



Great Eastern Ranges Initiative
A continental-scale lifeline
to engage people with nature

Annual Progress Report 2007–08



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Priority voluntary partnership areas for integrated conservation activities along the NSW section of the Great Eastern Ranges corridor, from the Australian Alps to Atherton.

Key

- Dark green Extant (remaining) woody vegetation, mainly consisting of remnant forest, woodland and heathlands
- Orange Proposed NSW section of Great Eastern Ranges corridor (with proposed connection south into Victoria and north into Queensland)
- Pale yellow Cleared or fragmented native vegetation



Executive summary

The Great Eastern Ranges Initiative (GER Initiative) is a long-term strategy. Formerly known as the Alps to Atherton Initiative, it aims to maintain and improve connectivity conservation of mountain ecosystems that extend more than 2,800 kilometres along the Great Dividing Range and Great Escarpment of eastern Australia, from southern Victoria to Far North Queensland. This annual progress report is for the 1,200-kilometre section of the GER Initiative in NSW, which is funded by the NSW Environmental Trust.

Drawing together the personal efforts of the various community, industry, government and non-government program personnel already working in the area, the GER Initiative will strengthen the resilience of natural ecosystems, and the native plant and animal species they support, in the face of climate change and ongoing threats.

The GER corridor will help to protect water supplies for over three-quarters of Australia's population, as well as our most significant nature-based tourism assets. Maintaining the ecosystem functions and connectivity of these mountainous catchments is essential for sustaining the health and wellbeing of eastern Australia's rapidly growing human population and economy, particularly with the rapid onset of climate change.

Key milestones

In the first year of the program, a small coordination team has achieved the key milestones and objectives within its control, as specified in the first year of *Alps to Atherton Initiative*, *NSW Business Plan 2007–2010* (the GER Business Plan):

- A communication and consultation framework has been implemented, along with the first stage of a communication strategy. This has achieved a high level of success in building community awareness and support for the vision and goals of the initiative within Commonwealth, state and interstate agencies, including the Department of Environment and Climate Change NSW (DECC), and a wide range of organisations, including conservation and other community groups and organisations, local government, scientists and industry.
- During extensive community consultation, over 50 presentations have been made at meetings with community groups, agencies and councils, as well as to national and regional scientific and community symposia. These meetings have provided excellent opportunities to establish widespread awareness and support among key stakeholders. Contractors have consulted with more than 170 organisations in three new partnership areas, presenting information about the GER Initiative at more than 30 meetings (see Attachment 1).
- Two pilot conservation corridor partnerships, Kosciuszko to Coast (K2C) and Slopes to Summit (S2S), involving 15 organisations, have been established in southern NSW. These successful partnerships have developed and implemented a wide range of integrated community awareness strategies, and conservation plans and programs, on private land, exceeding planned targets. Several of these organisations – Bush Heritage Australia, Greening Australia and the Nature Conservation Trust of NSW – have co-contributed funds that match or significantly exceed the Environmental Trust allocation to the partnership and complement the activities of the catchment management authorities. The partnerships aim to improve connectivity conservation management on private land, to buffer and interconnect core protected areas. Strong community acceptance, engagement and support have been established. Landholders' interest in the program is rapidly increasing and attracting new partners.



- The pilot programs have provided good models for establishing partnerships in three additional high conservation-value priority areas: the Border Ranges, Upper Hunter Valley and Southern Highlands.
- Following market research, the DECC Executive approved 'Great Eastern Ranges' as a new name for the initiative.
- On 12 April 2008, the Hon. Verity Firth MP, Minister for Climate Change and the Environment, launched the first Open Day of the K2C section of the GER Initiative. The event was launched on a private property near Bredbo in southern NSW, to an enthusiastic audience of landholders, program partners and people from the surrounding region. The event attracted positive national and local television and newspaper coverage.
- A rapidly expanding number of community organisations, advisory bodies, agencies, industry groups, landholders and individuals have formally and informally expressed their support for the concept of connectivity conservation and the approach that has been adopted by DECC for working in partnership with the community to achieve a shared vision for the GER.
- An audit of existing conservation mechanisms and the baseline condition of connectivity of ecosystems extending along the GER is in progress. The audit will provide information needed to monitor and evaluate the outcomes and environmental benefits of the program. A review of programs funded by DECC and the Environmental Trust is in progress, to identify synergies and maximise the benefits of available funding.
- Progress towards a national approach to establishing a conservation corridor along the length of the Great Eastern Ranges is being led by DECC, working closely with Commonwealth and state governments (Victoria, ACT and Queensland) and their agencies. A first step, a report by independent scientists on the scientific principles for continental-scale connectivity conservation of the Great Eastern Ranges, has been prepared for peer review and consideration by the jurisdictions. The report will provide an important source of information for advice to the Environment Protection and Heritage Council on how to progress the GER Initiative.
- Preliminary work has begun towards implementing a media-based community marketing and awareness campaign. If approved, the campaign will establish the GER brand and use this to promote community awareness of the GER, establishing its status as a national treasure that maintains the ecosystems, catchments and water supply essential for the wellbeing of over three-quarters of all Australians. The campaign will also engage with the tourism industry to promote the scenic and recreational value of the GER's iconic national parks. This will contribute to achieving the NSW State Plan's objectives to increase tourism.
- The program is now in a strong position to begin implementing the GER Business Plan's second and third-year objectives for the five identified priority areas, and the community marketing and awareness campaign.



Kosciuszko to Coast (K2C) partnership



K2C facilitator, Lauren Van Dyke, presenting at the K2C Open Day on 12 April 2008

Photo: I. Pulsford, DECC.



'Scottsdale' is a 1,300-hectare property located four kilometres north of Bredbo, owned and managed by Bush Heritage Australia. It is an 'anchor' property in the K2C corridor.

Photo: I. Pulsford, DECC.



The then NSW Minister for Climate Change and the Environment, Verity Firth, with the K2C partners at the Open Day

Photo: I. Pulsford, DECC.



Slopes to Summit (S2S) partnership



The S2S partnership aims to establish a connectivity conservation link across the south-western slopes between Albury and Kosciuszko National Park. Wrights Hill is one of the properties recently purchased by the Nature Conservation Trust of NSW to help build this corridor.

Photo: I. Pulsford, DECC.



The severely stressed Murray River will benefit from efforts to establish a conservation corridor between Albury and Kosciuszko National Park as part of the Great Eastern Ranges corridor.

Photo: I. Pulsford, DECC.



As the lead agency in the S2S partnership, the Nature Conservation Trust of NSW (NCT) is working hard to establish strong relationships with local landholders. Left to right: NCT's Nicky Bruce, Rob Dunn and Nigel Jones talk about the future of the S2S corridor with local landholder Bruce Ward (second from the right)

Photo: I. Pulsford, DECC.



Southern Highlands Link partnership



Two separate meetings in Moss Vale have established the beginnings of a strong GER partnership group in the Southern Highlands Link that will be led by Greening Australia.

Photo: I. Pulsford, DECC.

Upper Hunter partnership



All parties expressed great enthusiasm about the concept of the Great Eastern Ranges corridor at a workshop for future partners held at Pokolbin.

Photo: I. Pulsford, DECC.



Border Ranges partnership



Some of the Border Ranges partners – from DECC, the Nature Conservation Trust and the Northern Rivers Catchment Management Authority – gather at a local covenanted property to discuss management issues.

Photo: I. Pulsford, DECC.



A total of 18 different partner organisations have agreed to work together in the Border Ranges area to help establish the Great Eastern Ranges corridor. This group spent a day meeting near Lismore to discuss how such a partnership could work.

Photo: I. Pulsford, DECC.



1 Summary of key achievements

This section summarises our progress towards achieving the five goals specified in the GER Business Plan.

Goal 1 Connectivity conservation

Achieving an interconnected NSW GER conservation corridor supporting healthy environments and healthy people

Key achievements

- Implementing two pilot partnership programs in the K2C and S2S priority focus areas in southern NSW.
- Delivering an integrated mix of voluntary conservation mechanisms, including in-perpetuity conservation covenanting, land acquisition and covenanting through a revolving fund, wildlife refuges, and property vegetation management plans.
- Establishing private protected areas and a whole-of-paddock rehabilitation scheme through targeted programs.
- Establishing an additional three partnership groups in the Border Ranges, Upper Hunter–Barrington Tops and Southern Blue Mountains–Morton areas.

The establishment of the K2C and S2S pilot partnership programs has been very successful, concentrating and integrating efforts to enhance landscape-scale connectivity in two key sections of the GER corridor.

Lessons from these two programs, and from international case studies, have provided assurance for DECC about implementing community consultation processes to establish conservation partnerships in three additional areas: the Border Ranges, Hunter Valley and Southern Highlands. These programs are ready to begin their operations in years two and three of the GER Business Plan. In total this means there will be five priority focus areas in the NSW section of the GER (see map on inside front cover).

Outcomes

- Throughout the five priority focus areas, over 60 partner organisations have indicated willingness to work together to plan and implement a range of voluntary conservation activities with private and public landholders and land managers. The positive response from community groups, councils, industry and conservation groups far exceeds the program's current resources. Factors driving this response include:
 - community concern about the impacts of climate change on biodiversity
 - community readiness to accept 'big picture' strategies
 - the simple and understandable message that underpins the GER vision
 - the GER Initiative's cohesive and logical approach, aiming to optimise use of the limited resources available to mitigate the impacts of climate change on our biologically diverse ecosystems.

This combination of factors is unique within the eastern Australian context.



- The K2C and S2S partnerships have collaborated in rolling out a targeted mix of mechanisms to improve connectivity and conservation management across private lands with a combined area in excess of 442 hectares. These mechanisms include DECC conservation agreements, Nature Conservation Trust agreements and land purchased for conservation covenanting and re-sale, and establishment of private conservation reserves, property vegetation plans and a whole-of-paddock rehabilitation stewardship scheme by the team of partners.
- So far the K2C partnership has progressed furthest because it started earlier and has had more resources and strong local commitment due to its proximity to Canberra's large population.
- The GER Initiative is emerging as a potential opportunity for maximising the conservation benefit of offsets from development activities, including from mining and power generation industries in the Hunter Valley and the Hume Highway upgrade in southern NSW.

Goal 2 Communicating with the community

Fostering an aware, supportive and active NSW GER community

Key achievements

- Holding workshops and community forums in key locations to promote the work of the pilot partnerships and facilitate development of additional programs.
- Developing and producing a promotional package supporting the K2C partnership.
- Gaining support for the GER vision and goals in the form of resolutions and letters from:
 - the Blue Mountains Environment Summit, convened by the Member for Blue Mountains, the Hon. Phil Koperberg, February 2008
 - Corridors for survival in a changing world, a symposium held by the ACT National Parks Association, May 2008
 - the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area Advisory Committee, February 2008and other organisations.

The communication plan for the first year was aimed at establishing effective community partnerships in each of the priority areas identified in the GER Business Plan; informing and engaging the key scientists, community groups, catchment management authorities, advisory bodies, government agencies, local government, Commonwealth and interstate agencies; and selecting an advertising agency to develop a branding and awareness campaign.



Outcomes

- Over 50 oral presentations to meetings, scientific and community symposia, conferences and workshops have been conducted. Contractors engaged to help with forming partnerships have briefed and consulted with more than 170 organisations and individuals in the three new partnership areas and delivered a further 33 presentations about the GER Initiative.
- On 12 April 2008, the Hon. Verity Firth MP, Minister for Climate Change and the Environment, launched the first open day of the K2C section of the GER corridor. The event was launched at 'Ingelara', a private property near Bredbo in southern NSW, to an enthusiastic audience of landholders, program partners and people from the surrounding areas. The event was reported on ABC TV news and in local print media.
- The GER has attracted international, national and local media stories on a number of occasions, and K2C has been a flagship for establishing the initial profile of the GER Initiative. A K2C communication plan and a suite of public information tools, including brochures, a logo, a website and signage, have been created and used by the partners.
- The large number of people involved in the GER Initiative, with a broad range of interests, is providing considerable power and capacity to engage more widely with the community than would be feasible for the GER team within DECC.
- The Environmental Trust (ET) funds available for partnership support are an essential catalyst for facilitating collaboration, attracting partners and encouraging community engagement and leadership. Investment of ET funds in conservation agreements and other activities has led to significant co-investment from partners' programs. In the Border Ranges alone, the proposed investment of \$380,000 in 2008–09 has potential to align with more than \$650,000 of partners' existing funds, as well as leveraging very substantial amounts of in-kind contributions.
- The successful forming of partnerships is demonstrating potential for a wider application of this model for building effective conservation projects throughout the GER. During the next two years of the ET-funded start-up program, the GER Initiative will build on these achievements by investing funds in on-ground activities and supporting the formation of further partnerships. It is essential this investment continues, so that a series of successful collaborations are in place along the length of the GER, providing a high-profile program that attracts support from all industry, government and community sectors, sustainable beyond the life of the current ET funding.
- Progress has been achieved in developing a brand and testing options for the program's name. Market research and focus-group testing supported 'Great Eastern Ranges' as a name which the wider community would find more understandable than the proposed name 'Alps to Atherton'. Accordingly, the DECC Executive has adopted 'Great Eastern Ranges' as the new name (abbreviated to 'GER' in reports).
- A rigorous process to select a preferred advertising agency through a competitive selection process has undergone several delays, but is now nearing completion. This agency will be responsible for developing and implementing the Great Eastern Ranges marketing and communication campaign.



Goal 3 People working together

Helping people to work together effectively to achieve healthy NSW GER environments

Key achievements

- Making progress towards implementing GER as a national initiative involving the Victorian, Queensland, ACT and Commonwealth governments.
- Providing continuing support for, and receiving guidance from, the NSW Environmental Trust Great Eastern Ranges Initiative subcommittee.
- Connecting with over 40 organisations which are keen to work in partnership with the GER Initiative to achieve integrated conservation management activities on private land.

After its first year of operation, it is clear that the GER vision and goals have been easily understood and have been very successful in gaining the involvement and commitment of partners in each of the five priority focus areas. The GER connectivity conservation concept has attracted cutting-edge scientific research proposals which have been developed in partnership with six leading academic and research institutions. With leadership from the Australian National University, in partnership with DECC, the University of NSW, the Australian Museum, Museum Victoria and CSIRO, two applications were made for innovative research proposals to Commonwealth funding bodies. The applications were unsuccessful, although ongoing relationships have been developed for future collaborative opportunities.

DECC's partnership approach has stimulated a level of involvement and collaboration far beyond what would have been possible without the catalysing influence of the GER Initiative. For example:

- A series of successful workshops were facilitated in the Upper Hunter, Border Ranges and Southern Highlands, resulting in the establishment of active community partnerships enthused by the prospect of developing a conservation corridor along the length of the GER. The people involved are highly motivated and ready to begin on-ground activities as part of the second year of the GER Initiative.
- The GER Initiative is increasingly being championed and driven by non-government partners and catchment management authorities (CMAs). In each of the five focus areas, a non-government organisation (NGO) has offered to lead efforts to form GER partnerships. In the two pilot areas, CMAs, NGOs and DECC are implementing local agreements to integrate, align and coordinate delivery of the various conservation mechanisms and landholder incentive programs operated by a range of government and non-government bodies.
- There are interest and involvement from many sectors, including heavy industry (mining, electricity generation), horticulture and agriculture, tourism (including ecotourism and hoteliers' networks), research and academic bodies, governments (local, State and national), and both local and peak national conservation groups (see Table 1).
- As partnership planning activities proceed, the GER team is witnessing an emerging commitment to collaborative data collection, information sharing and conservation analysis and planning. DECC is beginning to review its other programs to identify those which intersect with the GER Initiative, as the first step in developing a better understanding of how government conservation programs contribute to delivering connectivity conservation.



- The GER team is working to identify and maximise synergies with other ET-funded projects such as *LandAlive* (formerly Aboriginal Land Management for Biodiversity) and the Hotspots Fire Project.

Table 1: Organisations and types of organisations engaging with the GER Initiative

Sector	Organisations
Conservation	Community groups and non-government conservation management organisations, Foundation for National Parks and Wildlife, Bush Heritage Australia, Nature Conservation Trust of NSW, Land for Wildlife, Greening Australia, World Heritage Area and National Parks and Wildlife Regional Advisory Committees, private donors and sponsors
Heavy industry	Coal mining, power generation
Agriculture	NSW Farmers Association, horse racing industry, wine industry
Community	Landcare, Wetlandcare, indigenous groups, community and environmental education enterprises, natural history societies, friends groups, catchment committees, local tourism bodies
Government	Catchment management authorities, local councils, rural lands protection boards, conservation management networks, NSW and Australian government agencies, state agencies in Victoria, ACT and Queensland
Academia	Universities, CSIRO, museums, national research centres



Goal 4 Effective administration

Running an effective and well-administered NSW GER program that achieves financial sustainability

Key achievements

- Implementing appropriate governance arrangements, including defining the terms of reference for the Environmental Trust Great Eastern Ranges Initiative subcommittee, and refining the current GER Business Plan.
- Planning activities and developing an operational plan for the 2007–08 financial year, to enable reporting on the milestones, outputs and outcomes in the GER Business Plan.
- Co-authoring a set of ‘principles of collaboration’ to be used within the K2C and S2S partnerships (see Attachment 2).

As a first step towards the goal of future financial sustainability for the GER program, the available funding has been used as a seed or catalyst to attract partners who will co-invest 50% or more funding for agreed on-ground conservation activities, to be undertaken by the partnership. Some partners have conducted fund raising activities or received donations or bequests of land or funds.

This approach has been highly successful, in some cases multiplying the partner’s investment. Major contributors include the Foundation for National Parks & Wildlife, Bush Heritage Australia, George Alexander Foundation, the Nature Conservation Trust of NSW, Greening Australia, Australian Wildlife Conservancy, Land for Wildlife and others.

As part of its approach to operating effectively, the K2C partnership has developed a series of agreed ‘principles of collaboration for the K2C partnership’ (see Attachment 2). The principles, which have been agreed to by all partners in that program, include:

- a description of the partners involved in the program, and the land management tools and incentives they use, including property acquisition, conservation agreements, revolving property purchases and voluntary management agreements
- an overview of the aims of the partnership (e.g. to increase the resilience and extent of landscape systems to mitigate their decline and restore habitat for all native flora and fauna, especially those listed as threatened)
- guidance on collaborative activities and planning objectives (e.g. guiding efforts to work collaboratively across tenures, to engage landholders, community groups, business and government agencies in a strategic and coordinated approach that better contributes to the GER Initiative).

These principles are likely to be modified and adopted by other partnership areas.

DECC staff members on the GER team have undertaken additional training in project management and procurement governance.



Goal 5 Applying knowledge and skills

Applying people's knowledge and skills wisely for the benefit of the NSW GER

Key achievements

- Establishing a Scientific and Technical Reference Group to provide advice on research and technical issues.
- Developing a range of innovative collaborative research proposals which enlist academic support for connectivity conservation and evaluating the potential impacts of climate change on the Great Eastern Ranges.
- Making progress towards a monitoring framework which links the GER Initiative with the evaluation of related natural resource management and biodiversity conservation programs.

Science-based conservation actions are being supported by adapting a range of cutting-edge tools and techniques to GER program needs, and by collating data for priority areas and for the entire GER.

- Collaboration is leading to the emergence of spatial modelling capacity and techniques that will support the growing requirement for connectivity conservation planning. Planning will take into account the potential impact of various Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) climate change scenarios on biodiversity.
- The GER team has collaborated with the DECC spatial analysis and decision-support team in Armidale and other scientists and researchers (within and outside DECC) to develop new techniques and tools for planning and decision making.
- This work has extended across a wide range of projects, including the development of critical tools such 'TOOLS2' – an integrated software application to support catchment planning, and help determine conservation priorities and investment decisions.
- A framework for spatial analysis and mapping of priorities and evaluating scenarios has been implemented for the K2C priority area.
- A pilot application of catchment planning tools in the Hunter–Central Rivers CMA area has provided a very powerful tool and a strong advantage in gaining an early start for integrated conservation planning with GER partners in 2008–09.

Examples of other initiatives making the best use of GER knowledge and skills:

- A Border Ranges Rainforest Biodiversity Management Plan was completed before the GER Initiative began. This provides an opportunity to immediately implement an agreed plan that accommodates conservation, multiple species recovery and restoration efforts in this significant national biodiversity hotspot.
- An audit is underway to analyse the wide range of conservation programs and mechanisms currently contributing to connectivity conservation in the GER, so the benefits flowing from improvements in integration and better-targeted conservation activities can be monitored, evaluated and reported (see Attachment 2). Auditing work has included:
 - connecting with existing monitoring, evaluation and reporting frameworks as the basis for measuring quantifiable change in resource condition



- establishing baseline statements on the type, distribution, status and significance of natural and cultural heritage values in the GER
- completing scoping studies on social values and economic benefits of the GER Initiative by establishing the baseline for community capital and engagement in conservation.
- A Scientific and Technical Reference Group has been established, and held its first workshop in May 2008. The working group was established to develop stronger links between researchers leading projects contributing to the GER, and to promote a collaborative multi-disciplinary approach to understanding the science of connectivity conservation in the GER. The first GER Science Forum to bring together leading experts in biological, social, economic and climate change science was held in September 2008 to identify key research requirements.
- The idea of forming an Aboriginal Heritage Reference Group is being discussed with DECC's Cultural Heritage Division. A working group of Aboriginal staff contributed to a workshop to develop the cultural values baseline report (prepared by Umwelt Environmental Consultants).



2 Outputs and milestones

Activities carried out

Table 2 lists activities carried out to achieve the objectives and outputs identified for 2007–08 in the GER Business Plan.

Table 2: Activities and outputs against the objectives and milestones of the GER Business Plan

(M = numbered milestone from the GER Business Plan)

Objective/milestone	Target date	Output	Achieved	
Goal 1 Connectivity conservation				
M 1	Two pilot partnership programs initiated: Kosciuszko to Coast (K2C) and Slopes to Summit (S2S)	Oct 2007	K2C and S2S partnerships established; functional landscape plan developed in S2S (previously done in K2C); partners delivering integrated conservation mechanisms, field days and workshops; open day launched by Minister for Environment and Climate Change in K2C; principles of collaboration agreed to by partners.	Oct 2007
M 2	Priority NSW investment areas identified	Dec 2007	Key stakeholders in three additional priority investment areas (the Border Ranges, Hunter Valley and Southern Highlands) consulted and the conservation priority of these areas confirmed.	Dec 2007
	A framework for land managers to help them connect and conserve their land within the area covered by the GER Initiative established	mid 2008	An effective operational framework for landholder engagement achieved through a partnership approach to engaging with the NGOs and agencies that deliver conservation programs.	Oct 2007



Objective/milestone		Target date	Output	Achieved
	A national response by governments to connecting and conserving areas covered by the GER Initiative facilitated	mid 2008	Three meetings of the Interstate Agency Working Group were held – a group established at the request of the Environment Protection and Heritage Council (EPHC) to report and provide advice on how to progress the initiative nationally. The working group commissioned a report by an independent scientist, Prof. Brendan Mackey, on the scientific principles that underpin a continental-scale conservation corridor approach along the GER. Following peer review the working group will provide further advice to EPHC in the second half of 2008.	Ongoing
	Three targeted voluntary conservation agreement programs initiated as demonstration projects	2008	Targeted programs were implemented in Slopes to Summit (Nature Conservation Trust), Kosciuszko to Coast (DECC) and Border Ranges (DECC–Kyogle area).	
Goal 2 Communicating with the community				
M 3	GER Initiative launched	Oct 2007	Launch held at K2C Open Day with Minister's involvement and national media coverage.	April 2008
M 4	Community consultation program commenced	Dec 2007	Process to facilitate development of partnership groups in the three next focus areas commenced.	Feb 2008
	The first annual science forum involving managers and CERF-funded researchers who are involved with the GER Initiative conducted	mid 2008	The Commonwealth Environment Research Facilities (CERF) proposal and subsequent application to the Australian Research Council were not successful. However, the first GER science forum was held in September 2008.	Sept 2008



Objective/milestone		Target date	Output	Achieved
	Background information to help the community understand all aspects of the GER Initiative developed, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – its purpose and vision – its economic and social benefits – private landowner benefits – ways in which projects developed under the GER Initiative will combat feral animals, fire and weeds 	mid 2008	A draft prospectus has been prepared in consultation with interstate agencies, DECC staff and directors, key partners and publications staff. Awaiting approval for publication.	Awaiting approval
M 5	Initial phase of branding and market testing in the pilot areas of K2C and S2S	May 2008	‘Great Eastern Ranges’ adopted as the new name for the initiative and a preferred creative agency selected; planning underway for a high quality film and ministerial press conference; film to be launched at the IUCN World Conservation Congress in Barcelona in October 2008.	May 2008
Goal 3 People working together				
M 6	National working group established and operating	Dec 2007	The Environment Protection and Heritage Council -established interstate working group has overseen development of a discussion document outlining the principles which underlie continental connectivity conservation (received and currently being peer reviewed). Rate of progress depends on cooperation and availability of other jurisdictions.	Nov 2007



Objective/milestone		Target date	Output	Achieved
M 7	Environmental Trust subcommittee established and operating	Dec 2007	The 11-member ET Subcommittee has been appointed and has met twice since approving the three-year GER Business Plan. Simon Smith has been appointed as the new chairperson.	May 2007
M 8	Stakeholder working group established and operating	Dec 2007	Establishment of a stakeholder working group has been deferred until the need for such a group in addition to other working groups has been better established.	n/a
	Opportunities provided for people in the community to communicate and share their interests, values and ideas on the initiative. Forums could include public meetings and web discussion space	mid 2008	A community forum is being planned for late 2008. Many public meetings and events have provided a wide range of opportunities for stakeholders and the wider community to provide input.	Late 2008 Ongoing
M 9	Two technical working groups established and operating	Dec 2007	A combined Science and Technical Reference Group was established and convened to enhance connections between existing and proposed research activities. Terms of reference have been approved. Formation of an Aboriginal Heritage Reference Group is under discussion with DECC Cultural Heritage Division. A working group of Aboriginal staff contributed to a workshop to develop the cultural values baseline report prepared by Umwelt Environmental Consultants	May 2008



Objective/milestone		Target date	Output	Achieved
	Adaptive management established for actions which include researchers, managers, property owners and community representatives, and which are based on experimental research information.	by 2008	An adaptive management demonstration program is being implemented by Bush Heritage Australia on 'Scottsdale' in the K2C corridor with input from CSIRO, Bush Heritage, DECC and other ecologists in the partnership.	2008
M 10	Commonwealth Environmental Research Facilities NSW research team established and operating	Dec 2007	The CERF funding bid was not successful. A second bid with the same research partners to the Australian Research Council (ARC) linkages research grant program was similarly unsuccessful. Applications have been submitted to ARC for funding social science research and population viability analysis against IPCC climate change scenarios. The first GER science forum in September identified alternative strategies for GER science.	Dec 2007
Goal 4 Effective administration				
M 11	Business Plan approved by the NSW Environmental Trust	July 2007	Approved by Minister. Draft GER Business Plan Part B Annual Plan 2008-09 prepared and reviewed by the subcommittee.	May 2007 June 2008
M 12	NSW project team established	August 2007	All positions filled after some initial delay in approval and recruitment.	Dec 2007
M 13	Draft NSW operations plan for 2007-08 completed	August 2007	Operational plan for 2007-08 approved by subcommittee and implemented.	Feb 2008
	Assess investment mechanisms provided by projects funded by the Environmental Trust and other programs, to ensure complementary resourcing	Oct 2007	Liaison between the GER Initiative and ET projects, including Hotspots Fire Project and the <i>LandAlive</i> program, are in progress to ensure synergies are achieved.	Aug 2007 July 2008



Objective/milestone		Target date	Output	Achieved
	All other Australian landscape-scale environmental funding programs (such as the National Heritage Trust scheme) informed about the strategic importance of resourcing the GER Initiative as a basis for complementary resourcing	Oct 2007	<p>Presentation and meetings were held with a large number of senior staff of Australian Government Departments, Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts (DEWHA), Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry Australia (AFFA) and the Greenhouse Office.</p> <p>Presentations and a field trip were conducted with the Assistant Secretary and Directors of the Biodiversity Branch of the DEWHA to showcase GER and K2C to demonstrate strategic benefits of funding projects that deliver integrated conservation partnership activities.</p>	<p>June 2007</p> <p>June 2008</p>
	An audit of potential strategic initiatives with catchment management authorities and other land management agencies conducted to establish investment priorities for the GER Initiative	Oct 2007	<p>Informal audit of strategic initiatives conducted through many meetings with all CMAs, agencies and non-government conservation organisations to identify and integrate a wide range of conservation mechanisms in each priority area.</p> <p>Detailed spatial analyses of mechanisms for all areas are underway.</p>	<p>October 2007 and ongoing</p> <p>June 2008</p>
M 14	Draft evaluation management plan completed	December 2007	Postponed until December 2008 due to staffing limits.	Ongoing
Goal 5 Applying knowledge and skills				
M 15	Rigorous best practice project monitoring and evaluation system established in cooperation with the Commonwealth Environmental Research Facilities research team	June 2008	CERF and ARC funding bids were unsuccessful.	n/a



The three most important outcomes achieved

Outcome 1 Implementing high-profile pilot partnerships

In accordance with the GER Business Plan, two pilot partnership areas were established in southern NSW – ‘Kosciuszko to Coast’ (K2C) and ‘Slopes to Summit’ (S2S) – before and during 2007–08 (see Attachment 2). The target vegetation types in K2C are Natural Temperate Grassland and Box-Gum Woodland and in S2S Box-Gum Woodland (communities that are nationally and NSW endangered ecological communities). These partnership areas provide opportunities to maintain and improve ecological connectivity of natural lands from the slopes to the coast, over the greatest possible altitude and ecological gradient in Australia.

The K2C program has been particularly successful. An effective and committed management group led by Bush Heritage Australia (BHA) and DECC has been operating well. Shortly before the GER Initiative began, BHA purchased ‘Scottsdale’ (1,328 hectares) to manage in-perpetuity as a private, protected area and to demonstrate conservation restoration and management techniques as a key link in the K2C corridor. The other seven partners include Greening Australia, Nature Conservation Trust of NSW, Southern Rivers Catchment Management Authority and local non-government groups. A key ingredient in the K2C’s success has been the co-funding of a shared partnership facilitator who is based within the partnership area, at Bredbo. To augment conservation action planning that had previously been carried out, facilitated by BHA, DECC has conducted a preliminary spatial prioritisation for this area.

Negotiations have begun with over 40 landholders who have been offered an integrated range of voluntary conservation mechanisms within the K2C corridor area. These include DECC’s conservation agreements and wildlife refuges, BHA’s property agreements, Greening Australia’s ‘whole-of-paddock rehabilitation’ stewardship agreements, and participation in Landcare and conservation management networks. To augment the landscape values of the Scottsdale property, BHA has obtained sponsorship funds to purchase an additional property in the K2C area. The NCT’s revolving fund has been used to purchase and place conservation covenants on two additional properties in the K2C area.

The K2C open day and partnership were launched by the NSW Minister for Climate Change and the Environment on 12 April 2008 at ‘Ingelara’, a private property near Bredbo. The highly successful open day was attended by over 350 people including the local Member for Monaro. The day resulted in highly positive local and national media coverage about the GER conservation corridor, including on ABC TV news. Local government is aware of the initiative and the wider community are aware and strongly supportive of the concept.

The successful partnership approach has confirmed a sound method for establishing collaborative conservation programs in three additional priority target areas in the GER.

The S2S program has a far lower profile and fewer partners actively engaged on the ground. However, this partnership, led by the NCT, has successfully negotiated six in-perpetuity covenants. These meet the agreed performance target required by the grant indicators. The NCT has also purchased two properties in the S2S area using revolving funds. Conservation action planning in the S2S has been undertaken by Greening Australia, and offsets from Roads and Traffic Authority funding for the Hume Highway upgrade may contribute to S2S in the future.



Outcome 2 Consulting with the community and stakeholder organisations

The Border Ranges comprises one of the two most biologically diverse landscapes in Australia (along with the Wet Tropics in Far North Queensland), and is recognised as a national tourism icon ('the Green Cauldron') in the National Landscapes Tourism Initiative. The area has been the subject of considerable efforts by stakeholder groups to develop the Border Ranges Rainforest Biodiversity Management Plan. The GER Initiative is working with key stakeholders to build on previous collaborative efforts to implement an integrated approach to whole-of-landscape conservation in the region. Eighteen partner organisations have agreed to participate as members of an active partnership program in the area, and a further 12 are keen to participate when funded activities begin in 2008–09. As highlighted previously in this report, more than \$650,000 of partner funds are potentially available for co-investment.

The Hunter Valley comprises one of the most complex regions in the NSW GER from a connectivity conservation perspective. Several connectivity issues (including east–west linkages provided by the Liverpool Ranges, Goulburn River National Park and the Hunter River, as well as natural 'pinching' of the GER at the head and foot of the valley), interact with mining development, a long history of agriculture, tourism and the wine industry. This poses a varied mix of conservation issues and opportunities.

Early discussions with stakeholders in the region indicated that a large number of groups are active, although their efforts are generally highly dispersed. The opportunity to connect efforts and demonstrate their roles as part of a wider vision and collaborative community effort has met with considerable enthusiasm.

An initial partnership meeting in Pokolbin in April 2008 involved 37 participants from more than 23 organisations. A further 28 groups are keen to contribute efforts ranging from strategic planning and vegetation mapping to delivering voluntary agreements, establishing in-perpetuity offset areas and restoring riparian and dryland areas. Projects already being proposed for the 2008–09 financial year include enhancing the corridor in two focal areas, vegetation mapping, strategic planning and holding promotional field days.

The Southern Highlands Link partnership area falls within a region where there is a significant break in the conservation reserves in the GER (i.e. a gap between Morton and Nattai/Blue Mountains national parks). Considerable conservation planning, undertaken by DECC, has identified a number of corridors in this region. Greening Australia has facilitated preliminary conservation action planning and landscape priorities have been identified for this region, which has significant areas of high quality Box-Gum Woodland and escarpment rainforest communities that provide opportunities within the connectivity matrix.

Two initial partnership meetings in Moss Vale in May and June 2008 involved 36 participants from 16 stakeholder groups. Greening Australia has offered to be the lead agency in this partnership, and some of these groups have either indicated support for the project or have an ability to contribute efforts ranging from strategic planning to delivering voluntary agreements, establishing property vegetation plan incentives and purchasing land.

Outcome 3 Marketing and communicating

The major decision of the past 12 months has been adopting 'Great Eastern Ranges' as the preferred name for the initiative. This decision was made on the strength of market research and focus group testing, which indicated that 'Great Eastern Ranges' has far greater resonance than did the original title, 'Alps to Atherton'.

The market testing followed extensive briefing and liaison with a number of creative agencies interested in taking on the role of developing a broader marketing and communication campaign. A preferred agency has been selected following a competitive tender process. However, because of the market research results, the successful agency will be re-briefed and further work will be required by the agency with potential for further testing of creative concepts before a more definitive campaign is developed and launched.



3 Issues and opportunities

The large number of keen and active community and industry partners means the GER Initiative is well-placed to deliver programs and spend funds available for on-ground partnership activities during 2008–09, using a targeted and prioritised mix of voluntary mechanisms for conservation on private land.

The large number of non-government partners involved places increasing demands on DECC's GER team to provide strategic oversight and leadership in key aspects of the program, such as connecting with tourism and other industry groups, developing conservation priorities, developing policy and producing media and marketing tools. However, the large number and broad range of interests involved gives the GER Initiative considerably more power and capacity to engage widely with the community than would be possible if the GER team was working on its own. In turn, DECC is now better placed to focus on addressing strategic partnerships with industry, particularly with potential partners in the tourism sector, to leverage future support and investment. For example, the Foundation for National Parks and Wildlife has the potential to be a key sponsor and has implemented a funding campaign in 2007–08 to purchase land in the GER corridor.

Within the five priority focus areas, the GER is increasingly being supported and driven by non-government partners (Nature Conservation Trust of NSW, Bush Heritage Australia, Greening Australia) and catchment management authorities (Northern Rivers, Hunter–Central Rivers, Hawkesbury–Nepean, Southern Rivers and Murray). In each area, a non-government organisation has offered to lead efforts to consolidate partnership formation. This is a highly desirable outcome, and one that is emerging earlier than anticipated. It is also highly possible that the coal mining and other industries in the Hunter Valley will become significant contributors to the development of the connectivity program during the next 12 to 18 months.

As the scientific principles and basis for the GER are more widely discussed within government and the scientific community, and further developed, it is likely that governments in other jurisdictions will move forward with developing a national approach. The advice that the Interstate Agency Working Group provides to the Natural Resource Management and Environment Protection and Heritage Standing Committees and Councils will be important in moving to a nationally agreed program for the GER in the other eastern states.



4 Communication

A communication and consultation framework, and the first stage of a communication strategy, have been developed and implemented. Extensive community consultation – including over 50 presentations made by GER team members to community groups and organisations, local governments, catchment management authorities, agencies, (Commonwealth, state and interstate) as well as to national and regional scientific and community symposia – has provided significant opportunities to establish widespread awareness and support among key stakeholders. Contractors and GER staff have consulted with more than 170 organisations in the three priority partnership areas in the Border Ranges, Hunter Valley and Southern Highlands regions. Presentations have been made at more than 30 meetings in these areas (see Table 3).

A rapidly growing number of community organisations, advisory bodies, agencies, industry groups, landholders and individuals have formally and informally expressed their support for the concept of connectivity conservation and the partnership approach that DECC has adopted. Over 60 organisations are now ready to work together in partnerships over the next two years to plan and implement a range of voluntary conservation activities with private and other public landholders and managers in the five priority landscape areas. The enthusiasm of the response from community groups, councils, industry and conservation groups exceeds the resources currently available. The key factors driving this support include:

- community concern about the impacts of climate change on biodiversity
- community readiness to accept ‘big picture’ strategies
- the simple and understandable message that underpins the GER vision, and
- the GER Initiative’s cohesive and logical approach, aiming to optimise use of the limited resources available to mitigate the impacts of climate change on our biologically diverse ecosystems.

This combination of factors is unique within the eastern Australian context.

Throughout the year the GER Initiative attracted media attention (see Table 6) including coverage in international, national and local radio and television stories and in the press. Stories about the GER have appeared on internet blog sites and in special articles in journals such as *Cosmos* magazine and CSIRO’s publications and newsletters. The GER Initiative will be included as a case study in a new global book on connectivity conservation management to be published by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in late 2008.

A range of quality promotional materials were produced for the GER Initiative, particularly for the K2C pilot partnership program. A GER Initiative brochure was produced following extensive internal and external consultation. This is awaiting approval for publication. A range of web-based material was published. A stakeholder contact database for the marketing campaign and local partnership activities has been established.

Several reports have been produced providing essential information for the proposed GER marketing and awareness campaign to be implemented in 2008–10. This information is also required to inform decisions on conservation priorities.

Under a grant agreement to the IUCN, Australian Geographic produced a high quality film on the GER which was launched at a special event at the World Conservation Congress in Barcelona in October 2008.



Table 3: Significant stakeholder and community interactions initiated by the GER Initiative

Date/period	Stakeholder group	Activity	Outcome
February – April 2008	Prospective stakeholders in the Hunter Region, various groups	Presentations and meetings with key contacts and active bodies in the Hunter Valley to identify prospective partners	Identifying more than 50 prospective partners, with more than half of them attending a partnership formation workshop in Pokolobin
March 2008	Hunter Regional Organisation of Councils (HROC)	Workshop to present the GER concept and discuss potential role and contribution of the HROC environment group	Formal motion of support passed by HROC
March 2008	Cultural Heritage Working Group	First meeting to provide inputs to cultural heritage values report	Group formed to provide future cultural heritage inputs to GER Initiative
April 2008	Border Ranges and Upper Hunter partnerships	Workshop to introduce and recruit potential partners to the GER Initiative	Identifying a number of partner groups in the Border Ranges and Upper Hunter areas
May 2008	National Parks Regional Advisory Committees	Presentation, and discussion of climate change and the role of the GER in biodiversity adaptation	Briefing and improved awareness of Regional Advisory Committee members
May 2008, June 2008	Prospective stakeholders in Southern Highlands Link	Two forums to establish partnerships and inform potential partners/ stakeholders about the initiative	Identifying a number of partners/supporters, with Greening Australia promising to lead Southern Rivers CMA, Hawkesbury–Nepean CMA, DECC and NCT in core group
June 2008	GER grassy ecosystems field day participants	A field day to introduce Commonwealth executive officers to the K2C partnership and GER	Briefing the Commonwealth officers who will be responsible for assessing Caring for our Country grant funding program applications and advising on the program



5 Conclusions

The GER Initiative has substantially achieved the approved objectives, goals and milestones for 2007–08. There has been an overwhelmingly positive response to the concept of establishing a conservation corridor along the Great Eastern Ranges from the Alps to Atherton and beyond by a wide range of stakeholders including agencies, catchment management authorities, local government, community groups, landholders, scientists and industry. This response has occurred in the absence of a major publicity campaign and with a limited range of published information. DECC's efforts to establish relationships with a wide range of partners, willing to work together to achieve a landscape-scale benefit, has placed the initiative in a very strong position to rapidly implement connectivity conservation activities in the five key priority areas and undertake a marketing branding and awareness campaign involving tourism and industry sectors in 2008–09.



Attachment 1

Organisations involved in partnership formation activities

GER partnership area	Potential partners who attended the partnership formation meeting	Other potential partners involved in discussions (in many cases unable to attend the meeting)
Border Ranges	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Foundation for National Parks & Wildlife 2 Byron Shire Council 3 Community NRM, Upper Clarence 4 ENVITE (Environmental Training & Employment Inc.) 5 Forests NSW 6 Gondwana World Heritage Area 7 Indigenous interests 8 Nature Conservation Trust of NSW 9 North Coast Environment Council 10 Northern Rivers CMA 11 Department of Environment and Climate Change NSW 12 OzGreen 13 Richmond Landcare Services 14 Southern Cross University 15 Tweed Council 16 Tweed Landcare Inc. 17 Wetlandcare 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 18 Brunswick Valley Landcare 19 Bunjulong Elders Council 20 Carbon Planet Pty Ltd 21 Community NRM, Byron Coast 22 Community NRM, Richmond Valley 23 NSW Department of Lands 24 NSW Farmers Association 25 Queensland Environmental Protection Agency 26 Rainforest Rescue 27 Richmond Landcare Inc. 28 Richmond Valley Council 29 Wilsons Creek Huonbrook Landcare
Kosciuszko to Coast	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Bush Heritage Australia (lead partner) 2 Friends of Grasslands 3 Greening Australia (Capital Region) 4 Molonglo Catchment Group 5 Nature Conservation Trust of NSW 6 Department of Environment and Climate Change NSW 7 Southern Rivers Catchment Management Authority 8 Upper Murrumbidgee Catchment Coordinating Committee 9 Upper Murrumbidgee Landcare Committee 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10 Murrumbidgee Catchment Management Authority
Slopes to Summit	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Bush Heritage Australia 2 Charles Sturt University 3 Murray Catchment Management Authority 4 Nature Conservation Trust of NSW (lead partner) 5 Department of Environment and Climate Change NSW 6 NSW Department of Primary Industries 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7 Australian National University 8 CSIRO



GER partnership area	Potential partners who attended the partnership formation meeting	Other potential partners involved in discussions (in many cases unable to attend the meeting)
Southern Highlands Link	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Goulburn Mulwaree Council 2 Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area Advisory Committee 3 Greening Australia (potential lead partner) 4 Hawkesbury–Nepean Catchment Management Authority 5 Kiama Municipal Council 6 Nature Conservation Council of NSW 7 Nature Conservation Trust of NSW 8 Department of Environment and Climate Change NSW 9 NSW Department of Planning 10 Robertson Community Tech. Centre 11 Robertson Environment Protection Society 12 Southern Rivers Catchment Management Authority 13 Sydney Catchment Authority 14 Tourism Southern Highlands 15 Wingecaribee Council 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 16 Australian Wildlife Conservancy 17 Bush Heritage Australia 18 Goulburn Field Naturalists 19 Southern Tablelands Grassy Ecosystems Conservation Management Network
Upper Hunter	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Bengalla Mining Company 2 BHP Billiton 3 Coal and Allied Rio Tinto Australia 4 Green Coalition Hunter Valley 5 Green Corridor Coalition 6 Greening Australia 7 Hunter–Central Rivers Catchment Management Authority 8 Hunter Valley Vineyard Association 9 Landcare Hunter Region 10 Macquarie Generation 11 Muswellbrook Coal Company 12 Muswellbrook High School 13 Nature Conservation Trust of NSW 14 Dept. of Environment & Climate Change NSW 15 NSW Department of Primary Industries 16 NSW Minerals Council 17 OzGreen 18 Rural Fire Service 19 Rural Lands Protection Board 20 Tuscany Wine Estate 21 Umwelt Australia Pty Ltd 22 Xstrata Coal NSW 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Aboriginal Culture and Environment Network 2 Aboriginal Heritage Officer for Forests 3 Anvill Hill Project Watch Association 4 Australian Stock Horse Society 5 Black Jack Mountain Landcare Group 6 Bow River Landcare Group 7 Bush Heritage Australia 8 Country Women's Assoc., Scone District 9 CSIRO 10 Hunter Bird Observers Club 11 Hunter Group of Councils 12 Hunter Region Landcare Network 13 Hunter Thoroughbred Breeders Association 14 Manangle Aboriginal Heritage Coop. 15 Merriwa Central School 16 Mindaribba Land Council 17 Muswellbrook Shire Council 18 National Parks Association 19 Newpac No.1 Colliery 20 NSW Farmers Association 21 RPS Harper Somers O'Sullivan 22 Scone High School 23 Singleton Council 24 Turning the Pages 25 Ungooroo Aboriginal Corporation, Singleton 26 Upper Hunter Shire Council 27 Upper Hunter Valley Coop 28 Wanaruah Local Aboriginal Lands Council



Attachment 2

Kosciuszko to Coast (K2C) project principles of collaboration

The following nine organisations (listed alphabetically) have come together to form a partnership in the K2C project, and are later referred to as partners:

- Bush Heritage Australia (BHA)
- Department of Environment and Climate Change NSW (DECC)
- Friends of Grasslands (FOG)
- Greening Australia Capital Region (GA)
- Molonglo Catchment Group (MCG)
- Nature Conservation Trust of NSW (NCT)
- Southern Rivers Catchment Management Authority (SRCMA)
- Upper Murrumbidgee Catchment Coordinating Committee (UMCCC)
- Upper Murrumbidgee Landcare Committee (UMLC).

See Appendix 1 for names of representatives and their delegates.

The aim of the partnership

The Kosciuszko to Coast (K2C) project brings together motivated and experienced natural resource management partners to identify, restore and extend alpine, wetland, grassland, woodland and forest ecosystems between Mt Kosciuszko and the coast. On this extensive landscape of approximately 1,200 square kilometres, K2C partners will focus on vegetation communities known to be in decline, of which Montane Swamps, Box-Gum Woodlands and Natural Temperate Grasslands are listed under NSW and/or Commonwealth legislation (see Appendix 2 for listed communities). It is the aim of the partnership to increase the resilience and extent of these landscape systems to mitigate their decline and restore habitat for all native flora and fauna, especially those listed as threatened.

Working across tenures, and using a range of land management tools and incentives, including property acquisition, conservation agreements, revolving property purchases, voluntary management agreements and incentives, K2C partners will engage landholders, community groups, businesses and government agencies in a strategic and coordinated approach. Through its work, K2C will contribute to the GER Initiative to extend landscape connectivity all the way from the Victorian Alps to the Queensland Atherton Tablelands.



Collaboration in operation

- 1 Each partner group endorses these principles of collaboration and the partner groups agree to operate in accordance with these principles in the K2C project partnership.
- 2 The work and efforts of the K2C partnership will be guided by the K2C Functional Landscape Plan and Strategic Plan.
- 3 Each of the partner groups may provide resources in cash and/or in kind to facilitate the work of the K2C project. However, the K2C partnership itself will not directly receive or dispose of funds.
- 4 The partner groups have established a K2C Steering Committee and each partner has appointed one person to sit on the Steering Committee. Each partner group has an equal voice in the deliberations of the K2C Steering Committee. Partner groups in the K2C Steering Committee agree to take decisions by consensus wherever possible.
- 5 Working groups, made up of two or more K2C Steering Committee partner groups, will expedite K2C project strategic actions to reduce workload and conserve K2C Steering Committee meeting time. Working group decisions are subject to K2C Steering Committee approval.
- 6 The Steering Committee may decide to invite other agencies and/or groups to become partner groups, provided new partners agree to operate in accordance with these principles of collaboration. However, to remain effective, the number of partner groups represented on the Steering Committee may need to be limited to no more than ten. Supporting groups may choose to be part of K2C but not be represented or contribute through the Steering Committee.
- 7 The Steering Committee shall meet at least quarterly with a quorum required of two-thirds of partner groups or six out of the eight existing partner groups. The Steering Committee shall:
 - take responsibility for the K2C project and develop, review and update the K2C Functional Landscape Plan and Strategic Plan and other works programs; it should record quarterly its effectiveness and achievements
 - provide general guidance and direction to the K2C Facilitator
 - form working groups to facilitate K2C work; working groups may include Steering Committee partners and may also seek advice or expertise from supporting groups or other non-partner groups or individuals as needed; the Facilitator shall be a member of any working group
 - keep suitable records of its decisions; decisions may be made via email circular between set quarterly meetings.
- 8 Contributions from the partner groups may take the form of commitments to the overall partnership or agreements between parties. Partner groups may continue to operate unilaterally as has been the case in the past, and where appropriate, partners can collaborate bi-laterally and multi-laterally.
- 9 Partner groups may agree to amend these principles of collaboration.



Appendix 1: K2C Steering Committee representatives (and their delegates), May 2008

BHA	Ben Carr (Owen Whitaker)
DECC	Rainer Rehwinkel (Ian Pulsford)
FOG	Geoff Robertson
GA	Graham Fifield (Sue Streatfield)
MCG	Lynton Bond (Tom Baker)
NCT	Rob Dunn (Nigel Jones)
SRCMA	David Hilhorst
UMCCC	Steve Welch (Lynton Bond)
UMLC	Tony Robinson (Lynton Bond)

Appendix 2: Listed communities

The following listed communities are relevant to K2C. The Commonwealth act is the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) and the NSW act is the *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995* (TSC Act).

Note that Endangered Ecological Communities followed by (A) are roughly equivalent to each other and are broadly referred to as **Montane Swamps**.

Likewise, those followed by (B) are broadly equivalent and are referred to as **Box-Gum Woodlands**. There is no NSW-listed equivalent for **Natural Temperate Grasslands**.

- **Montane Peatlands and Swamps of the New England Tableland, NSW North Coast, Sydney Basin, South East Corner, South Eastern Highlands and Australian Alps.** Conservation status in NSW (TSC Act): Endangered Ecological Community (A)
- **Natural Temperate Grassland of the Southern Tablelands of NSW and the Australian Capital Territory.** Conservation status nationally (EPBC Act): Endangered Ecological Community
- **Upland Wetlands of the New England Tablelands and the Monaro Plateau.** Conservation status nationally (EPBC Act): Endangered Ecological Community (A)
- **White Box–Yellow Box–Blakely’s Red Gum Woodland.** Conservation status in NSW (TSC Act): Endangered Ecological Community (B)
- **White Box–Yellow Box–Blakely’s Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland.** Conservation status nationally (EPBC Act): Critically Endangered Ecological Community (B)

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