



**AUSTRALIAN ALPS
NATIONAL PARKS**

**MEMORANDUM
of
UNDERSTANDING**

**in relation to the Cooperative Management of the
Australian Alps national parks**

September 2026



This MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
is made between:

The Director of National Parks having responsibility for the administration, management and control of Commonwealth reserves and conservation zones;

The Deputy Secretary having responsibility for the New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service within the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water;

The Executive Branch Manager having responsibility for the Australian Capital Territory Parks and Conservation Service; and

The Chief Executive Officer having responsibility for Parks Victoria.

WHEREAS

1. In July 1986 a Memorandum of Understanding was first entered into in relation to the Cooperative Management of the Australian Alps national parks.
2. The original Memorandum of Understanding was amended and re-signed on 2 December 1989, on 29 November 1996, on 6 November 1998, on 23 May 2003, on 12 July 2016 and on 23 June 2021.
3. The Parties recognised in the above noted Memorandums 1989, 1996, 1998 and 2003 were the then Ministers responsible for the portfolios therein identified, the 2016, 2021 and this current Memorandum now ascribes the identified responsibilities of the 'Parties' to the Executive Officers noted.
4. Pursuant to the objectives of that Memorandum, the Parties now wish to amend the Memorandum to reflect changes in the operation of the Memorandum in the intervening years, and to set a new focus for the future.
5. The Australian Government environment portfolio performs its functions to conserve biodiversity and heritage, in cooperation with the participating States and Territory.
6. The New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service within the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, the ACT Parks and Conservation Service and Parks Victoria, are the agencies responsible for the delivery of park management services within their respective State or Territory in relation to the areas described in Schedule 1. These areas are located in the Australian Alps or its environs and are collectively referred to in this Memorandum of Understanding as the "Australian Alps national parks".

PREFACE

NOW THE PARTIES have reached an understanding in regard to the following matters:

1. The Parties, as from this date, hereby agree to this revised Memorandum of Understanding. The Parties further agree that all matters being conducted under the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding prior to this date will continue to be conducted pursuant to this Memorandum of Understanding.
2. The Parties hereto acknowledge for themselves and on behalf of their Agencies that:
 - 2.1 The Australian Alps national parks comprise an area of major significance containing:
 - (a) Australia's highest mainland peaks and most spectacular mountain scenery;
 - (b) flora and fauna, ecological processes and communities unique to Australian alpine and sub-alpine environments;
 - (c) a range of sites, places and landscapes valued by the community including those with a rich and diverse cultural heritage belonging to Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people;
 - (d) a significant outdoor recreation and tourism resource for Australians and international visitors;
 - (e) important hydrological processes in the headwaters of major river systems flowing from the Australian Alps national parks, helping to ensure a supply of water vital for the maintenance of ecological processes and communities, domestic use, industry, irrigation and hydro-electric production in NSW, Victoria, the ACT and South Australia; and
 - (f) species and ecological communities that are among the most vulnerable in Australia to climate change.
 - 2.2 The significance of the Australian Alps has been recognised by the Australian Government and aforesaid State and Territory Governments by the extensive reservation of national parks and other protected areas within the region, through National Heritage listing and recognition as a National Landscape.
 - 2.3 The coordinated management, protection and preservation of the Australian Alps national parks for all Australians, present and future, requires a joint commitment extending across State and Territory boundaries.
 - 2.4 There exist Australian Government and State/Territory responsibilities for the conservation of the natural and cultural values of the Australian Alps national parks.
 - 2.5 To enable a continuing program of cooperative management activities the parties commit to a per annum funding of the program of an amount to be agreed at the annual Heads of Agencies meeting.

VISION

- 2.6 The vision of the Australian Alps national parks Cooperative Management Program is of Agencies working in partnership to achieve excellence in conservation management of the Australian Alps national parks natural and cultural values and sustainable use through an active program of cross-border cooperation.

MISSION

3. The Parties agree to the following objectives:
- 3.1 to pursue the growth and enhancement of inter-governmental cooperative management to protect the important natural, cultural and community values of the Australian Alps national parks; and
- 3.2 to cooperate in the determination and implementation of best-practice management of the areas listed in Schedule 1 of the Memorandum of Understanding to achieve the:
- (a) protection of the unique mountain landscapes;
 - (b) protection of the natural and cultural values of the Australian Alps;
 - (c) provision of an appropriate range of education, recreation and tourism experiences that encourage the enjoyment, appreciation, understanding and conservation of the natural and cultural values;
 - (d) protection and restoration of mountain catchments; and
 - (e) amelioration of the effects of climate change.

TERMS OF AGREEMENT

4. The Parties agree to request or direct their agencies to participate wherever possible and appropriate in the following working arrangements:
- 4.1 the Agencies will consult in the preparation of management plans for each area in Schedule 1 or in amendments to existing plans, and will aim to ensure that such management plans provide for complementary policies and management practices throughout the Australian Alps national parks;
- 4.2 the Agencies will consult on matters of policy formulation and management;
- 4.3 the Agencies will consult in the formulation of regulations for the management of the Australian Alps national parks and the enforcement of those regulations;
- 4.4 the Agencies will collaborate on matters of research including resource data collection and will undertake joint actions and management operations relevant to the coordinated management, conservation and protection of the values of the Australian Alps national parks with particular regard to the effects of climate change and adaptive management needs;
- 4.5 the Agencies will exchange information, ideas and expertise relevant to the protection of the values of the Australian Alps national parks, and will cooperate in the training of staff to manage the Australian Alps national parks;
- 4.6 the Agencies will consult with Aboriginal communities and foster their participation in the management of the Australian Alps national parks through appropriate representative forums;

- 4.7 the Agencies will cooperate to provide opportunities for community education, interpretation and awareness of the values of Australian Alps national parks and the benefits of the cooperative management program;
- 4.8 the Agencies will cooperate to provide opportunities for stakeholder participation in the management of the Australian Alps national parks;
- 4.9 each Agency will, within the areas for which it has management responsibility, strive to adopt complementary recreation management policies and where appropriate provide recreation facilities and services that enable a seamless range of visitor experiences in the Australian Alps national parks listed in Schedule 1;
- 4.10 the Agencies will cooperate in the monitoring of impacts on natural and cultural values and visitor use in the Australian Alps national parks; and
- 4.11 the Agencies will collectively strive to identify opportunities for the recognition of the regionally, nationally and internationally significant values of the Australian Alps national parks.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

- 5. The Parties agree to maintain three bodies to support the effective operation of the Memorandum of Understanding as follows:
 - 5.1 a group to be known as the Australian Alps Heads of Agencies (HoA) comprising heads, or their nominated representatives, of participating agencies. This body will be responsible for inter-agency relationships according to this Memorandum of Understanding and for the reporting of the Programs annual operations to the relevant government ministers responsible. The Heads of Agencies will endeavour to meet annually to consider strategic issues and provide advice to the AALC on policy, priority areas and emerging issues;
 - 5.2 a committee to be known as the Australian Alps Liaison Committee (AALC) comprising a senior officer of each Agency in a position to deliver the function of the committee and which will meet as required. The function of the committee will be to facilitate development, coordination, and implementation of cooperative management programs, including but not limited to an annual cooperative works program and other arrangements under this Memorandum of Understanding; and
 - 5.3 an Office of Program Management. This will consist of the Program Manager and support service as deemed necessary by the AALC to manage delivery of the annual works program and all associated actions, communications and promotion of the Program.

WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

- 6. The AALC will be the primary organisational body to give effect to this Memorandum of Understanding and will oversee the management of the Australian Alps national parks Cooperative Management Program. The AALC will ensure:
 - 6.1 that a Strategic Plan is prepared which establishes priority issues and identifies desired outcomes to give effect to the vision and mission of this Memorandum of Understanding;

- 6.2 that the Strategic Plan is reviewed on a three-year cycle and remains in place until a replacement plan is approved by the Heads of Agencies, and is accompanied by a review of the implementation of the previous Strategic Plan;
- 6.3 that an annual cooperative works program is developed consistent with the Strategic Plan for each financial year;
- 6.4 that the primary focus of the annual cooperative works program is to foster innovation and best practice in the areas of policy and management planning, operational management, stakeholder engagement, education, training, research and performance measurement;
- 6.5 that the annual cooperative works program is consistent with, and incorporated into, the management programs undertaken by the Agencies;
- 6.6 that a regular review of progress towards implementing the annual cooperative works program is undertaken during the financial year to which it relates;
- 6.7 that an annual report is submitted by the Heads of Agencies at the conclusion of each financial year to the respective government ministers responsible for national parks;
- 6.8 that, notwithstanding annual reports, significant outcomes arising from the annual cooperative works program are reported to Heads of Agencies in a timely manner; and
- 6.9 that opportunities for inter-agency liaison, in particular joint actions and management operations relevant to the coordinated management, conservation and protection of the values of the Australian Alps national parks, are identified and supported where appropriate.
7. The AALC may establish reference groups, task groups and other subsidiary bodies and advisory groups to assist the AALC with its responsibilities under this Memorandum of Understanding.
8. Any funds or in-kind support contributed by the Agencies as negotiated through Heads of Agencies will be managed for the annual cooperative works program under this Memorandum of Understanding.
9. The AALC may enter into cost-sharing arrangements with one or more State/Territory Agencies or other organisations and may seek sponsorship, as appropriate, for projects within the annual cooperative works program.
10. The position of Australian Alps Program Manager and associated administrative support, as may be required from time to time, will be hosted by individual State/Territory Agencies on a rotational basis, usually of three financial years duration, as appropriate.
11. In managing projects under the annual cooperative works program, a nominated Agency may project manage a particular project.

THIRD PARTY OPPORTUNITIES

12. The AALC will investigate, foster and engage with national and international managers of other alpine and sub-alpine parks or relevant government and non-government bodies to learn about or participate in specific cooperative programs where management benefits are to be expected. This may include, but is not limited to, cooperation with alpine resorts and other commercial entities to promote the conservation and sustainable use of the Australian Alps national parks; the establishment of partnerships with universities and other relevant research institutions to further identified research outcomes; and promoting the involvement of philanthropic organisations.

SCHEDULE 1

13. The Parties may agree to the inclusion within Schedule 1 of any national park, nature reserve, wilderness area or other compatible conservation reserve which complements or contributes to the Australian Alps national parks as outlined in clause 2.1.

NATURE OF AGREEMENT

14. This Memorandum of Understanding shall enter into effect on and from the day and year written below and may be amended or terminated at any time by mutual agreement of the Parties.
15. The Memorandum will be effective for a period of three years corresponding to the current Australian Alps Strategic Plan 2026 – 2029, or until a replacement plan is approved by the partner agencies. Upon presentation of a new strategic plan, the Memorandum shall be reviewed with the intent of a resigning that aligns to the period of operation of the next strategic plan.
16. The Parties acknowledge that this Memorandum of Understanding does not give rise to legal obligations.

DEFINITIONS

In this agreement:

"Parties" means the Director of National Parks, the Executive Officer having responsibility for the New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service within the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, the Executive Officer having responsibility for the ACT Parks and Conservation Service, and the Executive Officer having responsibility for Parks Victoria.

"Agencies" means the Director of National Parks, supported by Parks Australia division within the Commonwealth Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water; New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service within the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water; the ACT Parks and Conservation Service; and Parks Victoria.

"Australian Alps Program Manager" means a member of an Agency responsible from time to time for coordinating the management of the Australian Alps national parks Cooperative Management Program, under the direction of the Australian Alps Liaison Committee.



AUSTRALIAN ALPS NATIONAL PARKS

Memorandum of Understanding

has been signed by each Party on the date indicated below.

SIGNED by

Ricky Archer

Director of National Parks

Parks Australia

Commonwealth of Australia

Date 21/09/2026

SIGNED by

Alex Graham

Deputy Secretary

National Parks and Wildlife Service

New South Wales

Date 03/06/26

SIGNED by

Dr Rosie Cooney

Executive Branch Manager

ACT Parks and Conservation Service

Date 16/04/2026

SIGNED by

Lee Miezis

Chief Executive Officer

Parks Victoria

Victoria

Date 27/05/2026



Australian Government

Director of National Parks



SCHEDULE 1

Areas comprising the Australian Alps national parks

AREA	AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR MANAGEMENT
<i>Victoria</i>	
Alpine National Park	Parks Victoria
Mount Buffalo National Park	Parks Victoria
Snowy River National Park	Parks Victoria
Avon Wilderness Park	Parks Victoria
Baw Baw National Park	Parks Victoria
Yarra Ranges National Park - Lake Mountain Unit	Parks Victoria
<i>New South Wales</i>	
Kosciuszko National Park	NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service
Brindabella National Park	NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service
Scabby Range National Park	NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service
Bimberi Nature Reserve	NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service
<i>Australian Capital Territory</i>	
Namadgi National Park	ACT Parks and Conservation Service
Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve	ACT Parks and Conservation Service