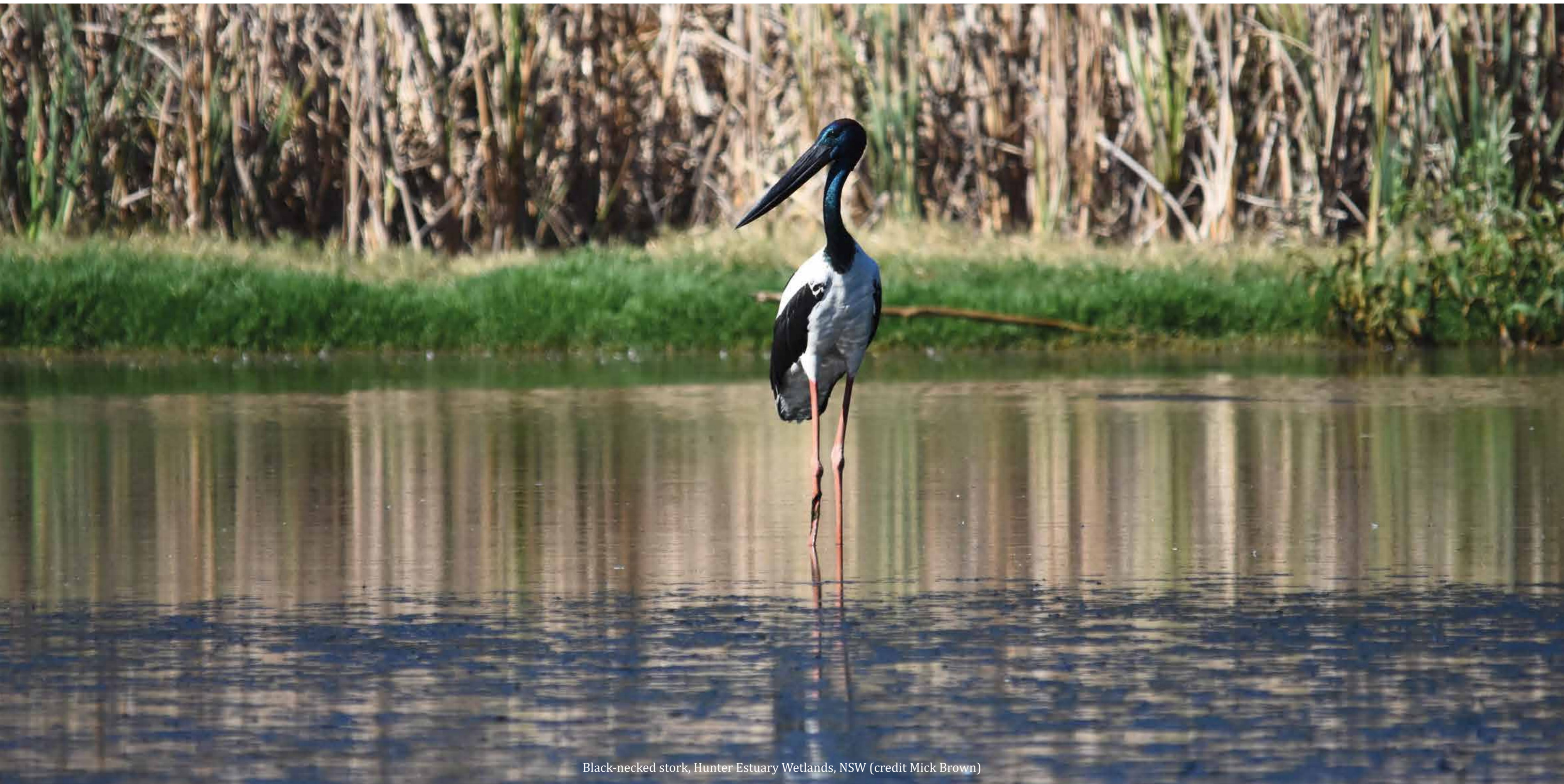




Australian Government



Celebrating 50 years of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands

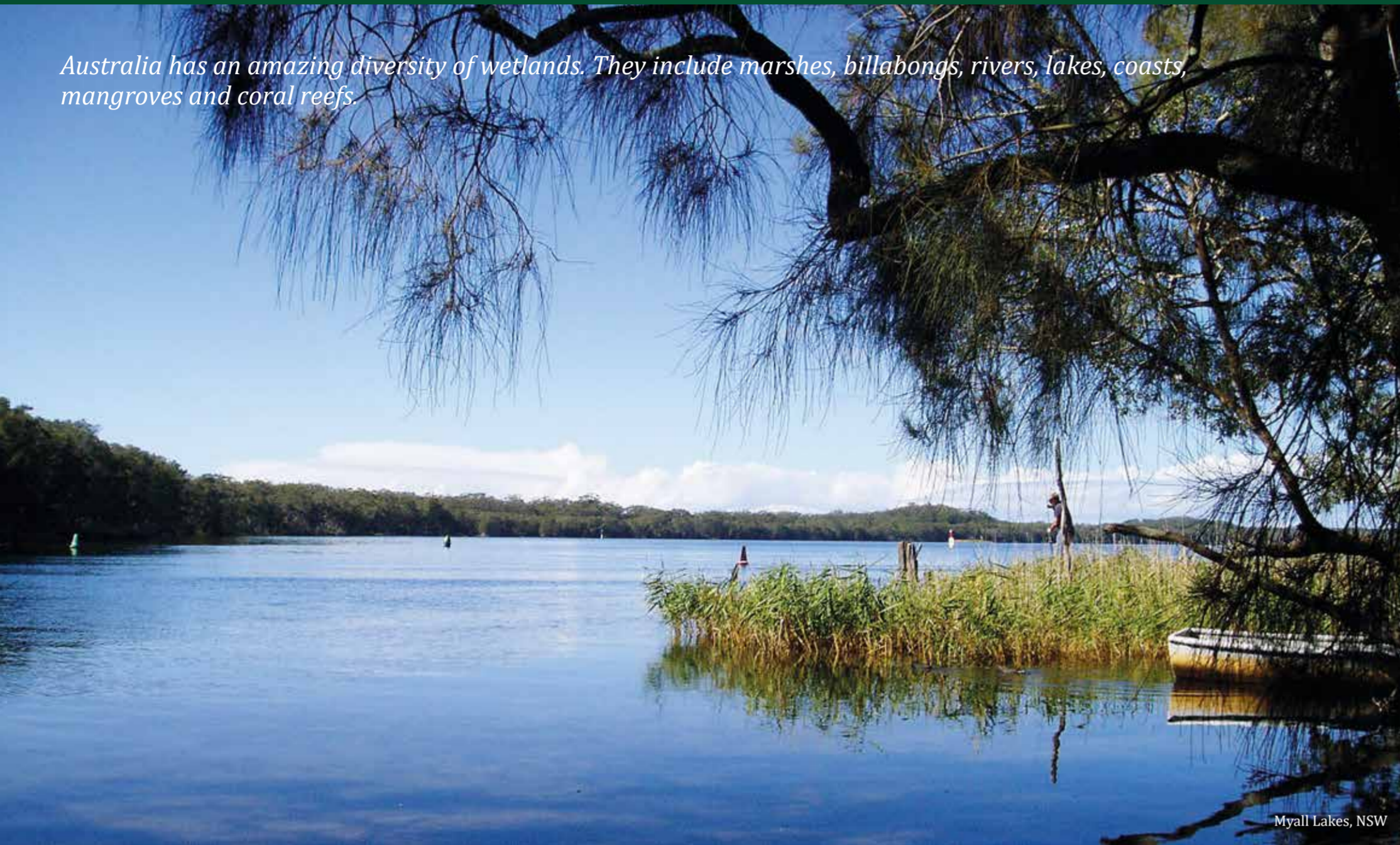


Black-necked stork, Hunter Estuary Wetlands, NSW (credit Mick Brown)

Australia was one of the first countries to sign the Ramsar Convention, which aims to halt the worldwide loss of wetlands and conserve those that remain. Australia designated the world's first wetland of international importance (Ramsar site) under the Convention – Cobourg Peninsula in the Northern Territory – in 1974.

Wetlands of international importance (Ramsar sites) in eastern Australia

Australia has an amazing diversity of wetlands. They include marshes, billabongs, rivers, lakes, coasts, mangroves and coral reefs.



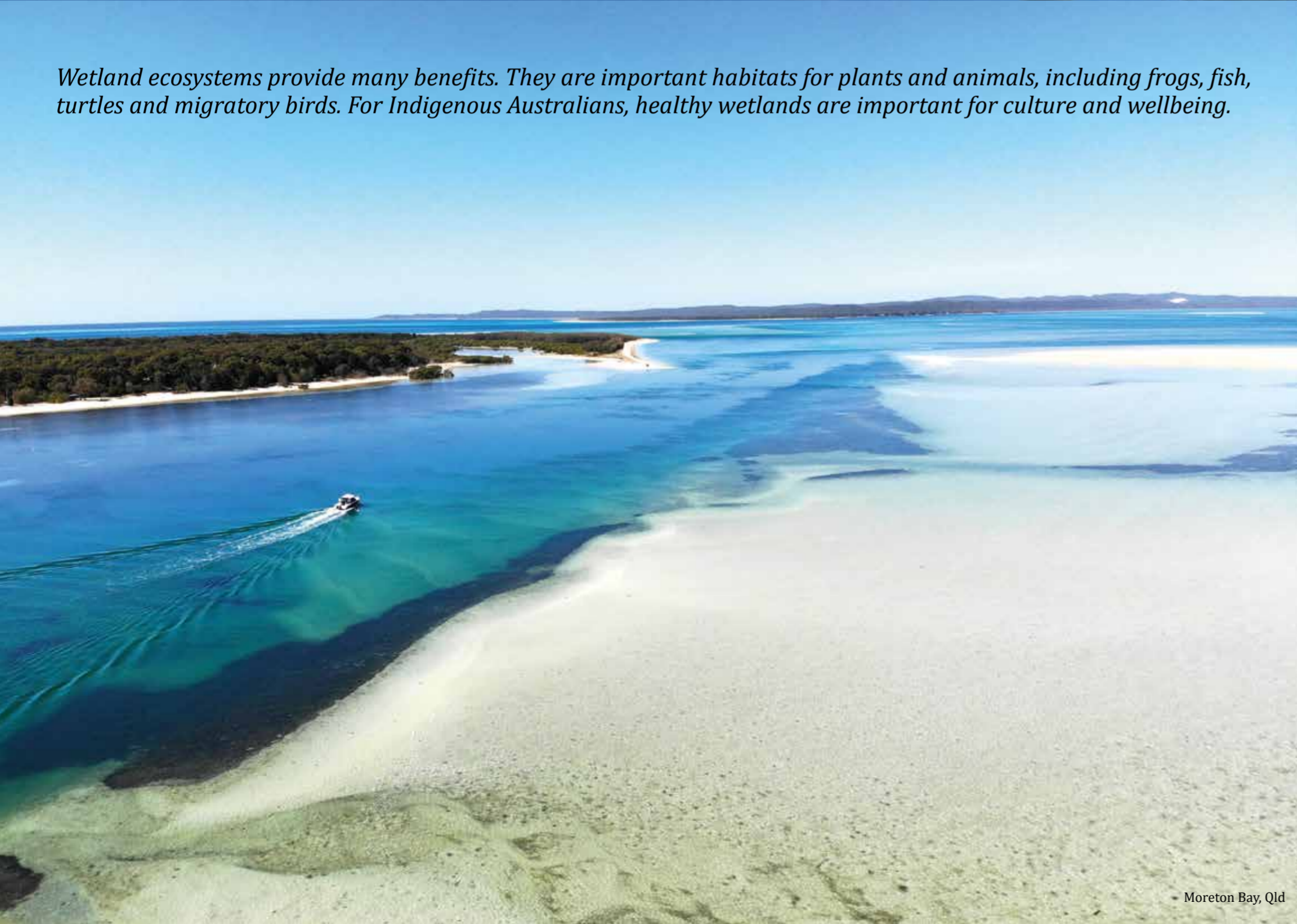
Myall Lakes, NSW



Great Sandy Strait, Qld (credit Ian Hutton)

Australia has 66 Ramsar sites, which are protected under national legislation.

Wetland ecosystems provide many benefits. They are important habitats for plants and animals, including frogs, fish, turtles and migratory birds. For Indigenous Australians, healthy wetlands are important for culture and wellbeing.



Moreton Bay, Qld



Water testing, Richmond Landcare NSW



Hunter Estuary Wetlands, NSW

Wetlands improve water quality, provide nurseries for fish and reduce the impacts of floods and storms. Wetlands also support recreation and tourism.



Great Sandy Strait, Qld (credit Gary Cranitch) © Qld Museum

For more information visit www.environment.gov.au/wetlands