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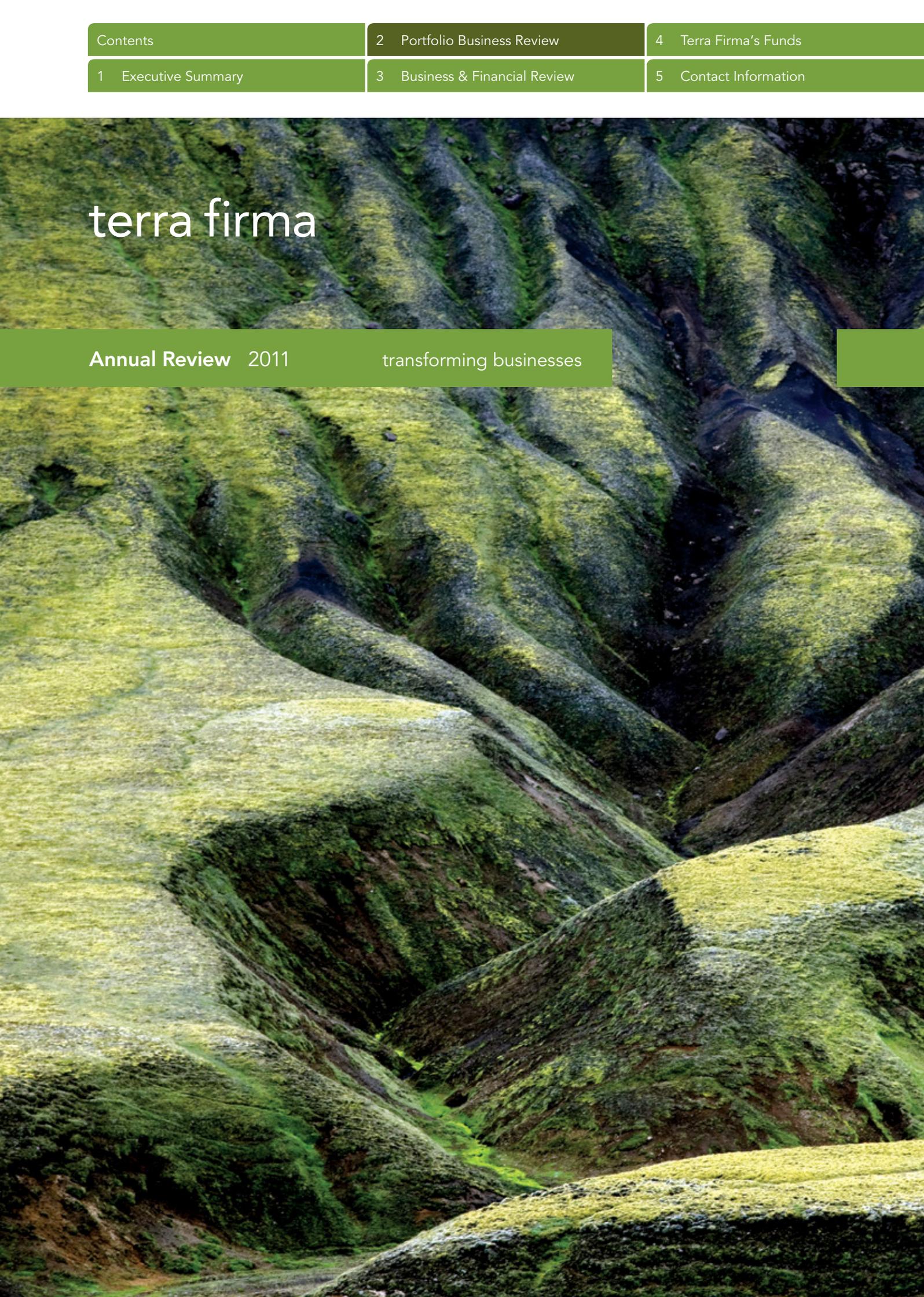
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Annual Review 2011

transforming businesses



Excerpt from the 2011 Annual Review
CPC Human Interest Article

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SAFEGUARDING THE FUTURE OF AN ENDANGERED SPECIES



The Gouldian finch – an endangered breed that CPC is helping to protect

Dingo Springs on CPC's Newry Station has long been a valuable watering hole for the cattle raised on this sprawling Northern Territory property. As expert conservationists will tell you, it is also important to another much smaller and more endangered visitor – the Gouldian finch.

This species of finch – Latin name *Erythrura gouldiae* – is a small, brightly coloured seed-eating bird that can only be found on the northern savannas of Australia. In fact, its numbers have undergone such a drastic decline in the last hundred years or so that there are now only a few areas in the Northern Territory and Western Australia where they can regularly be sighted.

The birds are now protected by legislation and there is even a 2006 National Recovery Plan for the Gouldian finch. One of the plan's keys aims is to improve the management of grazing and fire at key off-reserve sites within the Gouldian finch range, and it is here that CPC has been able to lend a hand.

Dingo Springs is a rich source of the grass seeds that these birds rely on, making it a site of major importance to ensuring the survival of this spectacular species. The key threats to the birds are the grazing animals, both domestic and feral, that compete for the grass seed, and the uncontrolled fires that can destroy these resources over large areas.

To tackle these threats and preserve this valuable habitat for the finches, CPC committed to investing in conservation work at Dingo Springs. It was also successful in having those funds matched by a grant from the Northern Territory Natural Resource Management Board.

The work has seen staff constructing fencing around the springs, managing the weed population and putting better fire management in place. The company has also found alternative water-points so that cattle no longer have to use the springs.

Monitoring sites have also been set up to assess the recovery of vegetation around the springs and government scientists will make regular visits to carry out surveys and check on progress.

This work doubles the area managed specifically for Gouldian finches by CPC to almost 550 hectares. It is hoped that these efforts will help to reverse the decline in numbers and that this rare and spectacular bird can thrive and go on to be enjoyed by future generations.