

AMLR NRM Blue Carbon Futures Grants 2019–20

Application guide

What are we working to achieve?

The Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges Natural Resources Management Board's **Blue Carbon Futures Grant** aims to facilitate collaboration and partnerships to support implementation of the **Blue Carbon Strategy for South Australia 2020-25**, within the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges region's coastal area.

Blue Carbon refers to carbon stored in coastal and marine ecosystems. In the AMLR region this may include saltmarshes, mangroves, seagrasses, tidal flats and supratidal forests (e.g. Melaleuca and Casuarina). These habitats can sequester and store significant quantities of carbon in both the plants and the sediment below. Macroalgae habitats may contribute significantly to Blue Carbon 'budgets', however deposition may largely occur beyond the immediate habitat.

The board has undertaken significant investment in conservation and restoration of coastal habitats over the last decade. The board has also invested significantly in Blue Carbon investigations and demonstration projects with partners such as the Dry Creek Salt Field tidal restoration project.

With the release of the Blue Carbon Strategy for South Australia, the board is seeking to facilitate collaborations to progress Blue Carbon approaches in the region. However, in the absence of some key national blue carbon market mechanisms, this initial grant round does not necessarily seek to invest directly in on-ground or capital works or construction. Rather, the support seeks to facilitate collaborations to assess feasibility or improve site knowledge in readiness for carbon market opportunities in the near future.

Project proposals will need to demonstrate how they align with key outcomes of the *Blue Carbon Strategy for South Australia*. You can access it here: <https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/topics/climate-change/programs-and-initiatives/climate-change-blue-carbon-strategy>

Blue Carbon Strategy for South Australia objectives

Objective 1: *Connect blue carbon ecosystem restoration to carbon markets and other finance mechanisms.*

Key outcome: *Blue carbon financing drives blue carbon projects.*

Objective 2: *Deliver research to quantify blue carbon and co-benefits.*

Key outcome: *Improved blue carbon and co-benefit valuation for project development.*

Objective 3: *Identify and implement blue carbon demonstration projects.*

Key outcome: *Blue carbon project feasibility is demonstrated.*

Objective 4: *Integrate blue carbon into coastal policy, planning and management strategies.*

Key outcome: *Blue carbon is a key factor in coastal decision making.*

How are we doing this?

The NRM Blue Carbon Futures Grants will provide funding to organisations or recipients who can deliver projects contributing to the achievement of the Blue Carbon Strategy outcomes in the AMLR region.

How big is the funding pool?

A total of up to \$200,000 plus GST is on offer.

When do applications close?

9.30 am Monday 13 January 2020

Who is eligible for the grants?

The grants are open to applicants capable of entering into a grant agreement with the Adelaide and Mt Lofty Ranges NRM Board. The primary target recipients are researchers or practitioners, land managers, local coastal councils and others, able to initiate and undertake projects in the AMLR region.

What types of projects are eligible?

- The grants are open to projects within the AMLR region.
(See <http://www.naturalresources.sa.gov.au/adelaidemtloftyranges/about-us/our-regions-plan> → Volume 1: Strategic plan for the region 2014-15 to 2023-24 - part 2 → pages 61–62)
- Projects will be **within the Adelaide and Mt Lofty Ranges NRM region**, or, for projects spanning more than one NRM region, will use the Blue Carbon Futures Grants contribution within the Adelaide and Mt Lofty Ranges NRM region.
- Projects will need to demonstrate significant in-kind or cash co-contribution.
- Projects may seek to scope feasibility or improve data on carbon stock, sequestration and methodologies for potential future on-ground or construction activities in the near future, consistent with outcomes outlined in the Blue Carbon Strategy for SA.
- Projects with an immediate on-ground, construction or capital works component are unlikely to be considered in this round, unless they can demonstrate:
 - they can be supported by innovative mechanisms to finance carbon sequestration projects; or
 - significant outcomes for blue carbon demonstration projects including partner stakeholder or private sector partnerships to progress and scale-up a demonstration project;
 - they provide novel or unique demonstration site or public awareness opportunities within the AMLR region.

As well as achieving Blue Carbon Strategy outcomes, grant assessment will consider how projects:

- facilitate co-benefit opportunities for biodiversity, fisheries habitat, living shorelines or other ecosystem services;
- demonstrate significant co-benefit for conservation of saltmarsh and shorebird habitat in the region.
- assess feasibility for:
 - introduction of tidal flow to stranded saltmarsh communities;
 - tidal reconnection approaches which can manage tidal regimes to mitigate medium to longer term mangrove incursion to saltmarsh and shorebird habitats;
 - changes to land-use planning to enable landward retreat and reconnect stranded saltmarsh and provide shorebird habitat co-benefits;
 - avoided disturbance.
- contribute to building skills, understanding, and/or organisational commitments for progressing future Blue Carbon actions
- improve the understanding and feasibility, costs and benefits and provide additional scientific data to inform implementation of future Blue Carbon Projects at locations in the AMLR coastal region
- consideration may be given to support community organisations, industry groups, local government or other partners, promoting awareness and conservation of Blue Carbon habitats or undertaking minor restoration projects of Blue Carbon habitats or Living Shoreline approaches (up

to \$15,000) which improve awareness of coastal habitats

- although each project may continue beyond the end of the 2019–20 financial year, the Blue Carbon Futures Grants contribution must be completed within the financial year.

What else will we be looking for in projects?

Additional outcomes that we have determined are important in delivering the primary objective are:

- Recognise the value of the knowledge of Aboriginal people, and of their participation in coastal management.
- Recipients will need capacity and be responsible for securing relevant permissions, permits and approvals.
- Demonstration by applicants of prior successful projects within the eligibility scope will be considered in assessment.
- Projects that deliver multiple benefits within an integrated coastal management framework, and demonstrate broad collaboration and partnerships.
- Projects which leverage co-investment from delivery and other project partners so that a minimum of \$1 is leveraged for every \$1 of NRM Levy grant funding.

What types of projects are ineligible?

- Projects which significantly impact negatively on threatened saltmarsh communities or shorebird habitat values (i.e. replacement of existing significant saltmarsh or shorebird habitat by mangrove restoration).

(For information on significant shorebird sites refer to Purnell, C., 2018. Shorebird Population Monitoring within Gulf St Vincent, Shorebird site profiles

<https://www.naturalresources.sa.gov.au/adelaidemtlofyranges/plants-and-animals/native-plants-animals-and-biodiversity/native-animals/birds/shore-birds-project>

→ Monitoring and reporting → [Shorebird population monitoring within Gulf St Vincent 2016-17](#) → pp 94-171)

- Projects which utilise species considered to be non-native to the AMLR region.
- Projects which do not demonstrate significant recipient contributions, (cash and in-kind).

What is the application process?

<p>27 November 2019</p>	<p>Funding round opens.</p> <p>Application guide and application form available from Natural Resources Adelaide and Mt Lofty Ranges: https://www.naturalresources.sa.gov.au/adelaidemtlofyranges/get-involved/grants-and-funding.</p> <p>Potential applicants can direct queries to Natural Resources Adelaide and Mt Lofty Ranges Manager Coast and Marine Tony Flaherty on 8273 9100, 0477 352 275 or tony.flaherty@sa.gov.au</p> <p>Complete the application form electronically, and email a Word document to Tony Flaherty.</p>
<p>Monday 13 January 2020</p>	<p>Applications close at 9.30 am</p> <p>Applications may be submitted before close date.</p>

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After application close	Applications are assessed and scored against the Blue Carbon Futures Grants outcomes by a Natural Resources Adelaide and Mt Lofty Ranges panel. The panel will agree on the allocation of funding amongst successful applications. Applicants may be contacted to discuss costings or delivery elements.
Week starting 27 January 2020	Applicants advised of the outcomes of the assessment. Drafting of grant agreements commences. Debriefs will be offered to unsuccessful applicants.