



INTERNATIONAL
LAND CONSERVATION
NETWORK

Making Space for Nature: The Australia Land Conservation Alliance Makes the Case for Increasing Voluntary Permanently Protected Land to 5% by 2030

*Cecilia Riebl, ILCN Regional Representative for Australasia
March 2022*

Last year, governments around the world recognized the inherent value of nature conservation, with over 70 countries, including Australia, joining the High Ambition Coalition (HAC) for Nature and People – an intergovernmental group with the central goal of protecting at least 30 per cent of the world’s land and oceans by 2030.

Responding to this commitment, and the opportunities it presents, the [Australian Land Conservation Alliance](#) (ALCA), together with the [Pew Charitable Trusts](#), has formed ‘Our Natural Legacy’, a broad coalition of diverse land management organizations that support enduring conservation outcomes on private lands.

Together, this coalition seeks to drive a significant increase in land voluntarily and permanently protected across the country from less than 2 per cent of private land (or 9 million hectares) currently, to 5 per cent (or around 23 million hectares) by 2030.

As part of this campaign, ALCA and Pew have recently launched the Our Natural Legacy website (ournaturallegacy.org.au), which profiles the important work of private landholders as custodians of their land and experts in its management and regeneration. It highlights that conservation landholders come in many forms—including farmers, Indigenous groups, and conservation organizations—and all have a vital and unique role to play in extending our protected area network.

An important part of the Our Natural Legacy campaign is to demonstrate the inherent as well as financial value of increasing our PPAs. The project aims to illustrate and quantify the costs, benefits, and economic impact of increasing PPAs in Australia to five per cent. We know that nature provides us all with ‘ecosystem services’ – such as trees providing carbon storage and coastal mangroves providing storm surge protection.

Nature also provides us with social benefits, including recreation, health and wellbeing, education value and cultural value. However, the monetary value of those services can be hard to quantify, as they are not generally tradeable in the marketplace, and tend to accrue to society as a whole. These are therefore called ‘non-market benefits’.

ALCA is engaging with government to make the case that public investment in environmental protection is needed to ensure these non-market benefits are realized, while also unlocking the market benefits

that do exist but are too small to induce private investment. In addition to this, Our Natural Legacy acknowledges the importance of co-contributions from philanthropic donors and private landholders willing to establish and maintain covenant agreements.

ALCA CEO Dr. Jody Gunn says that private landholders are collectively delivering significant social, environmental, and economic value by making space for nature and voluntarily committing to permanently protecting land.

“Through Our Natural Legacy we aim to recognise and celebrate the great work undertaken by diverse private landholders across the country to protect Australia’s unique biodiversity, often voluntarily,” Jody said.

“Enhanced awareness of private land conservation is an important part of accelerating investment, enabling us to build on the practical hard work of thousands of dedicated landholders.

“We are ambitious in what we hope to achieve, but there is momentum as well as a pressing need for us to scale up action to support the long-term productivity and resilience of our landscapes.”

A version of this article originally appeared in the Trust for Nature (Vic) Bulletin in March 2022.

Have news? Share updates from your organization or country by emailing ilcn@lincolninst.edu.