



Strategic Plan 2019–2023: In Summary

This document summarises the Kara Kara CMN’s *Strategic Plan 2019-2023*. A copy of the full Plan can be downloaded from the Network’s website at www.karakaracmn.org.au/events--resources.

Vision

Healthy, biodiverse and resilient ecosystems in a well-connected landscape.

Purpose

To protect and enhance habitat critical to the survival of native flora and fauna, in particular threatened and declining species.

Conservation targets

The Kara Kara CMN has identified a number of targets for conservation action. Shown below, these targets will be the focus of the Network’s conservation efforts for the life of this Plan.

1. Threatened and declining vegetation communities	2. Threatened and declining flora and fauna	3. Riparian and aquatic ecosystems
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Box-Ironbark forest ● Grassy woodland ● Heathy woodland ● Plains Woodland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Brush-tailed Phascogale ● Woodland birds ● Endemic native orchids ● Buloke (<i>Allocasuarina luehmannii</i>) ● Silver Banksia (<i>Banksia marginata</i>) ● Grey Grass-tree (<i>Xanthorrhoea glauca</i> ssp. <i>angustifolia</i>) ● Spiny Riceflower (<i>Pimelea spinescens</i> ssp. <i>spinescens</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Natural creek-lines ● Ephemeral soaks ● Freshwater wetlands

Active threats to conservation targets

Active threats to our conservation targets include climate change, habitat loss and degradation, loss of genetic diversity, grazing pressure, feral and invasive species (i.e. introduced predators, herbivores, birds and pathogens, and environmental weeds), inappropriate fire regimes, erosion and the ‘human-nature disconnect’.

Area of interest

For the life of this Plan, the Network's efforts to conserve, protect and enhance natural habitats will focus specifically on three landscape zones, namely:

- 1) From Morri Morri Conservation Reserve in the west to the Avoca River in the east;
- 2) From St Arnaud in the north to Moonambel in the south; and
- 3) On the Avon plains to the north-west of St Arnaud.

The areas identified in Zones 1 and 2 will be the focus of the Network's revegetation and habitat improvement works. On-ground works in Zone 3 will primarily focus on threatened species protection, particularly conservation target species such as Buloke and Spiny Rice-Flower.

Our strategies

The Kara Kara CMN will implement a range of strategies and actions to help mitigate the impacts of the active threats to our conservation targets identified in this Plan. These strategies and actions are outlined on the following pages.

Our performance and progress towards achieving our stated objectives will be outlined in the Kara Kara CMN's *Year in Review*, a report published each year to coincide with the Network's Annual General Meeting.

1. Conserve, protect and enhance natural habitats and species

Objective(s)

- Protect and enhance habitat critical to the survival of woodland flora and fauna, particularly threatened and declining species.
- Increase the area and quality of native habitat within the Kara Kara region.
- Improve landscape connectivity to facilitate species movement and dispersal.
- Protect threatened species.
- Reduce the impacts of feral and invasive species.
- Manage existing, and be alert to emerging, threats to regional biodiversity.
- In managing all Kara Kara CMN on-ground projects on private land, aim to achieve a 'win-win' for biodiversity and landholders/managers.

Actions

1) **On-ground programs...**

...for threatened/declining vegetation communities, flora and fauna

- Identify landscape connectivity gaps (particularly in Zones 1 and 2) and actively engage with landholders to encourage participation in bio-link creation/enhancement projects.
- Undertake revegetation programs (using both direct seeding and/or native tube-stock as appropriate to the site) on private land.
- Construct and install structural elements to improve native habitat for wildlife (e.g. species-specific nest-boxes, habitat logs and water retention barriers etc).
- Identify, and initiate actions/projects to protect populations of threatened and declining flora (e.g. grazing exclusion fencing).
- Assist and support specialist conservation agencies with native orchid monitoring and recovery programs.

- Support/co-ordinate programs for the control of feral and invasive species (e.g. weeds and feral foxes, cats, birds and herbivores), where appropriate.
- Manage weed infestations as appropriate to site and land tenure.

...for riparian and aquatic ecosystems

- Initiate projects to restore and rehabilitate native vegetation along natural watercourses.
- Partner with, and support, the NCCMA on projects that protect natural riparian and aquatic ecosystems.

2) Monitoring

- Measure/evaluate the effectiveness/success of selected habitat protection/enhancement programs on an ongoing basis, fine-tuning Network processes and procedures as required. Specific monitoring actions should include:
 - Establishing photo points at the completion of all revegetation projects;
 - Regular visits to selected revegetation projects to monitor growth and condition; and
 - Nest-box monitoring.
- Immediately report the emergence of new environmental weeds or pathogens (e.g. Myrtle Rust) that may pose a risk to regional biodiversity.

2. Be an advocate for biodiversity

Objective(s)

- Influence public policy across all levels of government on issues relating to biodiversity conservation, natural resource management, and the emergence and management of threatening processes.
- Facilitate the protection of remnant native habitats on private land into perpetuity.
- Influence strategic bushfire management planning within the Kara Kara region.
- Influence state and local government policy on the appropriate locations for community firewood collection.
- Remain apolitical at all times.

Actions

- Represent the interests of biodiversity in the Kara Kara region by participating in government consultation processes relating to environmental policy and legislation.
- Be alert to opportunities to protect natural habitats on private land into perpetuity, in particular by facilitating strategic land acquisitions and private covenants by our conservation partners.
- Advocate for greater protection of native habitats, flora and fauna through status upgrades to Bushland Reserves, Nature Conservation Reserves and State/Regional Parks.
- Provide input into DELWP's Bushfire Strategic Management Planning relating to the location, frequency and intensity of prescribed fuel reduction burns on public land.

3. Engage with the community

Objective(s)

- Educate the community about regional biodiversity and why conserving it is important.
- Raise awareness of the Kara Kara CMN among its various target audiences.
- Strengthen community participation in, and understanding of, Network programs.
- Engage with Traditional Owners.
- Maintain and strengthen the Kara Kara CMN's reputation as a 'good environmental citizen'.
- Establish the Kara Kara CMN as a 'go to' organisation for on-ground assistance and conservation advice in our region.
- Nurture future generations of conservationists.
- Remain apolitical at all times.

Actions

- Host and/or sponsor community events (i.e. seminars, field trips and activities) that promote and encourage the conservation of regional biodiversity and threatened communities/species.
- Identify and engage with broad-acre and absentee landholders to encourage their involvement in the Network's on-ground programs.
- Involve the Kara Kara region's Traditional Owners in Network programs, as appropriate.
- Seek out opportunities to engage with individuals and organisations/agencies to expand the Kara Kara CMN's volunteer network.
- Regularly communicate with the Kara Kara CMN's various audiences to raise awareness about the Network, its objectives and programs (i.e. via the website, eNews, Facebook posts and general media), and disseminate other conservation-related news and information.
- Expand/strengthen the Kara Kara CMN's schools' program (i.e. participation in Kara Kara CMN on-ground projects, education and habitat improvement programs).
- Seek out opportunities to engage with existing and potential conservation partners, including participating in and presenting at regional events and activities.

4. Build strong and enduring partnerships

Objective

- Build and maintain active and enduring partnerships that protect and enhance biodiversity in the Kara Kara region and more broadly.

Actions

- Regularly engage with neighbouring CMNs, conservation groups, government agencies and NGOs that are active in the Kara Kara region.
- Where possible, develop partnerships that create and improve habitat quality and linkages at both regional and landscape scales.
- Support and maintain a close working relationship with the Dja Dja Wurrung and Wotjobaluk peoples as the Traditional Owners of land within the Kara Kara region, particularly in relation to programs on public land.

5. Contribute to scientific knowledge

Objective

- Contribute to scientific knowledge by monitoring and sharing data on selected woodland fauna and flora in the Kara Kara region.

Actions

- Conduct quarterly bird surveys at established woodland sites within the Kara Kara region.
- Initiate a regular nest-box monitoring program.
- Share Network data with specialist government and biodiversity databases in a timely manner [e.g. BirdLife Australia's 'Birddata' and the Victorian Biodiversity Atlas (VBA)].

6. Secure the Network's future

Objective(s)

- Secure the ongoing financial and operational viability of the Kara Kara CMN.
- Secure funding for Network projects and programs.
- Maintain good governance.
- Increase Kara Kara CMN membership and volunteer participation.
- Provide a safe workplace for the Network's employees and volunteers.

Actions

1. Financial viability

- Secure ongoing Landcare Facilitator funding.
- Actively seek out funding for Network projects from both government and philanthropic sources.
- Increase public donations to the Kara Kara CMN.

2. Operational viability

- Plan for Committee succession, including identifying and recruiting appropriately-skilled Committee members.
- Build Committee and Facilitator capacity by actively seeking out opportunities for training and skills development.
- Reconnect with 'member agencies/organisations' and encourage active participation in, and support of, Network projects and programs.
- Be alert to opportunities to expand, and engage with, Kara Kara CMN's membership and volunteer base.
- Monitor/evaluate selected projects for the purpose of internal process improvement.
- Maintain good governance by staying abreast of changes to the law relating to incorporated associations, and registered charities and environmental organisations, and implementing changes to Kara Kara CMN policies and procedures as necessary.
- Maintain safe work practices at all times in accordance with the Kara Kara CMN's current *Operating Policies & Procedures*.