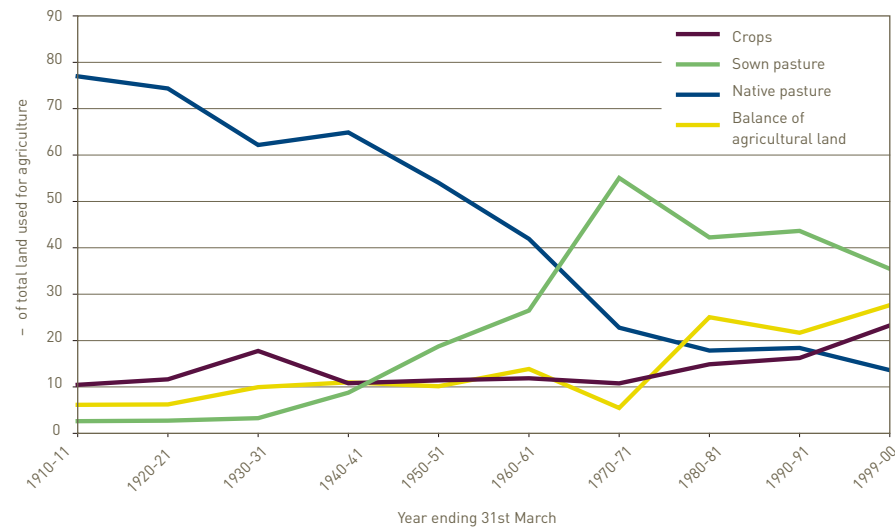


The landscape 1750 to 2000

Landscape change

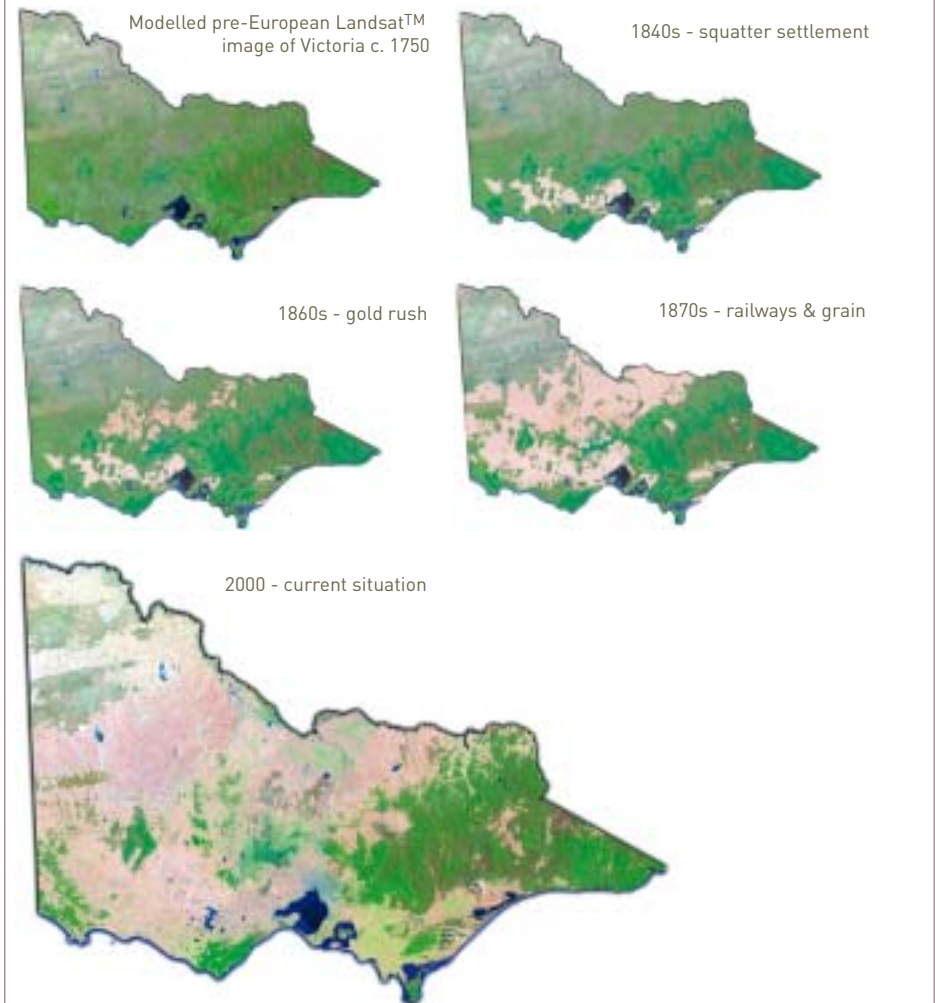
Prior to European settlement, Indigenous populations practised food gathering and production on a local scale. While their use of fire and hunting weapons gave them the ability to affect their local ecologies, the scale of impact was small when compared with European settlement. Since the early 1800s around 70% of Victoria's native vegetation has been cleared. From the 1940s, sown pasture became the predominant base for grazing rather than native pasture. Fertilisers became more commonplace in farming through the 1950s and 60s creating changes in nutrient levels and runoff across the landscape. The level of land clearing, along with land use practises in the 20th century has left a legacy of environmental issues such as biodiversity loss, poor water quality, salinity and erosion. Addressing such issues is the focus of much current environmental and natural resource policy.

Agriculture land use, Victoria, 1910-2000¹



NOTE: Commencing with the 1960-61 season, the area of pasture cut for hay seed has been excluded from area of crops; 'Sown pasture' includes oats, barley and lucerne sown for grazing; 1999-00 data is for year ended 30 June 2000.

The clearing and settlement of Victoria²



NOTE: The images make use of false colour imagery to show the difference between vegetation cover (green tones) and other land uses.

Sources ¹ABS *Victorian Yearbook 2002* ²Mansergh et. al. 2005 "Victoria's natural capital".