

## Caring for our Country

# Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement (MERI) Plan

## National Reserve System and Biodiversity Conservation

Base-level allocation (three of four)



**wheatbelt**  
natural resource  
management

*(Formerly Avon Catchment Council)*

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## Document History

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V1.1	Michelle Kidman	9 September 2009	Add 'other evaluation question' to Table 6, KEQ 2 about number of monitoring plans established. Add Document History section
V1.2	Rebecca Palumbo Michelle Kidman	17 September 2009	Incorporate changes advised by Ann Connelly, Australian Government
V1.3	Michelle Kidman	11 March 2010	Minor corrections and revisions to key evaluation questions and measures. Add Program Monitoring Plan (Attachment 2)

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# 1: Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose of the *National Reserve System and Biodiversity Conservation* Project MERI Plan

The continuous and integrated cycle of **monitoring, evaluation, reporting and improvement** is referred to as **MERI** in the Australian NRM context.

A project MERI plan articulates all the different aspects of MERI that will be needed and how they will be implemented over the life of the project.

This project MERI plan:

- Guides MERI for the *National Reserve System and Biodiversity Conservation* project of Caring for our Country in accord with the stated Caring for our Country outcomes and targets (<http://www.nrm.gov.au/me/index.html>) and consistent with the Caring for our Country MERI Strategy (<http://www.nrm.gov.au/me/index.html>)
- Provides a base from which to review the progress the project is making towards the agreed Caring for our Country targets and outcomes and from which to learn about successful implementation strategies and to adapt in response to lessons learnt.

## 1.2 Broader MERI Context

This plan is nested within:

- The NRM MERI framework (<http://www.nrm.gov.au/me/index.html>)
- The Caring for our Country Outcomes 2008-2013 (<http://www.nrm.gov.au/index.html>)
- The Caring for our Country Business Plan 2009-10 (<http://www.nrm.gov.au/index.html>)
- The MERI Strategy for Caring for our Country Strategy 2009-13 (<http://www.nrm.gov.au/me/index.html>)
- The WNRN *National Reserve System and Biodiversity Conservation* Program Management Plan

## 2: Scope

### 2.1 Program description

This program will increase the National Reserve System by working with land managers to legally protect locations through the use of conservation covenants. The locations target priority remnant bushland in the Avon River Basin that have been identified through a strategic conservation plan as significant and irreplaceable. The implementation of management plans will secure these locations as sustainable and functioning ecosystems.

The strategic conservation plan has identified targets that contain a high level of diversity, including ecosystems under represented in the national reserve system and threatened species.

To complement the National Reserve System work threatened species that are impacted by rabbits will have management activities identified while community groups will be given opportunities to participate in activities aimed at protecting over 100 EPBC listed species in the Avon River Basin.

Community participation in knowledge building activities will enable landholder contributions to biodiversity conservation to expand and continue beyond the life of the program.

## 2.2 Program methodology

### Specific Activities

To increase the area protected by the NRS, activities will concentrate on negotiating new covenants, revising and implementing management plans for existing covenants, and building skills, capacity and interest of land managers in bushland management.

Specific activities that contribute to these outcomes include:

- identify target areas
- engage land managers
- educate the community on covenanting and bushland conservation
- support new covenants
- monitoring and evaluation
- review and revise management plans
- develop implementation plans on a site-by-site basis
- prioritise management activities
- build capacity of land managers
- implement on-ground management activities
- long-term support for land managers through covenanting agencies.

In relation to EPBC species threatened by rabbits, activities will include monitoring populations to assess the impact of rabbits, identifying appropriate management actions, prioritise populations for action, implement management actions and monitoring populations for species recovery.

Management actions may include baiting, warren destruction, fencing of populations and other activities that increase species resilience such as recruitment burns, translocations and habitat improvement.

Community groups will be engaged to support participation in conservation activities, using workshops, training and publications to raise awareness in the community and improve community skills in identifying threatened species and reducing threats.

Community groups will be supported to implement coordinated pest animal control programs aimed at conserving biodiversity values through the reduction of these threats.

### Appropriateness

This program methodology has been developed as a result of experience over the last 5 years in implementing similar programs across the Avon River Basin. Program outcomes and activities have been developed using a program logic framework.

Experience has shown that achieving conservation covenants requires a personal approach to build relationships with land managers and develop trust so that land managers overcome their apprehension of covenants. Often offering on ground management assistance can be an important factor in facilitating land manager involvement in conservation.

A Strategic Conservation Plan will identify areas of remnant bushland that will contribute to the representativeness of the NRS in the Avon region. Land Holder Engagement officers will build relationships with priority land managers and provide knowledge and support to those land managers with the aim of acquiring a commitment to perpetual legal protection of the targeted bushland.

Land managers will be supported to develop management plans for their bush and opportunities to implement key activities. Legal protection of priority bushland must be coupled with support for on ground activities that abate threats to that land and will lead to long term security and sustainability for that bushland. Land

managers will be provided with support to implement agreed works and plan for future works based on matters identified in management plans.

Western Australian Covenanted agencies (DEC Covenanted and the National Trust) will be contracted to provide long term support and advice to land managers with conservation covenants. This support will be provided for at least 16 years.

Threatened species management will be an activity of this program. Priority locations selected for attention through the Strategic Conservation Plan may contain populations of threatened species. Where threatened species are located within priority remnants specific recovery actions for that species will be completed as part of the on ground work.

With over 100 threatened species listed under the EPBC Act a large number of these will be threatened by rabbits. Specific recovery actions will be implemented to improve the security of those species that are threatened by rabbits.

Building the knowledge of the community to identify and understand the significance of these species will be achieved through a targeted knowledge building program which will include the Avon's Most Wanted promotional activities as well as community workshops and fact sheets.

### **Technical feasibility**

The program is feasible – over the last 5 years the WNRM has implemented similar programs with considerable success. All targets and activities in this program have been developed from the lessons learnt over that time.

### **Strategic and integrated**

On-ground management activities in this program will be based on a strategic, science-based approach. The existing prioritisation plan will identify the most appropriate areas to target for investment. This commitment to scientific decision making will also ensure that management activities are integrated and considered in a landscape context, allowing for the most effective activities to take place.

### **Measure, monitor and evaluate**

The program will establish standards for monitoring biodiversity improvements and practice change which will be applied. This monitoring will ensure that resource condition change will be quantifiable in the long-term. As measurement of this change can only be achieved after a number of years, in the short term the program will use most significant change and case study stories to evidence improvements. This program MERI plan guides all aspects of monitoring and evaluation.

### **Review and improve**

Each year, as part of the program management cycle, the success of the program's approach will be reviewed and adapted accordingly.

Additionally, the target areas will be reviewed to include new science, evaluation of the previous year's success and any changes to NRS policy. Bushland management activities will be reviewed to ensure they are strategic and consider current recommended practice.

## 2.3 Caring for our Country targets and outcomes

Table 1 illustrates the specific Caring for our Country outcomes and targets the *National Reserve System and Biodiversity Conservation* program contributes to.

**Table 1: Caring for our Country targets to which the *National Reserve System and Biodiversity Conservation* program will contribute**

Caring for our Country Target/s	Funded Activity to be undertaken	Expected contribution of program
<p><b><i>Increasing the National Reserve System:</i></b> To increase the area that is protected within the National Reserve System by 5 million hectares a year in under represented bioregions, including areas that will contribute to the conservation of matters of national environmental significance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land manager engagement - one on one engagement of land managers by program officers to negotiate covenants</li> <li>• Existing protected areas - Management plan review and revision. Technical support provided to revise existing management plans for existing protected areas to meet NRS criteria.</li> <li>• Existing protected areas – long term management of agreements and land manager support through covenanting agencies.</li> <li>• Implementation plan development. Prioritisation of activities identified in management plans and development of on ground works program for investment by program</li> <li>• Implementation of on ground management actions – Implementation officer to manage contracts, provide technical support to land managers and quality assurance of all works</li> <li>• Development of incentives package and cost sharing arrangements</li> <li>• Development of new conservation covenants – Land holder engagement officer to advise land manager</li> </ul>	<p>390ha of bushland under new covenant 360ha of existing covenanted bushland with management plans consistent with NRS and on going land manager support 750ha of covenanted bushland with management actions implemented</p>

Caring for our Country Target/s	Funded Activity to be undertaken	Expected contribution of program
	<p>through covenanting process, carryout assessment of target to ensure bushland meets NRS standards and development of new management plans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of new conservation covenants – contracting of covenanting agencies to manage process and lodge covenants to title</li> <li>• Identify targets and manage conservation plan – Resources to manage prioritisation process, identify targets in the landscape and analyse information to update conservation plan</li> <li>• Program management and contract management. – Management of contracts and reporting requirements.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Reducing the Impact of Rabbits:</b> To suppress rabbit populations over the next three years to densities that are low enough to allow regeneration and recovery of critically endangered and endangered species and communities in identified priority areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recovery actions improving security against the threat of rabbits on EPBC listed species.</li> <li>• Monitoring program for EPBC listed species and on ground works program to reduce the impact of rabbits on threatened species</li> </ul>	<p>25 EPBC listed threatened species have the threat of rabbits monitored.</p> <p>25 EPBC listed species have management actions implemented to improve security against the threat of rabbits</p>
<p><b>Increasing Participation in Natural Resource Management:</b> To ensure all regional NRM organisations provide support for community groups (e.g. through devolved grants) to undertake local programs over the next 2 years</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community feral animal control program.</li> <li>• Support for local governments to implement community based control programs supporting the control of rabbits and foxes and their impact on threatened species</li> <li>• Integrate indigenous activities in biodiversity conservation.</li> <li>• Consultation with indigenous stakeholders, support for access to indigenous networks and development of opportunities for increased indigenous participation in conservation activities.</li> </ul>	<p>15 local governments are participating in coordinated community feral animal control programs</p>
<p><b>Improving Knowledge and Skills of Land Managers:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community and landholder training and workshops.</li> </ul>	<p>16 land managers are involved in developing and</p>

Caring for our Country Target/s	Funded Activity to be undertaken	Expected contribution of program
To increase by 42 000 land managers and farmers over four years who have demonstrated an improvement in knowledge and skills in natural resource management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resources to manage stakeholder relationships, develop and implement workshops, training opportunities and develop training resources.</li> <li>Media and promotional activities.</li> </ul>	<p>implementing management plans and attending workshops</p> <p>5 local governments receive training in managing threatened species</p> <p>5 community groups are participating in conservation activities</p>

## 2.4 Users of the Plan

Table 2 shows the primary users or the key people who will use this MERI plan to organise data collection, analysis and reporting. The Secondary users are people who may benefit from understanding and being aware of this MERI plan.

**Table 2: Key users for this MERI plan**

<p><b>Primary users: who will reflect and adapt</b></p>	<p>Wheatbelt Natural Resource Management Inc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Rebecca Palumbo, Program Manager, Natural Diversity</li> <li>○ Natarsha Woods, Operations Manager</li> <li>○ Elizabeth Kington, Program Manager, Sustainable Communities</li> <li>○ Michelle Kidman, Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Board of Directors</li> <li>• Sub Catchment Reference Groups</li> <li>• Members and Associates</li> </ul> <p>Project Team – WWF</p> <p>Project Team - Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC)</p>
<p><b>Secondary users: who need to be aware of this plan</b></p>	<p>Australian Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ann Connelly, Assistant Director, WA Team, Australian Government Land and Coasts</li> <li>• Drue Edwards, Director, Program Performance, Australian Government Land and Coasts</li> <li>• NRS Unit, Australian Government</li> </ul> <p>Western Australian Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• John Holley, Acting Director, State NRM Office, Government of Western Australia</li> </ul> <p>Participant landholders</p> <p>WA general community members</p> <p>Other Natural Resource Management Stakeholders</p>

## 2.5 Key evaluation questions

The key evaluation questions (KEQs) to be answered for the purposes of reporting outcomes against the targets that the *National Reserve System and Biodiversity Conservation* program addresses and program improvement are illustrated in Table 3 below:

**Table 3: Key Evaluation Questions**

Evaluation purpose	KEQ	The question relates to Caring for our Country target:
<b><u>Impact</u></b>	To what extent has the <i>National Reserve System and Conservation Biodiversity</i> program increased the area that is protected as part of the NRS in the Avon River Basin?	<b><i>Increasing the National Reserve System:</i></b> To increase the area that is protected within the National Reserve System by 5 million hectares a year in under represented bioregions, including areas that will contribute to the conservation of matters of national environmental significance.
<b><u>Impact</u></b>	To what extent has the <i>National Reserve System and Conservation Biodiversity</i> program supported regeneration and recovery of EPBC listed species?	<b><i>Reducing the Impact of Rabbits:</i></b> To suppress rabbit populations over the next three years to densities that are low enough to allow regeneration and recovery of critically endangered and endangered species and communities in identified priority areas.
<b><u>Impact</u></b>	To what extent have land managers and farmers demonstrated an improvement in knowledge and skills in biodiversity conservation, as a result of participating in the <i>National Reserve System and Conservation Biodiversity</i> program?	<b><i>Improving Knowledge and Skills of Land Manager:</i></b> To increase by 42 000 land managers and farmers over four years who have demonstrated an improvement in knowledge and skills in natural resource management

Evaluation purpose	KEQ	The question relates to Caring for our Country target:
<b><u>Impact</u></b>	In what ways and to what extent has the <i>National Reserve System and Conservation Biodiversity program</i> provided support to community groups to undertake local projects?	<b><i>Increasing Participation in Natural Resource Management:</i></b> To ensure all regional NRM organisations provide support for community groups (e.g. through devolved grants) to undertake local projects over the next 2 years
<b><u>Impact</u></b>	What, if any, unanticipated positive or negative changes or other outcomes have resulted?	All targets that this program addresses
<b><u>Effectiveness</u></b>	To what extent have the planned activities been achieved? Why or why not?  What other activities/strategies that might be more effective?	All targets that this program addresses
<b><u>Appropriateness</u></b>	To what extent are the investment strategies proving useful in engaging and influencing the targeted stakeholders?	All targets that this program addresses
<b><u>Efficiency</u></b>	To what extent has the program attained the highest value out of available resources? Why or why not?	All targets that this program addresses

## 2.6 Workplan and budget

The MERI workplan and budget for *National Reserve System and Conservation Biodiversity* program is illustrated below.

<b>Program timeline for activities</b>			
<b>Immediate program outcomes</b>			
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Achievement towards Caring for our Country Target</b>	<b>By when</b>	<b>Quantity of Target to be achieved</b>
Land manager engagement	6 Land managers with existing conservation covenants engaged	December 2009	390ha of bushland under new covenant
	Engage 6 new priority land managers with locations identified through the conservation planning process	December 2009	
	Engage 6 new priority land managers with locations identified through the conservation planning process	June 2011	360ha of existing covenanted bushland with management plans consistent with NRS and on going land manager support
	6 Land managers with existing conservation covenants engaged	June 2011	
Management plan review and revision and long term support	180ha of existing covenanted bushland have management plans consistent with NRS and on going land manager support	June 2010	750ha of covenanted bushland with management actions implemented
	120ha of existing covenanted bushland have management plans consistent with NRS and on going land manager support	June 2011	
	60ha of existing covenanted bushland have management plans consistent with NRS and on going land manager support	June 2012	
Implementation plan development	Develop 5 implementation plans for sites prioritised for management actions	June 2010	750ha of covenanted bushland with management actions implemented
Implementation of on ground management actions	300ha of covenanted bushland have management actions implemented	June 2010	
	300ha of covenanted bushland have management actions implemented	June 2011	
	90ha of covenanted bushland have management actions implemented	June 2012	
	60ha of covenanted bushland have management actions implemented	June 2013	
Development of new conservation covenants	75ha of bushland under new covenanted consistent with NRS	June 2011	750ha of covenanted bushland with management actions implemented
	150ha of bushland under new covenant consistent with NRS	June 2012	

Program timeline for activities			
Immediate program outcomes			
	165ha of bushland under new covenanted consistent with NRS	June 2013	
Recovery actions reducing the impact of rabbits on EPBC listed species	25 EPBC threatened species have the threat of rabbits monitored	June 2011	25 EPBC listed threatened species have the threat of rabbits monitored.
	Rabbit baiting is implemented for 10 EPBC listed species	June 2011	25 EPBC listed species have management actions implemented to improve security against the threat of rabbits
	Rabbit control measures are implemented for a further 5 EPBC listed species	June 2011	
	10 EPBC listed species have actions implemented to improve security against the threat of rabbits	June 2011	
Community and landholder training and workshops	2 community groups are participating in conservation activities	December 2010	16 land managers are involved in developing and implementing management plans and attending workshops
	2 local governments have received training on managing threatened species on local government lands	December 2010	
	10 land managers participate in workshops on managing bushland	September 2010	
	3 community groups are participating in conservation activities	December 2012	5 local governments receive training in managing threatened species
	3 local governments have received training on managing threatened species on local government lands	December 2012	5 community groups are participating in conservation activities
	6 land managers participate in workshops on managing bushland	December 2012	

<b>Program timeline for activities</b>			
<b>Immediate program outcomes</b>			
Community feral animal control program	Annual community based feral animal control program completed	August 2010	15 local governments are participating in coordinated community feral animal control programs
	Annual community based feral animal control program completed	August 2011	
Indigenous Engagement	Integrate indigenous activities in biodiversity conservation.	June 2011	Management plans for 2 sites include indigenous consultation and traditional ecological management practices
Program management and contract management	Targets for investment on ground reviewed based on project activities and conservation planning	December 2010	
	Targets for investment on ground reviewed based on project activities and conservation planning	December 2012	
Monitoring of project activities	MERI plan developed that addresses program logic, budget, quality and schedule management, progress towards milestones and targets, indicators, contract management and evaluation processes	July – September 2009	
	Determine biophysical monitoring requirements	June 2010	
	Determine practice change monitoring requirements	June 2010	
	Develop evaluation process for resource condition change	December 2010	
	Collect and analyse social information	December 2012	
	Collect and analyse biophysical information	December 2012	
	Adaptive management cycle (monitor, evaluate, report and improve)	Annually	

A summary of the measures for monitoring and key evaluation questions, together with a summary of the methods, responsibilities, timeframes and associated costs are outlined below. Measures have been selected from the Australian Government Caring for Our Country [Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement Strategy](#). Additional measures have been developed by Wheatbelt Natural Resource Management as appropriate.

<b>Program MERI activities and budget</b>				
<b>Monitoring</b>				
<b>Measure</b>	<b>Method of collection</b>	<b>Frequency of collection</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Cost \$</b>
<p><i>Measure 1</i></p> <p><b>Conservation Management</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of land managers adopting new conservation measures (stewardship programs, covenants agreed with landholders for biodiversity conservation purposes)</li> <li>Property area managed for biodiversity conservation</li> <li>Kms fencing*</li> </ul> <p><i>*Denotes WNRM specific measure</i></p>	<p>Quantification of baseline and change in number of land managers adopting new conservation measures (and type of conservation measure), and overall area managed for biodiversity conservation.</p> <p>Data will be collected via interim progress (immediate outcomes) reporting.</p>	<p>31 July and 31 December, 2009-2013</p>	<p>Program Manager, Natural Diversity, WNRM</p> <p>Project Officers, WWF</p> <p>Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator, WNRM</p>	<p>19,513</p>
<p><i>Measure 2</i></p> <p><b>Management plans, strategies, arrangements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of resource management plans or strategies completed or established, including program management plans, management plans for Australian Government funded protected areas under the National Reserve System (completed), Indigenous Protected Areas included in the NRS</li> <li>Area (ha) impacted / managed</li> </ul>	<p>Quantification of baseline and change in number of resource management plans completed or established.</p> <p>Data will be collected via interim progress (immediate outcomes) reporting.</p>	<p>31 July and 31 December, 2009-2013</p>	<p>Program Manager, Natural Diversity, WNRM</p> <p>Project Officers, WWF</p> <p>Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator, WNRM</p>	<p>19,513</p>

<b>Program MERI activities and budget</b>				
<p><i>Measure 3</i></p> <p><b>Pest Animal Control</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Area (ha) where pest animal control measurements implemented.</li> </ul> <p>(The biodiversity value of land being treated both before and after treatment is provided)</p>	<p>Quantification of baseline and change in size of area (ha) where rabbit control measures are implemented.</p> <p>Data will be collected via interim progress (immediate outcomes) reporting.</p>	<p>31 July and 31 December, 2009-2013</p>	<p>Program Manager, Natural Diversity, WNRM</p> <p>Project Officers, DEC</p> <p>Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator, WNRM</p>	<p>19,513</p>
<p><i>Measure 4*</i></p> <p><b>Conservation Status Trend of EPBC species</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Positive trend in conservation status of selected EPBC listed species. Actual species to be determined through project prioritisation process.</li> </ul> <p>(including # species, # populations, # ha – AG reporting requirement)</p> <p><i>*WNRM Specific Measure</i></p>	<p>Baseline and assessment of conservation trend following implementation of project activities.</p> <p>Monitoring frequency and methodology to be determined by Brett Beecham, Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC).</p>	<p>To be determined 2009-2013</p>	<p>Program Manager, Natural Diversity, WNRM</p> <p>Brett Beecham, DEC</p> <p>Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator, WNRM</p>	<p>23,513</p>
<p><i>Measure 5</i></p> <p><b>Monitoring Program:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of monitoring programs established</li> </ul>	<p>Quantification of baseline and change in the number of monitoring programs that have been established.</p> <p>Data will be collected via interim progress (immediate outcomes) reporting.</p>	<p>31 July and 31 December, 2009-2013</p>	<p>Program Manager, Natural Diversity, WNRM</p> <p>Project Officers, DEC and WWF</p> <p>Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator, WNRM</p>	<p>19,513</p>
<p><i>Measure 6</i></p> <p><b>Events/Displays</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of awareness-raising events or displays such as demonstrations, field days or study tours conducted, community volunteer days.</li> <li>Number of participants/groups involved or supported</li> </ul>	<p>Quantification of baseline and change in the number of awareness-raising events and/or displays, and the number of participants involved or supported.</p> <p>Data will be collected via interim progress (immediate outcomes) reporting.</p>	<p>31 July and 31 December, 2009-2013</p>	<p>Program Manager, Natural Diversity, WNRM</p> <p>Project Officers, WWF</p> <p>Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator, WNRM</p>	<p>17,513</p>

<b>Program MERI activities and budget</b>				
<p><i>Measure 7</i></p> <p><b>Partnerships / Community Groups:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of partnerships established, supported, contributed to</li> <li>Organisation type</li> </ul>	<p>Quantification of baseline and change in the number of partnerships and or community groups that have been established, supported or contributed to, and the type of organisation.</p> <p>Data will be collected via interim progress (immediate outcomes) reporting.</p>	<p>31 July and 31 December, 2009-2013</p>	<p>Program Manager, Natural Diversity, WNRM</p> <p>Project Officers, DEC and WWF</p> <p>Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator, WNRM</p>	<p>15,513</p>
<p><i>Measure 8</i></p> <p><b>Publications/Websites:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of written products such as brochures, newsletters, posters or fact sheets developed and websites developed or significantly enhanced.</li> <li>Number of people/groups targeted</li> </ul>	<p>Quantification of baseline and change in the number of partnerships that have been written products such as brochures, newsletters, posters, fact sheets and/or websites developed or significantly enhanced, together with the number of people and/or groups that have been targeted.</p> <p>Data will be collected via interim progress (immediate outcomes) reporting.</p>	<p>31 July and 31 December, 2009-2013</p>	<p>Program Manager, Natural Diversity, WNRM</p> <p>Project Officers, DEC and WWF</p> <p>Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator, WNRM</p>	<p>17,513</p>
<p><i>Measure 9</i></p> <p><b>Training Sessions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of training sessions, workshops, seminars or other skills and training events conducted.</li> <li>Number of participants/ groups involved or supported.</li> </ul>	<p>Quantification of baseline and change in the training sessions, workshops, seminars and other skills and training events conducted, together with the number of participants and/or groups involved or supported.</p> <p>Data will be collected via interim progress (immediate outcomes) reporting.</p>	<p>31 July and 31 December, 2009-2013</p>	<p>Program Manager, Natural Diversity, WNRM</p> <p>Project Officers, DEC and WWF</p> <p>Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator, WNRM</p>	<p>19,513</p>
<p><i>Measure 10*</i></p> <p><b>Knowledge, Skills and Engagement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of covenants established</li> <li>Current biodiversity conservation practice of land manager</li> </ul> <p><i>*WNRM specific measure</i></p>	<p>Baseline and change in knowledge, skills and engagement levels of project participants.</p> <p>Data will be collected via baseline and follow-up land manager surveys conducted by <i>Healthy Bushland Baselevel</i> project.</p>	<p>March to May 2010 (beginning of engagement process) and at end of management action</p>	<p>Program Manager, Natural Diversity, WNRM</p> <p>Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator, WNRM</p> <p>Program Manager, Sustainable Communities, WNRM</p> <p>Project Officers, WWF</p>	<p>23,513</p>

<b>Program MERI activities and budget</b>				
<b>Evaluation</b>				
<b>Key evaluation question</b>	<b>Methodology for addressing this question</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Cost \$</b>
<p><i>KEQ 1</i></p> <p>To what extent has the <i>National Reserve System and Conservation Biodiversity</i> program increased the area that is protected as part of the NRS in the Avon River Basin?</p>	<p>Analysis and annual review of baseline and change in Measures 1 and 2.</p> <p>All Key Evaluation Questions addressed in Final Program Report to Australian Government and Wheatbelt Natural Resource Management Inc. Evaluation Report (with Results Chart)</p>	<p>September 2010-2013</p>	<p>Program Manager, Natural Diversity, WNRM</p> <p>Project Team, WWF</p> <p>Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator, WNRM</p>	<p>11,227</p>
<p><i>KEQ 2</i></p> <p>To what extent has the <i>National Reserve System and Conservation Biodiversity</i> program improved regeneration and recovery of EPBC listed species?</p>	<p>Analysis and annual review of baseline and change in Measures 3, 4 and 5.</p> <p>All Key Evaluation Questions addressed in Final Program Report to Australian Government and Wheatbelt Natural Resource Management Inc. Evaluation Report (with Results Chart)</p>	<p>September 2010-2013</p>	<p>Program Manager, Natural Diversity, WNRM</p> <p>Project Teams, DEC and WWF</p> <p>Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator, WNRM</p>	<p>12,227</p>
<p><i>KEQ 3</i></p> <p>To what extent have land managers and farmers demonstrated an improvement in knowledge and skills in biodiversity conservation, as a result of participating in the <i>National Reserve System and Conservation Biodiversity</i> program?</p>	<p>Analysis and annual review of baseline and change in Measures 6-10.</p> <p>All Key Evaluation Questions addressed in Final Program Report to Australian Government and Wheatbelt Natural Resource Management Inc. Evaluation Report (with Results Chart).</p>	<p>September 2010-2013</p>	<p>Program Manager, Natural Diversity, WNRM</p> <p>Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator, WNRM</p> <p>Program Manager, Sustainable Communities, WNRM</p> <p>Communications Officer, WNRM</p> <p>Project Officers, WWF</p>	<p>12,227</p>
<p><i>KEQ 4</i></p> <p>In what ways and to what extent has the <i>National Reserve System and Conservation Biodiversity</i> program provided support to community groups to undertake local projects?</p>	<p>Analysis and annual review of baseline and change in Measures 1-3 and 6-10.</p> <p>All Key Evaluation Questions addressed in Final Program Report to Australian Government and Wheatbelt Natural Resource Management Inc. Evaluation Report (with Results Chart).</p>	<p>September 2010-2011</p>	<p>Program Manager, Natural Diversity, WNRM</p> <p>Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator, WNRM</p> <p>Program Manager, Sustainable Communities, WNRM</p>	<p>10,227</p>

<b>Program MERI activities and budget</b>				
			Communications Officer, WNRM Project Officers, WWF	
<i>KEQ 5</i> What, if any, unanticipated positive or negative changes or other outcomes have resulted?	Analysis and annual review of all data, including anecdotal evidence collected throughout the program.  All Key Evaluation Questions addressed in Final Program Report to Australian Government and Wheatbelt Natural Resource Management Inc. Evaluation Report (with Results Chart).	September 2010-2013	Program Manager, Natural Diversity, WNRM  Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator, WNRM  Project Officers, WWF and DEC	6,227
<i>KEQ 6</i> To what extent have the planned activities achieved? Why or why not?  What other activities/strategies that might be more effective?	Analysis and annual review of all data, including achievement against activity and milestones collected through program management records and reports.  All Key Evaluation Questions addressed in Final Program Report to Australian Government and Wheatbelt Natural Resource Management Inc. Evaluation Report (with Results Chart).	September 2010-2013	Program Manager, Natural Diversity, WNRM  Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator, WNRM	6,227
<i>KEQ 7</i> To what extent are the investment strategies proving useful in engaging and influencing the targeted stakeholders?	Analysis and annual review of baseline and change in Measures 1-3 and 6-10.  All Key Evaluation Questions addressed in Final Program Report to Australian Government and Wheatbelt Natural Resource Management Inc. Evaluation Report (with Results Chart).	September 2010-2013	Program Manager, Natural Diversity, WNRM  Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator, WNRM  Program Manager, Sustainable Communities, WNRM  Communications Officer, WNRM  Project Officers, WWF	9,227
<i>KEQ 8</i> To what extent has the program attained the highest value out of available resources? Why or why not?	Analysis of data sourced through all Key Evaluation Questions and associated measures and methodologies, program staff, program management records, Immediate Outcome Reporting and Project Status Reporting.  Data will be reviewed annually by program staff to determine the efficiency of program activities against outcomes achieved. Strategies for increased efficiencies will be identified and implemented in the next	September 2010-2013	Program Manager, Natural Diversity, WNRM  Operations Manager, WNRM  Chief Executive Officer, WNRM  Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator, WNRM	6,227

<b>Program MERI activities and budget</b>				
	round of program delivery. All Key Evaluation Questions addressed in Final AG Program Report and Wheatbelt Natural Resource Management Evaluation Report (with Results Chart).			
<b>Reporting</b>				
<b>Report</b>	<b>Information sources</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Cost \$</b>
Immediate Outcomes Report	Project Officers, WWF Project Officers, DEC Program Manager, Natural Diversity, WNRM Program Manager, Sustainable Communities, WNRM Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator	31 July, 31 December, 2009-2013	Program Manager, Natural Diversity, WNRM	18,453
Project Status Report	Project Team, WWF Project Team, DEC	Quarterly: March, June, September, December, 2009-2013	Project Team, WWF Project Team, DEC	36,906
Annual Results Chart	Immediate Outcome Reports Project Status Reports Program Management Records Program Staff Program Participants	September, 2010-2013	Program Manager, Natural Diversity, WNRM Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator, WNRM	10,635
Management Response Report	Results Chart	September, 2010-2013	Program Manager, Natural Diversity, WNRM Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator, WNRM	10,727

<b>Program MERI activities and budget</b>				
WNRM Program Evaluation Report (with Results Chart)	Results Charts 2010-2012 Immediate Outcome Reports Management Response Reports 2010-2012 Program Management Records Program Staff Program Participants	July, 2013	Program Manager, Natural Diversity, WNRM Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator, WNRM	10,819
<b>Improvement</b>				
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Methodology</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Cost \$</b>
<i>Activity 1</i> Annual Review	Review of all monitoring data, key evaluation questions, program management records and reports by program management staff.  Outcomes and lessons learnt captured in Results Chart, with recommendations for improvement and associated actions for adaptive management documented in Management Response Report.	September 2010-2012	Program Manager, Natural Diversity, WNRM Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator, WNRM	As above
<i>Activity 2</i> Management Response	Recommendations for Improvement documented in Management Response Report which is reviewed and shared with Wheatbelt Natural Resource Management Inc. team to determine how recommendations will be implemented and findings used, for adaptive management and communication of findings.	September 2010-2012	Program Manager, Natural Diversity, WNRM Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator, WNRM	As above
<i>Activity 3</i> Final Program Evaluation	Final analysis and review of overall program outcomes documented in WNRM Program Evaluation Report, which includes final results chart showing actual result versus expected result.	July, 2013	Program Manager, Natural Diversity, WNRM Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator, WNRM Program Manager, Sustainable Communities, WNRM	As above
<b>Total MERI cost</b>				<b>\$356,481</b>

## 2.7 Reports

The Australian Government (AG) reporting requirements and timeframes as specified in the funding agreement for this program.

Table 4 below sets out the Australian Government mandatory reporting requirements for the program together with program management reports required by the Wheatbelt Natural Resource Management Inc.

**Table 4: reporting requirements**

Type of report	Requirements	Recipient	Timeframe
<b>MANDATORY CARING FOR OUR COUNTRY REPORTS</b>			
Interim progress report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Results to date against targets using Caring for our Country reporting template</li> <li>▪ Summary of expenses</li> <li>▪ For the period July to 30 November of each year that the program is funded</li> </ul>	AG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 July – 30 November</li> <li>• With in 60 days of the 30 November for each year of the program</li> </ul>
Annual progress report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Results to date against targets using Caring for our Country reporting template</li> <li>▪ For the period December to 30 June of each year that the program is funded</li> <li>▪ Financial year funding acquittal for period July to June for each year that the program is funded</li> </ul>	AG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 December – 30 June</li> <li>• With in 60 days of the 30 June each year of the program</li> </ul>
Final program performance report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Final compilation and assessment of all the Program data/results (<i>May include information from mid-year reports, annual reports, and other research reports</i>)</li> <li>▪ Summative conclusion on achievements biophysical and /or social, cultural economic or environmental change that has occurred.</li> <li>▪ Final program financial acquittal for the whole of the programs life</li> </ul>	AG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 30 June</li> <li>• With in 60 days of the specified completion date for the program</li> </ul>
Milestone report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mandatory report specified against a milestone</li> </ul>	AG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ As specified in Deed of Agreement</li> </ul>

Type of report	Requirements	Recipient	Timeframe
<b>OTHER REPORTS</b>			
Immediate Outcomes Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Results to date of measures collected and reported by project delivery organisations and Wheatbelt Natural Resource Management Inc. program staff</li> </ul>	WNRM	31 July, 31 December 2009 - 2013
Project Status Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progress towards achievement of deliverables and activities for each 3 month period from project delivery organisations and Wheatbelt Natural Resource Management Inc. program staff, including budget status, and tracking and management of project issues and risks</li> </ul>	WNRM	Quarterly: March, June, September, December 2009-2013
Annual Results Chart	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report on outcomes to date of program and its contribution towards Caring for Our Country targets and Key Evaluation Questions.</li> <li>Includes recommendations for improvement and lessons learnt to date.</li> </ul>	WNRM	September 2010-2012
Management Response Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report on recommendations for improvement identified through annual review process, and having been documented in Annual Results Chart.</li> <li>Determines roles, responsibilities and processes for implementing findings or communicating results.</li> </ul>	WNRM	September 2010-2013
WNRM Program Evaluation Report (with Results Chart) Audio-visual and/or written	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report on overall outcome of program and contribution towards Caring for Our Country targets, and addresses key evaluation questions.</li> <li>Includes assessment of program management performance.</li> <li>Includes recommendations for improvement and lessons learnt.</li> </ul>	WNRM AG	End of Project: July 2013

### 3. Program Logic

Program Logic is a key element of an evaluation process as it shows a series of expected consequences, not just a series of events, at different outcomes levels within the logic. The program logic describes the relationships between activities and desired outcomes.

The overarching Caring for our Country MERI Strategy is underpinned by program logic, against which the key evaluation questions about the initiative can be clearly articulated. The outcomes range in type and timing from immediate through to longer-term outcomes, and build on foundations such as plans, frameworks, systems, and agreements for knowledge, communication and partnerships.

The Program logic for this MERI plan is included at Attachment 1.

### 3.1 Assumptions within the logic and managing risk

The hierarchy of the program logic (Attachment 1) and the rationale rest on some particular assumptions about how change will occur throughout the levels of outcomes over time.

Table 5 shows the assumptions made in developing the program logic. These assumptions will be tracked and tested throughout the life of the program, through the annual review process in the final Program Evaluation to ensure that the logic model is rigorous.

**Table 5: Managing risk**

Assumptions	Likelihood of assumption being wrong 1–5 (1 = rare, 5 = almost certain)	Consequences for longer-term outcomes if assumption is wrong 1–5 (1 = extreme, 5 = insignificant)	Key evidence to support this	Assumption will be tested
We assume that management activities will be required to protect bushland prioritised for inclusion in the NRS	2	4	Previous experience in bushland protection demonstrates that many remnants are impacted by livestock and weeds.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
We assume land managers will require support to undertake management activities	2	4	Previous experience in bushland protection demonstrates that land managers require encouragement through financial support and technical advice to undertake conservation activities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
We assume support for management activities will encourage land managers to commit to permanent protection of bushland through legal agreements	2	3	Previous experience in private protected areas has demonstrated that land managers require an incentive to sign up for permanent legal protection	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
We assume the WNRM developed strategic conservation plan will meet NRS standards for identifying bushland for inclusion in the NRS	2	2	The project brief and the criteria used in developing the strategic conservation plan was based on CAR criteria	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Assumptions	Likelihood of assumption being wrong 1–5 (1 = rare, 5 = almost certain)	Consequences for longer-term outcomes if assumption is wrong 1–5 (1 = extreme, 5 = insignificant)	Key evidence to support this	Assumption will be tested
We assume that other management activities will be required, apart from rabbit control, in order to support regeneration and recovery of threatened species	2	3	Previous experience demonstrates that if only one threat is addressed then it is likely that other threats will continue to impact on the species. In the Wheatbelt species are impacted by a number of threatening processes that require attention.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
We assume that training opportunities, knowledge building and other capacity building activities will provide land managers with the ability to undertake long term management of their bushland	3	2	Previous experience demonstrates that many land managers do not possess the technical expertise or confidence to recognise and address biodiversity conservation. Project involvement and training and capacity building builds knowledge and confidence for the land manager to continue on their own into the future	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
We assume general public awareness opportunities will improve the knowledge and acceptance in the community of legal protection methods and biodiversity conservation	3	4	General community knowledge and peer group knowledge are a major driver of land manager attitudes. Increased public awareness of biodiversity conservation can lead to greater public acceptance.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

## 4. Evaluation questions

Table 6 below illustrates the key evaluation questions and the other evaluation questions that relate to them.

*Key evaluation questions* are the high-level questions that the evaluation wants to answer in relation to the Caring for our Country targets.

*Other questions* are questions that are asked and for which data will be monitored to test the accuracy of program logic assumptions and measure the success of implementation strategies for the funded program activities.

The key evaluation questions will be addressed through evidence from various sources, such as:

- Reviews of existing data and program management strategies and processes.
- Mandatory program progress reports
- Internal Wheatbelt Natural Resource Management Inc. program management reports including Immediate Outcome Reports and Project Status Reports
- Biophysical monitoring
- Monitoring of social outcomes against levels of knowledge, skills and engagement, using qualitative methods such as one to one land manager interviews, case studies, event evaluation sheets and telephone and/or postal surveys.

Table 6 presents the data sources/evidence that will be gathered to address questions and the monitoring methods and frequencies.

All Key Evaluation Questions will be reviewed as part of the programs annual review process in November 2010 -2012. The final program evaluation will take place in July 2013.

Data will be sourced from land managers, program participants and staff to determine changes in levels of knowledge, skills and engagement/satisfaction of participating land managers. This data will be collected through surveys and interviews with analysis undertaken by Wheatbelt NRM staff.

Summarised quantitative and qualitative results will be recorded in the Results Chart which provides the framework for the programs annual review.

Each Delivery Organisation has a *Project Monitoring Plan* setting out individual data collection responsibilities. [Attachment 2 Program Monitoring Plan](#) provides a summary of information on all data collection methods and responsibilities.

**Table 6: Data sources and methods to address evaluation questions**

KEQs	Other-evaluation questions	Method	Frequency
<b>IMPACT</b>			
1. <b>To what extent has the <i>National Reserve System and Conservation Biodiversity</i> program increased the area that is protected as part of the NRS in the Avon River Basin?</b>	<p>How many land managers have adopted new conservation measures as part of the <i>National Reserve System and Conservation Biodiversity</i> program?</p> <p>What is the size of the area that has been managed for biodiversity conservation?</p> <p>How many resource management plans have been completed or established, and what size area is being managed under these plans?</p>	<p>The following data will be collected twice yearly by project delivery organisation staff and will be reported to the WNRM through Immediate Outcome Reporting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conservation Management (Measure 1)</li> <li>• Management Plans, Strategies and Arrangements (Measure 2)</li> </ul> <p>Data will be analysed by project delivery staff and WNRM staff and recorded in the Results Chart, which provides the framework for the annual review of outcomes against Caring for Our Country targets, Key Evaluation Questions, and includes recommendations for improvement and lessons learnt to date.</p>	<p>31 July, 31 December 2009-2010</p> <p>September 2010 – 2013</p>
2. <b>To what extent has the <i>National Reserve System and Conservation Biodiversity</i> program improved regeneration and recovery of EPBC listed species?</b>	<p>What is the area (ha) of native vegetation and habitat under improved management?</p> <p>What is the size of the area (ha) where rabbit control measures have been implemented?</p> <p>What are the EPBC listed species prioritized for management through this program, and how has the program contributed towards improving their regeneration and recovery?</p> <p>How many monitoring programs have been implemented?</p>	<p>The following data will be collected twice yearly by project delivery organisation staff and will be reported to the WNRM through Immediate Outcome Reporting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pest Animal Control (Measure 3)</li> <li>• Conservation Status Trend of EPBC Species (Measure 4)</li> <li>• Monitoring Programs (Measure 5)</li> </ul> <p>In addition, data will be collected through monitoring programs for status and trend of the EPBC listed species. Existing data on location and current conservation status will be used as a baseline to evaluate change in that status over the project life.</p> <p>Data will be analysed and reported by the DEC staff. Summarised data will be recorded in the Results Chart, which provides the framework for the annual review of outcomes against Caring for Our Country targets, Key Evaluation Questions, and includes recommendations for improvement and lessons learnt to date.</p>	<p>31 July, 31 December 2009-2010</p> <p>September 2010 – 2013</p>

KEQs	Other-evaluation questions	Method	Frequency
<p>3. <b>To what extent have land managers and farmers demonstrated an improvement in knowledge and skills in biodiversity conservation, as a result of participating in the National Reserve System and Conservation Biodiversity program?</b></p>	<p>What kinds of conservation measures are land managers / and or community groups using to protect and improve biodiversity conservation?</p> <p>Have land managers levels of knowledge, skills and engagement increased as a result of participating in the program? Why or why not?</p>	<p>The following data will be collected twice yearly by project delivery organisation staff and will be reported to the WNRM through Immediate Outcome Reporting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge, skills and engagement (Measure 10)</li> </ul> <p>Data collected via Key Evaluation Questions 1 and 2 will also be used to address this question.</p> <p>Data will be collected by Healthy Bushland Baselevel project staff using a baseline and follow-up survey. Analysis will be undertaken by the Wheatbelt NRM Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator and Sustainable Communities Program Manager.</p> <p>Outcomes will be recorded in the Results Chart which provides the framework for the annual review of outcomes against Caring for Our Country targets, Key Evaluation Questions, and includes recommendations for improvement and lessons learnt to date.</p>	<p>31 July, 31 December 2009-2010</p> <p>September 2010 – 2013</p>
<p>4. <b>In what ways and to what extent has the National Reserve System and Conservation Biodiversity program provided support to community groups to undertake local projects?</b></p>	<p>How many and what kinds of awareness raising events and displays were conducted?</p> <p>How many training sessions and workshops were conducted?</p> <p>How many land managers participated in these events?</p> <p>What kinds of conservation measures are land managers and/or community groups using to protect and improve biodiversity conservation?</p> <p>How many and what kind of partnerships have been established, supported or contributed to?</p> <p>How many brochures, newsletters, posters, fact sheets or websites have been developed? How many people were these targeted at?</p>	<p>The following data will be collected twice yearly by project delivery organisation staff and will be reported to the WNRM through Immediate Outcome Reporting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Events/Displays (Measure 6)</li> <li>• Partnerships / Community Groups (Measure 7)</li> <li>• Publications / Websites (Measure 8)</li> <li>• Training Sessions (Measure 9)</li> </ul> <p>Social information will be collected and analysed as described in Key Evaluation Question 3.</p> <p>Data will be analysed by WNRM program staff and recorded in the Results Chart, which provides the framework for the annual review of outcomes against Caring for Our Country targets, Key Evaluation Questions, and includes recommendations for improvement and lessons learnt to date.</p>	<p>31 July, 31 December 2009-2010</p> <p>September 2010 – 2013</p>

KEQs	Other-evaluation questions	Method	Frequency
5. <b>What, if any, unanticipated positive or negative changes or other outcomes have resulted?</b>	As a result of being involved in the program, did land managers experience anything they did not expect, either positive or negative? What impact did this have?	Data will be sourced via project delivery organisations and WNRM program staff and will be reported to the WNRM through Immediate Outcome Reporting.  Data will be analysed by WNRM program staff and recorded in the Results Chart, which provides the framework for the annual review of outcomes against Caring for Our Country targets, Key Evaluation Questions, and includes recommendations for improvement and lessons learnt to date.	31 July, 31 December 2009-2013  September 2010 – 2013
<b>EFFECTIVENESS</b>			
6. <b>To what extent have the planned activities been achieved? Why or why not?</b>	Have the project delivery organisations, WWF and DEC, effectively implemented the agreed activities and deliverables? Why or why not?  Has the program delivered the expected activities and milestones in the agreed timeframes? Why or why not?  What is working well? Why?  What isn't working well? Why not?  What other activities or strategies might be more effective?	Data will be sourced via program management records and project status reports and through the collection of Immediate Outcome Reporting. Project Status Reports track progress towards deliverables throughout the year, and identify any risks or issues associated with expected delivery. This facilitates early intervention and adaptive management requirements.  Comparison of expected versus actual activity and milestone delivery will also be reviewed as part of the annual review process, with Results recorded in the Results Chart. This provides the framework for the annual review of outcomes against Caring for Our Country targets, Key Evaluation Questions, and includes recommendations for improvement and lessons learnt to date.	31 July, 31 December 2009-2013  September 2010 – 2013
<b>APPROPRIATENESS</b>			
7. <b>To what extent are the investment strategies proving useful in engaging and influencing the targeted stakeholders?</b>	Are the engagement strategies being used the most appropriate way of encouraging land managers to become involved in practices to protect biodiversity conservation? Why or why not?  Are there other strategies that would produce a better result, in encouraging land managers to adopt biodiversity conservation	Data will be sourced through Key Evaluation Questions 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6, and associated measures and methods.  The annual review process will determine the effectiveness and appropriateness of engagement strategies and identify any improvements.	31 July, 31 December 2009-2013  September 2010 – 2013

KEQs	Other-evaluation questions	Method	Frequency
	<p>practices?</p> <p>Were the events, workshops and training sessions structured and delivered in a way that is appropriate to the needs of the land holders? How could they be improved?</p>	<p>Quantitative and qualitative results will be recorded in the Results Chart, which provides the framework for the annual review of outcomes against Caring for Our Country targets, Key Evaluation Questions, and includes recommendations for improvement and lessons learnt to date.</p>	
<b>EFFICIENCY</b>			
<p>8. <b>To what extent has the program attained the highest value out of available resources? Why or why not?</b></p>	<p>Did the program use the resources in the most efficient way possible, and at the same time maintain the required level of professionalism and quality?</p>	<p>Analysis of data sourced through all Key Evaluation Questions and associated measures and methodologies, program staff, program management records, Immediate Outcome Reporting and Project Status and Financial Reports and Audits.</p> <p>Data will be analysed by WNRM staff and recorded in the Results Chart, which provides the framework for the annual review of outcomes against Caring for Our Country targets, Key Evaluation Questions, and includes recommendations for improvement and lessons learnt to date.</p>	<p>31 July, 31 December 2009-2013</p> <p>September 2010 – 2013</p>

## 5. Improvement

### 5.1 Reviewing the MERI plan

Regular reflection on data, strategies, management processes and progress informs an adaptive management approach for continuous quality improvement of the program.

Table 7 provides a model for the review of the MERI plan, associated program logic(s) and for recording changes to achieve improvements in program implementation.

**Table 7 MERI Plan Review Schedule**

Date	Participants	Type of review	Resources/materials required	Agreed adaptive management strategy	Communicate results
Sept 2010 - 2013	Program Manager, Natural Diversity, WNRM Program Manager, Sustainable Communities, WNRM Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator, WNRM Operations Manager, WNRM Communications Officer, WNRM Project Staff, Delivery Organisations Project Staff, DEC	Annual Review	Interim Progress Reports Annual Review Report Program MERI Plan Program Management Plan Results Chart Community Engagement and Communications Plan Most Significant Change stories and Case Studies	Program performance will be monitored through the WNRM program management process and project status reports. Data collected will be analysed by project delivery organisation and WNRM staff and recorded in the Results Chart. The Results Chart will be used to provide a framework for the annual review process, showing results to date against the Caring for Our Country targets and the programs key evaluation questions. This process is coordinated by the Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator, WNRM	Lessons learned and recommendations for improvement (and associated implementation decisions) are communicated as appropriate to WNRM staff, project delivery staff, the wider community and natural resource management stakeholders. This process is coordinated by the WNRM Program Manager and the Communications Officer.

Date	Participants	Type of review	Resources/materials required	Agreed adaptive management strategy	Communicate results
Sept 2010 - 2013	Program Manager, Natural Diversity, WNRM Program Manager, Sustainable Communities, WNRM Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator, WNRM Operations Manager, WNRM Communications Officer, WNRM	Management Response	Results Chart (updated with recommendations for improvement and lessons learnt, following outcomes of annual review process)	<p>Recommendations for improvement and lessons learned that were identified as part of the annual review process are documented in the <i>Management Response Report</i>.</p> <p>Participants review the recommendations and use the report to record the feasibility, roles, responsibilities, timeframes and resources required to implement the recommendations. Actions arising from this session are then tracked in fortnightly staff meetings to ensure that results of are used in the adaptive management cycle.</p> <p>This process is coordinated by the Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator, WNRM</p>	<p>Lessons learned and recommendations for improvement (and associated implementation decisions) are communicated as appropriate to Wheatbelt Natural Resource Management staff, project delivery staff, the wider community and natural resource management stakeholders.</p> <p>This process is coordinated by the Program Manager and the Communications Officer.</p>
July 2013	Program Manager, Natural Diversity, WNRM Program Manager, Sustainable Communities, WNRM Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator, WNRM Operations Manager, WNRM Communications Officer, WNRM Project Staff, WWF and DEC	End of Program Review	Interim Progress Reports Annual Review Reports Program MERI Plan Program Management Plan Community Engagement and Communications Plan Results Chart and Management Response Reports Technical reports	Management Response process (as above) used to feedback into the next program planning phase.	<p>Key outcomes will be communicated via the Program Communications team to appropriate stakeholders as outlined in the Community Engagement Strategy.</p> <p>The WNRM Final Program Evaluation Report will be available in both audio-visual and written format, and will be re-packaged and communicated as appropriate to add value to the evaluation products delivered as part of the MERI process.</p>

## 5.2 The feedback cycle

The feedback cycle is facilitated through the annual review and management response process, as outlined in Table 7 (MERI Plan Review Schedule). Any improvements identified will be reflected through revisions to the Program Management Plan and associated work breakdown structures, the MERI Plan and the Community Engagement and Communications Plan. The WNRM program management methodology underpins the MERI process to ensure the timely and effective communication of adaptations to project staff to ensure delivery of project adaptations and inform staff of program delivery status.

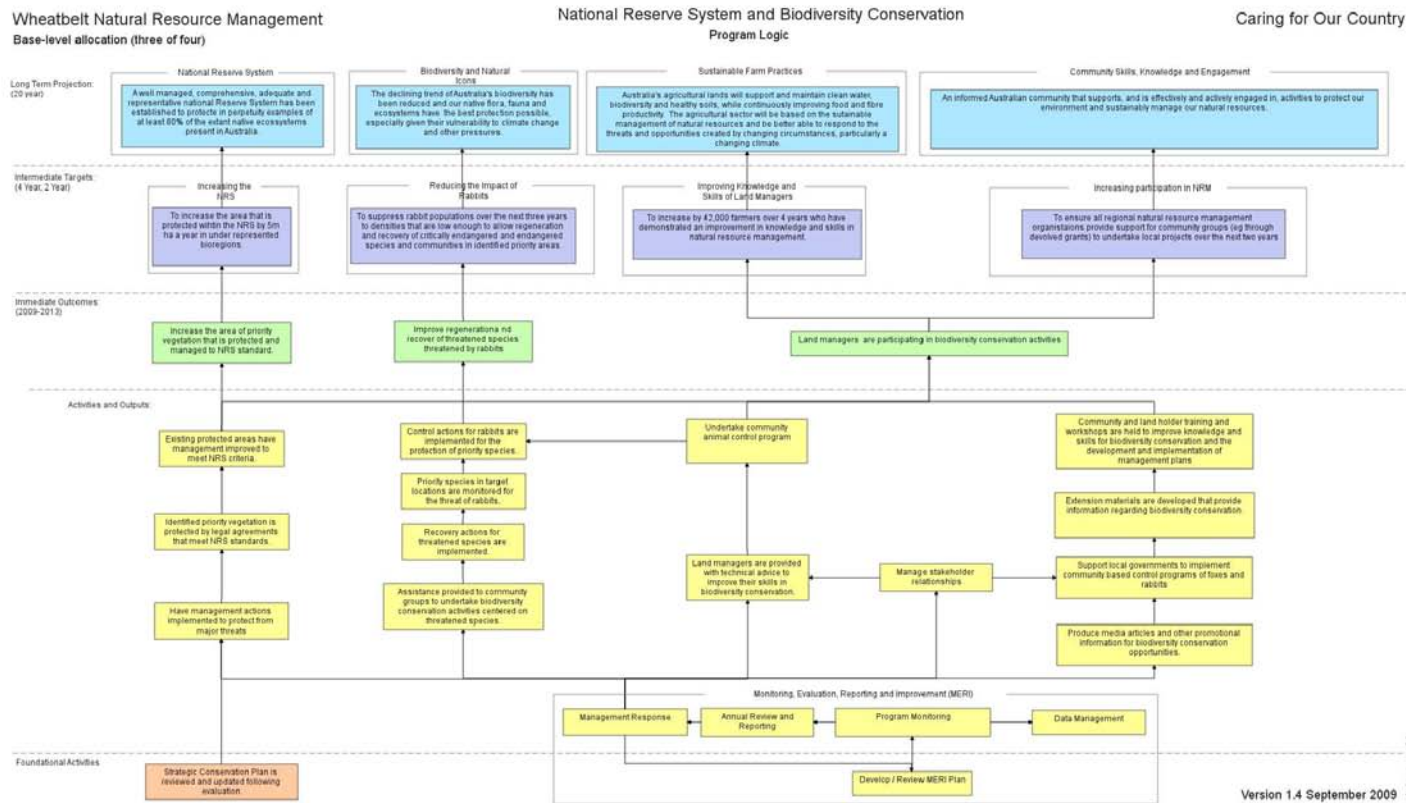
## 5.3 Communicating results

Key messages and outcomes resulting from the evaluation process will be communicated to the following key stakeholders:

- Australian Government
  - Ann Connelly, Assistant Director, WA Team, Australian Government Land and Coasts
  - Drue Edwards, Director, Program Performance, Australian Government Land and Coasts
  - NRS Unit, Australian Government
- Western Australian Government
  - John Holley, Acting Director, State NRM Office, Government of Western Australia
- Participant landholders
- WA general community members

Using the Programs *Community Engagement and Communications Plan*, the WNRM Communications Team will repackage and communicate evaluation outcomes in appropriate formats to these key stakeholders. A variety of mediums will be used including written and/or audio-visual (DVDs), websites, newsletters and through verbal delivery of key messages at targeted events such as partner and community meetings, and field days.

# Attachment 1: Program Logic



## Attachment 2: Program Monitoring Plan

CARING FOR OUR COUNTRY TARGET	KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS	OTHER QUESTIONS	UNIT OF MEASURE	METHOD	FREQUENCY OF COLLECTION
<p><b>Increasing the National Reserve System:</b> To increase the area that is protected within the National Reserve System by 5 million hectares a year in under represented bioregions, including areas that will contribute to the conservation of matters of national environmental significance.</p>	<p>To what extent has the <i>National Reserve System and Conservation Biodiversity</i> program increased the area that is protected as part of the NRS in the Avon River Basin?</p>	How many land managers have adopted new conservation measures as part of the <i>National Reserve System and Conservation Biodiversity</i> program?	# land managers in negation/implementing covenants	Immediate Outcomes Measures Monitoring collected through <i>Healthy Bushland Baselevel</i> Project (Rebecca Palumbo).	31 July, 31 December 2010 - 2013
		What is the size of the area that has been managed for biodiversity conservation?	Area (ha) under covenant	Immediate Outcomes Measures Monitoring collected through <i>Healthy Bushland Baselevel</i> Project (Rebecca Palumbo).	31 July, 31 December 2010 - 2013
		How many resource management plans have been completed or established, and what size area is being managed under these plans?	# management plans Area (ha) under improved management	Immediate Outcomes Measures Monitoring collected through <i>Healthy Bushland Baselevel</i> Project (Rebecca Palumbo).	31 July, 31 December 2010 - 2013
<p><b>Reducing the Impact of Rabbits:</b> To suppress rabbit populations over the next three years to densities that are low enough to allow regeneration and recovery of critically endangered and endangered species and communities in identified priority areas.</p>	<p>To what extent has the <i>National Reserve System and Conservation Biodiversity</i> program improved regeneration and recovery of EPBC listed species?</p>	What is the area (ha) of native vegetation and habitat under improved management?	Area (ha) of impact	Immediate Outcomes Measures Monitoring collected through <i>Rabbits and Resource Assessment Baselevel</i> Project (Brett Beecham, DEC) and submitted to Wheatbelt NRM.	31 July, 31 December 2010 - 2013
		What is the size of the area (ha) where rabbit control measures have been implemented?	Area (ha) under rabbit control	Immediate Outcomes Measures Monitoring collected through <i>Rabbits and Resource Assessment Baselevel</i> Project (Brett Beecham, DEC) and submitted to Wheatbelt NRM.	31 July, 31 December 2010 - 2013
		What are the EPBC listed species prioritized for management through this program, and how has the program contributed towards improving their regeneration and recovery?	Level of improvement EPBC listed species, (including # species, #populations, # ha)	Monitoring methodology to be decided <i>Rabbits and Resource Assessment Baselevel</i> Project team (Brett Beecham, DEC). Results submitted to Wheatbelt NRM in technical report. Data Management Plans, Metadata Statements and Data Dictionary required for submission to WNRM. Templates available at <a href="http://www.wheatbeltnrm.org.au/monitoringandevaluation/datam">http://www.wheatbeltnrm.org.au/monitoringandevaluation/datam</a>	To be determined
		How many monitoring programs have been implemented?	# Monitoring Programs	Immediate Outcomes Measures Monitoring collected through <i>Rabbits and Resource Assessment Baselevel</i> Project (Brett Beecham, DEC) and submitted to Wheatbelt NRM.	31 July, 31 December 2010 - 2013
<p><b>Improving Knowledge and Skills of Land Managers:</b> To increase by 42 000 land managers and farmers over four years who have demonstrated an improvement in knowledge and skills in natural resource management.</p>	<p>To what extent have land managers and farmers demonstrated an improvement in knowledge and skills in biodiversity conservation, as a result of participating in the <i>National Reserve System and Conservation Biodiversity</i> program?</p>	What kinds of conservation measures are land managers and/or community groups using to protect and improve biodiversity conservation?	Current Practice Area (ha) protected Length (kms) fencing	<i>Land Manager Survey</i> undertaken at beginning of engagement, and at end of management action. Survey to be completed by project staff following discussions with land managers. <i>Immediate Outcomes Measures</i> Monitoring collected through <i>Healthy Bushland Baselevel</i> project	March – May 2010 and end of mgt action 31 July, 31 December 2010 - 2013
		Have land managers levels of knowledge, skills and engagement increased as a result of participating in the program? Why or why not?	Current Practice # Covenants Increase in knowledge	<i>Land Manager Survey</i> (for current practice and increase in knowledge) undertaken at beginning of engagement, and at end of management action. Survey to be completed by project staff following discussions with land managers. <i>Event Evaluation</i> forms (after each event), available online at	March – May 2010 and end of mgt action 31 July, 31 December 2010 -

CARING FOR OUR COUNTRY TARGET	KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS	OTHER QUESTIONS	UNIT OF MEASURE	METHOD	FREQUENCY OF COLLECTION
				<a href="http://www.wheatbeltnrm.org.au/monitoringandevaluation/document/EventEvaluation">http://www.wheatbeltnrm.org.au/monitoringandevaluation/document/EventEvaluation</a>	2013
<b>Increasing Participation in Natural Resource Management:</b> To ensure all regional NRM organisations provide support for community groups (e.g. through devolved grants) to undertake local projects over the next 2 years	In what ways and to what extent has the <i>National Reserve System and Conservation Biodiversity program</i> provided support to community groups to undertake local projects?	How many and what kinds of awareness raising events and displays were conducted?	# awareness raising events	<i>Immediate Outcomes Measures</i> Monitoring collected through projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o <i>Healthy Bushland Baselevel</i></li> <li>o <i>Rabbits and Resource Assessment Baselevel</i></li> <li>o <i>Red Card</i></li> </ul>	31 July, 31 December 2010 – 2013
		How many training sessions and workshops were conducted?	# training sessions/workshops	<i>Immediate Outcomes Measures</i> Monitoring collected through projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o <i>Healthy Bushland Baselevel</i></li> <li>o <i>Rabbits and Resource Assessment Baselevel</i></li> <li>o <i>Red Card</i></li> </ul>	31 July, 31 December 2010 – 2013
		How many land managers participated in these events?  How satisfied were the land managers with these events? Why or why not?	# participants  Level of satisfaction	<i>Immediate Outcomes Measures</i> Monitoring collected through projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o <i>Healthy Bushland Baselevel</i></li> <li>o <i>Rabbits and Resource Assessment Baselevel</i></li> <li>o <i>Red Card</i></li> </ul> <a href="#">Event Evaluation</a> form (after each event)	31 July, 31 December 2010 – 2013  After each event
		How many and what kind of partnerships have been established, supported or contributed to?	# and type of community organisation/partnership	<i>Immediate Outcomes Measures</i> Monitoring collected through projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o <i>Healthy Bushland Baselevel</i></li> <li>o <i>Rabbits and Resource Assessment Baselevel</i></li> <li>o <i>Red Card</i></li> </ul>	31 July, 31 December 2010 – 2013
		How many brochures, newsletters, posters, fact sheets or websites have been developed? How many people were these targeted at?	# brochures, newsletters, posters, fact sheets, websites	<i>Immediate Outcomes Measures</i> Monitoring collected through projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o <i>Healthy Bushland Baselevel</i></li> <li>o <i>Rabbits and Resource Assessment Baselevel</i></li> <li>o <i>Red Card</i></li> </ul>	31 July, 31 December 2010 – 2013
<b>All Targets</b>	What, if any, unanticipated positive or negative changes or other outcomes have resulted?	As a result of being involved in the program, did land managers experience anything they did not expect, either positive or negative? What impact did this have?	+ or – changes/outcomes	Data collected by all Delivery Organisations and WRNM through <i>Immediate Outcomes Measures</i> Spreadsheet and <i>Land Manager Survey</i>	31 July, 31 December 2010 – 2013
<b>All Targets</b>	To what extent have the planned activities and milestones been achieved? Why or why not?  What other activities/strategies that might be more effective?	Have the project delivery organisations effectively implemented the agreed activities and deliverables? Why or why not?  Has the program delivered the expected activities and milestones in the agreed	% complete Milestone/activity  Participant satisfaction levels  Increase in knowledge of participants	Data collected by all Delivery Organisations and WRNM through <i>Event Evaluation</i> forms, <i>Land Manager Survey</i> , program records and project staff.	Throughout program 2009-2013

CARING FOR OUR COUNTRY TARGET	KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS	OTHER QUESTIONS	UNIT OF MEASURE	METHOD	FREQUENCY OF COLLECTION
		timeframes? Why or why not? What is working well? Why? What isn't working well? Why not? What other activities or strategies might be more effective?	Lessons Learned  Adaptive Management & Improvement	Lessons Learned and Improvement Strategy captured through <i>Immediate Outcomes Measures Monitoring</i>	31 July, 31 December
<b>All Targets</b>	To what extent has the investment approach proved useful in engaging and influencing the targeted stakeholders?	Are the engagement strategies being used the most appropriate way of encouraging land managers to become involved in practices to protect biodiversity conservation? Why or why not?  Are there other strategies that would produce a better result, in encouraging land managers to adopt biodiversity conservation practices?  Were the events, workshops and training sessions structured and delivered in a way that is appropriate to the needs of the land holders? How could they be improved?	Participant satisfaction levels  Increase in knowledge of participants  Lessons Learned Adaptive Management & Improvement  Participant satisfaction levels	Data collected via <i>Event Satisfaction Forms, Land Manager Surveys</i> and project staff.  Lessons Learned and Improvement Strategy captured through <i>Immediate Outcomes Measures Monitoring</i> .	Throughout program 2009-2013  31 July, 31 December
<b>All Targets</b>	To what extent has the program attained the highest value out of available resources? Why or why not?	Did the program use the resources in the most efficient way possible, and at the same time maintain the required level of professionalism and quality?	Overall program achievement and expenditure	Data collected via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All other measures</li> <li>Program and project staff</li> <li>Program management records</li> <li>Immediate Outcomes Measures</li> <li>Project Status reports</li> <li>Financial reports and audits.</li> </ul>	Throughout program 2009-2013

### Data Collection Surveys and Forms

The following survey's and forms for data collection have been developed and produced by WNRN and should be used by project staff to collect/record the required information.

- NRS Land Manager Survey:** Data collected from land managers prior to, and at end of management action and forwarded to Wheatbelt NRM for analysis.
- Event Evaluation Form:** Collected after each event (seminar, training session, workshop etc) by facilitator. Please allow 10 minutes at the end of each session to enable participants to complete the process. The *Turning Point Audience Response System* can also be used as an alternative to paper based forms, and to feedback results immediately to participants and facilitators. Forms available at <http://www.avonnrm.org.au/monitoringandevaluation/document/EventEvaluation>.
- Immediate Outcomes Measures Monitoring Spreadsheet:** Completed by project coordinators and submitted to Wheatbelt NRM at end of each reporting period (due on 31 July and 31 December each year). It may be useful to record this information throughout the year as it becomes available.

These documents must be returned to WNRN for analysis.