

Habitat 141°: linking outback to ocean

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Introduction

Habitat 141° is a large-scale, multi-partner collaboration that aims to promote conservation and restoration of natural habitats in south-eastern Australia. The establishment of Habitat 141° recognised the unique set of opportunities existing in the region and the strong desire of local people and communities to act for increased conservation across all tenures. Habitat 141° works through aligning and focusing the efforts and investments of contributing organisations, and recognises the advantages this has for achieving significant and enduring biodiversity conservation outcomes. The term ‘Habitat 141°’ refers to both the general region in which the initiative operates, the broad alliance of organisations, as well as the proposed legal entity that will plan, coordinate and align efforts.

Habitat 141° straddles longitude 141° east along the Victorian–South Australian border and extends 500 km from the Southern Ocean in the south to north of the Murray River including a small portion of far south-west New South Wales. The region is predominantly an agricultural landscape largely cleared of native vegetation for cropping and grazing except for some large areas of public land in north-west Victoria and eastern South Australia, largely dominated by mallee (Figure 8.1).

Habitat 141° was instigated in 2005 to: (i) improve the connectivity between large areas of public land through establishing corridors; (ii) increase the amount of natural habitat through extensive restoration; and (iii) improve the functionality of existing natural habitats through management.

The vision of Habitat 141° is ‘to work with communities to conserve, restore and connect habitats for plants and wildlife on a landscape scale from the outback to the ocean’ (Dunn and Jancauskas 2008). The alliance recognises that it will take at least 50 years to achieve this vision in the majority of nine landscape zones. The on-ground work of partner organisations