

There's more to Australian Mining



Partnerships in Action

Great Victoria Desert Biodiversity Trust

A unique and collaborative approach to biodiversity offsets is increasing knowledge and conservation outcomes in the Great Victoria Desert – Australia's largest desert.

IN FOCUS:

Finding the Sandhill Dunnart

The Trust funded the first Sandhill Dunnart Research and Adaptive Management Plan incorporating community, Traditional Owner, land manager and other expertise. Subsequent Greening Australia surveys funded by the Trust:



Identified two new Sandhill Dunnart sites. Fifty-two other fauna species were also recorded, possibly including a Great Desert Skink – the first official report in the region since the 1960s



Increased total bird and mammal species records to 172 for the region, including a rare sighting of the Scarlet-chested Parrot.

The Great Victoria Desert spans an area of 418,750 square kilometres across Western Australia's southern rangelands to South Australia's western region, with important cultural connections for Traditional Owners and custodians.

AngloGold Ashanti established the Great Victoria Desert Biodiversity Trust in 2013 as part of the biodiversity offset approach for the Tropicana Gold Mine located on the desert's western edge. Tropicana is a joint venture between AngloGold Ashanti and IGO. The Trust supports research and on-ground conservation in two of the desert's six ecological sub-regions.

A new opportunity

Extensive flora and fauna surveys as part of the approvals process for Tropicana ensured mine design minimised biodiversity disturbance and informed the project's environmental impact assessment.

The opportunity for a new fund for on-ground research and conservation was identified during the biodiversity offset strategy development. This increased ecological knowledge and conservation with benefits for species listed as Matters of National Environmental Significance in an area with few contemporary studies.

Stakeholders wanted more knowledge on fauna listed as Endangered, such as the Sandhill Dunnart and Malleefowl. Opportunities for Indigenous participation, training and knowledge exchange were also important.

The Australian Government supported a Trust as part of Tropicana's biodiversity offset strategy.

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An innovative, independent fund structure

The Great Victoria Desert Biodiversity Trust's unique structure includes the Western Australian Public Trustee acting as Trustee, an independent chair and a website to share research.

Trust objectives cover development of a bioregional management plan, priority research and conservation for identified threatened species, and Indigenous participation in landscape and species conservation.

"Partnering for collective impact underpins the Trust's approach."

The Tropicana Joint Venture will contribute approximately \$4.4 million over Tropicana's current mine life, following an initial contribution of \$1.6 million.

Partnering for collective impact underpins the Trust's approach. Among other outcomes this approach supported a new Adaptive Management Partnership – a collaboration of conservation, Indigenous and land management organisations for shared cultural and conservation vision in the area.

For more information visit:

www.gvdbiodiversitytrust.org.au

IN FOCUS:

Facilitating Traditional Owner land management activities

The Trust supports activities to capture and apply traditional ecological knowledge and facilitate Indigenous land management participation. Trust-funded projects to date include:



Research to increase fire management capability and reintroduce traditional fire management practices in areas of high conservation and cultural significance using satellite imagery and photography of traditional and contemporary fire patterns



Creation of 'burn rules' with the Pila Nguru Aboriginal Corporation to protect culturally and biologically important sites during fire projects



Traditional Owner ranger training at the Southern Deserts Ranger Forum.



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