

# Making successful investments in NRM Practice Change

Second forum for participating regions

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Prepared for



**Australian Government**  
**Land & Water Australia**

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Prepared by



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## 1. Introduction

This report documents the outcomes of the second annual forum with participating regions of the 'Making Successful Investments in NRM Practice Change' project. The project, funded by Land and Water Australia and the Australian Government, commenced in April 2006. The project is an 'action learning project', with Hassall & Associates working with ten participating NRM regional bodies from across Australia (see Appendix 1 for a list of participants).

The objective of the project is to enable better informed and more effective investments in NRM practice change through NRM regional bodies. The intended outcomes of the project are:

- § improved capacity of participating NRM regional bodies to plan, manage, review and adapt their investments and strategies for NRM practice change leading to improved natural resource condition; and
- § lessons learnt from the project passed to policy makers (through their involvement in the project, briefings and other means) to enable continuous program and policy improvement for targeted and effective regional investment in NRM practice change.

The focus of the first forum held in May 2007 was: to enable networks to be built and a community of practice to be developed amongst all project participants; to exchange information; and to share ideas on some of the key factors influencing regional NRM and practice change.

The focus of the 2008 forum was to share ideas on some of the policy implications of the research done so far and to design the next phase of the NRM Practice Change Project.

The key objectives of the 2008 forum were for all forum participants to:

- § share ideas and experiences across the regions;
- § discuss and refine the policy implications identified through our research in 2007;
- § finalise key themes and areas of research for 2008;
- § develop the work plans that will shape project activities in 2008; and
- § enjoy the opportunity to interact with each other about approaches to practice change.

## 2. Forum introductions

### Session Overview

The purpose of this session was to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>§ Introduce ourselves to new members of our community of practice.</li><li>§ Set the scene for the Forum.</li><li>§ Reflect on our participation in the NRM Practice Change Project to date.</li></ul>
Introductions and outline of the day
NRM Practice Change Project – Overview and Update
2007 - Reflections from Forum Participants <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>§ <i>What was the one biggest learning for you from the NRM Practice Change Project this past year?</i></li></ul>

### 2.1 NRM Practice Change Project – Overview and Update

Sue Salvin provided an overview of the NRM Practice Change Project, and an update on where the project is up to. Key points from Sue's presentation were:

- § The objectives and outcomes for the project had been revisited and improved to more clearly reflect what the project is trying to achieve, and to allow for the project to better report on outcomes being achieved. They are now as follows:
  - Objective:
    - § To enable better informed and more effective investments in NRM practice change.
  - Outcomes:
    - § Improved capacity of participating NRM regional bodies to plan, manage, review and adapt their investments and strategies for NRM practice change leading to improved natural resource condition.
    - § Lessons learnt from the project passed to policy makers (through their involvement in the project, briefings and other means) to enable continuous program and policy improvement for targeted and effective regional investment in NRM practice change.
- § The project is about to enter its second action learning cycle (of three), with this forum signifying the commencement of this stage. Discussions and action planning activities will provide a basis for the development of new workplans for the year.
- § Achievements to date have included: the website (which is up and running); the revision of the draft planning framework; a range of tools; and identification of initial policy and program implications.
- § Next steps will be: the completion of two more action learning cycles, which will include another forum for participating regions in 2009; a forum for a broader audience; and the final report (which is due in May 2010).

Please note that a full copy of Sue's presentation can be downloaded from the NRM Practice Change Website in the Additional Information section at [http://www.hassall.com.au/australian\\_division/info.html](http://www.hassall.com.au/australian_division/info.html)

## 2.2 2007 reflections from forum participants

### Participant responses to the question

What was the one biggest learning for you from the NRM Practice Change Project this past year?

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| Understanding the context we are working in              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ How NRM works in Australia, and recognising that the people working within it are very passionate.</li> <li>§ Understanding the context of this project within the workings of the regional body; and the context of the regional body within all regions in Australia.</li> <li>§ A lot of work being covered by this project is relevant and timely.</li> <li>§ NRM is beyond just on-ground activities.</li> </ul>  |
| Change in culture required                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ Bringing about practice change will be a long term process (cultural change)                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ e.g. change in thinking of some key operators</li> <li>○ needs to occur internally in our organisations first</li> <li>○ rethink how we engage board, staff, one on one, groups.</li> </ul> </li> <li>§ Need to rethink how we measure practice change targets.</li> </ul>   |
| Comparing regions and organisational structure           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ Similarities and differences across all.</li> <li>§ Approaches of other regions (e.g. in their implementation models).</li> </ul>  |
| Participatory research, learning and interaction         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ Introduction to social research and the effectiveness of having a community of practice.</li> <li>§ What it means to be involved in participatory research (time, inputs etc).</li> <li>§ Seeing the community of practice evolve and operate across institutional boundaries. Having a community of practice and participatory research gives people opportunities to reflect.</li> <li>§ Spirit in the project is strong.</li> <li>§ Regions are very open to share information.</li> <li>§ Value of face to face contact – nuts and bolts of on ground work is very far away from government and decision making processes so opportunities to interact with people involved in on ground work are rare but important.</li> <li>§ Tools and info- can be overwhelming.</li> </ul>   |
| Program logic and the practice change planning framework | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ The link between the two is that program logic addresses the 'what' and the planning framework the 'how'.</li> <li>§ Program logic is a useful process for planning, documenting, and testing. The 'journey' in constructing logic is useful in itself for surfacing issues and corporate knowledge.</li> <li>§ There are some challenges in applying program logic in NRM (which is inherently multi-attributed), therefore need to be pragmatic when constructing the logic (to avoid a complex 'spaghetti' logic!).</li> <li>§ It can be challenging to link program logic to current regional planning (e.g. on ground activities, good practice, RIS). Doing so can surface the fact that some plans haven't been linked back to a logic at all.</li> <li>§ It is useful for taking a good hard look at the way we do things, and to question why decisions were made (assessing corporate knowledge).</li> <li>§ Assists in surfacing foundational aspects that shape what we do/how we focus on NRM (eg. understanding external influences).</li> </ul> |

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### Additional discussion points:

- § There is a need to get language right when information is passed back and forth between regional bodies and policy makers, as there is often a different understanding of arrangements and models between the two. Similarly, both policy makers and regional bodies need to be specific when using particular terms (e.g. the use of the term '[land] resource managers' as opposed to 'landholders').
- § Land and Water Australia (LWA) has a role in informing government. There are three ministers responsible for natural resources in Australia yet LWA reports to one only (Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry), despite the relevance of the project to all three.
- § LWA is a research and development corporation (RDC) but is different from all the others, which are industry based.
- § There are parallels between this project and other LWA Social and Institutional Research Program (SIRP) projects. In programs, have historically looked 'upwards' within the program framework, and not across the programs for linkages. Knowledge transfer is important, as is retaining corporate knowledge.

### 3. Sharing our experiences

#### Session overview

<p>The purpose of this session was to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ Develop our understanding of our new co-researcher.</li> <li>§ Share our learnings from each of our research themes.</li> </ul>
Practice Change in the South Australian Arid Lands - SAAL
Strategic Review Theme
Profiling and Engagement Theme
Business Planning Theme
Implementation Models Theme
<p>Reflections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ <i>What were you main learnings from the theme this year?</i></li> <li>§ <i>How has your involvement in this theme helped you in your role?</i></li> <li>§ <i>How has your involvement in the theme helped your organisation?</i></li> </ul>

#### 3.1 Practice change in the South Australian Arid Lands (SAAL)

- § The area covered by SAAL is greater than 538 000 km<sup>2</sup> and is characterised by diverse land systems.
- § The major service centre is Port Augusta which is actually outside the region. The next largest town is Roxby Downs, a mining service centre.
- § There has been an increase in the number of leases being bought for private conservation in the area.
- § SAAL was a pilot region for a capacity auditing tool, a commercial product that is owned by Rural Solutions (a state government consulting arm).
  - Sub regional groups valued 61 capacities, and looked at where priorities were.
  - The Board were involved and commissioned a report to look at community engagement and capacity.
  - Some other SA regions use the tool.

### 3.2 2007 theme reflections

Note: Additional details on each of these themes can be found in the Annual Report 2007 (previously referred to as Milestone 4 Report) at [http://www.hassall.com.au/australian\\_division/info.html](http://www.hassall.com.au/australian_division/info.html). The tools developed from each of these themes are available on the NRM Practice Change Project Website ([http://www.hassall.com.au/australian\\_division/tools.html](http://www.hassall.com.au/australian_division/tools.html)).

#### Strategic review

This theme looked at investigating current approaches to investing in practice change and the success of these in achieving targets.

Regions involved: NRM North, WGCMA, NECMA

HAA: Lee-Anne Molony and Jack Knowles

<b>Activity 1</b> A review using a checklist questionnaire (structured around the planning framework)	
Main learnings	NECMA: The key evaluation questions had to be adjusted in order to capture the right information from both implementation and managerial staff, as they represented different 'angles'. The questions didn't put them in the right 'people/practice change' mindset; instead they were coming from a biophysical bent. Found it aligned with other evaluation work the region is currently involved in such as Performance Story Reporting. In particular, synergies with the Most Significant Change component of the process.  HAA: That the planning framework can be applied to many situations. This theme provided an opportunity to put it to use as a whole, and test its application.
How this helped in my role	NECMA: Found it to be a really good process to use, in working through program logic for planning and reviewing the planning that occurs. Specifically helped in writing a board paper relating to a change in investment direction (moving away from output-based investments).
How this helped in our organisation	NECMA: The objective would be to have a repeatable process which would enable evidence to be presented on whether a program had achieved what it originally set out to achieve. NRM North: Found that it brought to light some strengths and weaknesses and issues with scale (e.g. temporal and spatial). Changes made have been that they are no longer interested in whole-of-program review. Still a work in progress, though are looking for opportunities to use it on other programs.

<b>Activity 2</b> Used influence mapping prior to conducting the review, in order to better understand all the influences on their budget (WGCMA)	
Main learnings	WGCMA: The 'slicing and dicing' of the budget revealed how much was being allocated into different categories. The region usually gets criticised for having too much go into capacity building because the analysis is done by using project titles only. This task enabled categorisation by activity type instead, which produced a different result.
How this helped in my role	WGCMA: Now 'armed' with accurate information on how their investment is allocated. Helped in that it validated the 'gut feel' about ways of doing things.
How this helped in our	WGCMA: Looking to use it to review their Regional Catchment Strategy; though this would probably be better done if it was broken down into a number of

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organisation	reviews. This tool is useful given that the region will be conducting a review of delivery models in the next 12 months.
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### Profiling and engagement

This theme looked at trying to understand the role of social profiling in fostering practice change.

Regions involved: Lachlan CMA, SENRM

HAA: Ingrid Roth

Main learnings	Lachlan: realised that the CMA needed an internal planning process that prompted staff to think about social outcomes as well as biophysical outcomes - in particular, ' <i>whose practices to change</i> '. Brought about a change in thinking on the organisation's need to conduct social research themselves, in that they can outsource this and better utilise social information that is currently available, e.g. CSIRO's social science mapping (which gave an insight into who clients trust and differed between catchments).
How this helped in my role	See below
How this helped in our organisation	Lachlan: Are now able to be more specific in 'picking' priority areas within the catchment to focus on. They are now linking project planning process to their Regional Investment Strategy more completely. This is now being done as one process. This will help in driving where to put staff resources. Now that they are refining how they use social information, they are better able to target partners (e.g. agronomists, and contractors in conservation farming because of the sheer size of the land that they cover in their work). They are just about to test the template which will surface how much internal information lies with the organisation. Has also been effective in engaging district staff in regional planning. The 'yellow circle' (understanding, motivating and engaging people) is a useful way for engaging on-ground staff, which makes for a team-based approach in the development of projects. This planning is informing the plan that they are developing for government (they do project planning which then informs RIS, and informs projects). In NSW, they have a set budget each year – this is fundamental to how they plan.

### Business Planning

The theme aimed to incorporate practice change into standard business practice and planning. It involved a review of existing planning and evaluation processes.

Regions involved: HNCMA

HAA: Jack Knowles, Lee-Anne Molony

HNCMA tested their recent review of CSO (Community Service Officers) and Landcare group achievements, against a review matrix developed for the NRM Practice Change Project. HAA provided feedback and assistance to HNCMA during this reflection exercise.

The review highlighted a number of achievements, and issues for the HNCMA to address with the community. The reflection process was useful in highlighting how we go about planning and working with Landcare groups.

## Implementation models

This theme looked at ways to best evolve and support regional implementation groups, and to compare and contrast different implementation arrangements.

Regions involved: DCQ, NRM North, FBA, SCNRM

HAA: Ingrid Roth, Angela McDowell

<p><b>Activity</b> Thorough stocktake of the region's implementation groups and mechanisms used, and regular teleconferences and reflection on key points, some of which were captured in writing. SCNRM took a slightly different focus and looked at succession planning with groups. The 'groups' were those that are a part of the governance structure of the regional body.</p>	
<p><b>Main learnings</b></p>	<p>There was a big time commitment required at the start of this theme, in the stocktake phase. The exercise was very onerous, but necessary in order to go forward with comparing implementation models and mechanisms. It was very interesting to compare funding, and highlight the key risks, costs, and benefits. It highlighted the fact that regions are not that different.</p>
<p><b>How this helped in my role</b></p>	<p>The exercise helped in validating the 'gut feel' about what mechanisms were being used in regions. For FBA this task was an add-on to evaluating their Neighbourhood Catchment approach. SCNRM used a shorter version of the tool.</p>
<p><b>How this helped in our organisation</b></p>	<p>In some situations it may be useful to use this information to help other regions who are moving into a different arrangement such as sub catchment planning. NRM North has seen a subsequent increase in investment in network-information transfer and decrease in strategic investment.</p>
<p><b>Other discussion points on this theme</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ Groups are heavily involved in the process of developing regional strategies but can't always fund it all.</li> <li>§ Interested in cost of running boards as it seems there is a lot used up in supporting boards.</li> <li>§ Having standing committees is not always optimal for a regional investment model.</li> </ul>

Additional discussion points on 2007 reflections:

- § For some, the work in the project has been an add-on to their role, whereas for others it has fitted nicely into their current role. The amount of time people can allocate varies.
- § A strength of the project is that there is some pressure to stay involved and complete tasks (but there is also quite a bit of flexibility).
- § We could perhaps distribute tools more widely e.g. by making a CD and sending to regions.

## 4. The policy implications of our research Part I - Capacity Building for NRM Regions

### Session overview

<p>The purpose of this session was to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ Develop a better understanding of capacity building needs and directions in the context of NRM outcome achievement.</li> <li>§ Discuss the implications for NRM or NRM practice change.</li> <li>§ Discuss ways to encourage and facilitate interaction between regions.</li> </ul>
<p>Future directions in Capacity Building and NRM</p>
<p>Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ <i>Where are the current opportunities/gaps in capacity building for NRM regions?</i></li> <li>§ <i>What can be done to best fill these gaps and recognise opportunities?</i></li> <li>§ <i>How can the AG, states and regions better support capacity building for regional NRM bodies?</i></li> <li>§ <i>What are the benefits of NRM regions taking up opportunities such as the NRM Practice Change Project to interact and share ideas with each other</i></li> <li>§ <i>How could dialogue and interaction be encouraged among program and operational managers from different regions?</i></li> </ul>

### 4.1 Future directions in Capacity Building and NRM

Presentation by Jane Bennett – Director, Capacity Building Team, Australian Government Natural Resource Management Team

A full copy of Jane’s presentation can be downloaded from the NRM Practice Change Website in the Additional Information section at [http://www.hassall.com.au/australian\\_division/info.html](http://www.hassall.com.au/australian_division/info.html)

The presentation is accompanied by an Australian Government position paper on capacity building, ‘Building a more resilient community (<http://www.hassall.com.au/lib/doc/AustralianGovernmentPositionPaper-CapacityBuilding.pdf>)’. Please note: the enhancement comments in the resilience paper regarding the facilitators are proposals only and may not apply to the new program

Key points from Jane’s presentation:

- § Capacity building and awareness raising is two way and applies both for government and regional bodies.
- § The creation of the joint NRM team hopes to address the business improvement and governance side for this ‘young industry’.
- § NRM straddles broad scope of culture and language and there is often a struggle with these.
- § There is distinction in the word knowledge – it is applying intelligence and wisdom.
- § The need to invest in social capacity building is already embedded in programs. Therefore there will be a facilitator component in future dollars into capacity building, acknowledging that the role of an NRM facilitator is to convey policy advice and convey feedback back to policy makers (there is a sense that this could be improved).
- § Looking at engaging more broadly, e.g. with Aboriginal, R&D and local government groups.

### 4.2 Monitoring, evaluation, reporting and improvement

Presentation by Jens Light – Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement (MERI) team, Australian Government Natural Resource Management Team

Key points from Jen’s presentation:

- § There is a shift to reporting by outcomes rather than outputs, which is timely as we now have a bit more history behind programs in NRM.

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- § The revised National MERI Framework will place a much greater emphasis on identifying intermediate outcomes, especially attitudinal and practice change. MATs have generally been described in terms of being aggregations of outputs and there is variable interpretation of what they are. There has been a lot of energy lost in establishing too many targets, so the aim is to refine and reduce the number of these.
- § The AGNRM MERI team is undertaking capacity building efforts in regions around Australia in this area. More than twenty regional bodies have held 1-2 day workshops, and others are planned for the next few months.
- § The new MERI framework approach is to stay quite high level and general so that it is useable for all regions.
- § It encourages a program logic approach based on identifying the asset to change and the pathway to achieve this. It has a focus on outcomes based at the intermediate level, and recognises social outcomes.
- § Align national and regional interests in asset conditions. Set targets for outcomes described in logic.
- § Regions will be supported in how this is rolled out.

## 5. The policy implications of our research Part II - Participatory Research and NRM Regions

### Session overview

The purpose of this session was to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ Discuss the role of NRM Regions in participatory research</li> <li>§ Discuss options to improve regional participation in research.</li> </ul>
Land and Water Australia's Participatory Research Focus
Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ <i>What are the benefits/opportunities of participatory research?</i></li> <li>§ <i>What are some of the shortcomings or downsides of being involved in a participatory research project?</i></li> <li>§ <i>How can we improve regional participation in research programs?</i></li> </ul>

### 5.1 Land and Water Australia's Participatory Research Focus

Presentation by Noel Beynon, Land and Water Australia

Key points from Noel's presentation:

- § Australia has a history of farmers working together to share ideas to gain innovation, as well as extension that has focused on guiding to change practice, rather than regulation.
- § Participatory recognises this history, and focuses on social structures, involving all relevant people to actively address issues and learn.
- § There are pros and cons with participatory research for parties involved.
- § Many of Land and Water Australia's projects include aspects of participatory research (e.g. Grain and Graze, and Land, Water and Wool).

Please note that a full copy of Noel's presentation can be downloaded from the NRM Practice Change Website in the Additional Information section at [http://www.hassall.com.au/australian\\_division/info.html](http://www.hassall.com.au/australian_division/info.html)

Results of group discussion

#### Benefits/opportunities of participatory research

- § Learning by doing (the more staff are involved, the more capacity will be built).
- § The information and learnings are quite rich and are shared by both policy makers and regions.
- § The value is in the 'journey' as well as the end result.
- § Benefit of ongoing involvement.
- § Gaining early access and involvement to policy and research.
- § Sometimes it is the most efficient way of NRM regions to interact with researchers in a way that is low cost.
- § Flexibility through participatory involvement.

#### Shortcomings or downsides of being involved in a participatory research project

- § How to transfer findings, and whether they are able to be transferred.
- § Who do the results reside with (policy makers or participating region)? There can be burdens associated with this responsibility.
- § Threats – lack of understanding and expertise.
- § Time and resources that are involved. There is often not the time to implement findings and for adequate reflection.
- § The initial phases take time, e.g. in establishing ownership.
- § Whilst the learnings are rich, there can be risks of loss of focus and changing directions from the project's original intent; this can occur through participants and/or within institutions (e.g. if there is loss of corporate knowledge).

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- § A 'leap of faith' is required in the engagement phase/initial phases of the project researchers and participants.
- § There is a sense of risk for the participating region which is buying in to the research. Researchers may change line of research.
- § Communications on activities as well as process- potential risks.

### Possible improvements to regional participation in research projects

- § Need to maintain opportunities for shared learning.
- § Research organisers need to conduct better 'marketing' of projects and their outcomes to participants.
- § Need to focus on effective ways to involve peers in community of practice.
- § Need to think about how outcomes are recorded, used and transferred (i.e. how is the learning generated?).
  - How do we carry out the 'end phase' well? Product- sell?
  - Should this be a separate process or program?

## 6. It's not the NRM Practice Change project but now is a great opportunity to talk about...

Session overview

Landscape Logic and Bayesian Decision Networks
Strategic Planning Issue Filter
A new approach in Victoria

### 6.1 *Landscape logic and Bayesian Decision Networks*

NRM North

Bayesian Decision Networks (BDNs) are a form of influence mapping. NRM North uses them as a way of assessing how external influences affect what they do. The process involves:

- § looking at the relationships between these external influences and the influences of their activities;
- § determining what influential factors exist, i.e. what is stopping practice change? and
- § establishing what type of influence should be expected.

The use of BDNs should assist NRM North in understanding the potential degree of influence different activities have at a resource condition level.

Main uses for the information:

- § to assist with investment planning;
- § to determine where they will get value for money;
- § as a type of program evaluation, and for long term, forward projection;
- § to test program logic and identify gaps; and
- § to set realistic targets.

It is quite a useful tool for documenting assumptions, as it can use assumed data as well as actual and expert opinion.

NRM North will soon develop program logic frameworks for their four core programme areas, and are hoping to then develop BDN's to track the influence of their activities and other influences on management practices.

This will be a useful tool for when the strategy review occurs at the end of next year.

Landscape logic: In Tasmania there has been no catchment modelling done at all, so Landscape Logic is currently being used to develop this for one catchment.

NECMA

Landscape Logic: A suite of 6 projects. NECMA is using it as a tool to document linkages and assumptions, which is helping them to maintain corporate knowledge. The tool enables them to store versions and changes made.

### 6.2 *Strategic planning issue filter*

HNCMA

Please note that a full copy of the HNCMA presentation can be downloaded from the NRM Practice Change Website in the Additional Information section at [http://www.hassall.com.au/australian\\_division/info.html](http://www.hassall.com.au/australian_division/info.html)

The strategic planning issue filter is a custom designed spreadsheet and process that helps to manage emerging issues for the board to ensure their focus remains strategic. The spreadsheet categorises and

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scores issues against key criteria in order to filter them and determine what the pathway for action should be. Classes for issues include NRM, corporate governance and administration. All criteria must be satisfied before the issue progresses. It is administered by the strategic planning working groups.

The tool helps to quantify ideas, and determine the relevance of these as emerging/recurring issues. The benefit is that the board now focuses on core business, and that potentially it could be used to inform future planning. A possible link to practice change is that it could be used to make people think rather than conducting a rear vision review.

To assist with establishing context and keeping the board focussed, HNCMA has mapped out where the board sits in the state and federal government 'reality'.

### 6.3 A new approach in Victoria

#### WGCMA

Please note that a full copy of the WGCMA presentation can be downloaded from the NRM Practice Change Website in the Additional Information section at [http://www.hassall.com.au/australian\\_division/info.html](http://www.hassall.com.au/australian_division/info.html)

Key points from the presentation:

- § Victoria has gone through a process of 'lifting' to focus on outcomes.
- § WGCMA was previously focused around asset based themes but for planning in 08/09, the themes are going to be geographically focussed.
- § Challenge is how to 'slice' catchments.
- § Benefit is that it is focusing staff to articulate visions for catchments, and moving away from the tendency to repeat the previous funding cycle.
  - A 10 year vision is created for an ecosystem or area within the catchment, and from this outcomes and goals are articulated, and then projects will be developed from these.

#### NECMA

- § NECMA is also moving with the shift from project/output basis to program/intermediate outcome basis, and a move to a more spatially explicit asset based approach.
- § Recognition that capacity building is a key tool to achieve NRM outcomes.
- § Two programs: NRM asset protection and sustainable catchments.
- § NRM asset protection program objectives are to:
  - protect the highest value natural resource assets in the region; and to
  - achieve ecosystem resilience to maintain catchment processes in the areas supporting the highest value natural resource assets in the region.
- § Sustainable catchments program objectives are to:
  - increase awareness and understanding of environmental management priorities to influence broad scale behavior change to manage natural resources sustainably.
- § The practice change within the organisation is to focus on the broad objectives, and to use tools to ensure this/assist with this.
- § The existing framework and targets have been resource focused, with no social aspects. Targets can now include social factors as a high level asset. The question is how to measure this.

## 7. Policy implications of our research Part III - Program Logic and the NRM Practice Change Planning Framework

### Session overview

<p>The purpose of this session was to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ Develop a better understanding of the Australian Government's use of program logic in the context of the national Monitoring Evaluation Reporting and Improvement (MERI) Framework.</li> <li>§ Share our current approaches to using program logic in planning and evaluation.</li> <li>§ Discuss the relationships between program logic and the NRM Practice Change planning framework.</li> <li>§ Discuss implications for NRM program logic.</li> </ul>
How Our Region uses Program Logic
Program Logic and national NRM programs
<p>Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ <i>How do we currently use program logic in the way we do business?</i></li> <li>§ <i>How does program logic "fit" with the NRM Practice Change planning framework?</i></li> <li>§ <i>What are the opportunities to use the program logic and the NRM Practice Change planning framework together?</i></li> <li>§ <i>What does this mean for our planning, evaluation and reporting on NRM investments?</i></li> </ul>

### 7.1 How our region uses Program Logic – Lachlan CMA

Please note that a full copy of the Lachlan CMA presentation can be downloaded from the NRM Practice Change Website in the Additional Information section at [http://www.hassall.com.au/australian\\_division/info.html](http://www.hassall.com.au/australian_division/info.html)

#### Additional discussion points:

- § Program logic has proved to be a good tool for managing up as well as down.
- § Lachlan CMA uses it at both the project and program scale.
- § It has enabled MERI staff to better engage the rest of the organisation.
- § Initial attempts resulted in complex 'spaghetti' logics, but these were then stripped back and simplified.
- § The next phase in the use of this process will be to test their engagement processes.
- § Half the origination will go through the training in program logic in April.
- § The organisation will then set up a small secretariat to support teams to ensure the process remains consistent.
- § The CMA tends to define scope by working from the objective (top) level down. It has an asset based approach which is used to define scope. One of the main challenges has been in determining what levels activities lie in.
- § The use of program logic has assisted in focusing on what state the CMA wants the asset to be in.
- § The salinity investment framework (SIF3) and 'Infer' can be used as a defensible way of selecting investment priorities (a link to information on SIF3 can be found on the Project website at [http://www.hassall.com.au/australian\\_division/tools.html](http://www.hassall.com.au/australian_division/tools.html)).
  - NECMA went to the community after their database to assess what the priority assets were, and this resulted in a slight shift in focus.
- § FBA has engaged a consultant to undertake an evaluation of their Neighbourhood Catchment process using the National NRM Program Logic and the Performance Story Approach. The FBA is currently using the NRM program logic to develop the proposed Regional Investment Strategy.

## 7.2 Program Logic and the national NRM programs

Presentation by Ted Rowley, Hassall & Associates

Key points from Ted's presentation:

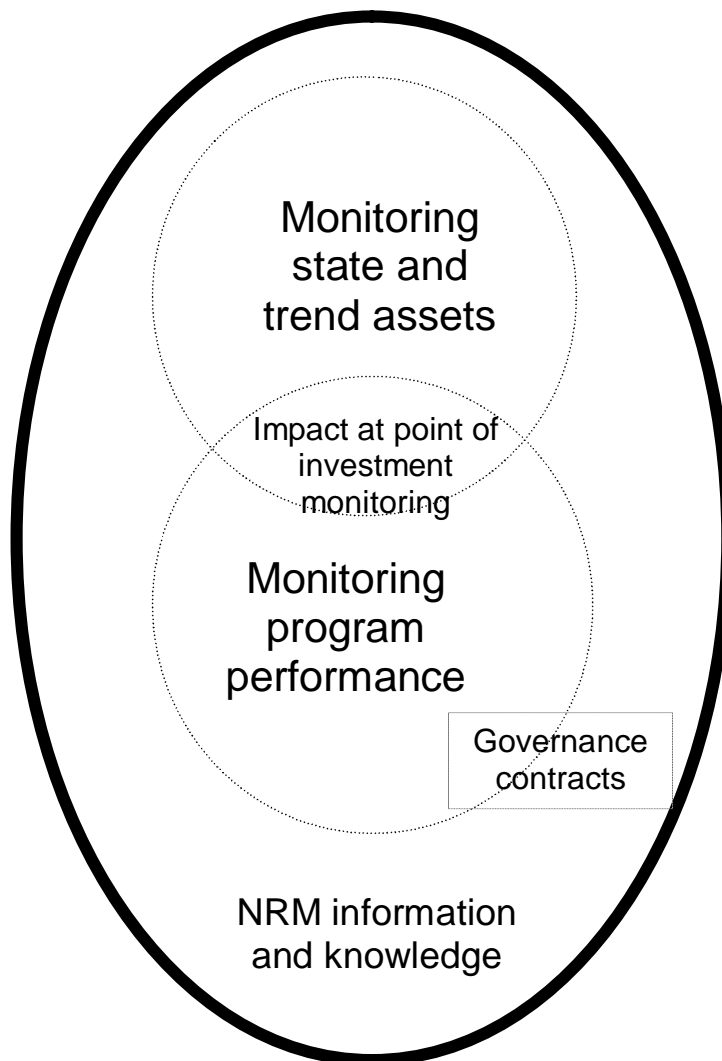
- § Program logic is a theory of change; a series of causal links.
- § The Australian government has been grappling with what assets it should invest in, and articulating what state it would like to see these in. It is attempting to use program logic to improve the way this is being done.
- § Historically there has been a focus on risks and threats, now there is a focus on looking for 'what works', and what the success components are, rather than what doesn't.
- § The government is hoping to use program logic to strengthen the program improvement cycle (design, evaluation and adaptive management), and increase focus on intermediate outcomes (the aggregate changes, in practice, behaviour and landscape/industry outcomes).
- § Regions using program logic:
  - FBA not so much at the moment. People feel there is a strong logic in the RIS anyway and in their activities, they just don't necessarily use the terms 'program logic'. It will really just be a case of documenting what they do, and once this is done it will be a simple and powerful communication tool. Currently use multi criteria logic, and last year populated all their activities against this. Used a framework or program logic to design their neighbourhood catchment arrangement.
  - NECMA has been using program logic, just not documenting it. Used an evaluation consultant a couple of years ago for training in this area. In Victoria it has seemed that arrangements have worked against this, as investors have been looking at dollars against outputs. However, there is a shift in this, and they are now looking at the 'whole of RCIP'. Using an integrated approach, but there still may be as many barriers to this as with the asset based approach. Shift from threats/issues, to assets based means that you have to understand the value of the asset and use the logic for this. All current projects are based on a theory of change (program logic).
  - NRM North is moving this way.
  - SAAL - plan was asset based approach, but a change in legislation meant that SAAL had to re-do the planning, and it now has an 'ecosystems' approach. It is working well at the higher level but the challenge is in bringing it down to the intermediate level. It has been successful in getting people to think in a systems way. Training is vital for partners because they don't have the understanding that the board has (e.g. state agencies, as they have control).
  - WGCMA: doesn't necessarily have to be labelled as such, it is more about the change in approach.
- § There have been problems with monitoring resource condition. Region wide state/trend monitoring data has not been able to answer impact and appropriateness questions. It appears that in many cases there has been a failure, however, this is often because monitoring has been set up to answer a different question. Data has been collected for a different purpose, and so can't be used to report on changes.
- § Need to make sure that if reporting by outcomes is done, outcomes travel to the steering committees, states, and the Australian Government. There may need to be a culture change for this to occur.
- § If there is a framework for this, the process will follow.

"Double yolker" diagram for explaining MERI for NRM information

- § Ideally our monitoring and evaluation activities for Natural Resource Management (NRM) investment programs should identify the state of and trend condition of natural resources and assess the impact, appropriateness, effectiveness and efficiency of our investment. To date the majority of the monitoring and evaluation effort has gone towards developing the programs, supporting governance, financial, project and input/output reporting and establishing some level of asset monitoring arrangements.

## Making Successful Investments in NRM Practice Change

- § Both 'yolks' are done for the same purpose in hypothetical reality. However, in practice it may not be the case. The monitoring for state and trend is often about system analysis from a technical point of view or in the case of water monitoring, for example, for answering questions about extractive percentages.
- § At this point in the investment cycle (5 years) intermediate outcomes (people and practice, aggregate landscape change and point of investment change) are beginning to be realised and desired biophysical change is yet to be realised or is as yet too complex to be.
- § Program performance needs to be reviewed in a shorter time frame than is expected for the longer term outcomes (asset condition change) to be achieved. Therefore the hierarchy of outcomes described in the program logic provides a time frame which allows logical and timely points in the progression of outcomes to look for impact and appropriateness information.
- § The fact that the focus of investment is invariably on a subset of the asset (area or zone), monitoring for state and trend of the asset in general doesn't yield relevant useful information on the impact or appropriateness of the program investment because the area or point of investment is a smaller component of the asset in totality.
- § These two scale issues (temporal and spatial) are why there are separate monitoring for program performance at the point or area of investment, as well as monitoring for general state and trend of the asset.



## 8. Refining our areas of research focus for 2008

### Session overview

The purpose of this session was to:

- § Enable Forum Participants to further develop ideas for research areas/themes that interest them.
- § Discuss draft themes and other possible areas of interest in the NRM Practice Change Project.
- § Develop a common understanding of research themes.
- § Decide the research themes and areas for 2008.

Exploring ideas for each of the draft themes

Refining our ideas into agreed themes

The group explored a range of possible themes and ideas for the NRM Practice Change Project. These included:

- § The links between Bayesian Decision Networks and the NRM Practice Change Project.
- § Approaches to priority setting, to include social considerations with biophysical considerations when making “macro scale” investment decisions.
- § The impact of external influences on achieving NRM Practice Change.
- § Program logic and the planning framework.
- § Monitoring and evaluation.
- § Approaches to implementation.
- § Community engagement.

Following discussion – four themes were identified for areas of focus:

- § Program logic and the planning framework.
- § Monitoring and evaluation.
- § Approaches to implementation.
- § Community engagement.

Forum participants identified which of these themes they would like to focus on, and four groups were formed. Each group was charged with developing an action plan for their theme. This action plan involved:

- § Identifying:
  - The importance of the theme for practice change.
  - Our objectives in focusing on this theme.
  - The theme “fit” with the Practice Change planning framework.
  - The outcome of our efforts in this theme.
- § Designing:
  - The project's approach to the theme.
  - The key steps for theme participants; including roles and responsibilities.

The following sections are the results of this group work. Hassall & Associates are using the outcomes of this planning activity as the basis for developing detailed workplans with each region for 2008.

### 8.1 Program logic and the planning framework

**Importance for practice change** Program Logic helps plan what your program intends to achieve and evaluate the success of your efforts. The NRM Practice Change planning framework helps you to plan the details of how you will go about implementing your program and test the assumptions in your program logic.

The NRM Practice Change planning framework ('the planning framework') is the main tool of the Practice Change Project. The project is focussed on testing and refining the framework and developing tools to assist regions to use the framework.

Used together, Program Logic and the planning framework can form a solid basis for making successful investments in NRM Practice Change. Using the framework will also help us identify gaps in our "tool box". Tools can then be developed to fill these gaps.

**Objectives**

- § Test the practice change planning process developed under the Practice Change project in 2007 to improve it and develop tools to enable regions to better use the framework as a basis for review of RIS/RCIP and other regional planning. Focus on practice change and the intermediate outcomes level.
- § Investigate how to include outcomes reporting requirements in service delivery agreements.
- § Trial outcomes reporting on practice change outcomes or better facilitate outcomes reporting for practice change.

**Approach**

Key steps for each region are:

- § FBA: develop a program logic which will be used to develop a RIS.
  - Program logic and RIS development.
  - Plan review.
  - Establish targets using program logic.
  - Framework to populate the program logic.
- § NECMA: develop a framework for program logic at a program level.
  - Populate (08/09).
  - Test.
  - Refine.
  - Roll out.
- § SC NRM: revisit contract and program design and look at how to incorporate performance reporting to contracts etc.
  - Framework to facilitate contract/program design development that integrates/supports/guides outcomes reporting requirements (and M&E requirements).
- § SAAL: use program logic and planning framework to develop investment and planning approach.
  - Develop a new program logic
  - Next steps...

**Expected outcomes**

Expected outcomes for this theme are:

- § A specific local program plan for each of the regions involved.
- § Better understanding of the practice change planning components.

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- § A refined and more relevant NRM practice change planning process.
- § Tools updated/developed as people identify needs.

The vision for this theme in a wider context is as follows:

- § Aspirational level: that the use of Program Logic and the planning framework is normalised/integrated/accepted/applied.
- § Intermediate level: regional Boards and program managers using program logic and planning frameworks
- § In one year's time: RCIP/RIS are based on program logic and planning framework principles and on practice.

Fit with practice change project planning framework

This planning process uses both NRM program logic and the planning framework developed through this project.

Regions involved

- § FBA
- § NECMA
- § NRM Nth
- § SCNRM

Regions with a watching brief

- § SAAL

## 8.2 Monitoring and evaluation

Importance for practice change	Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is important for identifying whether practice change (including the what, where, who and how) has occurred at program and project levels.  This informs adaptive management and also enables reporting on practice change.
Objectives	The overall objective is to build internal capacity for practice change M&E by scoping and testing the most appropriate M&E approach and/or technique to use in different circumstances. 'Most appropriate' is defined here as that which provides the best understanding of what actually happened on the ground with respect to practice change.
Approach	Key steps are: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Draft a region-specific program logic                 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Draft a program logic for one program of choice (a different theme/asset for each region)</li> <li>b. Identify the most important practice change assumptions to test, documenting the rationale</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Scoping M&amp;E tools.                 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Identify regions' existing M&amp;E tools with respect to practice change, including for different type/scale/purpose of programs/projects</li> <li>b. Identify gaps</li> <li>c. Scope additional options (including tools for taking external influences on practice change outcomes into account) and prepare fact sheets with 'application' criteria</li> <li>d. Scenario testing (comparative analysis) of options against each chosen theme</li> <li>e. Matrix of what works when, with confidence statements</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Review plan/real testing                 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Planning for real test to be done in 2009 workplan</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
Expected outcomes	Improved understanding of which M&E approaches/techniques are best for improving regional understanding of what processes achieve the greatest practice change.
Fit with practice change project planning framework	This fits with the "Review and Adapt" component of the planning framework , which asks: How will we monitor, evaluate and reflect on what has been achieved?
Regions involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ Lachlan CMA</li> <li>§ FBA</li> <li>§ NRM North</li> </ul>
Regions with a watching brief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ SCNRM</li> </ul>

### 8.3 Approaches to implementation

Importance for practice change	In making effective investments in practice change, we need to decide on the best approach to implementation. This could be through partnering with existing groups (eg sub-catchment groups, state agencies, industry organisations etc) or direct delivery. Better consideration of potential partners, their barriers and drivers and potential risks and benefits will improve the selection of delivery approaches by NRM Regions.
Objectives	To develop decision support around selecting/evolving implementation mechanisms, so that regional NRM organisations can make better decisions for investing in practice change.
Approach	<p>Key steps and tasks (people involved; timing):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Stocktake - What does implementation look like? What are we doing? What proportion of budget is attributed to each? Why are we doing it like this?<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Revisit last year's work and identify questions and areas most relevant/of interest to regions involved. May include situation, effectiveness, cost, resources, target audiences where approach was successful, rate of uptake etc</li><li>b. Reshape stocktake questionnaire. Questions could include: What role do incentives play in practice change? How do we ensure quality control?</li><li>c. Formatting into user-friendly means</li><li>d. Regions to conduct stocktake</li></ol></li><li>2. Review / Reflect - Is our approach getting results?<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Reflect on process and learnings through these tasks and conduct monthly teleconferences</li></ol></li><li>3. Explore alternative models and methods for implementation<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Explore literature in this area</li><li>b. Mini – stocktake of other participating regions</li><li>c. Draw on our interactions / understanding with non-participating regions.</li></ol></li><li>4. Decision support framework - Is there a way to choose the right model / mix of implementation?<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Decide what criteria are important for decision making (situation, effectiveness, cost, resources, alignment with profile of target audiences?)</li><li>b. Develop decision support method</li><li>c. Test decision support method</li><li>d. Refine</li></ol></li></ol>
Expected outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Better understanding of the range of implementation mechanisms (both 'who' and 'what', i.e. groups/partnerships and mechanisms).</li><li>2. Stocktake of approaches to implementation from participating regions</li><li>3. Tools to assist NRM Regions assess their current approaches to implementation, review the success of these and select appropriate approaches that will be most successful for achieving desired practice change.</li></ol>

## Making Successful Investments in NRM Practice Change

Fit with practice change project planning framework

This theme focuses on the “Implement” element of the planning framework which asks, among other things: Who could we partner with to help achieve the change?

Regions involved	§	FBA
	§	Lachlan
	§	SAAL
	§	WGCMA
Regions with a watching brief	§	NRM North
	§	HN CMA

## 8.4 Community engagement

Importance for practice change	Fostering practice change is reliant on the successful engagement of customers. To achieve successful engagement, we need to understand target audiences in order to design and implement engagement programs that are effective, and that will therefore provide an avenue to motivate people towards change.
Objectives	<p>To have a better understanding of the elements to be considered in planning for community engagement (CE) that facilitates effective investments in practice change.</p> <p>Key steps are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Stocktake of current CE processes             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Develop framework &amp; process for regions to stocktake current CE planning processes and activities (stocktake to addresses successes, shortcomings, costs, resources etc in current approach). This would include templates to capture information, and steps for regions to use to collect information (eg peer interviews / internal workshop / 1 page questionnaire for peers)</li> <li>b. Conduct stocktake</li> <li>c. Aggregate findings and compare approaches</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Reflect on current processes – is approach getting results?             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. HAA and regions to reflect on process and learnings through these tasks (eg through regular teleconferences).</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. How can we improve the way we engage our stakeholders?             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. What is success for our organisation?                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- HAA to develop template for regions to determine success</li> <li>- Regions to identify what success looks like for them.</li> </ul> </li> <li>b. Regions, with HAA assistance, to identify improvements to their CE planning process</li> </ol> </li> <li>4. Develop and test draft process             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. HAA to develop draft process for regions to develop a CE plan (2007 process to be used as the basis)</li> <li>b. Regions to test and refine process to develop their CE plan</li> </ol> </li> <li>5. Review             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. HAA and regions to reflect on process and learnings</li> <li>b. HAA to refine CE planning process</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
Expected outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ Tools to assist regions to assess the effectiveness of current CE processes</li> <li>§ Stocktake of current approaches to planning CE</li> <li>§ A tested process for planning CE</li> <li>§ A CE plan</li> </ul>
Fit with practice change project planning framework	<p>This fits with the “Understanding, motivating &amp; engaging people” component of the planning framework which has three sub-components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ Whose practices to change?</li> <li>§ People and change</li> <li>§ Mechanisms to foster change</li> </ul>
Regions involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ SENRM</li> <li>§ HNCMA</li> <li>§ Lachlan</li> </ul>

## Making Successful Investments in NRM Practice Change

Regions with a  
watching brief

§ NRM North

## 9. Our community of practice in 2008

### Session overview

The intended outcomes of this session were to:

- § Share our experiences in encouraging internal participation in the NRM Practice Change Project.
- § Discuss methods and opportunities to share our learnings with other regions and policy makers.
- § Discuss communication approaches for our 2008 work plans.

- § *What are other ways we can encourage participation of our colleagues in the NRM Practice Change Project?*
- § *What are some approaches for communication within the project - between participating regions, H&A and across themes?*
- § *How can we share our experiences with other regions that aren't participating in our project?*
- § *What are approaches we can take to communicating our findings with policy makers?*

Reflection:

- § *What are the key learnings we take home from the Forum?*
- § *What difference can these learnings make to the way we go about our work?*
- § *What is the one thing that we can do now to make a difference?*

### Ways we can encourage colleague participation in the practice change project

- § Incorporate our learnings from the project into existing process policies/processes – thus learnings are shared as part of operational improvements..
- § Direct inclusion into activities and communications (e.g. teleconferences).
- § Use of stand-alone tools from website.
- § Maintenance of project website.
- § Plan advisory group.
- § Include planning officers more closely.
- § Get inclusion of senior management.
- § Don't over-do emails. Directions to other info.
- § Demonstrate relevance of planning framework.
- § Fact sheet for regional offices and for informing board and regional chairs.
- § Positive discussion.
- § Quality versus quantity – more strategic communication.

### Approaches for communication within the project

- § Shorter project milestone reports (to client).
- § Aggregation of findings, and activities done to date:
  - quarterly teleconferences; and/or
  - email updates.
- § Restricted part of website for information for regions.
- § Gantt chart of timeframes.
- § Timely distribution of teleconference notes.

### Ways we can share our experiences with non-participating regions

- § Fact sheet to participating regions to disseminate.
- § At this stage it may be too early to bring in non-participatory regions to the forum.
- § Include via emails – to regional chairs/CEO or GM's.
- § Have a regional representative at the NRM Knowledge Forum.
- § For testing tools:
  - assess who has used a web-based tool; and/or
  - track from participatory regions when other regions have approached them about the project.
- § Regular monitoring and evaluation coordinator meetings.

Approaches we can take to communicating our findings to policy makers

- § Using regional facilitator network.
- § Hassall & Associates review project communication plan.
- § Regional representation at NRM Knowledge Forum.
- § AG NRM team at Practice Change Forums.
- § To state level; in the past the following has been done:
  - Land and Water Australia invited state representatives to hear about research nearing conclusion; and
  - HAA presentation to joint team (G-18 meet weekly- half hour presentation; and also MERI forum with DEWHA/DAFF reps).
- § Other forums/conferences might provide opportunity.
- § Using supporting materials, similar to "Attachment J" in discussions with policy makers.

## 10. Next Steps for the Project

Sue Salvin closed the forum, and highlighted the key next steps for the project. These were to:

- § Develop the forum report.
- § Finalise and agree on 2008 workplans, based on the action plans developed for each theme.
- § Commence 2008 action learning cycle, based on agreed workplans.

## Appendix 1 - 2008 forum participants

<i>Name</i>	<i>Organisation</i>	<i>Role in the NRM Practice Change Project</i>
<i>Martin Fuller</i>	West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority	Participating Region
<i>Deb Slater</i>	South Coast NRM Inc.	Participating Region
<i>Julia Callaghan</i>	Fitzroy Basin Association Inc.	Participating Region
<i>Gavin Peck</i>	Fitzroy Basin Association Inc.	Participating Region
<i>Michael Bent</i>	Fitzroy Basin Association Inc.	Participating Region
<i>Andrew Baldwin</i>	NRM North	Participating Region
<i>Jeff Taylor</i>	North East Catchment Management Authority	Participating Region
<i>Kate Lorimer-Ward</i>	Lachlan Catchment Management Authority	Participating Region
<i>Angus Arnott</i>	Lachlan Catchment Management Authority	Participating Region
<i>Kieran Hawker</i>	Lachlan Catchment Management Authority	Participating Region
<i>Fred Stadter</i>	South East Natural Resources Management Board	Participating Region
<i>Steve Nichols</i>	Hawkesbury Nepean Catchment Management Authority	Participating Region
<i>John Gavin</i>	South Australian Arid Lands NRM Board	New Participating Region
<i>Sandy Gunter</i>	South Australian Arid Lands NRM Board	New Participating Region
<i>Noel Beynon</i>	Land & Water Australia	Project Investor
<i>Jane Bennett</i>	Australian Government NRM Team	Project Investor
<i>Jens Light</i>	Australian Government NRM Team	Project Investor
<i>Sue Salvin</i>	Hassall & Associates	Project Director
<i>Ted Rowley</i>	Hassall & Associates	Project Team Member
<i>Jack Knowles</i>	Hassall & Associates	Project Team Member
<i>Lee-Anne Molony</i>	Hassall & Associates	Project Team Member
<i>Angela McDowell</i>	Hassall & Associates	Project Team Member

## Appendix 2 - Forum agenda

Tuesday 19th February, from 8am  
Introductions

8.00 am	<i>Tea and Coffee Welcome</i>	
8.30 am	Introductions and outline of the day	Jack Knowles
9.00 am	NRM Practice Change Project – Overview and Update	Sue Salvin
9.15 am	2007 - Reflections from Forum Participants <i>What was the one biggest learning for you from the NRM Practice Change Project this past year?</i>	All
10.00 am	<i>Morning Tea</i>	

Sharing our experiences

10.30 am	Practice Change in the South Australian Arid Lands	SAAL
10.50 am	Strategic Review Theme	Participating regions
11.15 am	Profiling and Engagement Theme	Participating regions
11.40 am	Business Planning Theme	Participating regions
12.05 am	Implementation Models Theme	Participating regions
12.30 pm	<i>Lunch</i>	

The policy implications of our research Part I - Capacity Building for NRM Regions

<i>Capacity Building &amp; NRM Regions</i>		
1.30 pm	Future directions in Capacity Building and NRM	Jane Bennett
2.00 pm	Discussion <i>Where are the current opportunities/gaps in capacity building for NRM regions? What can be done to best fill these gaps and recognise opportunities? How can the AG, states and regions better support capacity building for regional NRM bodies? What are the benefits of NRM regions taking up opportunities such as the NRM Practice Change Project to interact and share ideas with each other? How could dialogue and interaction be encouraged among program and operational managers from different regions?</i>	All

The policy implications of our research Part II - Participatory Research and NRM Regions

<i>Participatory Research and NRM Regions</i>		
2.30 pm	Land and Water Australia's Participatory Research Focus	Noel Beynon
2.45 pm	Discussion <i>What are the benefits/opportunities of participatory research? What are some of the shortcomings or downsides of being involved in a participatory research project? How can we improve regional participation in research programs?</i>	All
3.00 pm	<i>Afternoon Tea</i>	

It's not the NRM Practice Change Project – but now is a great opportunity to talk about...

3.30 pm	Landscape Logic and Bayesian Decision Networks	NRM North
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## Making Successful Investments in NRM Practice Change

3.50 pm	Strategic Planning Issue Filter	HNCMA
4.10 pm	A new approach in Victoria	WG CMA & NECMA
4.30 pm	"Speed Dating" – One on one 3 minute conversations with each other to discuss interesting work that you have been doing – not necessarily related to the NRM Practice Change Project.	All
<i>5.00 pm</i>	<i>Close</i>	

Wednesday 10th February, from 8.30am

<i>8.00 am</i>	<i>Tea and Coffee</i>	
8.25 am	Outline of the Day	Jack Knowles

The policy implications of our research Part III  
Program Logic and the NRM Practice Change planning framework

<i>Program Logic and the NRM Practice Change planning framework</i>		
8.30 am	How Our Region uses Program Logic	Lachlan CMA
8.45 am	Program Logic and national NRM programs	Ted Rowley
9.15 am	Discussion <i>How do we currently use program logic in the way we do business? How does program logic "fit" with the NRM Practice Change planning framework? What are the opportunities to use the program logic and the NRM Practice Change Planning Framework together? What does this mean for our planning, evaluation and reporting on NRM investments?</i>	All

Refining our areas of research focus for 2008

9.45 am	Exploring ideas for each of the draft themes	All
10.15 am	Refining our ideas into agreed themes	All
<i>10.30 am</i>	<i>Morning Tea</i>	

Developing our work plans for 2008

11.00 am	Develop work plans for each agreed theme/research area	All
12.00 noon	Presentation from each workshop	All
<i>12.30 pm</i>	<i>Lunch</i>	

Our community of practice in 2008

1.30 pm	<i>What are other ways we can encourage participation of our colleagues in the NRM Practice Change Project? What are some approaches for communication within the project - between participating regions, H&amp;A and across themes? How can we share our experiences with other regions that aren't participating in our project? What are approaches we can take to communicating our findings with policy makers?</i>	All
2.30 pm	Reflection <i>What are the key learnings we take home from the Forum?</i>	All

## Making Successful Investments in NRM Practice Change

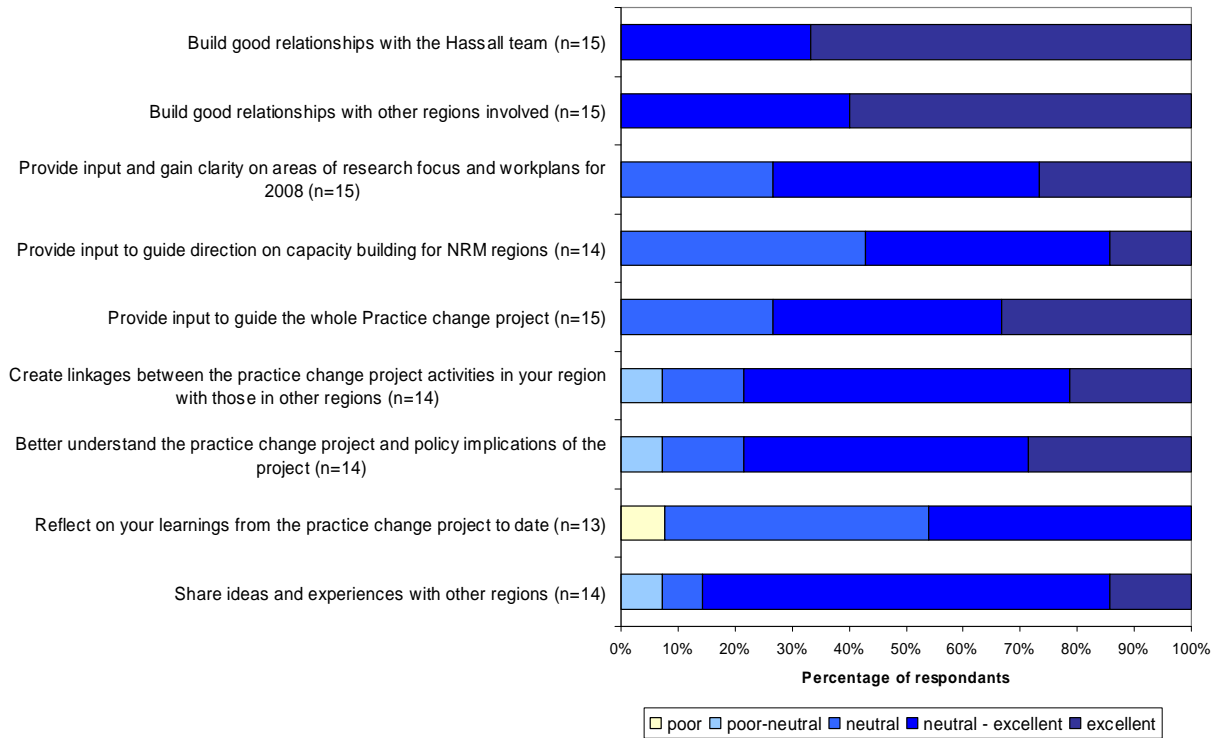
	<i>What difference can these learnings make to the way we go about our work? What is the one thing that we can do now to make a difference?</i>	
<i>3.00 pm</i>	<i>Close and Afternoon Tea</i>	

### Appendix 3 – Forum evaluation results

Evaluation sheets were provided to all participants, and a total of 15 were completed and returned. The results of these were analysed, and are presented below.

#### Forum effectiveness

Please indicate how effective the forum was for you to



#### Results summary

All participants felt that the forum was effective in building good relationships with the project team and the other regions involved. Most felt that it was effective in sharing ideas and creating linkages with other regions and improving their understanding of the project and its policy implications.

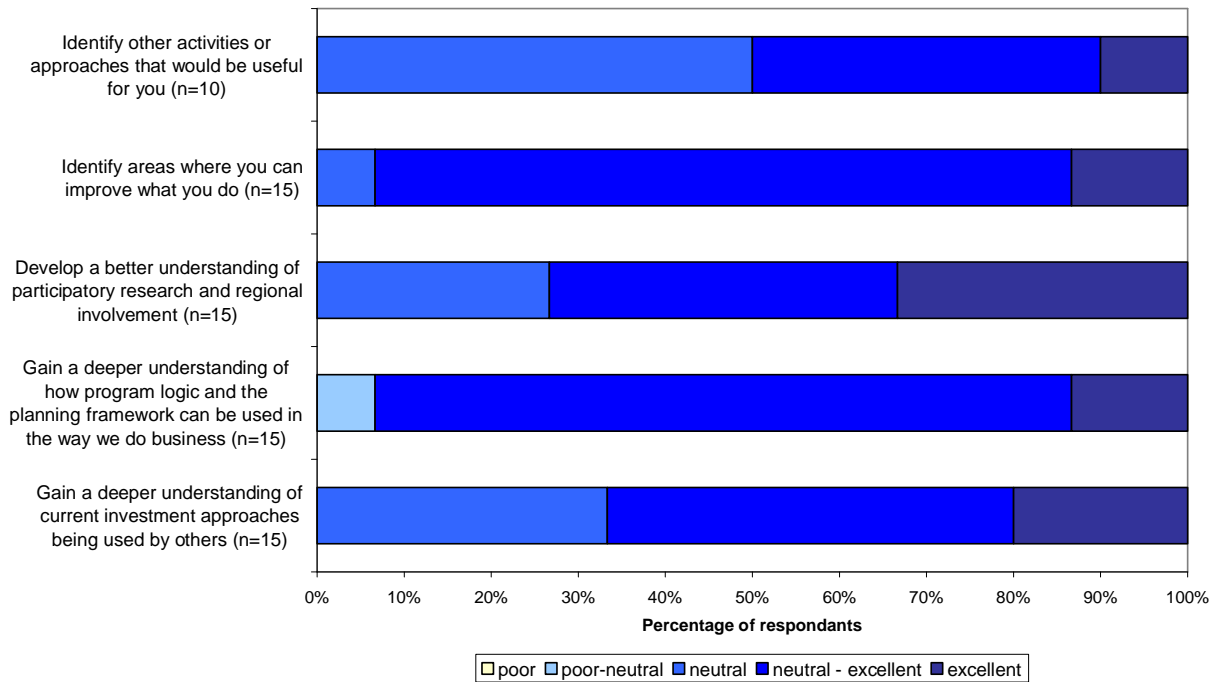
Some felt that the project didn't effectively enable to them to reflect on their learnings from the project to date.

#### Further comments provided

- § The forum was effective in re-engaging and motivating me to participate more
- § More learnings from other regions could have been presented to the group

## Making Successful Investments in NRM Practice Change

**In relation to investing in NRM practice change, how effective has the forum been for you to**



### Results summary

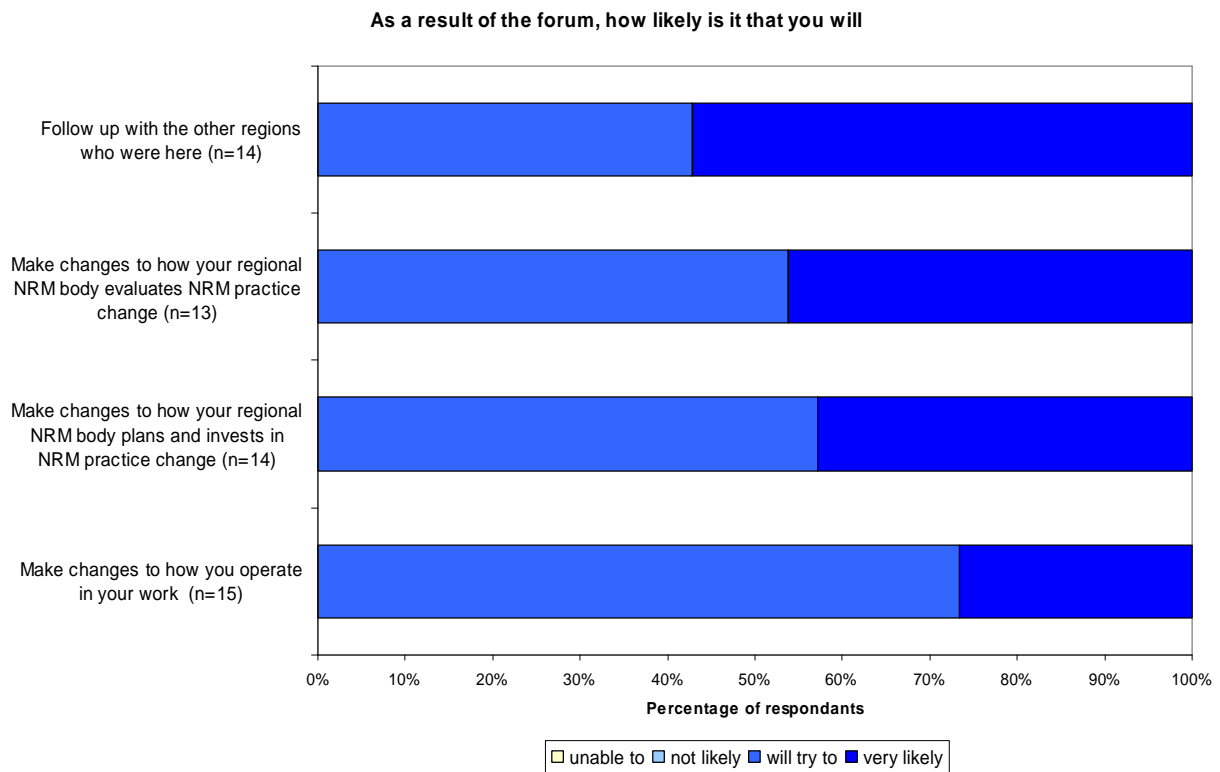
Most participants felt that the forum was effective in enabling them to identify areas of improvement in what they do, and also in developing a better understanding of participatory research and regional involvement.

The effectiveness of the forum in improving participants understanding of program logic and the planning framework in their business was generally highly regarded, although a small number of participants felt that this was not effective.

### Other activities or approaches identified that will be of use

- § Priority setting for investment in an asset based approach
- § Monitoring and evaluation
- § The fact that other regions are tackling similar issues
- § Strategic planning issue filter
- § Multi-criteria analysis ('Infer') and Bayesian networks model
- § Sub project workshops

**Resulting changes**



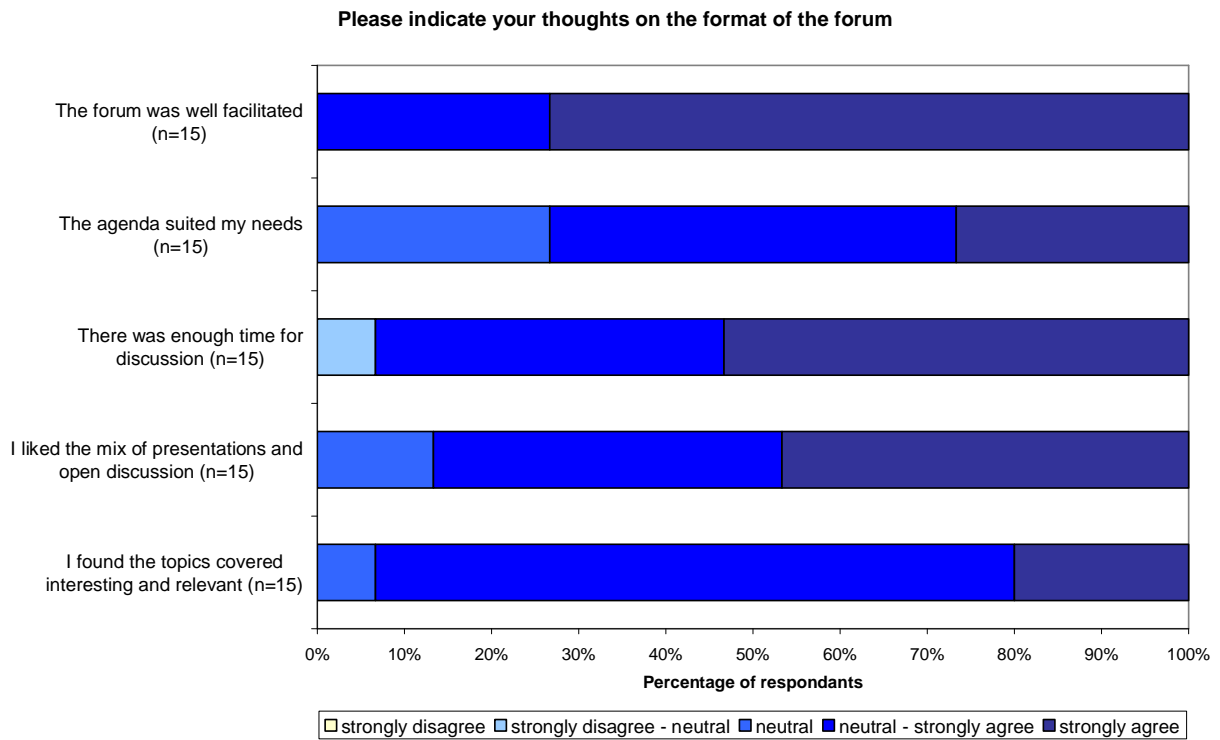
**Results summary**

All participants are likely to try to some extent to make changes in how they operate and to how their regional body evaluates, plans and invests in NRM practice change.

**Type of changes that will be made**

- § Trial different approaches used by other regions
- § Changes to how the use of the planning framework is done and documented
- § To clearly articulate the program logic
- § Improve rigour behind program logic process and build an M&E framework with focus on program logic
- § Embed program logic over the next 12 months
- § Implement their existing planning framework

**Forum format**



Results summary

All of the participants felt that the forum was well facilitated, and almost all felt that the topics were interesting and relevant. The majority of participants felt that there was enough time for discussion, but a very small percentage felt that there could have been room for more.

Additional comments made

§ The capacity building presentation seemed out of place

**Topic relevance**

Topic most relevant	Why?
Program logic MERI discussions	Further information base and clarification; very relevant to current work
Project planning for 2008	Provided opportunity for reflection on cultural project learning and CMA activity to plan agreed 2008 activities with regional partners
Project logic by Lachlan CMA	
Breaks and dinner	Best chance to catch up and have discussions (in depth) with other regional groups
All	All relevant; large catch-up on what much of the rationale behind, and direction of, this program is
RIS development (A new approach in Victoria – WGCMA and NECMA).	
Planning and community engagement	Currency in developing the NRM plan for the region
The reflections on 2007 themes	Relevance to area of work (in particular implementation and community engagement themes).
The presentations by the different regions on how they do things	

Topic least relevant	Why?
Participatory research	The context and role of the program was not really clear enough
Program logic and national NRM programs	Presentation and discussion were unfocussed and lengthy (but without many key points)
Business planning	Our region is a bit behind at the moment with this and therefore the discussion didn't hit the mark for our level of development

**Next year's forum**

- Suggestions
- § Tasmania: field visit to project site, 'live performance story' by theme
  - § 'field' or local visit if possible
  - § More presentations and sharing from regional groups. Less Australian government driven discussions
  - § Short 10 min presentation for each region on day 1
  - § More discussion between different bodies (CMAs to SAAL for example)
  - § Nothing, except that it is essential