

Situation Analysis – North East Catchment Management Authority

Background Drawing from the initial Practice Change Project workshop and various publications, the following is a situation analysis of the North East 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 North East 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 North East region of Victoria is an area rich in natural assets from snow-topped mountains to river valleys and open plains. The region covers approximately 1.9 million hectares of North East Victoria, including three major catchments: the Upper Murray, Kiewa and Ovens. The North East is bounded by the Murray River in the North, the Victorian Alps in the South, the NSW border in the east and Warby Ranges in the west. It includes the municipalities of Wodonga, Indigo, Wangaratta, Alpine, Towong and parts of Moira and East Gippsland.

Demographics The population of the North East Catchment Management Authority region is just under 95,000 and includes approximately 620 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. The most populated statistical local areas (SLAs) include the municipalities of Wodonga and Wangaratta, which combine to make up almost 50 per cent of the region's total population. The North East region has experienced consistent growth in population throughout the 1990s (0.5 per cent per annum) and has a relatively high level of residential mobility in comparison to rural Victoria as a whole. Parts of the region are growing very quickly particularly Wodonga, which grew by more than one per cent per annum during the five years from 1996. The population of the North East is ageing and in most areas the average age is greater than the Victorian average of 35 years (ABS 2001). Wodonga is the exception to this with a median age of people below the state average at 32 years (ABS 2001).

Land uses

- Broad acre cropping and crop pasture – 4.6%
- Pasture – Dryland and irrigated – 28.2%
- Horticulture – 04%
- Remnant native vegetation – 8.6%
- Other private land – 0.4%
- Public land – 55.5%
- Forestry – softwood plantations – 2.1%



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NRM issues

- Pest plants and animals
- Fire
- Soil salinity
- Soil acidity
- Soil erosion and soil structural decline (other soil health)
- Flooding
- Drought
- Disasters
- Climate change
- Algal blooms
- Water salinity
- Other water quality
- Changes in water resources
- Direct removal of native vegetation
- Habitat decline
- Changing market conditions
- Insufficient public investment
- Loss of knowledge, expertise and leadership

The Regional NRM Organisation

History

In 1994, legislation made provision for the appointment of Catchment and Land Protection Boards (CALP) across Victoria. In 1997, Catchment Management Authorities (CMAs) were created and in most instances took over the roles of the former CALP Boards.

Organisational arrangements

Under the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994, the North East CMA Board members appointed by the Minister must have between them experience and knowledge of water resources management, primary industry, environmental conservation and Local Government and must reflect the major land and water uses in the region. The North East CMA is controlled by a nine member Board of Management. The Board includes a cross section of representatives from community stakeholders.

Organisational Structure *(Refer to the attached Corporate Structure Chart)*

The North East Catchment Management Authority Board was appointed on the 1st July 2006 with the following members:

- Sarah Nicholas, Chairperson (Wandiligong)
- Anthony Griffiths Deputy Chairperson (Greta West)
- Lyn Coulston (Shelley)
- Terry Hillman (Thurgoona)
- Peter Roper (Tawonga)
- Rhonda Serpell (Running Creek)



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- Greg Hayes (Wodonga)
- Ray Park (Markwood)
- Tony Jarvis (Cudgewa)

The Authority has two Community Advisory Committees based upon the two main asset classes. These are the Land Advisory Committee and the Water Advisory Committee.

Key functions

The Authority has two types of business:

1. Direct:

- Waterway Management
- Floodplain Management
- Water Quality Co-ordination
- Landcare Support
- Grants Administration
- Funding Facilitation

2. Co-ordination

Implementation of the Regional Catchment Strategy through the North East CMA's partnership with Government Agencies, Water Authorities, Local Government, Industry and the broader community.

Budget

Total budget (2006)

Australian Government funds - \$3,932,406

State funds - \$5,492,525

Other funds - \$1,461,672

Total Revenue - \$10,886,603

Employees - \$2,879,178

Program costs - \$8,272,734

Depreciation - \$393,660

Governance costs - \$286,675

Other - \$195,514

Total Expenses - \$12,027,761

The NRM Planning Process

History

The renewed Strategy builds on work done by the former North East Catchment and Land Protection Board in the first strategy launched in 1997. The RCS is known as the "umbrella" strategy because it sits above the various regional management strategies and plans that provide further detail on the approach, goals and actions for individual issues and assets. The following is the key strategies and plans of the North East that sit directly below the RCS.

- Upper North East Water Quality Strategy
- Ovens Basin Water Quality Strategy



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- Regional River Health Strategy
- North East Regional Roadside Management Strategy
- Regional Floodplain and Drainage Management Strategy
- North East Region Weed Action Plan
- Rabbit Management Action Plan 2002-2005 – the North East Catchment
- North East Native Vegetation Plan
- North East Soil Health Action Plan Draft
- North East Salinity Strategy 1997-2002

NRM plan

The Regional Catchment Strategy was launched in 2004, it is the overarching strategic document to guide investment in natural resource management over the next 5 years.

The Strategy was developed with extensive consultation throughout the North East region. The community assisted in identifying the values provided by the region's natural assets and the threatening processes that put those values at risk.

Resource condition targets

Asset	Resource Condition Matter for Target (RCT)	Targets
Land	RCT 1.1: Improve surface soil (0-10cm) acidity	Improve surface soil (0-10cm) acidity levels of all agricultural land to better than pH 4.5 (measured in CaCl ₂ extract) by 2023.
	RCT 1.2: Soil Carbon Content	To be developed.
	RCT 1.3: Land area threatened by shallow and rising saline water tables	To be developed.
	RCT 2.1: Reduce the number of active gullies	Reduce the number of active gullies as at December 2005 in priority areas defined in the NESHAP (2001) by a minimum of 30% by 2023.
	RCT 2.2: Soil erosion — Wind	To be developed.
	RCT 2.3: Annual impact of priority and ecologically significant pest plant infestations in high priority areas	To be determined.
	RCT 2.4: Annual impact of priority and ecologically significant pest animals (rabbits, wild dogs, foxes)	Reduce by 2013.



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	infestations in high priority areas on all private land	
Inland Waters	<p>RCT 3.1: Change in contribution to salinity at Morgan from the Ovens River as measured at Peechelba East by 2015 (MDBC 2001). Based on 2000 conditions, utilising 1975-2000 climatic benchmark.</p> <p>RCT 3.1a: Change in contribution to salinity at Morgan from the Kiewa River as measured at Bandiana by 2015 (MDBC 2001). Based on 2000 conditions, utilising 1975-2000 climatic benchmark.</p> <p>RCT 4.1: Reduction in mean annual Total Nitrogen load from the Ovens Catchment into the Murray River.</p> <p>RCT 4.1a: Reduction in mean annual Total Phosphorus load from the Ovens Catchment into the Murray River.</p> <p>RCT 4.2: Reduction in mean annual Total Nitrogen load from the Upper North East Catchment into the Murray River.</p> <p>RCT4.2a: Reduction in Mean annual Total Phosphorus load from the Upper North East Catchment</p> <p>RCT 5.1: Maintain the 1999 Index of Stream Condition (ISC) rating of good and excellent condition stream reaches</p> <p>RCT 5.1a: Maintain the 1999 ISC rating of moderate condition stream reaches</p> <p>RCT 5.1b: By 2013 improve a percentage of the 1,100 km of</p>	<p>Zero</p> <p>Zero</p> <p>Reduced from 1,578 to 728 tonnes (46%) before 2033 (OBWQWG 2000).</p> <p>Reduced from 179 to 71 tonnes (40%) before 2033 (OBWQWG 2000).</p> <p>To be determined.</p> <p>Reduced by 75 tonnes from 235 tonnes to 160 tonnes (32%) before 2033 (from Kiewa River by 38 tonnes; from Lake Hume by 37 tonnes) — UNEWQWG 2001.</p> <p>For the 830 km of stream reaches at least until 2009 (DNRE 2003).</p> <p>For the 1,100 km of stream reaches by 2013 (DNRE 2003).</p> <p>20% by 2013</p>

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	<p>stream reaches classified as good and moderate ISC condition by at least one ISC category (DNRE 2003).</p> <p>RCT 5.1c: By 2013, improve a percentage of the 302 km of stream reaches classified as poor and very poor ISC condition by at least one ISC category (DNRE 2003).</p> <p>RCT 6.2: By 2023, percentage of water quality at all monitoring stations of inland water bodies complying with appropriate SEPP (EPA 2003) and ANZECC (2000) water quality objectives.</p> <p>RCT 6.3: By 2023, percentage reduction in the number of water-borne related illnesses from 2003 levels.</p> <p>RCT 6.4: Condition of Regionally Significant Wetlands.</p> <p>RCT 6.5: Groundwater quality compliance with objectives of the SEPP for Groundwater (EPA 1997).</p>	<p>10% by 2013</p> <p>80% by 2023</p> <p>50% by 2023</p> <p>To be developed</p> <p>Compliance with objectives of the SEPP for Groundwater (EPA 1997) by 2023.</p>
Biodiversity	<p>RCT 7.1: Improvement in the quality of priority EVCs (as determined by the North East Native Vegetation Strategy) over 2005 levels measured by habitat hectares (NECMA 2000).</p> <p>RCT 8.1: On-going extent, distribution and quality at any time as measured against the previous year (NECMA 2000) for all EVCs</p> <p>RCT 8.1a: Increase by a percentage extent of native vegetation for endangered EVCs and the extent of native vegetation for vulnerable EVCs</p>	<p>10% by 2023.</p> <p>Achieve on-going “net gain” until at least 2023.</p> <p>15% for endangered EVCs and 30% for vulnerable EVCs by 2023.</p>

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	relative to 1750 extent levels. RCT 9.1: Maintain or improve (by at least one VROTS status level) the 2003 conservation status of a percentage of threatened flora and threatened fauna species.	80% of threatened flora and 60% of threatened fauna species by 2023.
Built infrastructure	RCT 13.1: Reduced impact of high water tables and salinity on transport infrastructure by a percentage of 2003 impacts as measured by reduced expenditure on maintenance and reduced longevity of assets. RCT 13.2: Reduced impact of flooding on built infrastructure assets by a percentage of 2003 impacts.	20% by 2023. 20% by 2023.
Climate and Atmosphere	RCT 14.1: Reduction in greenhouse emissions and carbon storage in the region.	To be developed.

Management Action Targets

Matter for Target	Management Action Targets (MATs)
RCT 1.1: Improve surface soil (0-10cm) acidity	MAT 1.1.1: Soil pH monitoring and evaluation program initiated and implemented by December 2005. MAT 1.1.2: 20% landholders apply lime according to best practice to 20% of their farm by 2009 (NESHAPPT 2001). MAT 1.1.3: 20% regional landholders have access to cheaper lime from bulk storage pits by 2009 (NESHAPPT 2001). MAT 1.1.4: 20% lime spreaders/contractors completed quality assurance program by 2009 (NESHAPPT 2001). MAT 1.1.5: 5% low productive, irreversible acidic land taken out of agricultural production and revegetated by 2009 (NESHAPPT 2001).
RCT 1.3: Land area threatened by shallow and rising saline water tables RCT 3.1: Change in contribution to salinity at Morgan from the Ovens River as measured at Peechelba East by 2015 (MDBC 2001). Based on 2000 conditions,	MAT 1.3.1: 20% regional landholders incorporate perennial pastures and trees into their farming system by 2009 (NESHAPPT 2001). MAT 1.3.2: Increase the area of perennial systems in high recharge areas on agricultural land to a minimum of 15% by 2009.

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<p>utilising 1975-2000 climatic benchmark. RCT 3.1a: Change in contribution to salinity at Morgan from the Kiewa River as measured at Bandiana by 2015 (MDBC 2001). Based on 2000 conditions, utilising 1975-2000 climatic benchmark.</p>	
<p>RCT 2.1: Reduce the number of active gullies</p>	<p>MAT 2.1.2: 445 gullies repaired in the Upper Murray and Kiewa catchments by 2009 (NESHAPPT 2001). MAT 2.1.3: Gullies repaired in the Ovens catchment by 2009 (number to be determined — refer MAT 2.1.1). MAT 2.2.2: 10% landholders adopt best management practices to reduce run-off and erosion by 2009 (NESHAPPT 2001). MAT 2.2.3: Minimum of 70% groundcover (or at least 1,000 kg dry matter per hectare) on 20% agricultural land by 2009.</p>
<p>RCT 4.1: Reduction in Mean annual Total Nitrogen load from the Ovens Catchment into the Murray River.</p>	<p>MAT 4.1.1: Ovens Basin Water Quality Strategy (OBWQWG 2000) implemented via the attainment of targets developed for the management actions contained in the 12 strategy programs by 2030.</p>
<p>RCT 4.2: Reduction in mean annual Total Nitrogen load from the Upper North East Catchment into the Murray River. RCT 4.2a: Reduction in Mean annual Total Phosphorus load from the Upper North East Catchment</p>	<p>MAT 4.2.1: Upper North East Water Quality Strategy (UNEWQWG 2001) implemented via the attainment of targets developed for the management actions contained in the 13 strategy programs by 2008.</p>
<p>RCT 5.1: Maintain the 1999 Index of Stream Condition (ISC) rating of good and excellent condition stream reaches RCT 5.1a: Maintain the 1999 ISC rating of moderate condition stream reaches RCT 5.1b: By 2013 improve a percentage of the 1,100 km of stream reaches classified as good and moderate ISC condition by at least one ISC category (DNRE 2003).</p>	<p>MAT 4.2.3: 135 km of bank stabilisation, fencing and revegetation in the Upper Murray and Kiewa catchments by 2031 (NESHAPPT 2001) or 25 km by 2008. MAT 5.1.2: Recommended Regional River Health Strategy actions implemented.</p>

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<p>RCT 5.1c: By 2013, improve a percentage of the 302 km of stream reaches classified as poor and very poor ISC condition by at least one ISC category (DNRE 2003).</p> <p>RCT 6.2: By 2023, percentage of water quality at all monitoring stations of inland water bodies complying with appropriate SEPP (EPA 2003) and ANZECC (2000) water quality objectives.</p>	
<p>RCT 7.1: Improvement in the quality of priority EVCs (as determined by the North East Native Vegetation Strategy) over 2005 levels measured by habitat hectares (NECMA 2000).</p> <p>RCT 8.1: On-going extent, distribution and quality at any time as measured against the previous year (NECMA 2000) for all EVCs</p> <p>RCT 8.1a: Increase by a percentage extent of native vegetation for endangered EVCs and the extent of native vegetation for vulnerable EVCs relative to 1750 extent levels.</p>	<p>MAT 7.1.3: Protect, enhance and restore 10,000ha of priority EVCs through management agreements, fencing, pest plant and animal management and revegetation by 2009.</p>
<p>RCT 9.1: Maintain or improve (by at least one VROTS status level) the 2003 conservation status of a percentage of threatened flora and threatened fauna species.</p>	<p>MAT 9.1.2: Implementation of Recovery Plans and Action Plans by 2009 for threatened species.</p>
<p>RCT 2.3: Annual impact of priority and ecologically significant pest plant infestations in high priority areas</p>	<p>MAT 10.1.2: All known infestations of state prohibited weeds treated for eradication by 2005 (NECMA 2001).</p> <p>MAT10.1.3: Known new and emerging weed infestations treated for containment and/or eradication by 2005 (NECMA 2001).</p> <p>MAT 10.1.4: All satellite infestations of regional priority weeds treated for eradication by 2005 (NECMA 2001).</p> <p>MAT 10.1.5: Priority species of regional priority weeds in environmental priority areas and/or DSE project areas treated for containment and/or reduction by 2005</p>

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	(NECMA 2001).
RCT 2.4: Annual impact of priority and ecologically significant pest animals (rabbits, wild dogs, foxes) infestations in high priority areas on all private land	MAT 2.4.3: Implement for both rabbit zones and rabbit free zones as detailed in the Rabbit Management Plan.
RCT 13.2: Reduced impact of flooding on built infrastructure assets by a percentage of 2003 impacts.	MAT 13.2.1: Implementation of the North East Regional Floodplain Management Strategy and Regional Rural Drainage Management Strategy via the attainment of targets for 8 programs 7.

Philosophy and thinking

The NE-CMA's approach to NRM is:

- Community driven
- Focussed on management of natural systems rather than altering natural systems
- Committed to work through community, not impose on community
- Recognising that it takes effort to bring community along on a NRM 'journey'
- Assisted by the stability of Landcare groups
- To build on the trust and respect of staff and the CMA amongst the community
- About communities taking more control with less government intervention (this does depend on the issue)
- Encouraging community and organisations to take responsibilities
- People are at different stages of engagement and activity with NRM
- Trying to link with rural production values.
- Working with other organisations using a Partnership or "co-management" approach.

People, energy and skills

- There is much enthusiasm amongst the NE-CMA team.
- There is a mixture of long term and new staff with good interaction between them.
- Good experience base to draw on.
- Keen to develop their skills and approaches.
- Community leadership – requires time, effort and skilling up

Strengths	Identified skills needs
Commitment	Project planning & design for long term impacts, building on project outcomes/outputs
Passion	Finding engagement drivers
Enthusiasm	Skills and understanding for achieving and monitoring

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	practice change
Confidence	Influencing skills
Local knowledge	Negotiation
Ability to develop networks and relationships	Targeting markets better
Technical knowledge	
	NRM Salesmanship, Marketing
Experience	Communication & not overselling solutions
	Understanding farm businesses/systems
	Interviewing, surveys, evaluation – design & use to inform

Expectations of involvement in project

Expectations

- Answers
- Be able to understand practice change
 - WHAT/WHY?
 - What we do?
 - How it works?
 - What aiming to achieve?
 - Constraining factors
- What happens as a result of on-ground works?
- Participation – willing people
- Improve what we do
- Key package of approaches to trial
- Community confidence in accountability/relevance
- Consider cost effectiveness of target audiences and methodologies

Tools

Some of the tools that NE-CMA are interested in are:

- Social profiling – including identifying and understanding key influencers.
- Better process for working out/choosing best techniques
- Marketing - Identify need and value & building perception of this value.
- How to identify drivers and barriers (recognising that NRM outcomes may not match landholders' desired outcomes).
- Examples, case studies to refer to:
 - What worked, what didn't, why?
- Communication of Best Practice
- Tools to increase efficiency of engagement – eg to be better at 1:1 for change
- Cost effective measurement of change (evaluation)
- Making use of internal knowledge



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Working together

NE-CMA are keen to nominate a case study theme and work together on this.

NECMA are keen for the project to build on what they are already doing to gain cultural change within the organisation – need to value current practice in this process.



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CORPORATE STRUCTURE as at 30 December 2006

(Does not show line of reporting)

