



**ABC
Foundation**



**Strengthening
Aboriginal Regional
Communities**

Nature Repair Workshop Carbon Farming



On Country For Country

Nature Repair Market Workbook

Prepared by: ABC Foundation, April 2025

This workbook is an introduction to biodiversity and nature repair, and how community-led action can help care for Country. It's made for Aboriginal rangers, Traditional Owners, and others working on Country with these groups explaining what nature repair is, why it matters, and how it connects to cultural and environmental knowledge.

It offers a solid starting point with simple explanations, checklists, activities, and ideas to help you start thinking about nature repair in your area to build confidence in starting these conversations.

NATURE REPAIR FUN FACTS

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Throughout the workbook you will find some amazing, surprising, and inspiring facts about Nature Repair and Biodiversity — Keep an eye out!



Disclaimer: The information contained in this workbook is current and accurate to the best of our knowledge as of July 2025. Users should check with relevant authorities or the ABC Foundation for the most up-to-date guidance and requirements before undertaking a Nature Repair project.

Module 1:

What is the Nature Repair Market?

This module introduces the Nature Repair Market – what it is, why it matters, and how it connects to Aboriginal Country and care for Country. By the end of this module, you'll be able to:

- Understand what the Nature Repair Market is
- Understand the key terms and ideas behind Nature Repair
- Recognise key ecosystems for the Nature Repair Market
- See how these ecosystems help fight climate change
- Understand Nature Repair in the Australian context
- Reflect on cultural and community connections to these ecosystems

What is Biodiversity and why is it Important?

 **Biodiversity – the variety of all living things**

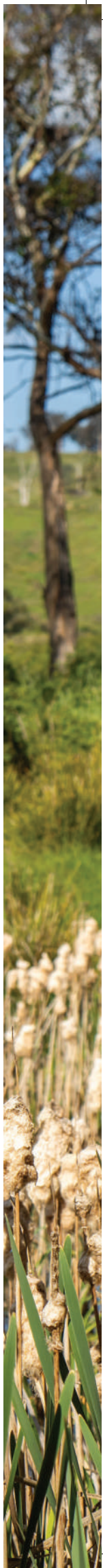
Biodiversity – the variety of all living things, from plants and animals to fungi and microorganisms – is the foundation of healthy ecosystems. Each species plays a unique role, contributing to natural processes like pollination, water filtration, soil formation, seed dispersal, and pest control. When ecosystems have high biodiversity, they are more **resilient to shocks** such as drought, fire, or disease, and can better adapt to changes over time – locking away carbon for many years to come. This resilience helps maintain ecosystem balance and supports long-term sustainability for both people and the environment.

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, biodiversity is also deeply cultural. Plants, animals, and landscapes hold knowledge, kinship ties, and stories passed down through generations. Healthy ecosystems mean not just environmental stability, but **cultural continuity, food security, and spiritual wellbeing**. Whether it's bush tucker, totem species, or ceremony places, biodiversity supports the full expression of Country. Protecting and restoring it strengthens both natural and cultural systems.



NATURE REPAIR FUN FACT

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Australia is home to more than 80% of species found nowhere else on Earth, including the platypus, numbat, and spinifex hopping mouse.



Australia's Role in Nature Repair

Australia is one of the most biodiverse countries on Earth, home to unique ecosystems found nowhere else – ranging from ancient rainforests and coral reefs to vast deserts and temperate woodlands. Yet, it also faces some of the highest biodiversity loss rates globally. In response, Australia is pioneering the **Nature Repair Market**, becoming one of the first nations to introduce a formal, government-backed system for investing in biodiversity restoration. This positions Australia as a leader in creating economic and policy tools that value ecological recovery – not just carbon reduction.

Globally, Australia's approach is being watched as a model for **how environmental markets can be designed to support both nature and Indigenous leadership**. With strong engagement from Traditional Owners, Ranger groups, and scientific institutions, the Nature Repair Market demonstrates how biodiversity repair can be community-led, culturally grounded, and scientifically rigorous. As global demand grows for nature-positive investments, Australia is helping to shape international standards and inspire similar initiatives across other countries facing biodiversity crises.

What is the Nature Repair Market?



The Nature Repair Market is built around the protection and regeneration of native species, ecosystems, and landscapes

The **Nature Repair Market** is a landmark national initiative by the Australian Government designed to encourage investment in environmental restoration and biodiversity enhancement. It provides a formal, regulated system through which landholders, Traditional Owners, community groups, and conservation organisations can receive recognition – and potentially income – for their work repairing and protecting Australia's unique natural ecosystems. Projects that demonstrate measurable improvements to biodiversity, such as habitat restoration, species protection, or invasive species management, may be eligible to earn **Biodiversity Certificates**, which can be bought by individuals or organisations aiming to contribute to nature-positive outcomes.

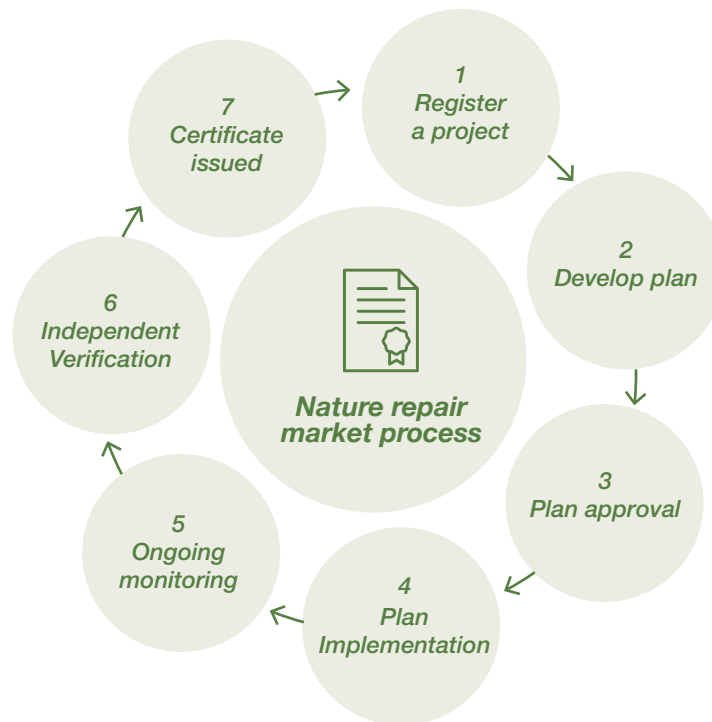
Unlike carbon markets that focus on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, the Nature Repair Market is built around the protection and regeneration of native species, ecosystems, and landscapes. It recognises that healthy Country – rich in biodiversity – is foundational to climate resilience, sustainable economies, and cultural survival. For Aboriginal Ranger groups, the Nature Repair Market represents not just an environmental opportunity, but a chance to align cultural responsibilities with national recognition and new sources of funding. It supports a model where two-way science, cultural governance, and community-driven land management are central to restoring Country for future generations.



NATURE REPAIR FUN FACT

Some native Australian trees can live for over 1,000 years, quietly storing carbon and supporting entire ecosystems.

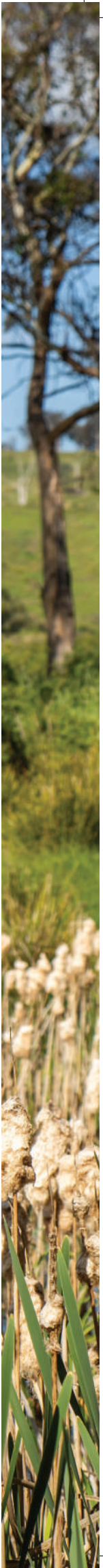
How the Nature Repair Market Works



The **Nature Repair Market** operates by awarding **Biodiversity Certificates** to projects that can demonstrate real, measurable improvements to biodiversity. These improvements might include restoring native vegetation, protecting threatened species, reconnecting habitat corridors, or removing invasive plants and animals. To ensure transparency and integrity, projects are assessed against approved methods and verified by independent assessors before certificates are issued. These certificates can then be sold to buyers – such as companies, philanthropists, or government agencies – who want to support nature-positive outcomes.

The process begins with a project proponent (e.g. Aboriginal Ranger group, landholder, or organisation) registering a biodiversity project under the Nature Repair Market scheme.

A biodiversity project plan is developed, outlining the proposed activities and how ecological outcomes will be monitored. The aim of a Nature Repair Project will be to restore the land to its “**Reference Ecosystem**” (see page 6). Once approved, the project is implemented on the ground, followed by ongoing monitoring to track changes in biodiversity. After sufficient progress is shown, the project undergoes independent verification, and a certificate is issued. Importantly, a project must show that it has resulted in gains to biodiversity that are additional to the “**Counterfactual Scenario**” (see page 7). This market system helps ensure that those working to heal Country – especially Traditional Owners – can access funding, recognition, and long-term support for looking after their land in ways that align with cultural and environmental values.



Culturally Significant Entities

In Nature Repair projects, **culturally significant entities** – such as totem species, bush foods, ceremonial plants, or places linked to ancestral stories – can be used as **cultural indicators** to help measure project success. Their presence, return, or improved condition provides meaningful insight into how well a project is supporting both ecological restoration and cultural connection. Including these indicators alongside scientific measures ensures that the project reflects the values, priorities, and lived experience of Traditional Owners and communities.

What is a Reference Ecosystem?

A reference ecosystem is a healthy, natural version of the type of ecosystem you're trying to restore through a nature repair project

A **reference ecosystem** is a healthy, natural version of the type of ecosystem you're trying to restore through a nature repair project – it is the highest level of ecological integrity, stability and resilience that the land could attain. It serves as a guide or benchmark to help determine what species, structure, and functions should be present at your site. Reference ecosystems are based on local examples of undisturbed or well-functioning ecosystems, and they help ensure that restoration work is ecologically appropriate, regionally relevant, and grounded in real-world conditions.



NATURE REPAIR FUN FACT

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One teaspoon of healthy soil can contain over a billion living organisms – most of them invisible to the eye but essential for plant life.

The Counterfactual Scenario

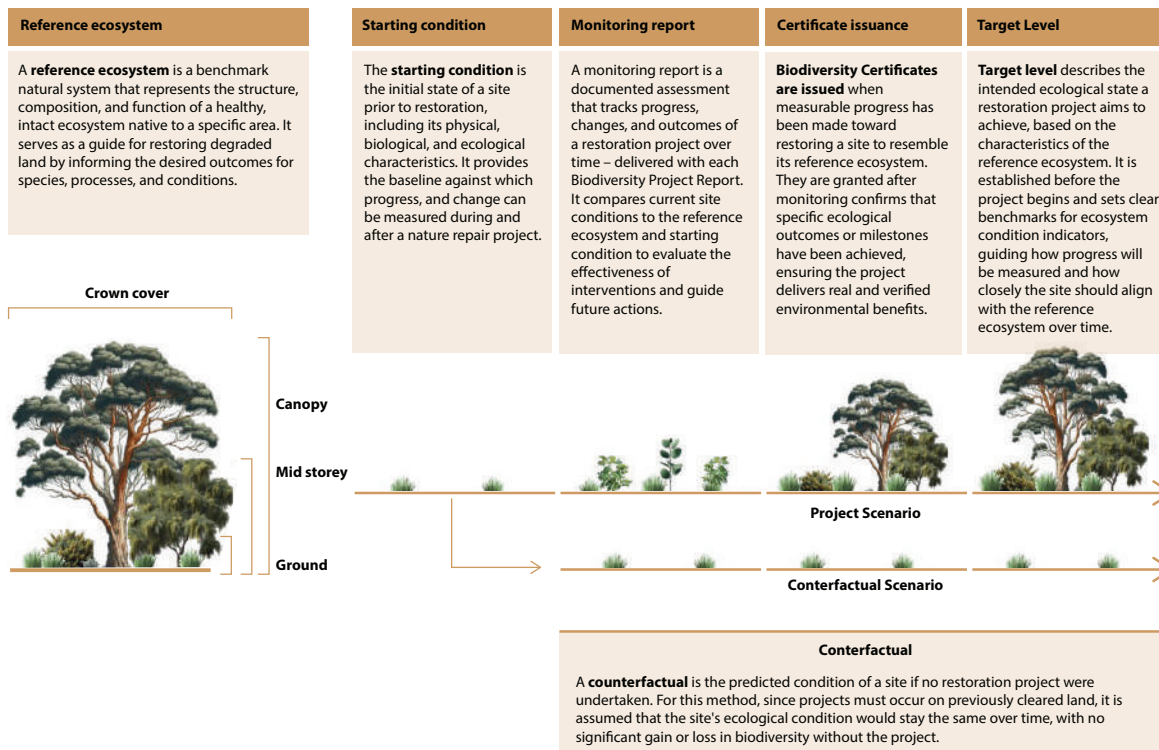
In the context of Nature Repair projects, the counterfactual scenario refers to what would likely happen to the land or ecosystem **if the project did not take place**. It's essentially a "baseline scenario" that helps compare the actual outcomes of the project against what would have occurred **without intervention**.

Understanding the counterfactual is important because:

- It provides a **reference point** to measure the true impact of restoration or protection activities.
- It helps verify that improvements (like increased species richness or habitat quality) are the **direct result of the project**.

- It ensures **Biodiversity Certificates** are awarded only when genuine, additional biodiversity benefits are delivered – beyond what would have occurred naturally or through business-as-usual land management.

For example, if an area was already recovering naturally due to low disturbance, doing nothing might lead to modest biodiversity gains over time. But if a Nature Repair project actively restores the site – such as controlling weeds, replanting native species, and managing fire – those **additional improvements** can be measured against the counterfactual to demonstrate success.



Original image source: cer.gov.au

Permanence Periods

In the Nature Repair Market, a **permanence period** is the minimum length of time that a project's biodiversity improvements must be maintained and protected – typically ranging from **25 to 100 years**, depending on the method used. This ensures that the environmental benefits, such as restored habitats or increased species richness, are not just short-term. During the permanence period, project proponents must actively manage the site and may be required to submit regular reports to demonstrate that biodiversity outcomes are being upheld. If a project fails to meet its permanence obligations – such as through land clearing or significant degradation – there may be consequences, including the requirement to **relinquish (return or cancel) Biodiversity Certificates** that were previously issued, in order to maintain the market's credibility and integrity.

Where Can Nature Repair Take Place?

The Nature Repair Market is designed to support biodiversity enhancement across a wide range of ecosystems – terrestrial, freshwater, and coastal – provided they contribute to measurable ecological improvement. Restoration activities may include replanting native species, managing fire regimes, protecting threatened fauna, restoring water flows, or removing invasive species.

Important Note:

*As of July 2025, there is currently only one approved method for the Nature Repair Market – – **The Replanting Native Forest and Woodland Ecosystems Method.***

In Western Australia, one example of a suitable ecosystem is the Midwest’s degraded sandplain woodlands, home to species like the Carnaby’s Black-Cockatoo and native Banksia. A nature repair project here might involve controlling invasive weeds, fencing sensitive areas from grazing, and re-establishing native understory vegetation to reconnect fragmented habitat corridors. These actions could increase habitat quality and native species abundance – making the project eligible for a Biodiversity Certificate under the scheme.

Example Ecosystems For Nature Repair in Australia

Temperate Woodlands and Grasslands (e.g. Box-Gum Grassy Woodlands)

- Found in southeastern Australia, including NSW, VIC, and parts of southern QLD.
- Heavily cleared for agriculture – less than 5% remains in good condition.
- Provide habitat for endangered species like the Swift Parrot and Squirrel Glider.
- Restoration activities: native species replanting, removal of exotic species, fencing remnant patches.

Mallee and Sandplain Shrublands (e.g. Western Australia’s Wheatbelt and Midwest)

- Among the most biodiverse but fragmented regions in the country.

- Habitat for endangered plants, reptiles, and birds like the Malleefowl.
- Restoration activities: native species replanting, seed broadcasting, rabbit control, reconnecting habitat corridors.

Rainforests and Gondwanan Remnants (e.g. Daintree, Gondwana Rainforests of NSW & QLD)

- World Heritage-listed, ancient ecosystems with very high species richness.
- Threatened by climate change, invasive species, and land-use change.
- Restoration activities: weed removal, native tree planting, biosecurity management.



NATURE REPAIR FUN FACT

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Mallee trees have lignotubers – underground woody lumps that allow them to regrow after fire, drought, or damage.

Threats to Ecosystems in Australia

Australia has one of the highest rates of land clearing in the developed world



1. Habitat Loss and Fragmentation

Australia has one of the highest rates of land clearing in the developed world. The removal of native vegetation for agriculture, mining, infrastructure, and urban sprawl reduces available habitat for wildlife and breaks up continuous ecosystems into isolated fragments. This disrupts ecological processes like migration, breeding, and seed dispersal, and increases edge effects (e.g. exposure to wind, weeds, and predators).

Nature Repair Solutions:

- **Re-establish wildlife corridors** between bushland patches to allow animals to move safely.
- **Restore native plant communities** in cleared or degraded landscapes.
- **Protect high-value remnants** through fencing, stewardship agreements, and covenanting.
- **Example:** Reconnecting fragmented Wandoo woodlands in WA's Wheatbelt to support threatened black-cockatoos and increase plant diversity.



2. Invasive Species (Plants and Animals)

Australia's biodiversity is severely impacted by introduced species. Feral cats and foxes are leading causes of mammal extinction, while invasive grasses like Buffel and Gamba crowd out native plants and fuel intense wildfires. Invasive plants also disrupt soil chemistry and hydrology, creating monocultures that reduce habitat quality for native fauna.

Nature Repair Solutions:

- **Remove invasive flora** using chemical, manual, and cultural techniques.
- **Implement feral animal control programs** (trapping, exclusion fencing, baiting where appropriate).
- **Replant native species** to outcompete weeds and rebuild ecological resilience.
- **Example:** Eradicating Parkinsonia and rubber vine from riparian areas in the Kimberley to protect waterholes used by wildlife and traditional harvesters.





3. Soil Erosion and Salinity

Poor land management practices, including overgrazing and vegetation removal, have led to widespread soil erosion and dryland salinity. In many areas, rising water tables bring salt to the surface, killing vegetation and creating barren landscapes. These degraded soils lose their ability to support biodiversity or produce food.

Nature Repair Solutions:

- **Plant deep-rooted native species** to lower water tables and stabilise soil.
- **Use erosion control structures** like sediment traps or contour bunds.
- **Control grazing pressure** and rehabilitate groundcover.
- **Example:** In WA's Avon River basin, restoring York Gum and Jam shrubland to halt salinity spread and return habitat for native marsupials.



4. Degraded Waterways and Wetlands

Australia's inland rivers and wetlands are under intense pressure from over-extraction, altered flows, pollution, and physical damage from stock. Wetlands that were once seasonally flooded are now permanently dry or filled with weeds. Riparian zones – crucial buffer areas – are often stripped of vegetation, leading to erosion and poor water quality.

Nature Repair Solutions:

- **Reinstate natural water flows** to wetlands and riverbanks.
- **Revegetate riparian areas** with native sedges, reeds, and trees.
- **Install fencing and off-stream watering** to reduce livestock impacts.
- **Example:** Re-wetting parts of the Peel-Harvey estuarine system in WA to improve fish nurseries, waterbirds, and water filtration services.



NATURE REPAIR FUN FACT

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Mangroves act like living seawalls, protecting coastlines from storm surges while trapping carbon and sediment.



The Replanting Native Forest and Woodland Ecosystems Method

The **Replanting Native Forest and Woodland Ecosystems method** under the Nature Repair Market supports the restoration of cleared or degraded land by establishing native vegetation communities. This method focuses on replanting local species – trees, shrubs, and groundcover – to recreate functioning ecosystems that resemble the natural vegetation types of the area. The goal is not just to grow trees, but to rebuild habitats that support biodiversity, including pollinators, birds, mammals, and understory plants.

Projects using this method must follow ecological best practices and demonstrate that the replanting will deliver long-term improvements in biodiversity. This includes planning for plant diversity, using local provenance seed, and managing threats like weeds and grazing. Over time, restored sites are monitored for indicators such as

species richness, vegetation structure, and habitat connectivity. This method is well-suited to farms, conservation areas, or cultural landscapes where native ecosystems have been lost, and it can generate **Biodiversity Certificates** once verified outcomes are achieved.

More information can be found here:
<https://www.dcceew.gov.au/environment/environmental-markets/nature-repair-market/replanting-native-forest-woodland-ecosystem-method>




NATURE REPAIR FUN FACT

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Restoring native vegetation can cool the surrounding air by several degrees, reducing the effects of heatwaves.





Example: Nature Repair in Practice – The Gondwana Link Project

A powerful example of Nature Repair in action is found in the **Gondwana Link** project in **Southwest Western Australia**. This ambitious initiative aims to reconnect and restore fragmented ecosystems across a 1,000 km corridor from the karri forests near Margaret River to the dry woodlands of the Great Western Woodlands.

In areas near **Fitzgerald River National Park and Nowanup Station**, Traditional Owners, conservation groups, and landholders have collaborated to replant thousands of hectares of native woodland using local provenance species. The focus is not just on tree planting but on **reconstructing diverse bushland communities**, including banksias, wattles, and understory herbs and grasses. These efforts have created habitat for species like the **Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo, Honey**

Possum, and native orchids, while also restoring cultural connections to Noongar Country.

These restoration efforts align closely with the Nature Repair Market's goals – demonstrating how large-scale, community-led replanting projects can improve biodiversity and ecosystem function over time.

***Note:** While the Gondwana Link project is not currently part of the Nature Repair Market and was established prior to the scheme's introduction, it shares the same objectives of long-term, measurable biodiversity repair. It serves as a practical and inspiring example of the type of work the Nature Repair Market is designed to support.*

Can I Run a Carbon Project & a Nature Repair Project Together? - Introducing “Stacking”

In short – Yes!

“Stacking” a Nature Repair project with a **carbon farming project** means running both biodiversity and carbon-related activities on the same piece of land in a way that allows you to potentially access **both Biodiversity Certificates and carbon credits** (such as ACCUs). The idea is that a single well-designed project – like restoring native vegetation – can deliver **multiple environmental benefits**: improving biodiversity and storing carbon.

To be stacked, the two components must:

- Use **approved methods** under each scheme (e.g. the Nature Repair Market and the ACCU scheme)

- Measure and report on **distinct outcomes** (e.g. species return vs. carbon sequestration)
- Avoid **double counting** – you can't claim the same outcome under both markets

For example, a project that **replants native woodland** might improve habitat for threatened species (earning Biodiversity Certificates) while also drawing down carbon and storing it in vegetation and soils (earning ACCUs). Stacking allows landholders or Traditional Owner groups to **maximise benefits** – both ecological and financial – while maintaining strong cultural and environmental integrity.



The Link to Climate Action

Nature and biodiversity repair are powerful tools for climate action because healthy ecosystems act as natural climate buffers. Forests, wetlands, grasslands, and coastal systems absorb and store carbon, cool local climates, retain water, and reduce the impacts of extreme weather events like floods, droughts, and heatwaves. When these ecosystems are degraded, not only is biodiversity lost, but stored carbon can be released back into the atmosphere, and landscapes become more vulnerable to climate stress.

By restoring native vegetation, reconnecting habitats, and improving land health, biodiversity repair helps build **resilient, low-emission landscapes** that benefit both people and the planet. These efforts also support cultural practices and traditional ecological knowledge, particularly in Aboriginal-led projects that use techniques like cultural burning and seed saving. In this way, nature repair contributes to both **mitigation** (reducing emissions) and **adaptation** (helping communities cope with climate change) – making it a key pillar of climate solutions.

What You Can Do Now to Support Healthy, Biodiverse Ecosystems



Everyday people can make a real difference for biodiversity

Everyday people can make a real difference for biodiversity by taking simple, place-based actions. Whether you live in the city, country, or coast, small efforts add up to big outcomes for ecosystems.

Examples of what you can do:

- Plant native trees, shrubs, and grasses in your garden or community space
- Avoid pesticides and herbicides that harm insects and soil life
- Volunteer with local Landcare, bush regeneration, or wildlife groups
- Choose sustainable, low-impact products and avoid overconsumption
- Reduce plastic use and join litter clean-up efforts in parks and waterways
- Stick to marked trails when exploring natural areas to avoid damaging habitat
- Learn about local species and share your knowledge with others
- Support and donate to Indigenous and community-led nature repair projects

These everyday actions help protect biodiversity, strengthen ecosystems, and build a healthier future for Country.





Module 2: Project Pathways

From Vision to Implementation

Nature Repair projects can be incredibly rewarding – for climate, culture, biodiversity, and community. But they require thoughtful, step-by-step planning. This module breaks down what’s involved in designing and delivering a successful Nature Repair initiative, whether it’s restoration, protection, or a research-led project:

Step 1:

Understand the Ecosystem

Step 2:

Engage Traditional Owners and Stakeholders

Step 3:

Define the Project Type

Step 4:

Check Methodology and Funding Options

Step 5:

Design the Intervention Plan

Step 6:

Implement Monitoring and Reporting Systems

Step 7:

Report and Reflect

Step 8:

Maintain Biodiversity Outcomes – Permanence

Step 1: Understand the Ecosystem

Understanding the ecosystem before starting a nature repair project is essential for ensuring that restoration efforts are appropriate, effective, and sustainable. A thorough understanding helps identify the **reference ecosystem** – a healthy, intact version of what the site should look like – so that the project has a clear ecological benchmark to aim for. It also helps uncover key factors

like soil type, climate, native species, and past disturbances, which inform decisions about which plants to use and which threats to manage. This knowledge is critical for **mitigating risks**, such as planting species that won’t survive or unintentionally spreading invasive plants. In many cases, gaining this understanding may require working with **experts in ecology, botany, hydrology, or land management**, who can help assess site conditions and guide planning. By grounding the project in solid ecological knowledge, teams can set **measurable, achievable goals**, track progress meaningfully, and adapt as needed to ensure long-term biodiversity outcomes.

Key Questions:

What kind of ecosystem is it?
(Forest, Mangrove, Woodland, salt marsh, etc.)

What is the reference ecosystem?

Is restoration of this land to it’s reference ecosystem possible?

Is it degraded, stable, or recovering?

What are the specific climatic conditions for this area?

What pressures or threats exist (e.g. grazing, pollution, development)?

Tools and Techniques:

- GIS mapping, aerial drones, and historical satellite imagery
- Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) from Elders and Rangers
- Biodiversity and vegetation surveys
- Carbon stock assessments (above- and below-ground)

Step 2: Engage Traditional Owners and Stakeholders

Successful Nature Repair projects are built on partnerships – especially where Country, Native Title, or community trust is involved.

Engage:

- Traditional Owner groups and Elders
- Aboriginal Ranger teams
- Local landholders
- Local government, scientists/researchers, and NGOs

Co-Design Principles:

- Respect cultural protocols and decision-making structures
- Ensure Elders and knowledge holders guide planning
- Use local language, stories, and visual tools for consultation
- Offer training and job pathways as part of the project vision

Case Example:

In the Fitzroy River region of Western Australia, Traditional Owners were consulted in the early planning stages of a nature repair project focused on restoring riparian woodlands and controlling invasive weeds. Elders from multiple language groups shared seasonal knowledge about native plants, flood cycles, and culturally significant species like river gums and bush medicines. Through on-Country meetings and yarning circles, the project team co-designed restoration zones that aligned with both ecological goals and cultural priorities. This approach ensured that traditional ecological knowledge guided decisions, sacred sites were respected, and local Ranger teams were empowered to lead monitoring and land care activities.

***Note:** This project began before the launch of the Nature Repair Market and is therefore not eligible for Biodiversity Certificates. However, it strongly reflects the same goals and values – restoring ecosystems, enhancing biodiversity, and caring for Country in ways that align with the spirit of a Nature Repair project.*

Step 3: Define the Project Type

Nature Repair & Biodiversity projects can come in many shapes and sizes, not all will be relevant to your project. It is important to define the goals of the project early in the process, as this will shape how activities may be undertaken. Earning Biodiversity Certificates doesn't need to be the end goal of a Nature Repair project, improvements to country, biodiversity and community may be more important to your group. If earning certificates is a goal of your project, it is important to align your project closely with currently approved methods. Currently in Australia there is only one accepted method for generating Biodiversity Certificates, the **Replanting native forest and woodland ecosystems method**.

***Note:** Not all ecosystems currently have eligible Nature Repair methods under the Nature Repair Market, but these are evolving fast. Restoration may also qualify for philanthropic or international Biodiversity certificates.*



NATURE REPAIR FUN FACT

Biodiverse farms are more resilient to pests, droughts, and extreme weather than monoculture farms.



Step 4: Check Methodology and Funding Options

The Nature Repair Market is a **new and evolving system**, designed to grow and improve over time. As our understanding of biodiversity and ecosystem restoration deepens, **new methods are regularly developed** and existing ones are updated to reflect the latest science, policy, and community feedback. Because of this, it's important to **check with the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW)** and/or the Clean Energy Regulator (CER) to ensure you're using the most up-to-date and approved methods for your project. Staying informed helps ensure your work aligns with current standards and can be eligible for Biodiversity Certificates.

*Currently the only Nature Repair Market method that can generate Biodiversity Certificates is the **Replanting native forest and woodland ecosystems method**, however new methods are being developed.*

Check with:

- The Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW)
- Clean Energy Regulator (CER)
- Philanthropic funders or state-based environmental programs

Note: *A project may not need to be eligible for Biodiversity Certificates to still deliver jobs, biodiversity, and climate outcomes.*

Step 5: Design the Intervention Plan

An **intervention plan** in the context of the Nature Repair Market is a detailed roadmap that outlines the specific actions a project will take to improve biodiversity on a given site. It describes what will be restored or protected – such as native vegetation, habitat structures, or species populations – and how those activities will be carried out. The plan includes timelines, site maps, the methods used (like replanting, fencing, or invasive species control), and how progress will be monitored and reported. A strong intervention plan is essential for demonstrating that the project is well-designed, achievable, and capable of delivering measurable biodiversity outcomes, which is a key requirement for earning Biodiversity Certificates.

This is your “what and how” – what will change at the site, how will it be done, and who will do it?

Include:

- Restoration targets (e.g. “replant 2 hectares of Banksia Woodland”)
- Project maps
- Timeline (e.g. staged over 2 years)
- Partners and roles
- Permits and regulatory approvals needed
- Community training and job creation pathways
- Monitoring framework (see Step 6)

Tips for Success:

- Work with experts in Nature Repair, Ecology, Conservation and Soil Science
- Consider climate resilience (global warming, erosion, shifts in rainfall)
- Include varied cultural and biodiversity indicators



NATURE REPAIR FUN FACT

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Australia has more than 1,200 species of native bees – and most of them don't sting!

Step 6: Implement Monitoring and Reporting Systems

Monitoring and reporting systems are used to track a nature repair project's progress and outcomes over time. They involve collecting data on key ecological indicators – such as species presence, vegetation health, or weed reduction – to show whether the project is meeting its biodiversity goals. In the **Nature Repair Market**, this data is essential to verify that real, measurable improvements have occurred and to qualify for Biodiversity Certificates.

These systems are important because they:

- Provide **evidence** of ecological outcomes
- Support **adaptive management** – helping teams adjust when needed
- Ensure **accountability** to funders, partners, and communities
- Allow for **cultural indicators** to be included alongside scientific ones
- Build a transparent record of success over the long term

Involving Traditional Owners in monitoring ensures that both ecological and cultural values are recognised, strengthening the integrity and relevance of the project

Step 7: Report and Reflect

Reporting and reflecting with community is vital because it ensures transparency, builds trust, and keeps everyone connected to the progress and purpose of the project. Sharing updates through yarning circles, community meetings, or visual storytelling helps people see the impact of their efforts, celebrate successes, and raise any concerns early. It also creates space for Elders, youth, and other community members to contribute knowledge, shape future decisions, and strengthen cultural ownership of the work.

Keep your community and partners updated:

- Share photos, results, and stories
- Host feedback yarning circles or site visits

Evaluate: Did we meet our cultural, environmental, and training goals?

Reporting to certificate registries and the Clean Energy Regulator (CER) is a key step in the Nature Repair Market process. It involves submitting verified evidence that the project has achieved measurable biodiversity

improvements in line with approved methods. This reporting must be accurate, consistent, and supported by monitoring data. Once reviewed and validated, the CER can issue a **Biodiversity Certificate**, formally recognising the project's contribution to restoring and protecting ecosystems. This step ensures integrity, transparency, and trust in the market.

Step 8: Maintain Biodiversity Outcomes – Permanence

Maintaining biodiversity is a critical part of meeting the **permanence requirements** set out in your selected Nature Repair method. Once your project is established, you are responsible for **protecting and managing the biodiversity gains** – such as restored habitat, native vegetation, or species recovery – for the full duration of the method's permanence period, which is typically **25 or 100 years** (or another time period, if specified by the method). This means ongoing site care, monitoring, and threat management (like controlling weeds, fire, or grazing) to ensure that ecological outcomes are not lost over time. Failing to meet these requirements may result in the need to **relinquish issued Biodiversity Certificates**, so long-term planning and community commitment are essential for success.

Checklist: Are We Ready to Launch?

There's no one-size-fits-all blueprint for a Nature Repair project. Your team might:

- Start small with a site clean-up or fencing project
- Dive deep into biodiversity certificate registration
- Focus on reviving cultural relationships with natural places

What matters most is that the pathway is culturally strong, scientifically sound, and community-led.

Nature Repair projects are not just technical – they're cultural, relational, and intergenerational. Here's how Ranger teams can take a leadership role while safeguarding the values, voices, and rights of their communities.





Module 3: Cultural and Community Importance

Module 3a: Considerations for Organisations Working with Aboriginal Rangers

Nature Repair projects are not just about biodiversity support and climate mitigation. For Indigenous communities, these ecosystems are living, breathing Country – rich with spirit, memory, and meaning. This module explores how culture, community, and co-design must sit at the centre of all Nature Repair work.

Ecosystems Are Living Cultural Landscapes

For Aboriginal people, ecosystems are more than just physical environments – they are **living cultural landscapes** deeply connected to identity, lore, and spirituality. Country holds ancestral stories, totem species, and ceremonial sites that guide cultural responsibilities and ways of life. Restoring and protecting ecosystems also helps restore cultural strength.

Key points:

- Ecosystems are tied to **songlines, Dreaming stories, and kinship systems**
- They provide **food, medicine, materials,** and places for ceremony and teaching
- They are Home to ancestors and connected to sacred stories and songlines.
- Certain species and sites hold **totemic or sacred significance**
- Caring for these places is part of fulfilling **cultural obligations and Lore**
- Biodiversity loss can mean loss of **language, stories, and intergenerational knowledge**

These ecosystems are inseparable from identity and lore. Any project that treats them only as an economic opportunity, risks erasing their cultural reality and misaligning with local governance and values.

Why Co-Design Matters

Co-design with Aboriginal communities means working in genuine partnership from the very beginning of a project – shaping goals, methods, timelines, and outcomes together. It ensures that Traditional Owners have real decision-making power, not just a seat at the table. Co-design respects cultural protocols, values local knowledge, and builds trust by embedding community priorities into every stage of the project. It leads to stronger outcomes because it honours the people who know Country best and ensures the work is done in ways that are culturally safe, relevant, and sustainable.

It means Traditional Owners are involved from concept to delivery, with joint control over:

- The project goals
- The storylines and knowledge being shared
- The benefit sharing
- The monitoring and storytelling

True co-design includes:

- Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) before site assessments or technical studies.
- Culturally appropriate consultation, not just one-off meetings.
- Recognition of local governance structures, such as Elders Councils, Prescribed Bodies Corporate, or Ranger Advisory Boards.
- Time and space for yarning, seasonal calendars, and Indigenous decision-making.

Intergenerational Knowledge and Community Strength

Nature Repair projects can – and should – be vehicles for strengthening community.

They offer a rare opportunity to:

- Connect young people with Elders
- Use two-way learning (traditional + Western science)
- Preserve and revitalise language related to sea life, tides, and species
- Rebuild connection to Country after trauma or dislocation

Examples:

- Language names for animals, plants, and weather/seasonal patterns added to monitoring tools
- Seasonal calendars developed by Elders and Junior Rangers together
- Story circles where community members record memories of fishing, harvesting, or ceremony on tidal lands

Caring for Country – Embedding Cultural Protocols in Project Planning

“Caring for Country” includes cultural, spiritual, emotional, and ecological responsibilities. Rangers are not just workers – they are custodians.

Embedding cultural protocols into project planning is essential for ensuring that nature repair projects are respectful, inclusive, and culturally safe. These protocols – such as seeking permission to access Country, engaging Elders first, and recognising men’s and women’s business – help guide how work should be done in a way that honours local lore and customs. When properly embedded, cultural protocols protect sacred sites, strengthen community ownership, and build lasting trust between project partners and Traditional Owners.

Cultural protocols may include:

- Seeking permission to access country
- Recognising men’s and women’s business
- Acknowledgment and Welcome to Country
- Engaging elders first

These are not “barriers” to progress – they are essential governance tools that protect both people and places.

Nature Repair work should:

- Be guided by cultural lore, not just science
- Recognise that some places may be off-limits for restoration or commercialisation
- Avoid disrupting cultural fire regimes, access routes, or Dreaming stories

Cultural Indicators for Monitoring and Evaluation

Integrating cultural indicators into project planning for monitoring and evaluation is essential for recognising the full value of nature repair work. These indicators reflect the cultural, spiritual, and community outcomes that matter most to Traditional Owners, going beyond scientific measures alone. Including them ensures that projects are accountable to cultural priorities, support intergenerational knowledge, and reflect the lived experience of those connected to the land. It also strengthens the integrity of the project by valuing two-way learning and culturally informed definitions of success.

Example Indicators:

- Return of totem species
- Return of bush foods/medicines
- Increased participation in cultural practices

These can be captured through:

- Yarning sessions
- Visual storytelling (e.g. murals, photography, videos)
- Ranger/Elder joint reports



NATURE REPAIR FUN FACT

.....
Dead trees (snags) are crucial habitat for bats, parrots, and many insects – so not all fallen wood should be removed.



Cultural Risk Management

Nature Repair projects that don't respect cultural values can lead to serious and lasting consequences. When cultural protocols and community voices are ignored, it can create **division within the community**, damage long-standing relationships, and **cause a loss of trust in Ranger programs** that are meant to serve and protect Country. Disrespecting **sacred sites or traditional knowledge** – even unintentionally – can harm the spiritual and cultural fabric of a place, undermining the integrity of the entire project. To manage these risks, it's essential to **engage Traditional Owners early**, follow local governance and decision-making structures, and ensure that cultural protocols are embedded into every stage of the project – from planning and site selection to monitoring and reporting. Open communication, respect, and co-design are key to building trust and long-term success.

To avoid this, build in:

- Cultural Safety Plans
- Conflict Resolution processes
- Clear role definitions and expectations between partners

Cultural Questions to Ask Before You Start

Use these prompts during early planning stages:

Whose Country are we working on?

Have we spoken with the right Elders and families?

Are we working at the right time (culturally, seasonally)?

What stories, species, or sacred lores live here?

How will this project help heal and empower our people?

Are we protecting culture from being commodified or misused?

Who benefits, and who decides?

Summary:

Culture Is Not a Tick-Box – It's the Foundation

Nature Repair projects succeed when they are:

- Culturally safe
- Community-led
- Built on trust and story

They should strengthen connection to Country and empower the next generation of custodians – not just increase biodiversity.

Module 3b: What Should Aboriginal Ranger Teams Consider?

We Are More Than Workers – We Are Custodians

Ecosystems for the Nature Repair Market are deeply entrenched in Country, carrying ancestral lore, language, and identity. As Rangers, your role in these projects is not just environmental or scientific – it is deeply cultural, grounded in your responsibility to care for land and uphold cultural knowledge.

What does this place mean to us beyond biodiversity?

Who are the story holders and decision-makers for this Country?

What values and responsibilities do our mob carry for these ecosystems?

Rangers are not contractors – they are protectors of story, identity, and lore.

Ensure Projects Align with Cultural Lore and Governance

Not every opportunity is the right one – even if it brings jobs or Biodiversity Certificates. As a Ranger team, you must:

- Check that the project respects local lore and decision-making.
- Make sure Elders and cultural authorities are part of early discussions.
- Confirm with your Prescribed Body Corporate (PBC) or equivalent body before giving approval or access.

Protect Storylines, Sacred Sites, and Knowledge

Forests, woodlands, and other areas may contain:

- Burial grounds
- Ceremonial or gender-specific spaces
- Totemic species or songlines

You may need to:

- Exclude certain zones from restoration or mapping
- Conduct cleansing ceremonies before project activity
- Use restricted knowledge protocols when discussing these places with outsiders

Tip: Build cultural buffers into restoration plans – not every metre of country should be touched.

Own the Knowledge Pathways

Owning traditional knowledge pathways in nature repair projects means ensuring that Indigenous knowledge is protected, respected, and controlled by the communities it belongs to. This includes deciding how knowledge is shared, who has access to it, and how it is used within the project. By maintaining ownership, Traditional Owners can safeguard cultural integrity, ensure knowledge is applied appropriately, and prevent misuse or exploitation. It also reinforces self-determination and ensures that nature repair is done in ways that honour cultural authority and connection to Country.

Data is power. Ensure your team:

- Has control over how data is collected, stored, and shared
- Agrees to any use of drone footage, GIS data, or satellite maps
- Embeds cultural indicators alongside biodiversity data (e.g. return of totem species, traditional harvesting, community well-being)

Suggested tool: Develop a “Two-Way Monitoring Plan” with a science lead and a cultural lead.

Educate the Educators – Hold Space for Two-Way Learning

Many scientists, consultants, and funders entering the Nature Repair Market have:

- Little understanding of cultural protocol
- Limited experience with Indigenous knowledge systems

As Rangers, you are in a position to teach respectfully:

- Host “on-Country induction days” for visitors
- Share seasonal calendars and cultural maps (as appropriate)
- Explain decision-making timelines, which may differ from bureaucratic ones

Champion Community Benefits Beyond Biodiversity

Nature Repair projects can:

- Fund long-term ranger employment
- Create youth training and Junior Ranger pathways
- Reconnect families to Country
- Heal intergenerational disconnection

But only if your team is at the centre of benefit planning. Ask:

- How does this help our people reconnect with our stories?
- Are we building our own ranger enterprise or becoming reliant on outsiders?
- Are we getting just jobs – or governance, data, leadership and legacy?



NATURE REPAIR FUN FACT

.....
One mature wattle tree can produce thousands of seeds in a single season – great for regeneration, but also tricky to manage if not monitored.





Module 4: Risks and Challenges

Staying on Track - Managing Risks in Nature Repair Projects

Nature Repair projects are powerful, but they're not easy. They operate at the intersection of climate science, community expectations, cultural lore, environmental variability, and evolving regulation. This module outlines the key risks – and how to meet them with clear-eyed, culturally safe, and strategic responses.

Clarify Land and Sea Rights – Before the Project Begins

Areas on country often have complex tenure arrangements – often having overlapping rights and interests. You may be dealing with:

- Native Title areas
- Crown land
- Marine parks
- Pastoral leases
- Intertidal zones

Each layer may carry different decision-makers, laws, and cultural custodians and lore.

- Consult the Prescribed Body Corporate (PBC)
- Identify who holds decision-making power for different zones
- Avoid signing MOUs or supporting restoration activities without legal clarity

Environmental and Physical Risks

Nature repair projects often operate in complex, dynamic environments, where natural forces and site conditions can affect success. Without careful planning, projects may face setbacks due to erosion, extreme weather, or ecological instability. Understanding these risks early helps teams plan for resilience and avoid unintended damage to ecosystems.

Examples of environmental and physical risks:

- Flooding or heavy rainfall washing away new plantings
- Drought conditions limiting plant survival or regeneration
- Soil erosion destabilising restored areas
- Fire damaging young vegetation or sensitive habitat
- Sea level rise or tidal changes altering coastal restoration zones
- Invasive species re-establishing if not properly managed

Factoring these risks into intervention plans and timelines is essential for long-term success.

Managing environmental and physical risks in nature repair projects requires proactive planning, adaptive management, and strong ecological understanding. By anticipating challenges and building resilience into the project design, teams can reduce the likelihood of setbacks and support long-term success.

Examples of risk management strategies:

- Select hardy native species suited to local conditions
- Use erosion control measures like contour planting or mulching
- Schedule planting during seasons with reliable rainfall
- Build climate buffers by planting a mix of species and age classes
- Consult hydrologists or soil scientists to assess water flow and site stability
- Monitor regularly and adapt methods based on what's working or failing

Taking these steps helps ensure that nature repair efforts are not only effective, but sustainable over time.



Regulatory and Legal Risks

The Nature Repair Market is still emerging. The rules around what counts, who owns it, and how certificates are created are still developing.

Risks Include:

- Lack of approved Nature Repair methods (Only one currently – **The Replanting Native Forest and Woodland Ecosystems Method**)
- Confusion over land tenure – e.g., Native Title vs. Crown land vs. State
- Changing government policies or biodiversity accounting rules
- Insecure access or conflicts over land/sea rights

Tips for reducing these risks:

- Work with legal experts who understand both The Nature Repair Market and Indigenous land rights
- Develop clear benefit-sharing agreements with Traditional Owners and community
- Treat Nature Repair projects as part of a long-term strategy, not a one-off revenue source



Technical and Data Challenges

Nature Repair projects require robust scientific data, including reference ecosystem data, climatic conditions, biomass, species composition, biodiversity, and sediment composition. But many areas haven't been properly mapped, lack consistent long-term data, and have complex climate dynamics that are hard to model.

Risks:

- Inaccurate or incomplete baseline data can jeopardise certificate eligibility
- Overpromising biodiversity improvements may damage credibility
- Delays in data collection or scientific review can stall projects

How to manage:

- Partner with experts, scientists and research institutions
- Prioritise training Rangers in monitoring (e.g. drones, soil cores, biodiversity tracking)
- Use pilot projects to build reliable data slowly
- Record cultural knowledge alongside science to guide decision-making

Tip: Don't try to collect perfect data on day one. Focus on consistency, transparency, and learning.



NATURE REPAIR FUN FACT

.....
A single fox can kill up to 20 native animals in one night, making predator control a key part of some nature repair projects.





Social and Community Risks

Even well-designed Nature Repair projects can face serious challenges if they are not grounded in strong community engagement and cultural awareness. Projects that **fail to meaningfully involve community members** from the outset risk losing trust, generating confusion, or being seen as externally driven. Misunderstandings about what “nature repair” actually involves can lead to resistance, especially if people feel left out of decisions that affect their Country. If the **benefits are not shared fairly**, or only reach a small group, it can create division and weaken community support. Just as importantly, **overlooking cultural responsibilities or sacred sites** can cause harm, both to community relationships and to the integrity of the land. Embedding clear communication, inclusive planning, and respect for cultural governance is essential to ensuring that Nature Repair projects are embraced, effective, and long-lasting.

“No one asked us if we wanted this project.”

How to manage:

- Engage Traditional Owners, Elders, youth, and families from the start
- Offer cultural and economic benefits to a wide group – not just the Biodiversity Certificate holders
- Communicate clearly and often – using language, visuals, and yarning
- Set up community steering groups or advisory panels



Financial and Funding Risks

Nature Repair projects often require sustained commitment and careful planning over several years. Unlike short-term programs, these projects focus on long-term ecological outcomes, which means results – and any associated Biodiversity Certificates – may not be issued until several years into the process. There are significant **upfront costs** involved, including site assessments, ecological mapping, securing permits, community engagement, training staff, and establishing monitoring systems. Once the project is underway, it must be **maintained and monitored regularly** to track biodiversity improvements, manage threats like weeds or fire, and meet the compliance requirements set by the Clean Energy Regulator. These long timelines and resource needs highlight the importance of strong project design, reliable funding, and clear benefit-sharing agreements from the outset.

Some of the financial risks associated with Nature Repair projects:

- Running out of funding before project completion
- Relying too heavily on a single grant or certificate price
- Not covering the true costs of community engagement and governance

Potential solutions to mitigate this risk:

- Diversify funding: combine grants, philanthropy, local contributions, and co-investment
- Include cultural costs (e.g. ceremony, Elder stipends, community meetings) in budgets
- Develop a long-term funding strategy beyond initial project life
- Build Ranger enterprise capacity to offer nature-linked services (e.g. monitoring, drone mapping)



Reputational Risks

Maintaining **community control and transparency** is essential to the integrity of any Nature Repair project. This means ensuring that Traditional Owners and community leaders are actively involved in all decisions, and that their authority is respected throughout the process. It's important to **document all decisions, permissions, and agreements clearly**, so there is a shared understanding and accountability at every stage. Communities and Ranger teams should feel empowered to **say “no” to offers or partnerships that don't align with their values or cultural governance** – because not every Nature Repair deal is a good one. To support this, it's valuable to **train Rangers and community leaders in communication skills and consent-based project design**, so they can confidently navigate negotiations, ask the right questions, and advocate for Country in a way that protects cultural and environmental interests.

Poorly run or externally-driven projects can lead to:

- Loss of community trust
- Negative media coverage
- Damage to Ranger program reputation
- Exploitation or “Greenwashing” behaviour by third parties

“We'd rather go slow and do it our way than rush and lose control of our Country.”

Be Aware of Exploitation and “Greenwashing”

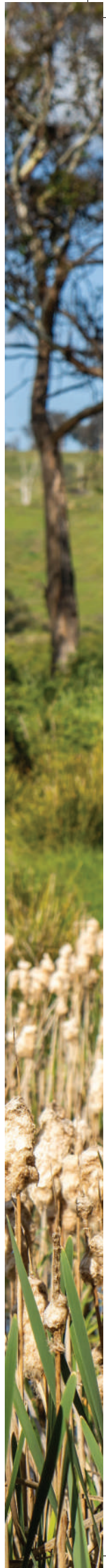
In the context of nature repair, communities need to be cautious of **exploitative deals or “greenwashing”** from outside groups. Some individuals or companies may present themselves as committed to biodiversity restoration but offer arrangements that mainly benefit themselves. They might take advantage of communities unfamiliar with the Nature Repair Market, pushing through unfair contracts, bypassing cultural protocols, or rushing community consent.

Greenwashing refers to when a company or project appears environmentally responsible on the surface but fails to deliver meaningful outcomes – or worse, uses environmental language to hide harmful practices. In nature repair, this can happen when a project is promoted as helping the environment, while the real goal is marketing or financial gain. To avoid this, communities should take time to understand proposals, seek independent legal and cultural advice, and ensure that projects are led by community values and governance.

You have every right to:

- Say no
- Ask for more time
- Request legal support
- Walk away from any deal that disrespects your role as cultural custodians

If it doesn't feel right – it probably isn't.





Module 5: Tools, Templates, and Resources – Building a Solid Foundation

Nature Repair projects require careful planning, coordination, and communication. Having the right tools, templates, and resources at your fingertips can mean the difference between a clear, community-led project and one that stalls or unravels.

This module introduces practical planning and delivery resources – many of which can be adapted or co-created with your team and Elders.

1. Site Selection Checklist

Choosing the right location is the first critical decision in any Nature Repair project. It affects everything – cultural approval, ecological potential, ecosystem resilience, and community involvement.

A site selection checklist ensures you:

- Don't overlook key environmental or cultural factors
- Avoid areas with tenure conflicts or physical instability
- Identify sites with the best potential for restoration or protection



NATURE REPAIR FUN FACT

Some weeds can produce tens of thousands of seeds per plant, making early control essential to nature repair success.

Nature Repair Site Selection Checklist:

Print this checklist on a clipboard and take it on site visits with Elders and Rangers.

	Check ✓
Cultural Considerations	
Have Traditional Owners been consulted about this site?	
Is the area culturally safe and appropriate for restoration or monitoring?	
Are there any sacred sites, songlines, or restricted areas nearby?	
Will Elders or community members need to guide access or decisions?	
Ecosystem Type	
Is it an eligible ecosystem? (e.g. Forest, Woodland, etc.)?	
Are native species still present or able to return naturally?	
Will it be possible for us to fully restore this land to it's reference ecosystem?	
Site Condition	
Is the site degraded, stable, or recovering?	
Are there visible signs of erosion, pollution, or past clearing?	
Are weeds, pests, or hard structures affecting the area?	
Climatic & Environmental Conditions	
Is there enough rainfall to support natural regeneration or planting success?	
Are there wet/dry or hot/cold seasons that will affect timing of activities?	
Is the terrain stable and suitable for planting, access, or erosion control?	
Could changing conditions (e.g. hotter temperatures, rising sea levels) impact long-term success?	
Threats and Risks	
Are there ongoing threats (e.g. nearby development, 4WD access, rubbish dumping)?	
Is the site likely to be safe from future disturbance?	
Can the area be protected long-term?	
Access and Feasibility	
Is the site accessible to rangers and community for regular visits?	
Can work be done safely and respectfully on this Country?	
Are there any permissions, landholders, or authorities to talk to?	
Monitoring and Learning Potential	
Can we track changes (e.g. soil, plants, tidal movement)?	
Can this site support two-way learning and training?	
Would this site suit a future carbon/nature repair project or just cultural care?	



NATURE REPAIR FUN FACT

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Eucalypts “sweat” through their leaves – they release oils that create the famous blue haze of the Blue Mountains.



2. Nature Repair Project Timeline Template

Most Nature Repair projects can take years from initial scoping to full-scale monitoring and (potentially) certificate issuance.

Creating a timeline helps:

- Keep your team and stakeholders on the same page
- Ensure you meet funding and reporting deadlines
- Schedule activities around seasonal and cultural calendars

Template Breakdown:

Stage	Timeframe	Key Activities
1. Early Engagement & Planning	Months 0–6	Identify and assess potential sites
		Engage Traditional Owners, Elders, and community
		Conduct site visits and cultural clearances
		Define project goals and outcomes
		Begin ecological baseline assessments
2. Site Assessment & Preparation	Months 6–12	Draft intervention plan and monitoring framework
		Complete detailed ecological surveys
		Finalise site maps and restoration plans
		Check land tenure and regulatory requirements
		Prepare for planting or restoration works
3. Implementation / On-Ground Works	Year 1–2	Confirm cultural and scientific indicators for monitoring
		Undertake restoration activities (e.g. replanting, erosion control)
		Continue cultural engagement and on-Country learning
		Begin regular monitoring
4. Ongoing Monitoring & Reporting	Year 2–5+	Maintain site (e.g. watering, weed and pest control)
		Collect ecological and cultural monitoring data
		Adapt management based on findings
		Submit progress reports to stakeholders
		Share updates with community
5. Verification and Certification	Year 3–5+	Prepare for independent verification
		Review monitoring outcomes
		Host verification visits or audits
		Submit documentation to Clean Energy Regulator
		Receive Biodiversity Certificate(s)



CULTURAL NOTE

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Build in time for ceremonies, cultural clearances, and “go-slow” periods like sorry business.

3. Cost Estimation Tool

A well-built budget is essential for the success of a Nature Repair project, as it ensures that all aspects of the work – from on-ground restoration to cultural engagement and long-term monitoring – are properly resourced. It helps project teams plan ahead, allocate funds efficiently, and avoid unexpected shortfalls that could delay or compromise outcomes. A strong budget also demonstrates transparency and accountability to funders, partners, and community members, and ensures that cultural protocols, community involvement, and compliance requirements are respected and fully included in the project’s financial planning.

Ask for support to customise your budget in line with both biodiversity methods and community values.

Category	Examples
Project Planning and Coordination	Staff wages (e.g. project manager, coordinator)
	Site assessments and expert consultations
	Cultural governance meetings or advisory group support
	Travel for stakeholder engagement or site visits
On-Ground Implementation	Native seed or seedlings (local provenance)
	Equipment and materials (e.g. planting tools, fencing, mulch)
	Site preparation (e.g. weed control, soil conditioning)
	Labour costs (e.g. rangers, contractors, community teams)
Monitoring and Evaluation	Baseline and follow-up ecological surveys
	Cultural monitoring activities (e.g. yarning circles, seasonal observations)
	Scientific tools (e.g. drones, GPS, soil test kits)
	Data analysis and reporting
Training and Capacity Building	Ranger or community training (e.g. ecological monitoring, restoration techniques)
	Certifications or workshops (e.g. First Aid, WHS, mapping skills)
	Junior Ranger or youth involvement programs
Cultural Engagement and Protocols	Payments for Traditional Owner participation and knowledge sharing
	Support for ceremony, Welcome to Country, or cultural clearance activities
	Language interpretation or signage reflecting cultural names and stories
	Cultural advisory or Elders’ council honorariums
Legal, Compliance, and Certification	Legal advice (e.g. land tenure, partnership agreements)
	Registration and verification for Biodiversity Certificates
	Insurance and risk management
	Environmental permits or regulatory approvals
Communications and Knowledge Sharing	Community updates (e.g. meetings, newsletters, signage)
	Storytelling and documentation (e.g. photos, videos, case studies)
	Production of educational or promotional materials
Administration and Overheads	Office costs (e.g. phone, internet, printing)
	Administration staff time
	Financial auditing and project reporting

TIP

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Add a “Cultural Column” to your budget to capture costs often missed in conventional grants – like Elders’ time, story recording, and bush tucker catering.



4. Mapping Tools and Visual Resources

Mapping is one of the most powerful tools in Nature Repair work. It brings:

- Science and story together
- Visual clarity for community meetings and funders
- A long-term record of change and resilience

The Platform for Land and Nature Repair (PLANR)

PLANR (Platform for Land and Nature Repair) is a digital platform developed by the Australian Government to support the **Nature Repair Market**. Its main purpose is to provide a central, accessible source of environmental data and tools to help land managers, Traditional Owners, project developers, and regulators design and assess **nature repair projects**.

PLANR will help users:

- Identify priority areas for nature repair
- Understand environmental conditions and land use history
- Access spatial mapping and vegetation data
- Support planning, monitoring, and verification of projects
- Align projects with eligible **Nature Repair Methods** and reference ecosystems
- Estimate carbon abatement potential

By bringing together science, land data, and regulatory guidance in one place, PLANR aims to make it easier to create strong, evidence-based projects that qualify for **Biodiversity Certificates** – while supporting transparent and informed decision-making across the country.

Other suggested Tools:

- The Environmental-Economic Accounts Dashboard
<https://www.eeadashboard.dcceew.gov.au/>



- Drone mapping with overlays for hydrology and vegetation
- Story maps combining totems, species, and place names
- Community-led maps made with Elders

5. Where to Find More Resources

Clean Energy Regulator

The Clean Energy Regulator (CER) is the Australian Government body responsible for overseeing the Nature Repair Market. In this role, the CER ensures that projects meet the standards and requirements set out in the Nature Repair legislation and approved methods. It manages the **registration of projects**, oversees **verification processes**, and is the authority that **issues Biodiversity Certificates** once a project's biodiversity improvements have been independently confirmed.

The CER's role is to maintain the integrity and transparency of the market by:

- Approving eligible projects
- Ensuring proper monitoring, reporting, and data collection
- Managing the public registry of Biodiversity Certificates
- Preventing misuse or false claims

In short, the Clean Energy Regulator acts as the **gatekeeper** of the Nature Repair Market, making sure that projects deliver genuine, measurable environmental outcomes.

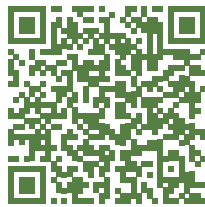
<https://cer.gov.au/schemes/nature-repair-market-scheme>



The Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW)

The Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) is the lead Australian Government agency responsible for managing and guiding the Nature Repair Market. Its responsibilities include the development and review of approved Nature Repair methods, ensuring they are scientifically robust, culturally appropriate, and adaptable over time. DCCEEW also leads the creation of tools, templates, and resources to support project planning, delivery, and reporting – such as PLANR. In addition, the department oversees the broader policy and regulatory framework that underpins the Nature Repair Market, helping to ensure it remains credible, transparent, and focused on delivering genuine environmental outcomes.

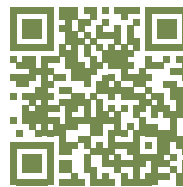
<https://www.dcceew.gov.au/environment/environmental-markets/nature-repair-market>



ABC Foundation Resources Library

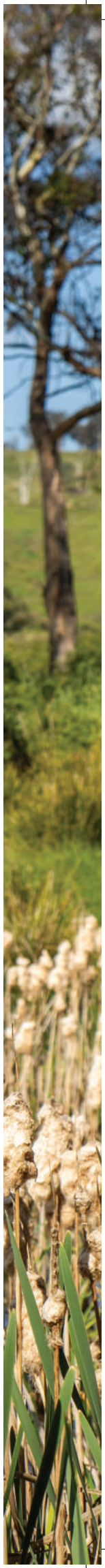
ABC Foundation has developed a comprehensive **Resources Library** to support communities, land managers, and Ranger teams involved in **Nature Repair** and **Carbon Farming**. This library is designed to be a practical, culturally informed knowledge hub that helps users confidently plan, deliver, and monitor their environmental projects. It contains a wide range of easy-to-use tools, templates, factsheets, and guides covering everything from method selection and project planning to monitoring techniques, cultural engagement, reporting, and regulatory compliance. The resources are suitable for both beginner and experienced practitioners, with content tailored to reflect the unique needs of **Indigenous-led and community-based projects**. All materials are freely available and can be accessed anytime via the ABC Foundation website, making it easier for individuals and groups to deliver strong, informed, and effective environmental outcomes.

www.abcau.com.au/oncountrycarbon



NATURE REPAIR FUN FACT

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Even small patches of native vegetation (less than 1 hectare) can support over 100 insect species, including pollinators and decomposers.





Module 6: Extension and Application Pathways

Extension and application pathways help ensure that Nature Repair projects create lasting impact beyond the initial site work. By building strong partnerships, integrating with cultural and community plans, creating local jobs, and sharing knowledge, projects can grow into long-term movements for healing Country. Scaling up successful approaches, influencing policy, and continuing cultural leadership allows communities to carry their restoration work forward with strength, sustainability, and shared purpose.

Partnerships for Long-Term Impact

Nature repair works best when it's done in collaboration. Building strong, long-term partnerships can open new doors for funding, training, and technical support.

Examples of strategic partners:

- Universities or research institutions for ecological monitoring and innovation
- Aboriginal Ranger programs and local land councils for cultural governance and land access
- Local councils or catchment groups for landscape-scale coordination
- NGOs and philanthropic organisations for funding and storytelling
- Industry partners looking to invest in nature-positive work

Partnerships should be grounded in shared values and mutual respect, with clear roles and community-led decision-making.

TIP

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Approach these partners as equals – your cultural science is just as valuable as academic data.

Integrating with Cultural and Community Planning

Nature repair should align with existing cultural and community goals. Embedding your project into broader planning documents can strengthen its legitimacy and attract support.

Opportunities include:

- Including nature repair priorities in **Sea Country Plans** or **Healthy Country Plans**
- Aligning with **Regional NRM Strategies** or **local government environmental plans**
- Building project activities into **community development** or **wellbeing initiatives**

This alignment shows that your work is not isolated – it's part of a bigger vision for Country and community.

Building Local Capacity and Employment

A successful nature repair project can become a **pathway to employment, training, and enterprise** – especially when led by community.

Pathways to explore:

- Creating **Ranger employment opportunities** in restoration, monitoring, and education
- Supporting **Junior Ranger programs** for youth engagement and knowledge sharing
- Offering training in drone use, plant ID, GPS mapping, and cultural monitoring
- Exploring **fee-for-service contracts** (e.g. fencing, weed control, seed collection) to grow enterprise income

Investing in skills and capacity means your team is ready to lead future projects independently.

Scaling Up or Replicating Projects

Scaling up a Nature Repair project means taking what's been learned from one successful site and applying it to new locations, either within the same region or across different landscapes. This could involve expanding to nearby areas with similar ecosystems, or adapting the model to meet the needs of another community. Replication requires thoughtful planning, strong cultural governance, and reliable monitoring systems that can be reused or adapted. It's also an opportunity to grow partnerships, attract additional funding, and train more local people – ensuring the work remains community-led and responsive to local priorities.

Steps to consider:

- Identify new sites with similar ecological or cultural importance
- Use your existing monitoring and reporting frameworks as templates
- Apply lessons learned to improve efficiency and outcomes
- Engage new partners or expand existing ones
- Secure blended funding (grants, Biodiversity Certificates, donations)

Make sure new projects still follow the same cultural protocols and governance structures as your first.

Influencing Policy and Funding

Nature Repair projects that demonstrate clear ecological and cultural outcomes can play a powerful role in shaping policy and investment at local, regional, and national levels. By sharing stories, data, and on-ground experiences, communities can highlight what's working and advocate for stronger support of Indigenous-led restoration efforts. This might include contributing to policy submissions, attending consultation forums, or partnering with researchers to publish findings. When projects influence how funding is structured or how success is measured, they help create a more inclusive and effective nature repair system that reflects both scientific and cultural knowledge.

How your project can shape future direction:

- Contribute data and insights to local and regional land use planning
- Participate in government consultations on environmental policy
- Share cultural indicators that challenge or enhance mainstream monitoring tools
- Advocate for increased funding to support Indigenous-led nature repair
- Demonstrate the benefits of long-term, place-based investment

By showing what works, you help shape a system that better supports Country and culture.

Where to Go From Here: Next Steps

Long-Term Vision

Nature Repair work should lead to:

- Culturally-led enterprises in restoration and monitoring
- Ranger-led research and training hubs
- Self-sustaining projects with blended income (grants, credits/certificates, partnerships)
- Policy influence that centres Aboriginal voices in marine governance

Want more info?

ABC Foundation can assist with many aspects of a Nature Repair project, providing support from early planning through to delivery and monitoring. This includes helping to **find and secure relevant experts**, such as ecologists, cultural advisors, and monitoring specialists, as well as assisting with **project development, community engagement, and aligning with approved Nature Repair methods**. Whether you're starting a new project or strengthening an existing one, ABC Foundation can help ensure your work is well-supported, culturally grounded, and technically strong.

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Activities

Nature Repair Knowledge Quiz

Multiple Choice (Choose the best answer)

1. What is the main purpose of the Nature Repair Market?
 a) Promote tourism
 b) Generate carbon credits
 c) Fund biodiversity improvements
 d) Sell native plants
2. Which of the following is considered a reference ecosystem?
 a) A plantation forest
 b) A healthy version of the original local ecosystem
 c) Any cleared farmland
 d) A newly planted park
3. What does biodiversity refer to?
 a) The number of people in a community
 b) The total amount of rainfall in a region
 c) The variety of plants, animals, and ecosystems in an area
 d) The amount of carbon stored in soil
4. What role does the Clean Energy Regulator play in the Nature Repair Market?
 a) Runs tree-planting programs
 b) Issues Biodiversity Certificates
 c) Funds local councils
 d) Approves tourism permits
5. What is a key benefit of involving Traditional Owners in nature repair?
 a) Reduced project costs
 b) Faster certificate approval
 c) Integration of cultural knowledge and governance
 d) Easier media coverage

True or False

6. A Nature Repair project can only occur in forests.
 True False
7. Fallen logs and leaf litter are important for ecosystem health.
 True False
8. There are no weeds native to Australia.
 True False
9. High biodiversity makes ecosystems more resilient to threats like drought, fire, and disease.
 True False
10. A good monitoring plan includes both scientific and cultural methods.
 True False



NATURE REPAIR FUN FACT

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Tree hollows take over 100 years to form naturally, which is why artificial nest boxes are used in many restoration sites.

Glossary

Term/Abbreviation	Explanation
ACCU	Australian Carbon Credit Unit
Baseline Data	Baseline data is the information collected about the condition of a site before a Nature Repair project begins, used to measure changes and improvements over time.
Biodiversity	The variety of all living things – plants, animals, and microorganisms – and the ecosystems they form, which together support the health and balance of nature.
CER	Clean Energy Regulator
Counterfactual Scenario	The counterfactual scenario is the likely condition of the land or ecosystem if the nature repair project had not taken place.
Culturally Significant Entity	A thing, matter, process or place that is of cultural significance to Aboriginal persons or Torres Strait Islanders.
Microorganism	Microorganisms are tiny living organisms – such as bacteria, fungi, and protozoa – that are too small to see with the naked eye and play vital roles in soil health, decomposition, and ecosystem function.
DCCEEW	Department of Climate Change, Energy, Environment & Water
Reference Ecosystem	The highest level of ecological integrity, stability and resilience that the land could attain, and acts as a benchmark for the project.
'Stacking'	Running a Nature Repair project on the same land, at the same time as a Carbon Farming project, to earn both ACCU's and Biodiversity Certificates.
TEK	Traditional Ecological Knowledge

Nature Repair Knowledge Quiz Answer Sheet

- Multiple Choice:**
- c) Fund biodiversity improvements
 - b) A healthy version of the original local ecosystem
 - c) The variety of plants, animals, and ecosystems in an area
 - b) Issues Biodiversity Certificates
 - c) Integration of cultural knowledge and governance
- True or False:**
6. False
 7. True
 8. False
 9. True
 10. True





If you want to know more, let's chat!

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