



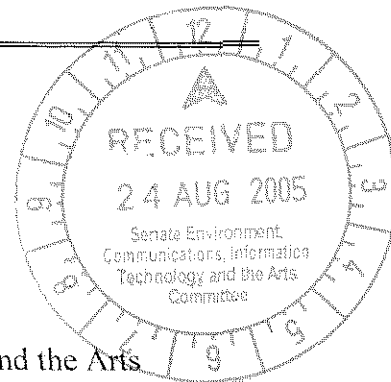
**SOUTH COAST REGIONAL INITIATIVE
PLANNING TEAM INC**

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19 August 2005



Louise Gell
Secretary - Environment, Communications, Information Technology and the Arts
References Committee/Legislation Committee
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Louise

Inquiry into the extent and economic impact of salinity in the Australian environment

Thankyou for your letter dated the 26 July 2005. The South Coast Regional Initiative Planning Team Inc (SCRIPT) has only recently completed the development of *Southern Prospects - the Natural Resource Management Strategy for the South Coast Region of Western Australia*, and subsequent Investment Plan under the Natural Heritage Trust (NHT) and National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality (NAP) regional delivery framework.

The Strategy and Investment Plan have now both received State and Australian Government Ministerial endorsement for accreditation. We are now preparing for implementation of approximately \$70 million of NHT and NAP funding over three years.

Development of the Strategy has been conducted in a consultative manner with all stakeholders across the Region involved as much as possible. As a result the Strategy and Investment Plan are well balanced and has the potential to go a long way to achieving environmental, social and economic outcomes.

Even though we are just entering the period of significant investment from NHT and NAP we believe the goals of these programs will be readily achieved. We will be further complimenting this investment with the National Landcare Program, and from other sources such as private investors.

We believe that the NRM Regional Model and the role of Regional NRM Groups in the management of salinity-affected areas will create significant positive benefit. The reasoning behind this is that the Regions have a good understanding of the local issues and the management options available and how to achieve them through local knowledge and experience. Regional coordination of the research and extension is paramount to help land managers manage salinity and the delivery of management options will also have positive consequences.

Western Australia is going through a review of NRM Structures including Regional NRM Groups. The outcome of this will cause much interest and hopefully a positive way forward. Currently the core operation of SCRIPT is supported through a cash contribution from the State of Western Australia. At present this is adequate for the size of operation we intend to operate.

We would look forward to providing information into the future. If you would like to discuss this further please do not hesitate to contact the SCRIPT CEO Rob Edkins on (08) 9892 8537.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Garry English". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "G".

Garry English
Chair