

**SUBMISSION TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE  
CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT**

**JOINT SUBMISSION BY**

**EUROBODALLA AND SNOWY RIVER SHIRE COUNCILS**

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# **SUBMISSION TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT**

## **Introduction:**

The care, control and management of catchments within Australia is becoming increasingly important. It is the successful management of catchments, which is the basis or essential key element for an ecologically sustainable future.

Currently there is a myriad of professional and volunteer organisations at the “grass roots” level implementing various programs in an ongoing effort to redress a history of catchment degradation. These efforts are, to a greater extent, uncoordinated and dispersed throughout an increasing number of land management agencies and hence the desired level of progress of catchment management is not being achieved.

The present short term funding from an uncoordinated federal and state level through various departments does little to enhance the progressive, long term sustainability of catchments.

A more successful approach would be achieved if the outcome of ecologically sustainable catchment management:

- structured organisations into a coordinated direction at the community level where ownership and commitment are the greatest and,
- Guaranteed long term federal and state funding were directed to the community level.

## **The Community Level**

The organisation charged with the legal mandate at the community level is local government. It is this organisation within the three tiered government system that is most responsible and responsive to community aspirations and needs. Any “activity” conducted or undertaken is done so within a catchment and therefore ecologically sustainable catchment management should be integrated within the auspices of local government.

As adjustments to local government boundaries occur, as they inevitably do for a variety of reasons, serious consideration should be given to boundary adjustments being aligned to catchment or sub-catchments.

Catchment Management Committees (CMC) and Land Care Groups currently working under different administration should be brought under the auspices of local government and operate as bonafide committees under that administration with similar levels of community and specialist membership. This structural reform would facilitate the coordination of all groups planning or implementing programs within catchments such as landcare, creekcare, bushcare, dunecare, estuary, flood management, coastal, wetland, vegetation, etc. a primary focus of these committees would be to administer funding, whether grant or direct state/federal funds and preparation of State of Environment Reports. The current opportunity for state/federal agency specialist and technical resources to the committees would continue and in fact be enhanced under this coordinated approach.

As the need is identified responsibilities for water and vegetation reform planning could easily be incorporated within these committee's framework.

The full integration of all activities and strategies/plans within the catchment as developed by these committees would easily be catered for within the existing local government plans of management, land use plans, financial reports and annual reports.

Local government have the capacity to refocus land use planning instruments to reflect catchments and sub-catchments by applying their acquired expertise and using their existing tools such as satellite and aerial imagery, CDATA analysis with land, water, and air capability mapping.

Local government is well positioned to coordinate and account for federal/state funding which would ensure:

- Consistency and integration in strategic planning, assessment and monitoring of catchment management programs including water and vegetation management
- Accountability to the wider community through community based committees as an integral component of local government.

The attached model is the proposed relationship, which integrates federal/state/local government agencies and non-government organisations.

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**FEDERAL**

**STATE**

**LOCAL**

**CMC**

-NHT  
-Coast & Clean seas  
-Environ Trust

-Natural Resource & Environment Mgt  
-Coastal Policy

-LEP/DCP  
-Flood Plan  
-Environ Mgt Plan

Catchment & Resource Mgt

-State Catchment Co-ordinating Cttee  
-Regional Catchment Cttee

-Local Catchment Cttee

-Estuary Mgt  
-Coastal Mgt  
-Flood Mgt  
-River Mgt  
-Vegetation Mgt  
-Wetland Mgt  
-Landcare Mgt

Environment Aust'a

EPA  
Fisheries  
NPWS  
DLWC  
DAg  
DUAP

Engineering  
Coastal  
Environmental  
Planning

Grants

Grants  
Technical Support  
Coordinate BioRegion  
SEPP/REPP

Land use  
Environ Strategies  
Environ monitoring  
Prioritising  
Works  
Mgt Plans  
SoER

Cttee's admin  
Coordinators  
Care Groups  
Consultation

Key

1 – Delegated authority under s355 LGAct  
2 – Community member chairs sub-Cttee  
- Cllr chairs Head Cttee

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