

Media Release

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Minister for Regional Development
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NEW INVESTMENT ON TARGET TO BOOST SUSTAINABLE HUNTING

The Andrews Labor Government is delivering new programs to support safe, responsible and sustainable hunting across the state.

The next phase of the Sustainable Hunting Action Plan (SHAP) 2021-2024 was announced today, backed by \$5.3 million funding from the Labor Government. The four-year plan will support the state's 60,000 licenced game hunters, improve animal welfare and help facilitate important research – delivering on our election commitment.

The Government is providing \$1 million to increase the role of Traditional Owners in managing the land where hunting takes place. This funding will be provided to implement the *Traditional Owner Game Management Strategy*, which was a key achievement of the most recent Sustainable Hunting Action Plan.

Members of the Traditional Owner community led the development of the strategy, which was launched earlier this year at the Tang Tang Swamp – a pilot project showcasing a Dja Dja Wurrung led restoration of Country including replanting native vegetation along with restoring cultural water and fire regimes.

New grants for community initiatives will be available under the strategy to fund a range of activities such as regional game food events, habitat restoration and conservation projects, hunter education and research.

The strategy also outlines the need for better access to information about hunting locations by enhancing the "More to Explore App", as well as new education programs through online learning modules and improving animal welfare through wounding reduction action plans.

Hunting is a popular recreational activity in Victoria that makes a significant contribution to the economy. Game licence holders added an estimated \$356 million to the Victorian economy in 2019, supporting around 3,100 full-time-equivalent jobs.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Agriculture Mary-Anne Thomas

"Safe, responsible and sustainable game hunting makes an important contribution to our regional economy."

"I'm excited to see the Traditional Owner Game Management Strategy being put into practice – it offers opportunities for Aboriginal communities to manage Country while sharing their traditional values and practices."

Quote attributable to Traditional Owner Game Management Strategy Project Control Group Chair Rodney Carter

"It is great to see the Government supporting opportunities for Traditional Owners to manage Country and pass on knowledge and wisdom to future generations so they can maintain strong connections to the land."

Quote attributable to Chair of the Game Management Authority Brian Hine

"This Plan funds important research to enable GMA to achieve our vision – that game hunting meets community expectations as a sustainable, well-regulated activity based on science and conducted in a responsible manner."