

8.1 A SUSTAINABLE TERRITORY

The ACT Government Sustainability Framework

People, Place, Prosperity is the ACT Government's sustainability policy. In 2009, the Government reviewed this policy, aligning it closely with the Canberra Plan. In turn, this assisted in refining the sustainability principles and set out an ambitious work program across all three triple bottom line areas (social, economic and environment), embedding community inclusion and poverty impact analysis, and engaging the community in major government decision making. The policy also sets out work to develop a clean economy and a broad environmental agenda, including the reduction of the ACT's waste and a reassessment of the *Nature Conservation Act 1980*.

The ACT Government uses a triple bottom line approach to sustainability, recognising the interdependence of social, economic and environmental well-being. The Government has acknowledged that decision-making will often involve different emphases amongst the three principles.

Government Leading by Example

The 2011-12 Budget supports the Government's commitment to achieving a sustainable future for the ACT.

In 2010, the Government committed to a 40 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) by 2020 and a goal of zero net GHG for the ACT by the year 2060. This commitment was underpinned by the development of appropriate legislation – the *Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act 2010*, which was passed by the Legislative Assembly in October 2010. The Government also committed to carbon neutrality for schools by 2017, with the Education and Training Directorate and the Sustainable Development Directorate tasked to achieve this outcome.

New initiatives included in the 2011-12 Budget and existing actions build on earlier work across government including protecting our natural and built environments, conserving our natural resources, responding to challenges of climate change and promoting development, and the uptake of renewable energy.

The Budget also reflects the government's determination to provide leadership in sustainable practices by reducing its own carbon footprint. This embraces the promotion of sustainable urban development and land management, and ensures that its accommodation and facilities are energy and water efficient.

While sustainability considerations are embedded in all Government decision-making processes, a number of initiatives included in this Budget have a particular focus on achieving the Territory's sustainability targets. These include:

- the Government Office Building, which will reduce the greenhouse gas emissions associated with the Government's office accommodation and provide for enhanced sustainability in the way that the Government provides its services as a consequence of having the administrative component of the ACT public service contiguously located;
- construction of schools at Bonner and Franklin to a five star standard;

- a range of transport related initiatives which will encourage a modal shift away from the use of motor vehicles, such as new walking and cycling infrastructure, bus priority measures, new public transport infrastructure and additional funding to enhance ACTION's network;
- enhancements to waste management infrastructure in the ACT and new initiatives aimed at increasing recycling;
- significant investments in urban water management, such as stormwater recycling measures in North Canberra and urban ponds in new developments to improve water quality and reuse run-off for irrigation purposes;
- extension of the Resource Management Fund which assists government agencies to develop capital works projects that reduce their consumption of electricity, gas and water;
- increased uptake of renewable energy within the ACT Government energy purchasing arrangements;
- an expanded initiative to assist low income households improve household energy efficiency;
- enhanced regulation of building energy efficiency; and
- initiatives aimed at improving the ACT's natural environment such as invasive weed control and restoring waterways and surrounds.

The Government's continuing commitment to sustainable energy is demonstrated by the work undertaken to facilitate the establishment of large scale solar power generation in the Territory. This commitment is also evident through the enhancement of the country's most generous Feed-in-Tariff scheme to encompass medium scale generators and open access to community groups – providing assistance for residents, businesses and community groups to reduce their emissions.

Continuing with its promotion of renewable energy use in the community, in 2011-12, the Government will lead by example by increasing its proportion of renewable energy consumption to 35 per cent of total ACT Government electricity consumption.

The ACT Government has also commenced a staged program for the replacement of 2,000 inefficient, high-wattage streetlights with energy efficient alternatives. This program is due to be completed in the first half of 2012.

Sustainability in Public Housing

Commencing in 2007, the Government committed \$20 million over 10 years to improve the water and energy efficiency of public housing properties with the aim of decreasing emissions and increasing the comfort of tenants. The Government has allocated additional funding to double the capacity to expedite the program in 2011-12. The focus will be on building and shell improvements, such as ceiling and wall insulation and draught sealing, as physical building and shell improvements have greater longevity and are less prone to failure.

Housing ACT continues to participate in the *Water and Energy Savings in the Territory* (WEST) Program to assist tenants to reduce energy costs. This includes retrofitted improvements to properties coupled with targeted education programs. Housing ACT also works with ACTEW to assist tenants in managing water use more effectively through their participation in a number of water tune-up programs.

As part of the stock revitalisation strategy, Housing ACT will continue to acquire properties with an energy rating of at least three stars. Many new Housing ACT properties under construction, including those in stage two of the Commonwealth *Nation Building and Jobs Plan*, will have an energy rating of 6 stars or more.

Sustainability in the Built Environment

The ACT continues to be a forerunner in sustainability with the early adoption of new building standards for energy efficiency, a well established energy rating scheme and the introduction of licensing for residential building energy efficiency assessors.

Improving the sustainability of buildings requires regular updating of the regulations applying to appliances, buildings and other equipment (including construction and installation). To achieve this, the ACT is a member of a number of National Working Groups.

This Budget provides funding to the Sustainable Development Directorate to increase the number of building inspectors. This will improve construction code compliance and the overall quality and sustainability of the building stock in the ACT.

The Government itself occupies almost 90,000m² of owned and leased office space and is implementing programs to reduce its carbon footprint as an example to other landlords and tenants. The Government Property Group, which consists of representatives from all government jurisdictions, is developing a National Framework for Sustainable Government Office Buildings. This framework will establish performance benchmarks for environmentally sustainable development in all new buildings and large fit-outs. The Government is also actively involved in developing green lease schedules as part of an ongoing cooperative process between the Commonwealth and State/Territory Governments.

The Government has also committed to the construction of a new centralised office building for the majority of ACT administrative functions. This building will provide leadership in sustainability as it relates to office accommodation.

A vital ingredient of sustainability is the development of workforce capacity to deliver new technologies and innovative practices. Given the significant role the construction sector plays in meeting energy and greenhouse emissions targets, support for the development of training and education for industry is critical. The Sustainable Development Directorate is developing a suite of handbooks for installers of photovoltaic generation units, construction practitioners and designers on sustainable design and installation.

The recent introduction of the Energy Efficiency Assessors Licensing Scheme will improve compliance with energy efficiency requirements in homes built in the ACT. Given the contribution of housing to overall energy use in the ACT, this will play a crucial role in the Government's target of a 40 per cent reduction on 1990 greenhouse gas emission levels by 2020.

Planning for a Sustainable Future

The Government recognises the role of urban planning in ensuring a sustainable future. *The Canberra Spatial Plan* and *The Sustainable Transport Plan* make up the ACT Planning Strategy. Since the establishment of that strategy, the ACT Government has committed to a carbon neutral Canberra by 2060. Given this target and the Commonwealth's emphasis on more sustainable urban planning, it is appropriate to revise the strategy during 2011-12.

The Government will also commit to sustainability objectives by ensuring that sustainability and innovation issues are incorporated in the planning and design of developments delivered through the Economic Development Directorate (EDD). A Sustainability and Innovation Framework has been developed to address a range of elements including:

- energy and water;
- sustainable resource use and waste management;
- biodiversity and landscape protection;
- transport;
- social and cultural aspects of communities; and
- economic viability.

All EDD development projects are assessed against this Framework. A Design Review Panel also assesses development proposals at various stages in the planning process to ensure high quality design and outcomes.

The new suburbs of Coombs and Wright in Molonglo have achieved certification under the Urban Development Institute of Australia EnviroDevelopment program for energy, waste, community and ecosystems:

- energy initiatives include the Home Energy Advice Team, solar envelope guidelines (ensuring solar access for standard homes) and seven star energy rated multi-unit developments;
- waste initiatives include processing and reuse of vegetative debris either on site or at the nearby Arboretum and development of a request-for-proposal for a builders' waste recycling facility in Molonglo;
- community initiatives include early engagement with local community groups such as the Molonglo Bush on the Boundary group and in planning for a community garden in Coombs; and
- ecosystem initiatives include the development of a Riparian Management Strategy.

Other Government initiatives include:

- working with the Commonwealth to address matters of national environmental significance in relation to the land release programs across residential, commercial, industrial and community facility land releases;
- minimising the environmental impacts of works during construction in the control of dust, noise, sediment and building waste by enforcing compliance with waste management, littering and other requirements on new developments;

- developing water sensitive urban design to reduce mains water usage, retain more stormwater on-site and improve the quality of water that leaves sites by using non-potable water (from the various stormwater retention ponds) to irrigate public open space areas in Franklin, Harrison, Forde and Bonner;
- encouraging energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy by maximising solar orientation of blocks and mandating solar hot water systems;
- developing pedestrian friendly designs with plantings for shady verges and open space links throughout suburbs; and
- implementing a cat containment policy in Bonner and Forde to help protect local wildlife.

The ACT Spatial Plan has a clear goal of creating a more compact city form with development being more intensive within 7.5 kilometres of Civic.

As part of this process the Government commissioned research to identify the implications and vulnerabilities inherent in Canberra's metropolitan structure. The research resulted in two Reports:

- *Human Settlement Vulnerability and Adaptive Capacity Assessment*; and
- *Spatial Plan Evaluation: Urban Form Scenarios Adaptation and Mitigation Interventions*.

Following on from these Reports, the Government is investigating the suitability of sites for new urban development within the current urban boundaries but which might be outside 7.5 kilometres of Civic, particularly along transport corridors or adjacent to other town centres.

Bringing forward investigations on these sites provides the opportunity to explore the potential for improving sustainable transport and building options while considering how these might contribute to social equity, more affordable housing, and improved services for individuals and the community.

Transit-oriented development and walkable neighbourhoods are key planning principles being applied at Molonglo, assisting in the reduction of car dependence and GHG, and supporting a shift to public transport, cycling and walking. The first suburbs, Coombs and Wright, will have an extensive network of pedestrian and cycle paths to link community facilities such as shops, schools and parks with surrounding residential and recreation areas. The path networks generally follow natural drainage paths and bush corridors.

Alternative water supplies may be used to irrigate Molonglo's open spaces and playing fields to reduce potable water use. Protection of water quality within the Molonglo River is a high priority and is being achieved in Coombs and Wright through the use of wetland ponds on tributary streams.

Sustainable development principles are also being applied in new developments in Belconnen and Gungahlin through increasing densities around activity centres and along transport corridors and creating walkable neighbourhoods. These areas can also contain ecological communities and threatened species that are important to the Territory's biodiversity. Surveying and investigating areas proposed for future development enables identification and protection of communities and the implementation of measures that mitigate the impact of development, in line with Territory and Commonwealth legislation and policy.

A central transport corridor has been established to accommodate an inter-town public transport route with 'rapid express routes' to connect to the City, Belconnen, Weston and Woden.

Sustainability in the Education Sector

The Government will build on the continued success of the *ACT Sustainable Schools Initiative* in 2011-12 by:

- supporting the 84 ACT public schools, of which 76 have already registered, on the Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative (AuSSI) program whilst engaging the remaining 8 schools;
- supporting the existing 36 non-government schools in the AuSSI program;
- continuing to develop curriculum support material for teachers;
- continuing to provide professional development for teachers in components of sustainability through Professional Learning Opportunities;
- continuing to assist schools to conduct water, waste and energy audits;
- identifying an environmentally sustainable design (ESD) champion at each public school to facilitate the introduction and ongoing management of ESD activities;
- promoting the AuSSI toolkit and supporting resources; and
- preparing a Sustainability Handbook titled "What is a Sustainable School?".

The roll-out and installation of solar power generation systems at all public schools will continue in 2011-12. Installation will include a smart electrical meter and educational interface software, which will assist in the reduction of electrical power, increase student awareness of solar power generation and support curriculum activities relating to sustainable practices. The Education and Training Directorate will also be undertaking trial installations of smart water and gas meters in some public schools.

The installation of rain water tanks at public schools will continue in 2011-12. The tanks will supply water to toilets and class project areas such as feature garden beds, courtyards and agricultural plots. In addition to raising student awareness of water conservation issues, this initiative will significantly contribute to the reduction of potable water consumption.

The new Gungahlin College, Namadgi P-10 School, Harrison Secondary School, Franklin Early Childhood School and the new Bonner Primary School include ESD initiatives to achieve a high green star rating such as water sensitive urban design principles, building orientation and solar passive design, clerestory windows, solar hot water systems and underground rainwater storage tanks.

The construction of the new Sustainable Skills Training Hub at the Canberra Institute of Technology's (CIT) Bruce Campus will meet current Government requirements for sustainable commercial development by conserving energy and water. A significant aim of this project will be to achieve 100 per cent green power generation within the new facility. The facility will incorporate the latest sustainable technologies.

The new electro-technology building, situated at the Fyshwick Trade Skills Centre, incorporates environmentally responsible materials and services, including the building fabric, insulation, shade, heating and cooling systems, ventilation, lighting and water consumption.

Sustainability in ICT

Sustainability principles are also incorporated in the Government's Information and Communication Technology (ICT) programs. InTACT continues to pursue initiatives to improve efficiency and reduce the environmental impact of ICT operations, including:

- introducing new 'Coolthread' based technology that delivers sound performance, maximises energy and space efficiency, and has a high level of performance per watt;
- ongoing pursuit of server 'virtualisation' that dramatically reduces the number of power consuming and heat generating physical servers;
- replacement of a large number of older desktop PC devices with new PCs that are not only faster but also more energy efficient;
- implementation of "hot aisle/cold aisle" principles in all ACT Government data centres, which is approximately 65 per cent complete; and
- the development of a draft ACT Government ICT Sustainability Plan 2012-2017.

A number of new initiatives have been identified for 2011-12, including:

- investigation of unified communications options whereby a single piece of technology could deliver multiple means of communication (e.g. a desktop computer with a headset to double as a phone) thus enabling greater use of telecommuting and teleconferencing; and
- the upgrade of licensing and supporting infrastructure to reduce the overall hosting charge to make virtual the preferred option over physical servers. This would be coupled with further work to enable, where appropriate, business systems to be delivered on any hardware in any location at any time via workstations that would replace cumbersome and expensive desktop PCs.

Sustainability Across the Health Sector

Sustainability in the ACT health sector is also a priority for the Government.

ACT Health's capital upgrade program is geared towards implementing new environmentally efficient initiatives and upgrading fittings and fixtures including:

- use of night cooling;
- installation of energy efficient lighting;
- installation of occupancy-sensors or timer-controls for lighting and air conditioning in non-critical buildings;
- installation of flow restrictors or water-efficient plumbing fixtures; and
- connection of plant and building spaces to building management systems to allow automated and/or remote monitoring.

Sustainability Programs

Climate Change

The ACT Government has the most ambitious greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets of all Australian jurisdictions.

The *Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act 2010* was passed by the Legislative Assembly in October 2010, establishing ACT targets for:

- zero net greenhouse gas emissions by 2060;
- peaking per capita emissions by 2013;
- reducing emissions by 40 per cent of 1990 levels by 2020; and
- reducing emissions by 80 per cent of 1990 levels by 2050.

A second Action Plan under the *Weathering the Change* climate change strategy is under development. The Action Plan will include options for achieving carbon neutrality in the ACT by 2060 and provide strategies for achieving legislated targets and will be the subject of community consultation in late 2011.

In 2009-10, the Government implemented the ACTSmart program, which provides an one-stop-shop for ACT Government rebates, assistance programs and advice to help residents, businesses, schools and community groups save energy and water, reduce waste and cut greenhouse gas emissions.

The program includes:

- the ACTSmart website (www.actsmart.act.gov.au);
- a mix of sector-focussed rebates, incentive and assistance programs for residential homes and gardens, schools, businesses and offices; and
- evaluation, monitoring and reporting to enable continual evaluation of the overall effectiveness of the initiatives and its components.

The Outreach program and the Water and Energy Saving in the Territory Plus (WEST Plus) program assists low income residents to improve their energy efficiency at home, reduce their expenditure on energy bills, and contribute to reducing the ACT's greenhouse gas emissions.

The benefits from the Outreach trial were estimated to be:

- energy use reductions of just over 1 million kilowatt hours per year - sufficient to fully power about 130 ACT homes;
- greenhouse gas emissions reduced by 915 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent; and
- total saving to households of \$131,600 per year.

In 2011-12 the Outreach program is being expanded through increased funding for provision of energy efficient appliances, as well as funding to provide low income residents with free professional home energy efficiency assessments, and simple free modifications to increase energy efficiency such as draught-proofing, insulation, blinds and curtains, and education.

WEST Plus is an extension of the WEST program implemented in 2003 to assist residents who have been taken to court over unpaid utility bills by providing a home energy efficiency assessment, energy and water efficiency improvements and education. WEST assists tenants of Government housing, while WEST Plus was introduced in late 2010 to provide similar assistance to clients in private rental accommodation and owner-occupiers, focusing on reaching clients who have difficulty meeting utility bills, but have not necessarily been the subject of legal action over unpaid bills.

Waste

The Government released the draft *Sustainable Waste Strategy 2010-2025* (draft waste strategy) in December 2010. The previous *No Waste* strategy increased resource recovery from the 42 per cent in 1995-96, when it was released, to over 70 per cent when it was replaced in 2010. The draft waste strategy outlines a comprehensive framework to increase resource recovery to over 90 per cent by 2025.

The Territory also issued a request for proposals to build a Material Recovery Facility for dry mixed commercial wastes in December 2010. Proposals closed at the end of March 2011 and are currently being assessed. Subject to successful negotiations it is expected to result in a new facility being established within the Hume Resource Recovery Estate which will recover in excess of 40,000 tonnes of material each year.

The Territory continues to work collaboratively with the Commonwealth and States/Territories to improve resource recovery including working towards the introduction of the much anticipated television and computer product stewardship scheme in 2011. The ACT became the first jurisdiction to divert all computers and television units from landfill by introducing mandatory recycling for televisions in 2010, complementing the mandatory recycling for computers introduced in 2005.

While the Territory continues to make significant strides to reduce waste generation and increase resource recovery, the Government recognised that for the foreseeable future, unrecoverable wastes will be created that will need to be sent to landfill. The Territory has invested in maintaining a safe and environmentally responsible landfill to meet the ACT's future needs by extending the life of the current landfill to 2015-16 through improved design and more efficient use of landfill cells within the Mugga Lane Resource Management Centre. The Territory is actively exploring options for the next landfill cell to meet needs beyond 2015-16.

The Territory is always seeking to improve the waste management services it provides the community. From 27 April 2011, the ACT Government commenced trialling a bulky waste household collection service. During the trial, one free collection will be offered per dwelling to eligible Concession Card holders (those who hold a current Centrelink Pensioner Concession Card, or an ACTION Gold Concession Card, or a Department of Veterans Affairs Gold Card). Other households can access collections for a fee.

Street Level Recycling Initiative

In 2011-12 the Government is also trialling the introduction of street-level recycling in the city centre with the installation of 33 recycling bins and bin shrouds in high visibility locations.

Water

During the drought period that commenced in 2002, the Government and community responded by developing a water resource management strategy with detailed demand management targets and measures, introducing permanent water conservation measures, and investing in major infrastructure to improve and expand potable water treatment and storage capacity. The water quality of our lakes and rivers was also a focus being improved by the construction of urban ponds in new estates and in established suburbs. The provision of non-potable stormwater for irrigation also contributed to the ACT's water security by reducing the use of high quality drinking water and providing alternative sources of water suitable for the purpose of irrigation.

The lifting of the drought has not, in the medium to longer term, made water conservation any less an issue. In 2011-12, the Government will continue to develop and implement programs to reduce demand for potable water and increase the use of cost effective fit-for-purpose non-potable water. The Government will also continue to investigate options and complete designs to harvest non-potable water from Canberra's existing lakes, ponds and other non-potable water sources.

A progress report of *Think Water, Act Water* will be released in 2011. A review of the strategy will lead to the development of a revised water strategy for the ACT outlining new objectives and targets. The Sustainable Development Directorate will also review the current water efficiency standards for household fittings and fixtures to ensure they complement broader water efficiency policy.

In 2011-12, the Government will continue to monitor the implementation of ACTEW's water security projects with the objective of implementing an efficient and effective planning and management approach, ensuring water security for the ACT and broader region with an overall aim of significantly reducing the time spent in periods of water restrictions.

A central platform to this approach is water supply diversification, in particular:

- construction of an enlarged Cotter Dam, which is expected to be completed in 2011-12; and
- construction of a pump station and pipeline from the Murrumbidgee River, near Angle Crossing, to Googong Dam, which is expected to be completed by 2012-13.

Energy

In 2009, the ACT Government released a draft Sustainable Energy Policy, which examined the potential for the establishment of a large-scale solar power generator, and introduced the nation's most generous feed-in-tariff. In 2010, the ACT Electricity Feed-in-Tariff Scheme was reviewed and Stage 2 was legislated in early 2011 extending eligibility to medium-scale generators (up to 200kW capacity) and to community owned generators. Work also commenced on pursuing the option for a large-scale renewable generator as a possible Stage 3 of the Feed-in-Tariff Scheme.

This work will continue in 2011-12, with the Government:

- finalising the ACT's Sustainable Energy Policy;
- participating in the national energy reform agenda;
- undertaking targeted projects to ensure the equitable provision of energy;
- continuing to facilitate the establishment of large-scale solar power generation in the ACT; and
- decentralising energy supplies and progressing a second electricity supply line to the ACT and south-eastern NSW.

The Government will continue to implement new and revised national minimum energy performance standards (MEPS) for appliances and equipment. These standards cover a number of products from small household plug-in appliances to industrial installations. The first of the MEPS for gas using products were introduced in late 2010 with the implementation of standards for gas water heaters.

As part of its review of the Territory Plan, the Sustainable Development Directorate is preparing a new estate development code to replace the Residential Subdivision Development Code. Among other things, this code will introduce rules to ensure that at least 95 per cent of blocks in future green field subdivisions comply with new solar orientation requirements, whilst ensuring that subsequent residential buildings can achieve good solar orientation without casting shadows over neighbours.

The ACT continues to lead the way on the introduction of energy efficiency initiatives, having introduced a number of the actions in the national strategy, including differential duty on the registration and transfer of fuel efficient vehicles, mandatory disclosure of energy efficiency on residential property sales and improving the energy efficiency of street lighting.

The Government will also be actively involved in developing and implementing other national initiatives to improve the efficiency of buildings and effectiveness of energy efficiency schemes, including the development of a new national framework for setting energy use and assessment standards for buildings and aiming to be the first jurisdiction to license residential energy assessors.

Transport

In line with the *Sustainable Transport Plan (2004)* and the soon-to-be-released *Transport for Canberra* policy, the Government will continue to invest in infrastructure and programs that focus on reducing transport emissions.

Increasing the overall use of sustainable transport modes and promotion of higher vehicle occupancy rates will be the main focus of the policy. Highlights for 2011-12 will include:

- a trial extension of rapid bus services to West Belconnen;
- improvements to bus services for newly constructed suburbs;
- construction of new park-and-ride and bike-and-ride facilities;
- the first phase of the \$12.5 million Real Time Passenger Information System;
- design of Northbourne Avenue transit priority lanes;
- continuing the installation of bike racks on the ACTION bus fleet; and
- ongoing promotion and marketing of sustainable transport options.

The Government is also encouraging increased energy efficiency and use of renewable energy in ACT vehicles, including exploring opportunities for electric vehicles.

Protecting the Environment

Environmental protection will continue to be a high priority for the Government during 2011-12. Conserving the Territory's environment for future generations entails balancing development needs with the responsible and efficient use of available resources. The Government will finalise amendments to the *Nature Conservation Act 1980* in response to community consultation in 2010-11.

Key priorities include implementing the response to the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment's inquiries into the management of Canberra's urban forest, Canberra Nature Park, Googong foreshore and the Molonglo River corridor, and maintaining a high level of regulatory oversight over water quality and abstraction, noise pollution and air quality.

This year the Government renewed its investment in programs aimed at conserving threatened species. In collaboration with the Australian National University, nationally significant research is being conducted at the Mulligans Flat Sanctuary on restoration of critically endangered woodlands. Reintroduction of locally extinct fauna into the Mulligans Flat Woodlands Sanctuary is a key focus.

In 2010-11 preparations for the reintroduction of the Eastern Bettong were undertaken such as preparing research proposals and licences to enable a breeding program for the bettongs to be established at Tidbinbilla in the coming year and for a population to be established at Mulligans Flat. The successful Corroboree Frog breeding program is continuing with the establishment of an assurance population of over 1,000 frogs now held in captivity, some of which will be released into the wild in the coming year.

Research on threatened grassland fauna, in conjunction with the University of Canberra, is working towards the establishment of a Grassland Earless Dragon breeding program and research on the habitat and ecology of the dragon. The planting of 6,000 food trees for the Glossy Black Cockatoo has been undertaken in key reserve areas in south Canberra and will be monitored over the next three years.

With the support and assistance of local community groups, revegetation works in the Mount Painter Nature Reserve have been undertaken, including rabbit control, site preparation and mass plantings of local tree and shrub species.

The Government continues the staged replacement of the urban forest, which is a strategic initiative that aims to reduce the risk to government, people and property from the declining condition of the ageing and drought-affected urban tree estate.

The *ACT Vertebrate Pest Management Strategy 2002* is currently being reviewed to:

- assess the efficacy of its objectives, strategies and performance indicators; and
- ensure alignment with the *ACT Pest Plants and Animals Act 2005* and the recently released Commonwealth and NSW Government pest management strategies, codes of practice and management plans.

Public consultation on a draft *ACT Pest Animal Management Strategy* will be undertaken and a final Strategy released in 2011-12.

Strengthening Communities

The Government is committed to supporting the community in undertaking activities that complement the delivery of environmental priorities. In 2011-12 the Government will continue to provide support to our community partners, including the Canberra and South East Region Environment Centre, the Conservation Council and SEE Change ACT.

Through the *Caring for our Country* initiative, the Government will continue to support the *Waterwatch* program and *Greening Australia* to engage the community in the delivery of environmental projects. The Government will deliver a targeted Indigenous employment and training project, *Caring for our Cotter*, funded through the *Caring for our Country Initiative*.

ACT environment grants will continue to support worthwhile community projects, including:

- conservation planning;
- sustainable landscape development;
- environmental impact reduction;
- Canberra centenary celebrations;
- community engagement, education and awareness-raising; and
- natural and cultural heritage conservation works.

