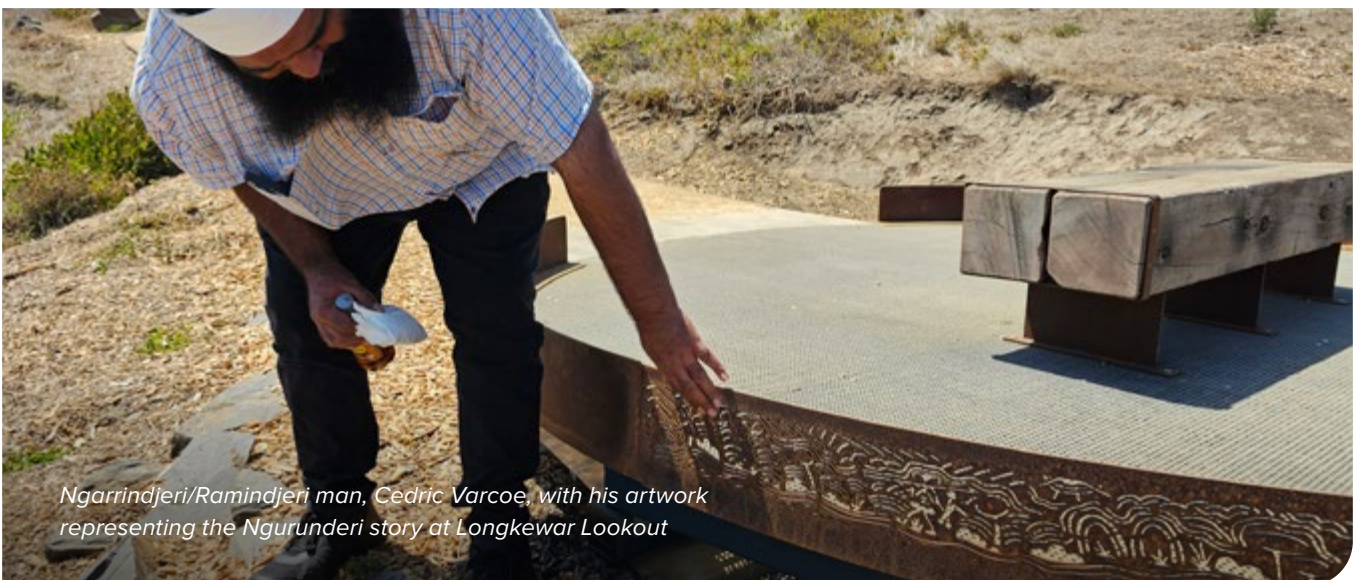
Strengthening respectful partnerships between indigenous and non- indigenous people and supporting integrated planning across land and sea Country ensures that coastal management reflects both cultural values and ecological priorities.

Building awareness of cultural heritage, traditional practices, and collaborative approaches enables communities and land managers work together more effectively. Increasing the capacity of Traditional Owners and First Nations groups to lead and participate in caring for coastal Country fosters more holistic, inclusive, and enduring conservation outcomes.

Outcomes

Long term (10+ year) - Traditional Owners and First Nations groups are supported and resourced to lead the care, management, and protection of land and sea Country through strong partnerships and integrated planning.

Medium (5 year) - Stronger partnerships with Traditional Owners and First Nations groups lead to shared knowledge, improved recognition of cultural heritage, and more effective, collaborative management of land and sea Country.



Ngarrindjeri/Ramindjeri man, Cedric Varcoe, with his artwork representing the Ngurunderi story at Longkewar Lookout

Artwork representing part of the Ngurunderi story by Ngarrindjeri woman, Jamaya Branson, at Petrel Cove, Encounter Bay

Ngurunderi Shapes the Land

Today you are walking in the footsteps of Ngurunderi, an ancient spiritual ancestor of the Ramindjeri and Ngarrindjeri palak (people). Ngurunderi journeyed here all the way from the River Murray in the south east, creating landforms, plants and animals as he went. One of these landforms is the towering headland before you, known as Kongkengguwar (The Bluff). It was formed when Ngurunderi threw his plonggi (fighting club) to the ground while chasing his runaway wives. A bird's eye view of Kongkengguwar shows the distinct shape of the head of the plonggi—a permanent reminder of how the headland came to be.



Priority actions

- 4.1 Support Traditional Owners and First Nations communities** to lead Country management by recognising their cultural authority, interests, and deep connection to place.
- 4.2 Traditional Owners and First Nations people actively caring for Country** through cultural teaching and practices that support the renewal of cultural and ecological systems.
- 4.3 Collaborate with Traditional Owners and First Nations groups** to enhance conservation of coastal ecosystems and protect heritage values.
- 4.4 Establish and maintain partnerships** that align cultural responsibilities with conservation goals, ensuring recognition and protection of cultural heritage.
- 4.5 Integrate Sea Country planning and actively collaborate with Traditional Owners and First Nations peoples and communities** in coastal management and decision-making.
- 4.6 Support Traditional Owners' cultural knowledge and aspirations to develop collaborative modern techniques** for effective land and sea management practices.
- 4.7 Facilitate connection and cultural education** between Traditional Owners, coastal communities, and land managers to strengthen collaborative stewardship.
- 4.8 Deliver Traditional Owner-led training and resources** to land managers and community members to improve understanding of cultural heritage processes, including site and artefact identification and reporting.

5 Plan for sustainable growth and development in coastal areas

Coastal regions face growing pressure from population growth, urban expansion, and climate-related impacts. Strategic planning is essential to ensure Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) that balances environmental integrity with social and economic needs. Stronger, integrated planning frameworks are needed to protect sensitive ecological habitats, manage risks to the natural and built environments and to people, and to build long-term resilience.

Strengthening coastal protection relies on collaboration across all levels of government, stakeholders, developers, and communities to deliver consistent, informed, sustainable, and adaptive development outcomes.

Refer to Future Urban Growth map in online appendices.

Outcomes

Long term (10+ year) - Coastal development is ecologically sustainable and supports climate resilient communities.

Medium (5 year) - Coast and nearshore protection and climate adaptation measures are integrated into planning processes through collaboration across all levels of government, stakeholders, developers, and communities.



Green Bay, Rocky Bay, Freemans Knob and Ladies Beach, Port Elliot

Priority actions

- 5.1 Influence regional planning** to ensure new developments areas are climate resilient and avoid high-risk coastal zones.
- 5.2 Strengthen strategic planning processes** by incorporating updated coastal hazard mapping, contemporary climate-change projections, nature-based adaptation priorities, and alignment with Coastal Hazard Adaptation Plans, ensuring consistent and long-term resilience across coastal communities.
- 5.3 Review and update zoning classifications of coastal interface areas** currently zoned as Primary Production or Rural, establishing conservation-appropriate buffer zones along the shoreline to strengthen protection of vulnerable natural coastal assets.
- 5.4 Strengthen planning controls to prevent development in high-risk zones** and safeguard areas identified for retreat or conservation of threatened ecological communities and species.

6 Improve community understanding and care for coastal ecosystems

Coastal ecosystems are diverse, rich in biodiversity, and provide vital protection for shorelines. They support terrestrial, estuarine, and marine life; and offer cultural as well as recreational value to communities. These areas face growing threats from climate change, development and increased population, and pollution.

Strengthening public understanding and care for coastal environments is essential to their long-term protection. Promoting education, engagement, and local stewardship empowers communities to take part in conservation efforts, encouraging informed action and shared responsibility for safeguarding coastal ecosystems into the future.

Outcomes

Long term (10+ year) - Empowered land managers and communities actively protect coastal ecosystems through increased awareness, stewardship, and participation in conservation efforts.

Medium (5 year) - Communities have increased knowledge of, and engage in, coastal conservation through education programs, local initiatives, and participation in local conservation activities.



Coastal education art by Barbary O'Brien



Priority actions

- 6.1 Promote responsible behaviours** that support the protection of coastal species and habitats through targeted education and outreach.
- 6.2 Engage and collaborate with land managers** to reduce the impact of invasive and overabundant species on areas of conservation value.
- 6.3 Raise awareness of recreational impacts** on coastal ecosystems and encourage low-impact practices among visitors and local users.
- 6.4 Support and expand citizen science programs** to build community knowledge, improve data collection, and inform coastal management.
- 6.5 Implement local initiatives** to reduce threatening processes and activities affecting coastal habitats.
- 6.6 Encourage best-practice land management** to minimise stormwater runoff, pollution, and other land-based impacts on coastal and nearshore environments.
- 6.7 Facilitate networking and collaboration** among coastal community groups and land managers to strengthen collective stewardship and conservation efforts.

7

Address climate change impacts on conservation values

Climate change is placing increasing pressure on coastal, estuarine and marine environments. Rising sea levels, increased storm intensities, ocean warming, acidification, and shifting species distributions are already altering habitats and biodiversity. Algal blooms are likely to become more frequent, degrading water quality and disrupting marine food webs. Risks to coastal communities, settlements and natural ecosystems are recognised as two of the eleven priority climate risks identified in the Australian Government's National Adaptation Plan.

Proactive, adaptive management is essential to address the growing impacts of climate change on coastal systems. Ecosystems such as seagrass meadows, reef systems, coastal dunes, cliff lines and estuaries provide critical biodiversity refuges, carbon storage and buffer shorelines from erosion and inundation. Many of these natural assets are already vulnerable and under significant pressure. Effective climate adaptation must therefore prioritise resilience-building measures, including targeted conservation and nature-based solutions that harness the protective functions of healthy ecosystems.

For example, coastal dunes play a vital role in absorbing storm surges, reducing flooding and limiting erosion. Protecting, conserving and restoring coastal, estuarine and marine ecosystems delivers direct benefits for both natural and built environments.

Outcomes

Long term (10+ year) - Coastal, estuarine and marine ecosystems have improved resilience and capacity to adapt to climate change, sustaining biodiversity and maintaining healthy, functioning natural systems.

Medium (5 year) - Climate adaptation planning, strategies and management for coastal, estuarine and marine environments embed nature connectivity and ecosystem health, reducing climate impacts and improving the condition of habitats.



Posidonia seagrass

Priority actions

- 7.1 Strengthen understanding** of climate hazards and their impacts on natural coastal, estuarine, and marine land/seascapes and biodiversity.
- 7.2 Assess and prioritise** climate adaptation strategies, including nature-based solutions, for areas of high coastal, estuarine, and marine conservation value.
- 7.3 Protect and restore** natural environments to enhance the resilience of coastal, estuarine and marine ecosystems to climate hazards.
- 7.4 Investigate and prioritise options that enable the landward retreat and migration of coastal**, estuarine and marine habitats, supporting long-term biodiversity and ecosystem function.
- 7.5 Establish or expand biodiversity assessment and monitoring programs** to track environmental change, identify emerging risks, and inform adaptive conservation management.

How progress will be measured and reported

To ensure the Southern Fleurieu Coastal Action Plan delivers meaningful and measurable outcomes, a monitoring, evaluation, reporting, and improvement (MERI) framework has been developed. This framework will guide how progress is tracked, reported, and adapted over time.

Key components of the MERI framework include:

Monitoring – Regular ecological and cultural monitoring will assess habitat condition, species diversity, threat reduction, and community engagement. Monitoring will be aligned with regional priorities and tailored to each cell's specific values and pressures.

Evaluation – Progress will be evaluated against the plan's medium (5-year) and long-term (10-year) outcomes through tracking the delivery of the priority actions. Evaluation cycles will identify successes, challenges, and opportunities for improvement.

Reporting – Transparent reporting will ensure stakeholders and the community are informed of progress. Annual summaries and mid-term reviews will be shared through regional channels and stakeholder networks.

Improvement – Adaptive management will allow actions to be refined based on research and monitoring results, stakeholder feedback, and emerging threats. This ensures the plan remains responsive and effective over time.





Great knot



Explore the full plan online

For detailed information on each section of the coastline, including the 27 cells, site-specific guidance, supporting documents and resources to help with on-ground management, the full **Southern Fleurieu Coastal Action Plan** is available online at hf.landscape.sa.gov.au/SFCAP, or simply scan the QR code below.



Scan here to
view online!





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