



## Q&A on making a bequest to Gondwana Link

### **Q1: What if Gondwana Link Ltd no longer operates when my will is enacted.**

**A:** Gondwana Link is a 100 year plus program to ensure that one of the world's biological hotspots remains ecologically resilient across south-western Australia. We have nearly reached our first 20 years of operation. Should some as yet unforeseen reason require the organisation be wound up then, as a registered charitable organisation, GLL is required to transfer residual assets to a similar environmental fund, authority or institution. While there are a number of reputable conservation organisations working with us to achieve the Link, we wish to keep the overall program leadership locally based, and have selected Green Skills Inc. as the organisation most able to continue our work. Green Skills are long time close colleagues with over 30 staff and have operated since 1989. Hence our preference is that you include in your bequest the words

*'In the event that Gondwana Link Ltd is unable to use this bequest for the intended purposes, or does not exist at the time of our death, we instruct that those funds be transferred to Green Skills Inc. In the event that Green Skills Inc. no longer exist at the time of our death we instruct our Executors to direct the bequest to a reputable locally based conservation organisation working in the Gondwana Link area.'*

### **Q2: The field of conservation organisations working across Gondwana Link and in south-western Australia looks quite crowded. Is it useful to consider a bequest directly to them?**

**A:** Our website contains an up-to date outline of the work underway and the groups involved in Gondwana Link. Conservation priorities are frequently changing across landscapes and within organisations and there are no short cuts. If you want to give directly to one of these groups you should discuss their work and their priorities with them. Gondwana Link Ltd maintains a strategic focus across the Link and can readily identify the current strategic priorities as they change over time, and the groups involved. This ensures that whenever your bequest arrives it is directed to the most cost-effective work underway. If you have a preference as to how your bequest is to be spent, such as for securing or restoring land, supporting local community action, or maintaining the backbone work of Gondwana Link Ltd, please mention that in your bequest.

### **Q3: I want to concentrate my bequest into the biodiversity hotspot that is south-western Australia.**

**A:** Gondwana Link is exactly that. Our area of on-ground operation is constitutionally restricted to south-western Australia, and stretches across 1,000 km of this wonderful biodiversity hotspot, from the cool, high rainfall forests and wetlands at the south-westernmost part of the continent, to the semi-arid woodlands and mallee country bordering the Nullarbor Plain. We facilitate and support a cohesive program of ambitious work by many groups across this important stretch of country.

**Q4: GL relies on a small core of staff. If any become unavailable for extended periods, what back-up is available?**

**A:** There's really two questions in this. Firstly, we are now extremely confident that the range of groups and individuals involved will keep Gondwana Link going on the ground. The work may speed up or slow down a bit over the years as various people come and go, but it is now deeply embedded as part of the West Australian fabric, and as such we are confident there will always be a central organisation to support the overall program. We are working to build a stronger internal succession program. Current staff are competent in each other's work programs and readily fill in when there is a gap, but as funds become available we will be increasing the Core staff so we can better manage the increasing workload and also open up pathways for career succession.

**Q5: Essentially GLL helps a number of other organisations to achieve mutually agreed objectives. How does GLL scrutinise the activities of these organisations, especially their financial activities to ensure that the reputation of GLL remains unsullied?**

**A:** GLL does not seek to scrutinise the internal arrangements of any organisation. Nor could it. What we are interested in is high priority results on the ground being achieved through high ethical and environmental standards of operation. To that end we have developed principles and standards of operation, and are extending and tightening these. We have also worked with groups to develop detailed Conservation Action Plans that cover the priority areas to clarify and guide the jointly agreed actions. Our ability to formally monitor implementation of these remains limited, but is increasing. Nevertheless, we are well aware of what efforts and progress are being made in each area, and can readily identify current priorities, the more cost effective work underway at any one time, and which organisations are operating cohesively or not.

The work of maintaining our reputation is slightly more complex. Following the example of other large landscape initiatives we found that 'once the grand vision . . . was unleashed, it was impossible to control. Attempting to control these efforts would have stifled much of that creativity and energy' (Harvey Locke, Yellowstone to Yukon, 2010). While we all bask in the reflected glory of all the good work underway, we do aim to ensure that groups only speak for their own efforts in Gondwana Link, and that to minimise the risk of reputational damage from any unwise statements of efforts. There are some risks in this of course, there are risks in everything worthwhile.