



Image credit © Parks Australia

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# Strategic Plan

2023-2025

# Our story

The National Parks Conservation Trust (Parks Trust) was established in 2018 and is an independent Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission registered charity with DGR 1 status.

We connect partners, leverage their strengths and mobilise additional investment to support transformational conservation projects with lasting benefits. The projects we support are delivered in, and are intended to extend benefits beyond, Australia's remarkable Commonwealth terrestrial national parks: Kakadu, Uluṛu-Kata Tjuṛa, Booderee, Christmas Island, Pulu Keeling, Norfolk Island, the Australian National Botanic Gardens, and over 280 million hectares of Australian Marine Parks.

This is our first strategic plan that builds on our early foundations and will guide our conservation work and growth as an organisation.

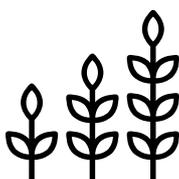
***The Parks Trust is committed to conserving Australia's plants, animals and cultural heritage. We realise that this is a big job, so we are bringing people together that share this vision.***

*- Chair, Rhondda Dickson*

# Our growth journey



2018 - 2022  
Establish



2023 - 2025  
Grow and Adapt



2025 and beyond  
Mature and Evolve

## VISION

To conserve Australia's plants, animals and cultural heritage by bringing people together.

## PURPOSE

To enable partnerships supporting the conservation of Australia's plants, animals and cultural heritage through transformational initiatives in and beyond Commonwealth national parks.

## CHALLENGE

Many ecosystems and their constituent species are in decline, and some have disappeared altogether.

Cultural heritage and traditional knowledge connected to these areas and species is at risk of being lost.

The scale of the challenge to protect our natural and cultural heritage continues to increase and evolve as we face urgent, global issues like climate change.

## ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGE

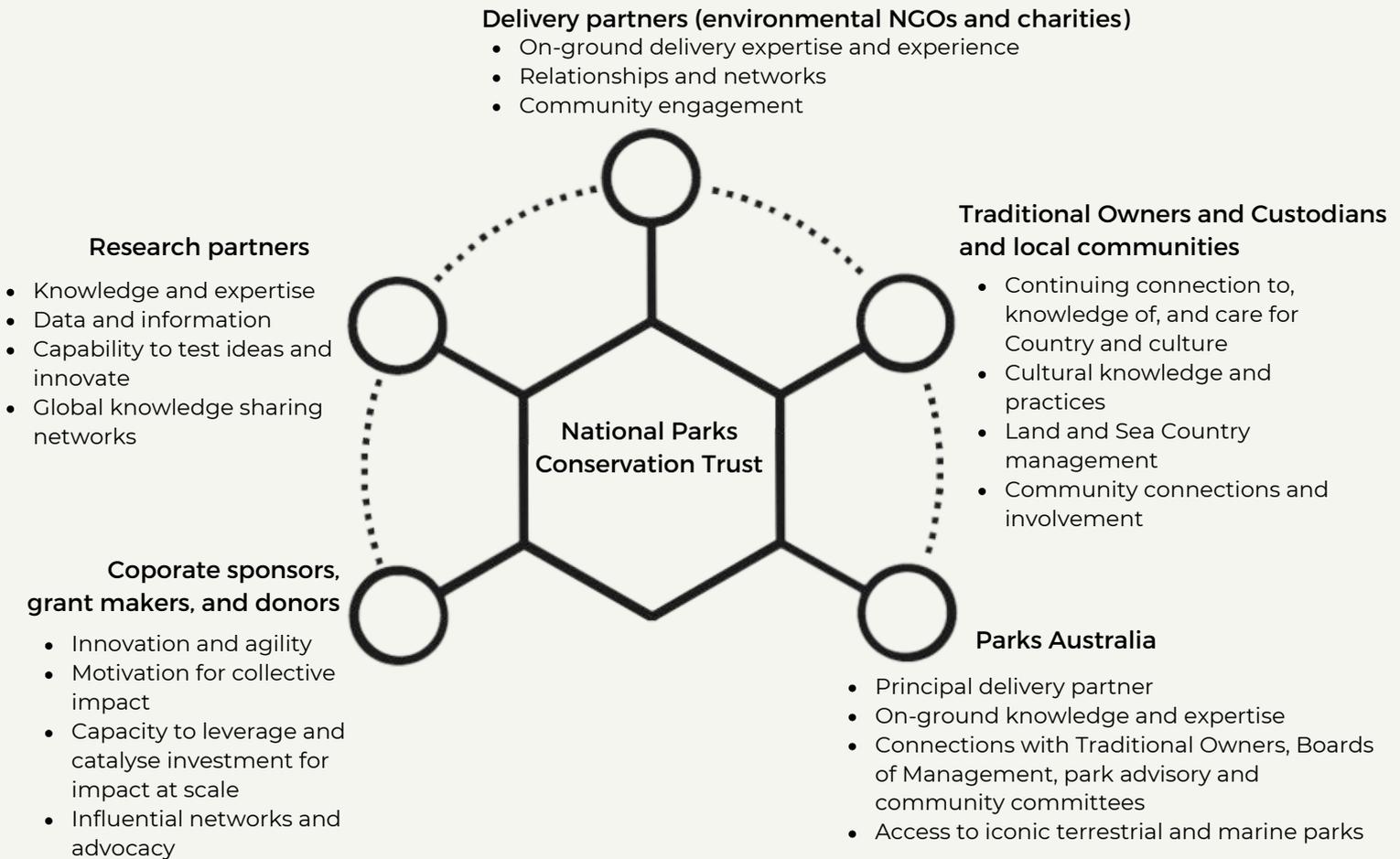
Together, we need to 'shift the dial' on our conservation efforts to address the scale and complexity of these challenges and realise lasting benefits for Australia's precious species, ecosystems and cultural heritage.

By aggregating resources and diverse capabilities, the Parks Trust works with organisations across sectors to achieve greater impact than is possible by acting alone.



# Our unique role

The Parks Trust is uniquely positioned as a broker with a strong portfolio of delivery and funding partners. We connect expertise and resources from various sources with our supporters who are motivated by transformational conservation projects.



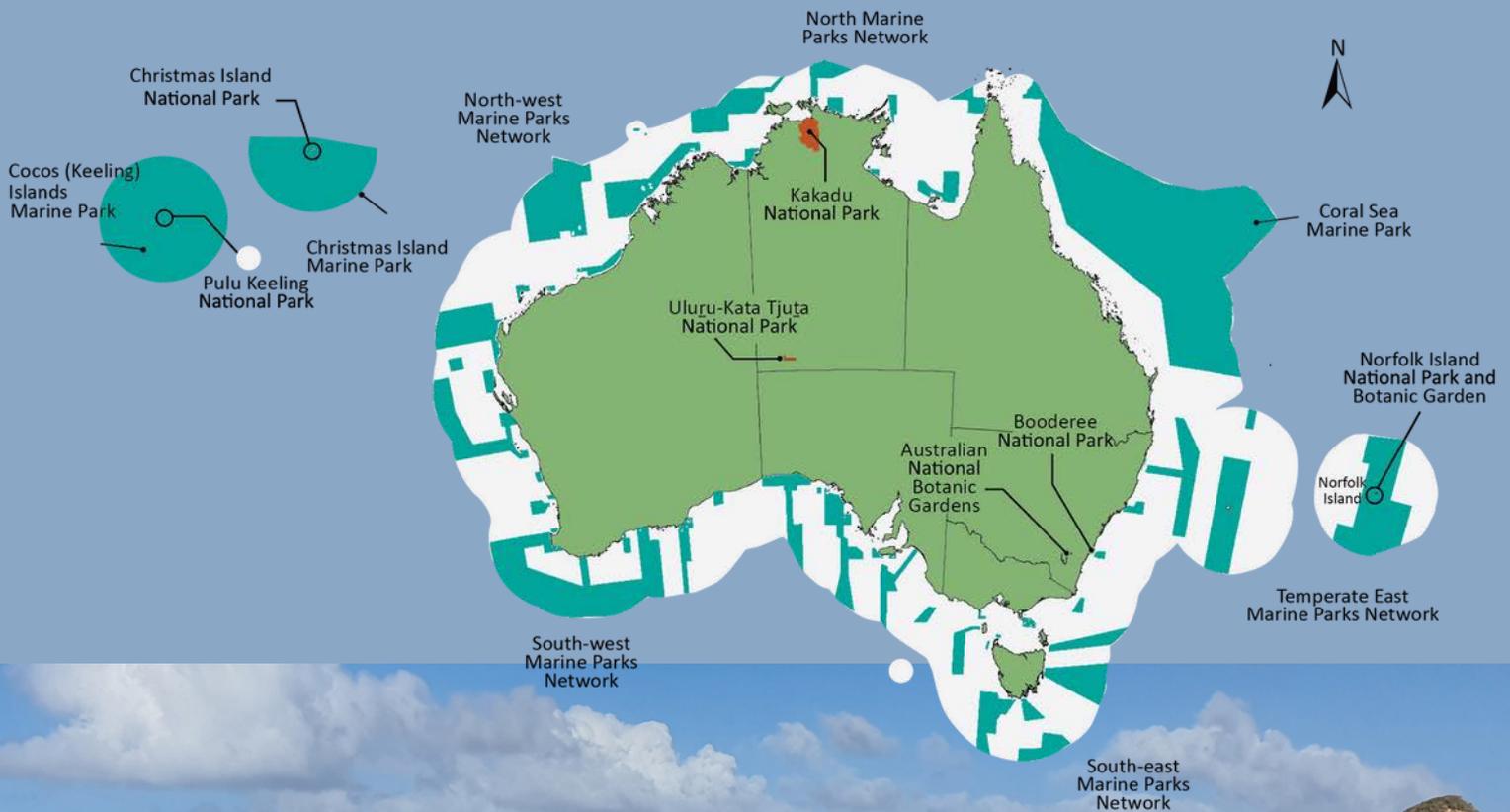
We work with our network to support solutions with the potential to increase the scale and accelerate the benefits of conservation efforts. Learnings from our projects are shared beyond project boundaries and across sectors to encourage knowledge transfer, reduce duplication, and broaden impact.

As part of our network of collaborators, our strategic partnership with Parks Australia helps us to support projects that can:

- have nationally significant environmental, cultural and community benefits.
- be identified by Traditional Owners, rangers, and scientists, and linked to local expertise.
- have strong potential to achieve lasting outcomes beyond the conclusion of the project, by linking with monitoring and evaluation plans maintained by Parks Australia.
- contribute to educating, engaging, and inspiring the public.

# Where we work

We deliver projects across Australia with a focus on national parks, gardens and marine parks which encompass a wide variety of ecosystems, rich biodiversity, and cultural heritage. Many threatened and/or endemic species and ecological communities are protected within their boundaries. Our support of work in these places affords our projects the benefit of a managed environment from where the learnings can be assessed, applied elsewhere or scaled up.



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# Our focus areas

The Trust's direction is underpinned by three key focus areas.

1



Restore lost biodiversity and reverse decline

Conserving threatened plants, animals, and ecological communities in and beyond terrestrial and marine parks.

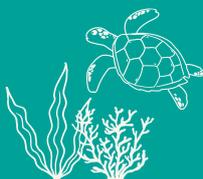
2



Cultures remain strong and vibrant

Recognising, involving, and celebrating cultures in and beyond terrestrial and marine parks by supporting empowerment of Traditional Owners, Custodians, and local communities.

3



Sustainably manage our oceans

Addressing knowledge gaps and restoring habitats to improve the health and management of our marine parks.

# Focus 1:

## Restore lost biodiversity and reverse decline

### Conserving threatened plants, animals, and ecological communities in and beyond terrestrial and marine parks.

The terrestrial Commonwealth parks support a wide variety of ecosystems and rich biodiversity, including many threatened species from a range of different taxonomic groups. Many species that were once present in these parks are no longer there or are reduced to small remnant populations.

Opportunities exist to bring back some of these species, restore lost biodiversity and rebuild ecosystems. In many cases, this will require effective management of invasive species and other pressures, through development and adoption of innovative solutions.

The removal and control of invasive species is one of the biggest challenges to the health of our natural areas. Australia has both proven methods, and the potential for new and emerging technologies, to combat some of the threats. Recognising that the removal of invasive species is not an end in itself, rather it is a key part of improving the overall health of our natural landscapes, both within and outside our parks.

The projects supported under this focus area will improve the status of threatened ecological communities and species, and re-introduce native species which contribute to healthy and sustainable ecological functioning.

We will meaningfully engage with Traditional Owners and value their traditional knowledge.

We will look to engage partners to:

- suppress or eradicate priority invasive species that have the biggest impact on threatened species and ecosystems.
- restore natural habitats and ecosystems.
- increase healthy, functioning and reproducing populations of priority threatened species.



# Focus 2:

## Cultures remain strong and vibrant

### Recognising, involving, and celebrating cultures in and beyond terrestrial and marine parks by supporting empowerment of Traditional Owners, Custodians, and local communities.

Our parks and their natural, cultural and historic heritage are valued by the diverse local communities who live around, work in and visit them. Connecting communities with their unique environment and species is an important way to raise awareness and inspire the community to value Australia's natural environment.

Kakadu, Uluru-Kata Tjuta and Booderee National Parks are jointly managed with their Traditional Owners and are precious and unique places of significant natural and cultural values.

Supporting the Traditional Owners to conserve, share and celebrate their culture - the oldest living culture on earth - and manage their Land and Sea Country, is a priority for our work. Projects may include rock art, language, Traditional Ecological Knowledge and other cultural values.

The projects supported under this focus area will create and enhance partnerships with Parks Australia, Traditional Owners, and local communities.

We will look to build partnerships to support:

- conservation of culture and heritage in Commonwealth national parks.
- local decision making in the management of culture in Commonwealth national parks.
- employment opportunities and other community benefits for First Nations people.
- capacity building and upskilling to increase opportunities for First Nations'-led management of Country.



# Focus 3:

## Sustainably manage our oceans

### Addressing knowledge gaps and restoring habitats to improve the health and management of our marine parks.

Marine parks help conserve marine habitats and protect the species that live within and rely on them.

To manage Australia's marine parks effectively, investment is needed to address gaps in knowledge, restore habitats, and implement robust long-term monitoring programs. With these in place, we can respond more effectively to early warning signs when ecosystems start to degrade, learn more about our marine environment, and avoid the huge costs associated with remediation.

There is an opportunity to explore strategic partnerships with organisations motivated to support global ocean action and invest in targeted areas of marine discovery.

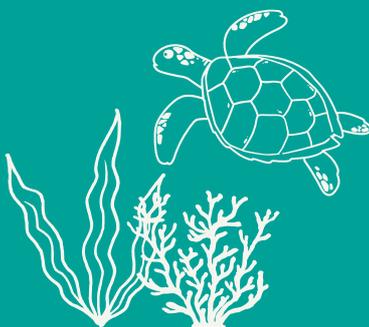
In support of this focus area, the Parks Trust has partnered with the Director of National Parks on the Ocean Discovery and Restoration (ODR) program.

The ODR program is a \$15 million investment by the Australian Government over 4 years for co-investment with philanthropic and corporate partners.

The Parks Trust will look to engage partners to:

- restore habitats by addressing key threats.
- undertake innovative research to address knowledge gaps and improve marine park management.

In progressing this work, we will meaningfully engage with the Traditional Owners connected to their Sea Country.



# How we work

We broker purposeful collaborations by aligning shared goals to achieve results that are transformative, lasting and influential.



## Transformational results in globally significant places

We support innovative actions that challenge the status quo in conserving Australia's natural environment and cultural heritage. This includes investing in new technologies, research, and methodologies that will have positive outcomes now and into the future.



## Funding goes further

We leverage project seed funding and co-contributions to mobilise impact at scale. More broadly, our collaborative partnerships enable amplified outcomes that are nationally and internationally significant.



## Connecting the sector

We play a unique role in creating alliances and facilitating direct access to the science and cultural knowledge as it happens in our iconic places. This connection enables knowledge sharing and efficient use of resources to achieve shared conservation goals.

Parks Trust Trustees consider new project proposals seeking support twice yearly.

If you are interested in contributing to one of our focus areas, or if you have a transformational idea you would like to discuss with us, contact us at [hello@parkstrust.org.au](mailto:hello@parkstrust.org.au)

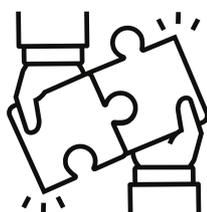


# Our strategy in action

As we move into our next phase of growth, our priorities for our conservation projects for 2023-2025 are to:

- broaden our projects to include additional species and ecological communities across Australia.
- increase the scale and influence of our conservation projects for maximum benefit.
- support First Nations and Indigenous cultures so they are respected, maintained, and empowered in our work.
- bring together western science and traditional knowledge to improve conservation outcomes.
- connect communities with our work to inspire increased public support for conservation.

Our operating model will support these priorities by:



**Driving partnerships across sectors** by growing and connecting our portfolio of collaborators with diverse resources, skills and experience.



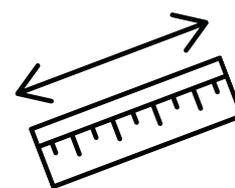
**Building capacity and capability** by broadly sharing new knowledge generated through our projects.



**Inspiring and engaging** new and existing funders and supporters to strengthen resourcing.



**Upholding strong governance** and best practice operating standards.



**Measuring and communicating** our impact.



National Parks  
Conservation  
Trust



Image credit © Parks Australia

The National Parks Conservation Trust acknowledges all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Traditional Custodians of Country and recognises their continuing connection to land, sea, culture and community. We pay our respects to Elders past and present.

The National Parks Conservation Trust acknowledges its dedicated partners, donors and supporters. It is thanks to their vision and commitment that we are able to facilitate improved conservation outcomes in Australia.

Special thanks to our partner, Parks Australia, for providing on-ground project delivery, expertise, and operational support that is helping us realise this important work.