



NRM WA

Partnering for Prosperity

NRMWA – Restoring a Strategic Partnership for WA's Prosperity

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Partnering for Prosperity

NRMWA – Restoring a Strategic Partnership for WA’s Prosperity

Western Australia’s historic and future prosperity is fundamentally tied to the health of its natural assets. For over 25 years, the Regional Natural Resource Management (NRM) network, represented by NRMWA, has established itself as WA’s primary partnership-focused environmental delivery partner. We are a unique alliance of scientific expertise, deep regional relationships, and trusted capability, operating right across our vast State. Our network co-designs solutions with Traditional Owners, landholders, local governments and industry to deliver tangible, on-ground action.

WA’s NRM organisations are independent, ACNC-registered not-for-profits, governed by skilled Boards with strong oversight and financial accountability. We are established Commonwealth Regional Delivery Partners, have delivered over \$700M in regional projects and we are prepared to scale this model for greater biodiversity outcomes in WA. We are not a lobby group; we are a design and implementation engine for environmental good.

The Investment Imperative: A Legacy of Success, a Need for Reinvestment

Western Australia accounts for one-third of Australia’s landmass, yet our NRM network now operates with only a fraction of the strategic investment it once received. Under the former Carpenter Government, bilateral arrangements directed approximately \$100 million per annum (over \$160 million today) into WA’s regional NRM organisations. That investment was discontinued during the Barnett Government and has never been reinstated.

WA is now the only State in Australia that does not provide core, sustaining funding to Regional NRM organisations. Without co-investment, the State has limited leverage with the Commonwealth and minimal influence over where and how national funds are allocated in WA. This gap constrains our collective ability to align long-term investment with State Government priorities and deliver integrated outcomes.



Why NRM WA?

WA’s trusted NRM network: Deep local knowledge, proven delivery, and sector-wide reach

Strategic solutions: Designed for compliance, transparency, and long-term success

Partnership-first: Embedding Traditional Owner outcomes and stakeholder collaboration at every stage

Future-focused: Ready to support WA’s transition to a sustainable, climate-resilient, and nature-positive future



Executive Summary

A Two-Pronged Investment for a Resilient WA

This submission outlines a strategic investment to reinvigorate this proven delivery model to de-risk WA's economic pipeline, safeguard our natural assets, and build community resilience.

Our proposal is a two-pronged partnership:

- 1. Targeted Program Fund:** A suite of initiatives to deliver high-impact outcomes, including:
 - **De-risking Development:** Accelerating Strategic Industrial Area approvals and positioning WA as a leader in nature markets
 - **Safeguarding Environmental Assets:** Establishing statewide monitoring of threatened ecosystems, expanding conservation on private land, and accelerating mine rehabilitation
 - **Building Resilience:** Empowering communities with locally-led climate adaptation, protecting coastlines, and securing a unified emergency response plan for natural assets
- 2. Securing Core Delivery Capacity:** A foundational investment to enable strategic alignment with state priorities, unlock Commonwealth and private funding, stimulate regional jobs, and maintain standing capacity for environmental response.

This partnership is a strategic down-payment on WA's future, leveraging our established network for maximum return. Detailed business cases for each initiative are available upon request.



TEC Partnership Program: Closing WA's Threatened Ecosystem Monitoring Gap

A recent Auditor General's report highlighted a critical gap in WA's environmental management: while 72% of the State's Threatened Ecological Communities (TECs) occur on non-DBCA lands, there is no coordinated monitoring to assess their status or guide recovery. Remedying this provides a significant opportunity to safeguard WA's most vulnerable ecosystems through partnerships with the landholders who manage them daily.

The Solution

A Unified, Scientifically Rigorous Partnership

A partnership between the State and the NRMWA to develop WA's first statewide, tenure-blind TEC assessment and monitoring system. Embedded peer review ensures data quality before entry into DBCA's Boranga system. This partnership aims to improve TEC outcomes by turning reliable data into focused conservation actions and stewardship agreements.

Proof of Concept

NRMWA's network possesses proven capability, a statewide WA Environmental Dashboard and ongoing TEC projects. These projects include landscape scale assessments, collaborative actions with Aboriginal Rangers and landholders, and standardised national monitoring data for the CSIRO, showcasing our capacity to unify data and transform it into targeted on-ground conservation.

Measuring Success



This investment closes a critical accountability gap, ensuring WA's most vulnerable ecosystems are monitored, managed and improved through a partnership combining local knowledge, rigorous science and government leadership, while informing the SIA strategic offset planning

The Ask

\$12 million* over 3 years to deliver:

- ✔ Statewide program coordination and integrated data management
- ✔ Regional NRM field teams for scientific assessments and landholder engagement
- ✔ Training and equipment for consistent, safe monitoring operations

*All pricing is indicative and subject to final scope and specifications of the project





Private Land Conservation Program: Unlocking Private Land for Public Good

There is a significant opportunity to expand conservation outcomes on private and pastoral lands which contain a substantial portion of our state's natural heritage. Through a public-private partnership, we can secure high-value conservation areas at a fraction of the cost of public acquisition.

The Solution

This program provides long term protection to critical remnant ecological communities. By partnering to reinvigorate Conservation Covenants and Land for Wildlife initiatives and leverage our established landholder networks, we will secure high-value conservation areas at a fraction of the cost of public acquisition. This model leverages private landholder investment in stewardship, while simultaneously building the foundation WA needs to participate in the Commonwealth's Nature Repair Market.

Proof of Concept

Queensland's nature refuges now account for one-third of that state's protected area estate, demonstrating the model's success. Here in WA, NRM organisations have proven landholder relationships and a 2016 partnership agreement (never implemented) that established an example framework for Land for Wildlife delivery.

Measuring Success

 <p>OUTPUT</p> <p>Thousands of hectares of underrepresented ecological communities protected under conservation agreements with management plans</p>	 <p>OUTCOME</p> <p>Increased WA landmass under protection and managed for conservation, tracked via a public dashboard for transparency</p>	 <p>IMPACT</p> <p>New pathways for private investment in conservation through emerging markets</p>
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This investment delivers on the Native Vegetation Policy and supports Australia's 30x30 conservation target and seeks to leverage the \$250 million Saving Australia's Bushland Program, expanding WA's conservation estate while creating new economic opportunities for landholders.

The Ask

\$8 million* over 4 years to deliver:

- ✔ Identification and engagement of landholders seeking conservation mechanisms
- ✔ Voluntary agreements with tailored conservation management plans
- ✔ Targeted covenant program in strategic high-value areas
- ✔ Support for landholders to undertake conservation works

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WA Natural Capital Initiative: Unlocking Private Investment for WA's Landscapes

Western Australia is falling behind in the multi-billion-dollar natural capital market. While states like Queensland have invested \$500 million into their Land Restoration Fund, WA's participation remains limited. This competitive disadvantage is compounded because national methodologies fail to account for WA's unique ecosystems such as northern savannas, central rangelands, and southern agricultural systems, locking out our landholders, Traditional Owners and regional communities from new nature repair markets.

The Solution

The WA Natural Capital Initiative is a strategic intervention to position our state as a competitive destination for environmental investment. By leveraging the NRM network's established role as a trusted broker, this initiative develops and pilots practical, WA-specific methodologies. This will create the evidence base needed to unlock private investment for biodiversity enhancement, carbon sequestration, and climate-resilient landscapes.

Proof of Concept

The model is proven at scale by Queensland's \$500 million Fund. Here in WA, our regional NRM organisations have already built implementation ready coalitions with landholders, Traditional Owners, and industry. We have a proven track record of delivering complex, multi stakeholder projects, ensuring this initiative delivers rapid, tangible results.

Measuring Success



This investment is a critical step to position WA as a leader in the nature-based economy. It directly supports Diversify WA and WA Climate Policy goals, creating new economic opportunities while building the resilient landscapes that underpin our state's future prosperity.

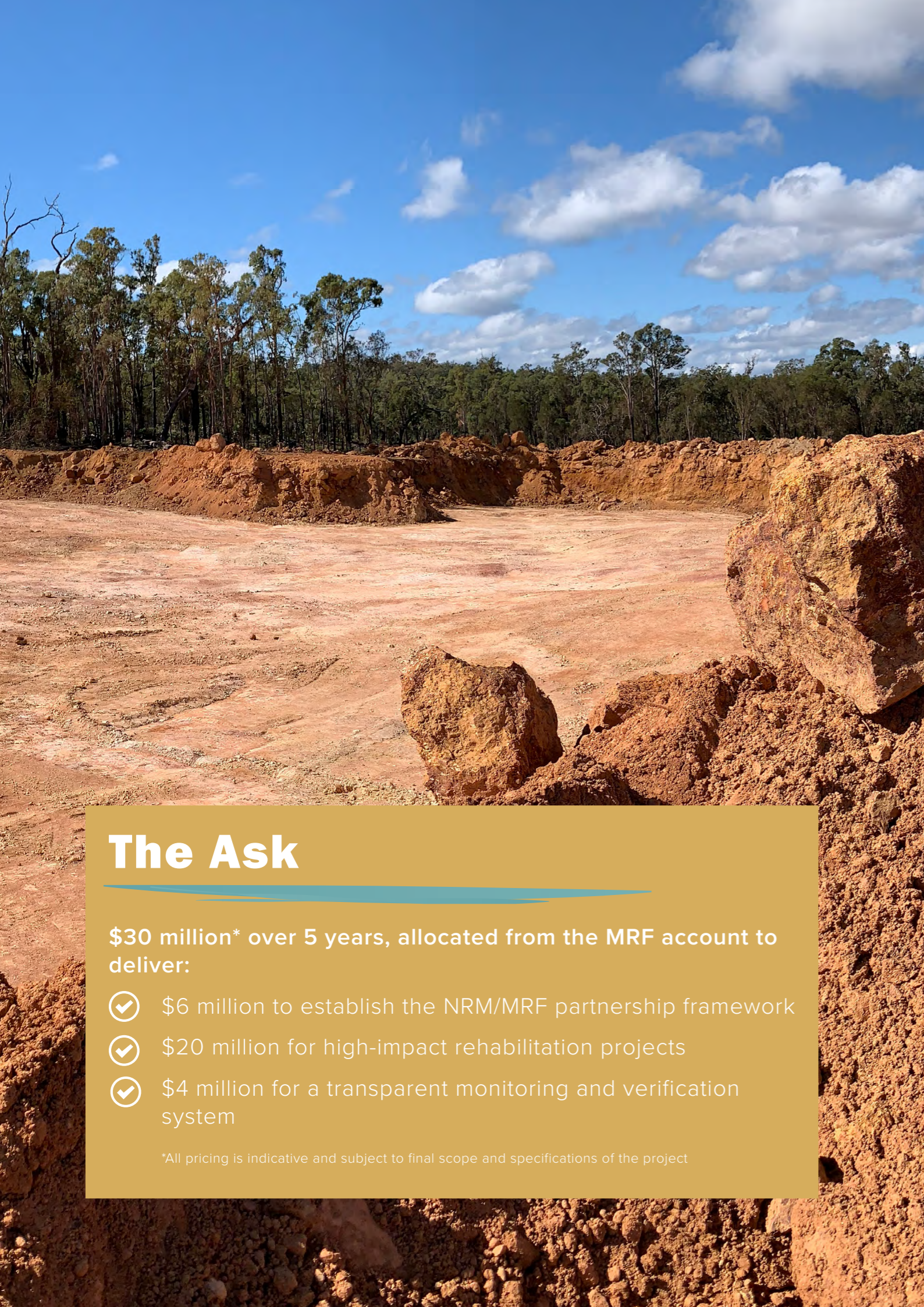
The Ask

\$15 million* over 3 years to deliver:

- ✓ WA specific methodologies tailored to our key regions and tenures
- ✓ On ground pilot projects that de risk future investment and demonstrate readiness
- ✓ A pipeline of opportunity, mobilising over \$5 million in private investment and bringing 50,000+ hectares under new stewardship within three years

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MRF Partnership Program: Accelerating Mine Rehabilitation Across WA

Western Australia's Mining Rehabilitation Fund (MRF) is projected to hold more than \$378 million by 2026/27, with annual inflows of \$47 million, yet public confidence is eroding due to slow on-ground expenditure and limited visibility of outcomes. A recent review confirms these concerns, calling for greater tangible, on-ground rehabilitation and the strategic use of a portion of MRF monies for regional-scale projects. This partnership directly addresses those recommendations, transforming a dormant financial holding into a visible, high-impact program.

The Solution

Integrating NRMWA's regional network into the MRF framework will help shift the fund from being compliance-focused, to value-driven rehabilitation. NRMWA's regional network brings local knowledge, scientific rigour and community trust. We will deliver strategic alignment with ecological priorities, evidence-based project design and transparent monitoring through a digital Monitoring, Reporting, Verification (MRV) platform. Co-design with Traditional Owners and local communities will ensure rehabilitation delivers cultural, environmental and economic benefits.

Proof of Concept

NRMWA has 25+ years of experience in large-scale restoration across all land tenures. Similar models in Queensland and Victoria demonstrate success in linking rehabilitation with regional planning and natural capital frameworks.

Measuring Success



This partnership accelerates rehabilitation, creates regional jobs, and ensures benefits flow directly to WA communities, ultimately delivering productive post-mining landscapes that strengthen WA's long-term resilience.

The Ask

\$30 million* over 5 years, allocated from the MRF account to deliver:

- ✓ \$6 million to establish the NRM/MRF partnership framework
- ✓ \$20 million for high-impact rehabilitation projects
- ✓ \$4 million for a transparent monitoring and verification system

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Climate Resilience Empowerment Program: Building Regional Capacity for Local Action

Western Australia faces escalating climate risks intensifying heatwaves, droughts, bushfires, floods, cyclones and coastal erosion that directly threaten communities, infrastructure, and natural assets. While the appointment of a dedicated Minister for Climate Resilience marks a critical step forward, the portfolio would benefit from on-ground delivery partners which are critical to empower local action and build enduring regional capacity.

The Solution

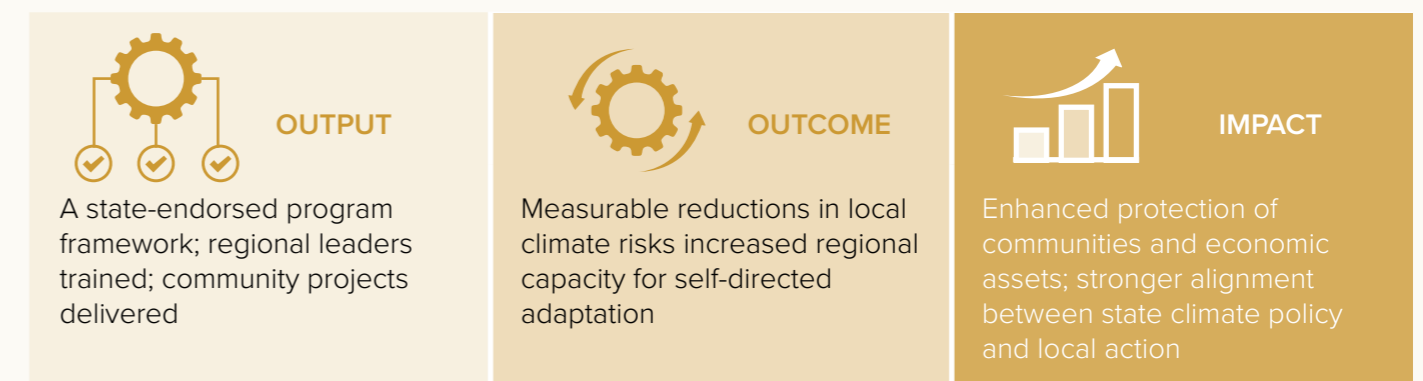
Locally Led Climate Resilience Initiatives

This initiative establishes a formal partnership to deliver a statewide program of locally led adaptation, mitigation and capability building. Leveraging NRMWA's regional network as the delivery partners, NRMWA will use this investment to support community-driven projects tailored to local risks and opportunities through co-design with local communities, Traditional Owners, landholders, and local governments.

Proof of Concept

Our network has a 25-year track record of delivering complex, community-based environmental projects. We possess the established partnerships, regional trust, and project management expertise to ensure rapid mobilisation and enduring impact, turning funding into measurable on-ground resilience.

Measuring Success



This investment provides a tangible, ready-to-deploy delivery platform. It is a strategic down-payment on WA's adaptive capacity, ensuring communities are equipped to face a climate-challenged future.

The Ask

\$7 million* over 4 years to deliver:

- ✓ Establishment of a Climate Resilience Empowerment Fund, administered through the regional NRM network
- ✓ Regional capacity building, including training, technical support, and leadership development
- ✓ Co-design and delivery of locally prioritised on-ground projects across all regions
- ✓ A digital transparency dashboard for public reporting and accountability

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Coastal Resilience Initiative:

Protecting WA's Shorelines

Western Australia's coastline, the backdrop of our lifestyle and a vital economic asset, is on the frontline of climate change. Accelerating erosion and inundation pose escalating risks to public infrastructure, private property, tourism and community safety. With 80% of Western Australians living near the coast, the current fragmented and reactive approach to coastal erosion is no longer sufficient. We face a choice: invest strategically in resilience now or pay far more in lost tourism revenue and cost of repair later.

The Solution

A Data-Driven, Partnership-Based Model

This initiative moves beyond ad hoc interventions by establishing a coordinated statewide program built on three pillars: advanced monitoring, nature-based solutions and proactive community stewardship. Partnering with Aboriginal Rangers and local governments, we will deploy a drone-based monitoring network to identify vulnerabilities before they become crises.

High-priority erosion hotspots will be stabilised, while a dedicated coastal user strategy manages competing pressures through track rationalisation and signage. This integrated approach ensures every dollar invested delivers compounded benefits in risk reduction, ecological health and community capacity.

Proof of Concept

Our NRM network already delivers coastal restoration and engagement from the Kimberley to the South Coast. Established partnerships with Aboriginal Corporations, local governments and community groups enable immediate operationalisation.

Measuring Success



This investment secures Western Australia's coastline for future generations. It delivers adaptation measures identified through the Coastal Hazard Risk Management and Adaptation Planning process, aligns with State Planning Policy 2.6, CoastWA Priorities and the WA Climate Adaptation Strategy.

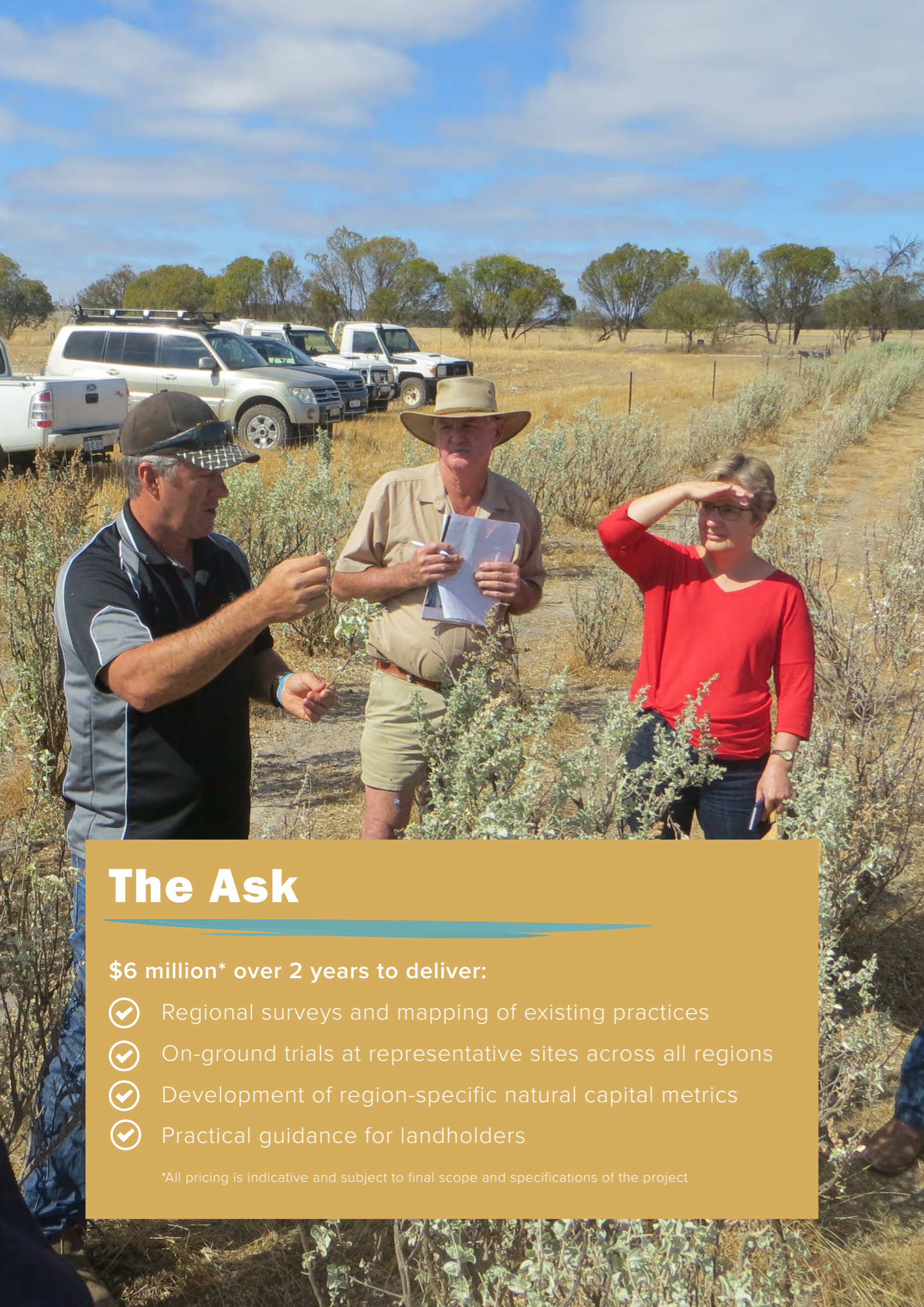
The Ask

\$10 million* over four years to deliver:

- ✓ A statewide drone monitoring network co-delivered with Aboriginal Rangers
- ✓ Strategic green infrastructure projects to protect high-value assets and ecosystems
- ✓ A comprehensive coastal user strategy
- ✓ Capacity building for volunteers and land managers to ensure long-term stewardship

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The Ask

\$6 million* over 2 years to deliver:

- ✓ Regional surveys and mapping of existing practices
- ✓ On-ground trials at representative sites across all regions
- ✓ Development of region-specific natural capital metrics
- ✓ Practical guidance for landholders

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Regenerative Agriculture:

What Works in What Region

Current approaches to regenerative agriculture in WA can be ineffective when applied across our diverse landscapes. This leaves farmers uncertain about the value of their investments in landscape rehydration and soil health. Western Australian farmers identify that soil health is a high priority.

Soil health underpins agricultural productivity. By extension, soil health is critical to the gross value of agricultural production and the WA economy. Currently 6.4 million hectares is at risk of wind erosion (costing over \$70 million annually). Government investment in targeted efficient solutions that sustain the agricultural landscape is urgently needed.

The Solution

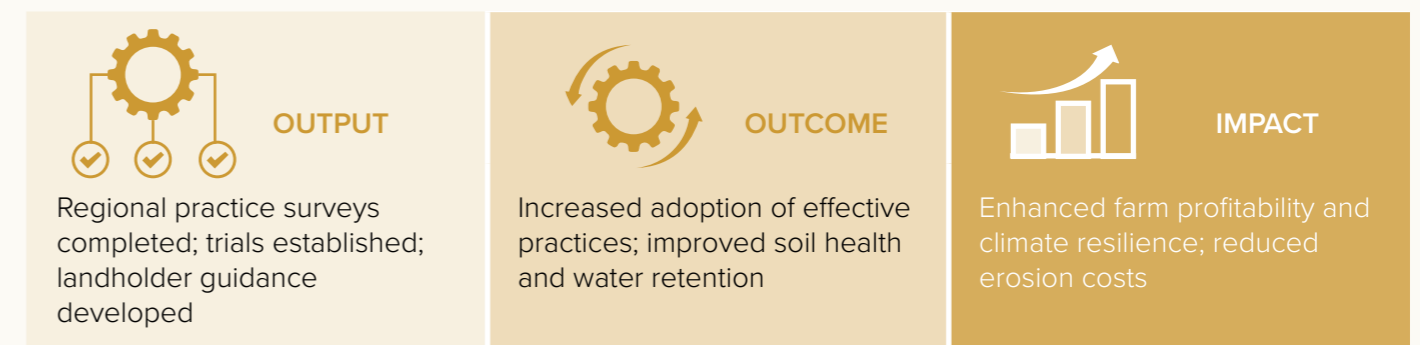
Region-Specific Evidence for Confident Investment

This initiative will determine what works where across WA's diverse regions, focusing on less-proven practices like in-stream structures and contour banks, while refining strategic revegetation placement. Through regional surveys, on-ground trials at representative sites, and collaboration with landholders, we will build the evidence base for effective landscape rehydration. The program will develop agricultural-focused natural capital metrics to clarify pathways for sustainable farming.

Proof of Concept

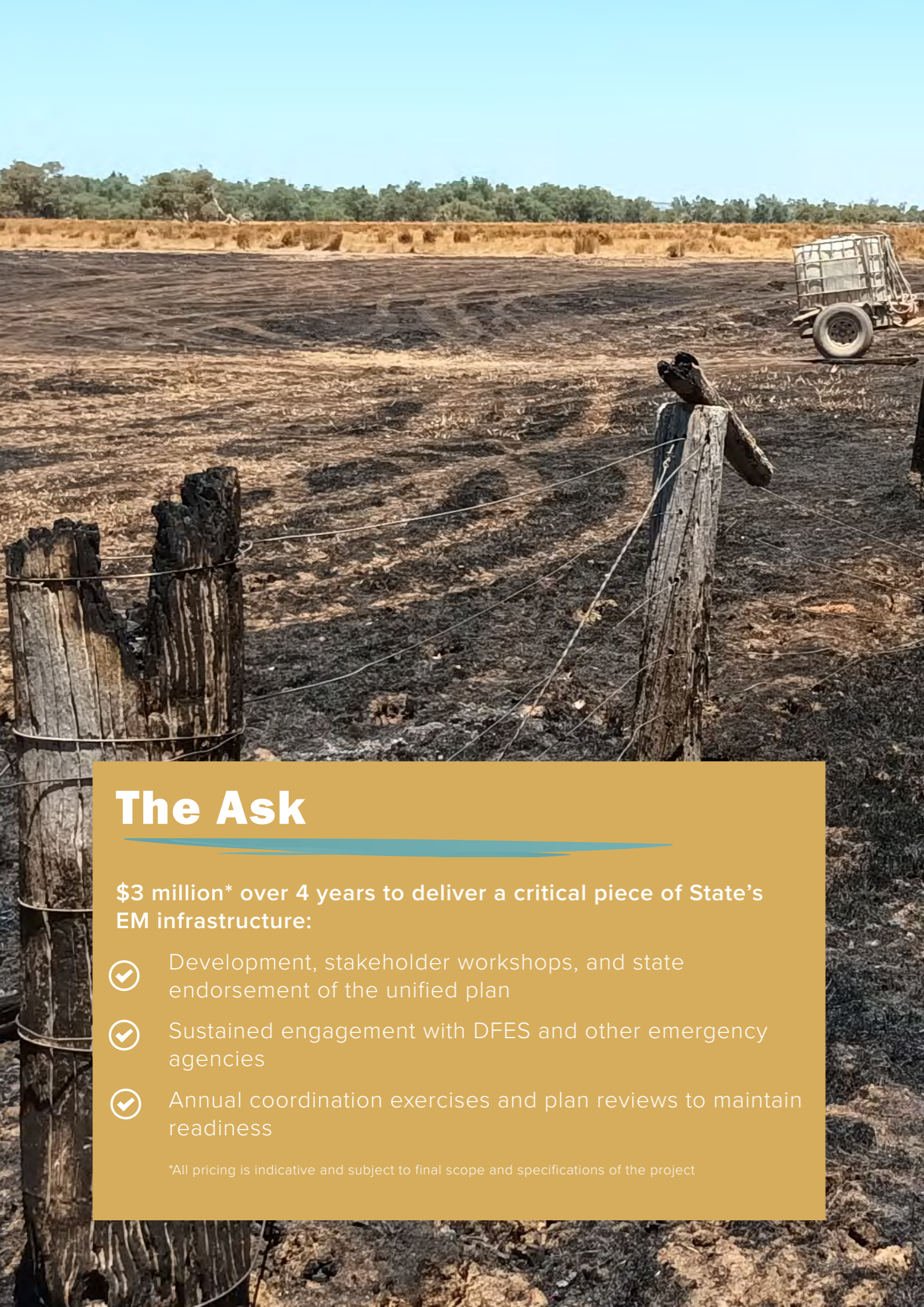
Our NRM network brings proven expertise in sustainable agriculture and landholder engagement. This builds on our successful delivery of landscape-scale programs while addressing specific knowledge gaps about practice effectiveness across WA's diverse farming systems.

Measuring Success



This investment directly supports the WA Climate Strategy and Soil and Land Conservation Act by securing rainfall in drying conditions and building landscape resilience. It provides farmers with confidence to invest in practices that benefit both their enterprise and the environment.





Unified State NRM Emergency Response Plan

Western Australia’s current approach to the environment during emergency response is fragmented. Seven separate NRM regional Emergency Preparedness Response plans create operational inconsistency, hindering critical coordination with DFES during fires, floods, and biosecurity emergencies. This lack of a single, state-endorsed protocol directly undermines the protection of vital biodiversity, water resources, and agricultural assets when rapid, coordinated action is most crucial.

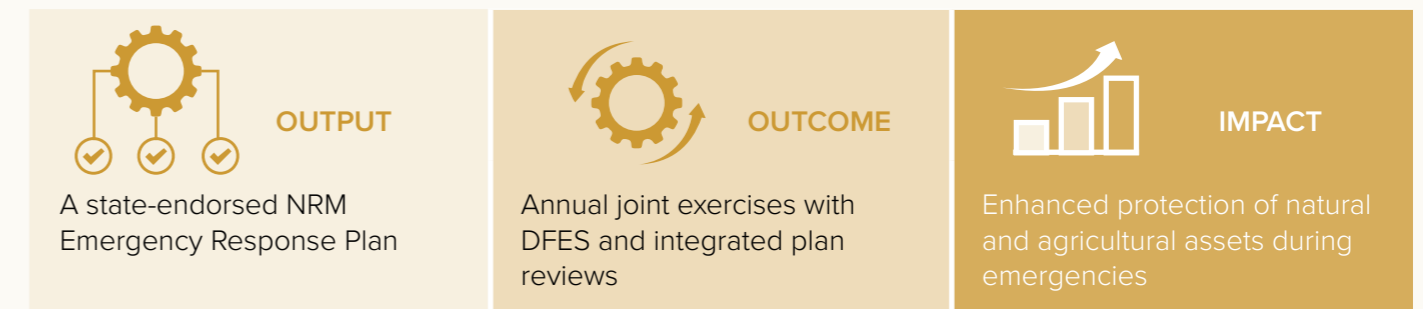
The Solution

This initiative will consolidate seven regional plans into one Unified State NRM Emergency Response Plan. This single framework will harmonise risk assessments, response protocols, and stakeholder coordination across all regions. It provides emergency planning and response agencies with a clear, single point of integration for protecting WA’s natural capital, ensuring a consistent and effective response that aligns with the state’s emergency management and environmental legislation.

Proof of Concept

The seven existing regional Emergency Preparedness Response plans provide a proven foundation of identified assets and risks. This initiative simply scales this demonstrated model to a state level, creating the efficiency and consistency that emergency responders require.

Measuring Success



This investment is a low-cost, high-value intervention to streamline emergency management. It ensures WA’s productive landscapes and natural heritage are defended systematically, supporting community resilience and economic stability.

The Ask

\$3 million* over 4 years to deliver a critical piece of State’s EM infrastructure:

- ✓ Development, stakeholder workshops, and state endorsement of the unified plan
- ✓ Sustained engagement with DFES and other emergency agencies
- ✓ Annual coordination exercises and plan reviews to maintain readiness

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Partnering for Prosperity:

Core Funding for Integrated Delivery

WA's prosperity depends on healthy natural assets. For 25+ years, the Regional NRM network has been a trusted partner, connecting government, industry, Traditional Owners, and landholders to deliver real, on-ground results.

The Challenge

WA is the only state without core funding for regional NRM groups. This limits our leverage with the Commonwealth, constrains private investment, and risks missed opportunities for integrated, long-term outcomes.

The Opportunity

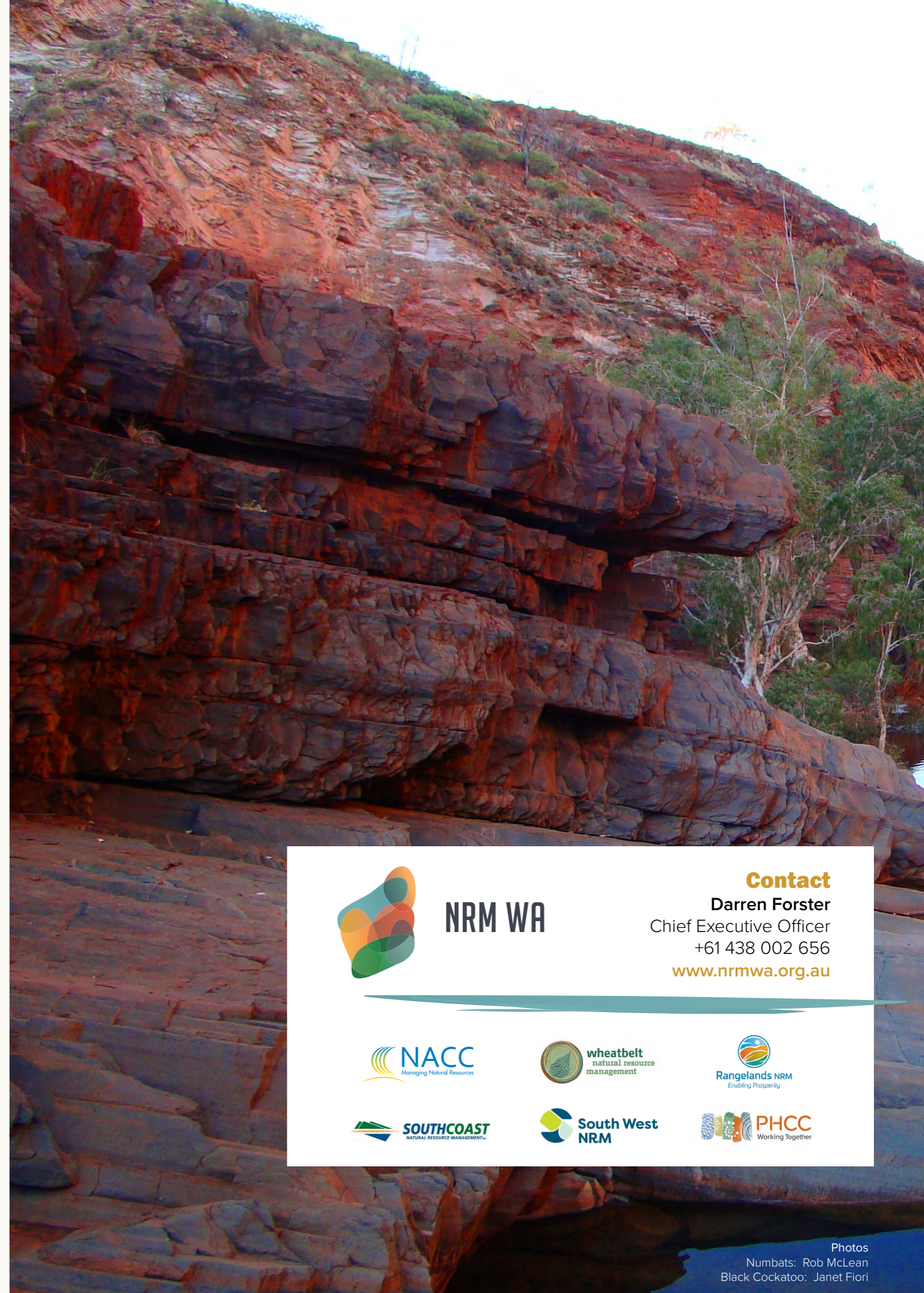
A four-year strategic partnership to secure core delivery capacity, enabling WA to lead in nature-based markets, climate resilience, and regional job creation.

What Sustained Funding Delivers

Strategic Alignment	Competitive Advantage	Economic Multiplier	Risk Management
Co-develop and deliver a State NRM Framework	Secure WA's fair share of Commonwealth and nature market investment	Stimulate regional jobs and private investment (\$4.20 return per \$1 invested)	Build capacity for rapid response to biosecurity and climate events

Proven Delivery, Measurable Results

This partnership is a cost-effective insurance policy for WA's environment and a catalyst for a resilient, prosperous future. NRMWA stands ready to work the WA State Government to secure WA's legacy as a leader in environmental stewardship, economic resilience, and community prosperity.





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