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Gayini and Emerging Models for Permanent Private Land Conservation in Australia:

Managing country for conservation, sustainable agriculture and Indigenous heritage

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Biodiversity conservation in Australia is increasingly focusing on integrated land management working in productive landscapes. This approach is necessary to conserve some of the country's most endangered landscapes (for example, [grasslands](#)) and also to support the ecosystem services upon which our farmers, and the wider public, depend. Achieving restoration, protection and management of nature on farming lands is a delicate balance between the various, and sometimes conflicting, priorities of primary production and environmental conservation, and requires innovative partnerships and collaborations.

Gayini, a vast 87,816 hectare agricultural property in southwest New South Wales, [sets a new standard](#) for what can be achieved for conservation in these productive landscapes. This property contains the largest remaining area of wetlands in the southern Murray-Darling Basin, and is an area of national and international conservation significance. It is also a rich cultural landscape that has supported Aboriginal people, the Nari Nari, for 50,000 years. In 2018, a consortium led by [The Nature Conservancy](#), and including the [Nari Nari Tribal Council](#), the [Murray Darling Wetlands Working Group](#) and the [Centre for Ecosystem Science](#) at the University of NSW took over management of Gayini.

Today the land is being managed for conservation and production: low-impact grazing and, when appropriate, opportunistic cropping. It is secured by a range of legal protections including soil conservation easements and a covenant (easement) embedding land and water management plans. In future it may also be protected by a conservation covenant from the [Biodiversity Conservation Trust](#) of New South Wales, which would bring with it ongoing stewardship payments. (See more details at ILCN's *Conservation Tools and Strategies in Common Law Jurisdictions*:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zII0eJ05MYE> (6:20 – 22:50))

Gayini is just one example of a conservation project using innovative partnerships to heal, manage, protect, and measure our natural capital on farming land: entities like [Tiverton Agriculture](#), [Odonata](#), [La Trobe University](#) and the [Queensland Trust for Nature](#) are all finding their own ways to forge new partnerships and find new solutions to one of the biggest challenges of our time.

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