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# Exploring landscape history through integrated participatory research: experiences from Victoria

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### **SUMMARY**

The extent of native vegetation in the landscape is the function of many contemporary and historical factors. While the contemporary influences on native vegetation are relatively well understood, the historical perspective is often ignored or poorly understood. In part this is due to the difficulty of obtaining reliable data, but it is also because the collection of such data requires the combination of disciplines and perspectives. This chapter documents the process and results of a multi-disciplinary investigation into the historical and contemporary drivers of landscape change. This process brought together researchers in rural sociology, vegetation ecology and environmental modelling, as well as natural resource management (NRM) practitioners. Together, we sought to construct a picture of historical change in native vegetation within our three case study areas by mapping the change in native vegetation using aerial photographs from 1946–2008, engaging a selective sample of landholders in a series of landscape history workshops, conducting site inspections with landholders to explore specific