# LandWater & Wool

**Shaping the future**

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Land & Water Australia

another innovation by australian wool

# What do native vegetation, quality wool and healthy profits have in common on the Northern Tablelands of NSW?

## Fast facts

**Catchments:**
Border Rivers, Gwydir, Namoi, North Coast

**Predominantly summer rainfall:**
700 mm in west, 1500 mm in east

**Number of wool growers:** 800

**Soil types:** Granite, trap, basalt

Profitable management of native vegetation is a priority for many woolgrowers. The *Profitable Biodiverse Wool Production for the Northern Tablelands of NSW* project (2002-2007) demonstrated the benefits of biodiversity for wool production.

## Demonstrating the benefits

Biodiversity surveys on representative Monitor wool properties showed:

- Water quality in most farm dams and streams was good to excellent in spring 2005
- A wide range of birds, 'micro-bats', frogs and pasture plants, and healthy numbers of common brushtail possums
- Some of the bird species to be of special conservation significance
- Wooded streams and dams are important for bats and frogs
- Diverse flora and fauna underpin the stability, resilience and productivity of local wool properties.



## Conclusive evidence

- Native pastures and timber are good for production *and* biodiversity
- Management that maintains high groundcover and pasture biomass enhances infiltration, boosts soil organisms and improves water quality
- A mix of native and sown species is associated with high wool production
- Properties can have 30% tree cover without sacrificing carrying capacity
- The cost of planting shelterbelts is more than offset by increased lambing percentage and survival of adult sheep
- Local tree planting efforts are boosting both farm profits and bird and bat numbers on farms.

**Wool properties are likely to be biodiverse if they achieve** high production per head (80-90% of genetic maximum), high groundcover (preferably 100%), high pasture biomass and diversity, high crop biomass, clean water, 10-30% of the farm vegetated with healthy timber and shrubs, and management is adjusted to the different types of country across the property.

***The more productive and palatable the pastures on such properties, the more profitable they will be.***


### Acknowledgements

The project team is indebted to the woolgrower families who offered their properties as Case Study, Testimonial and Monitor farms, to those who responded to our regional survey and answered questions over the telephone, and to the prominent woolgrower families and their advisors who sat on the Steering Committee and provided invaluable advice.

Photos: Stuart Green, Bob Shepherd & Nick Reid.


### Project products

The project produced a series of Case Studies, Testimonials, and Fact Sheets, which are available either nearby this poster, or on-line at

www.landwaterwool.gov.au.

### For more information


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