

Situation Analysis – Lachlan Catchment Management Authority

Background

Drawing from the initial Practice Change Project workshop and various publications, the following is a situation analysis of the Lachlan CMA. It includes the key NRM issues, organisational structure, the resource condition targets and management action targets that have been identified. The purpose of the situation analysis is to provide an overview of the Lachlan catchment for circulation among the ten regions involved in the project. This will enable the participating regions to better understand each others situations.

The Region

Geography

The Lachlan catchment covers an area of approximately 84,700 km² and produces 14% of NSW agricultural production. The catchment encompasses 24 local government areas.

The Lachlan Catchment is located in central western New South Wales, flanked by the Macquarie and Bogan catchments to the north and Darling to the west, Murrumbidgee to the south and the Sydney/Shoalhaven Basin to the east.

The Lachlan River rises near Gunning and terminates in the Great Cumbung Swamp near Oxley, 1450 river kilometres to the west. Major tributaries of the Lachlan include the Abercrombie, Boorowa, Belubula and Crookwell Rivers.

Demographics

The Lachlan Catchment is home to more than 106,000 people and includes the towns of Crookwell, Cowra, Young, Forbes, Parkes, Condobolin, West Wyalong and Hillston among others. It falls predominantly within the Wiradjuri Aboriginal tribal area.

NRM issues

Key natural resource management problems are:

- dryland salinity;
- declining surface water quality;
- declining health and extent of native vegetation;
- loss of native biodiversity;
- degradation of riparian and wetland ecosystems;
- deterioration of soil resources; and
- threats to cultural heritage.

The Regional NRM Organisation

History

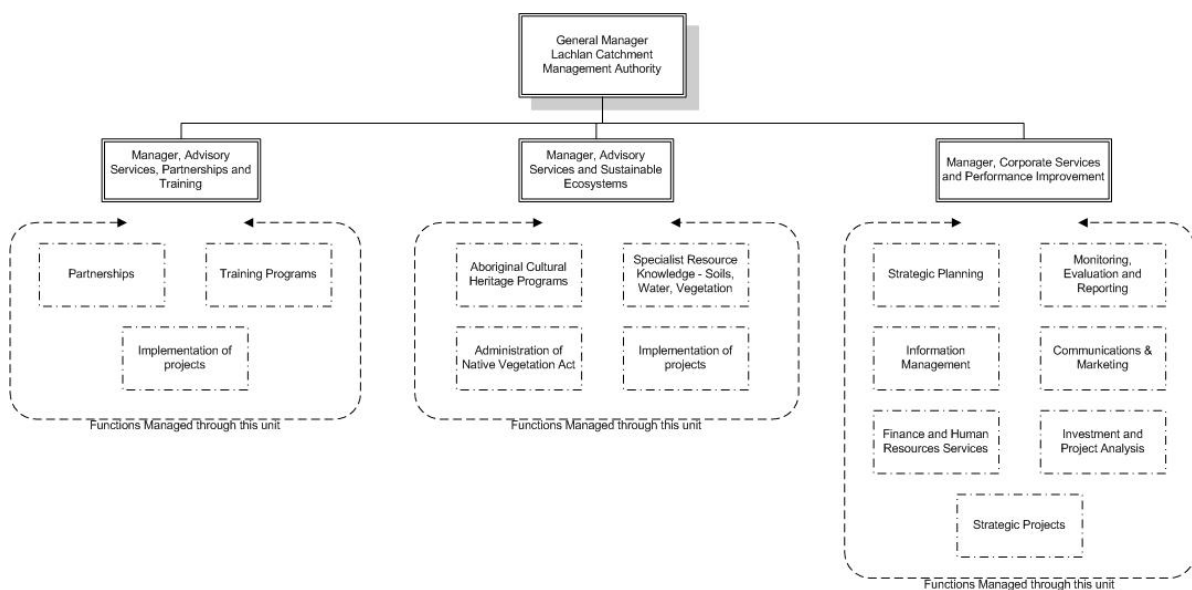
The Lachlan Catchment Management Authority (CMA) was established in January 2004 under the NSW *Catchment Management Authority Act, 2003*. The LCMA was established to replace the previous committees of the Lachlan Catchment Management Board, the Lachlan River Management Committee,

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the Lachlan Unregulated River Management Committee, the Lower Lachlan Groundwater Management Committee, the Mid-Lachlan Regional Vegetation Management Committee, western Riverina Regional Vegetation Management Committee and the North Lachlan - Bogan Regional Vegetation Management Committee.

Organisational arrangements

- The General Manager reports directly to the Board.
- There are three senior managers that report to the General Manager. These cover the portfolios of Advisory Services Training and Partnerships, Sustainable Ecosystems, Monitoring and
- Evaluation and Corporate Services.



Key functions

1. **Leadership in Natural resources** – to provide an appropriate regulatory and policy environment to encourage better natural resource management. It includes providing advice and direction to the community on relevant NRM policy and regulatory issues and equally providing advice to the various levels of government.
2. **Provision of Information products, education, training and technical support** – to provide the community with the capacity, in terms of motivation, information and skills, to implement programs.
3. **Strategic Allocation of natural resource incentive funding** – to provide the community with financial resources to implement agreed programs in conjunction with the Lachlan CMA.

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The NRM Planning Process

History The development process was a collaborative community/government partnership. Built upon the substantial foundations of the Catchment Blueprint, developed by the Catchment Management Board, the draft CAP is in development.

NRM plan Lachlan CMA had the task of developing and drafting an integrated catchment management plan, commonly referred to as the "Catchment Action Plan (CAP)". After another round of community consultation in August 2005 and consequent redrafting, the CAP is expected to be ready for submission in late 2005.

Resource condition targets

Asset	Resource Condition Targets (RCTs)
Biodiversity and Native Vegetation	<p>CT1 By 2016 there is an increase of 145 000 hectares of terrestrial native vegetation that is being actively managed for biodiversity conservation.</p> <p>CT2 By 2016 the highest priority terrestrial and aquatic threatened flora and fauna species, endangered populations and significant species will be managed for conservation.</p> <p>CT3 By 2016 restrict the extent of priority pest animals and environmental weeds.</p>
Water and Aquatic Ecosystems	CT4 By 2016 riverine and aquifer ecosystem condition and quality is maintained and improved.
Land Management	CT5 By 2016 soil health has improved on 870 000 ha of agricultural land.
People and Community	CT6 By 2016 the Lachlan community is actively involved in sustainable natural resource management with the capacity and motivation to achieve sustainable landscapes.

Management action targets

Asset	Management Action Targets (MATs)
Biodiversity and Native Vegetation	<p>MT1 By 2016 20 000 hectares of terrestrial native vegetation managed for biodiversity conservation in perpetuity.</p> <p>MT2 By 2016 100 000 hectares of terrestrial native vegetation are actively managed for biodiversity conservation through management agreements.</p> <p>MT3 By 2016 20 000 hectares of native vegetation established through revegetation using local endemic species.</p> <p>MT4 By 2016 5 000 kilometres of corridor habitat is established and/or protected.</p> <p>MT5 By 2016 10 Councils within the catchment have prepared and are implementing local biodiversity strategies consistent with the National and State Biodiversity Guidelines for local government.</p> <p>MT6 By 2016 all regional and local land use strategies and environmental planning instruments incorporate provisions which</p>

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	<p>naturally acidic lands are managed using best management practices to reduce the impacts of acidity.</p> <p>MT27 By 2016 100 000 hectares of saline hazard landscapes will be improved and maintained using actively growing, diverse, perennial-based vegetation systems.</p> <p>MT28 By 2016 20 000 ha of actively eroding, fragile or severely degraded land are stabilised and/or rehabilitated.</p> <p>MT29 By 2016 increase community participation in developing and implementing property resource plans and sub catchment plans.</p>
People and Community	<p>MT30 By 2016 there is an increase in community awareness, knowledge and skills in relation to sustainable natural resource management.</p> <p>MT31 By 2016 increase the number and diversity of individuals, groups and networks engaged in and adopting sustainable natural resource management practices.</p> <p>MT32 By 2016 maintain and increase the number of individuals, groups and networks investing in mutually beneficial partnerships that achieve NRM outcomes.</p> <p>MT33 By 2016 systems are in place to support the community to achieve sustainable NRM.</p> <p>MT34 By 2016 there is an increase in involvement of Aboriginal people in sustainable NRM within the Catchment.</p> <p>MT 35 By 2016 establish 30 partnerships between Aboriginal communities, Lachlan CMA and land managers that identify, protect, manage and/or maintain landscapes culturally significant to Aboriginal people.</p>

Philosophy and thinking

Lachlan CMA sees their strengths as:

- Offering a range of incentives including on ground works and training
- Decentralised staff network
- Streamlined assessment process
- Ability to engage groups and individuals through a range of communications
- Proactive board who lead decision-making
- Established review and evaluation for projects and processes
- Not using a directive approach with farmers – tend to ask what farmers want and work out how it can fit in with the CMA's objectives
- Adopting a balanced approach between production and conservation – accept the need for production in the landscape, and adopt a solutions-based approach – 'can do' attitude as an organisation
- Established formal relationships with different bodies
- CMA strong in cultural heritage work, which has been a new and significant change

Staff are given the opportunity to voice opinions and concerns, and encouraged to take on responsibilities in new positions.

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People, energy and skills

<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Identified skills needs</u>
Broad and varied set of skills	Some specific social science expertise would be useful
Staff good at forming relationships	Change management skills
Mostly from extension backgrounds	
Mentoring model with senior and junior staff working together	
Trust and respect carried over from soil con	
Staff have established relationships in their communities	
Good technical skills	
One on one communication and negotiation	

Expectations of involvement in project

Expectations

- To gain a better understanding of relevant principles across organisations – which ones are effective and relevant for the Lachlan CMA? Also, is there any existing work on the best agents for change?
- Gain an Insight into other regional bodies' activities to achieve change, and effective use of funding – that is how to avoid the Victorian 'welfare' model and create a level of independence rather than dependence.
- Benchmarking - how good at change management (NRM standard are useful).
- Overall versus silo approach to funding (eg salinity, water)
- Project design – considerations for a change management project – how to find them and check they are the right ones.
- What are we doing now that we don't need to do / shouldn't be doing / or should be doing instead that would help achieve practice change and NRM outcomes.
- Develop a better understanding of how to engage different people and meet different needs, for example training courses.
- What approaches should we be avoiding, and what are some "words that work" in the field.

Tools

Tools would be useful to assist with the points listed above as well as:

- How to match drivers to barriers?

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- Tools for linking to outcomes with simple and local data needs
 - purpose and use of data
- Tools for landholders to monitor change and a system for linking science with landholder actions, and a model to improve interaction between researchers and on-ground practitioners. How do other bodies drive research and change – where does it work and where doesn't it?

Case study topics

Some possible pilot project areas were discussed, and some of the areas were:

- Different drivers between projects;
- Issue with public and private benefits; and
- Native vegetation – revegetation and regeneration.