



Australian Government

Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Ms Jeanette Radcliffe
Committee Secretary
Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Standing Committee
Australian Senate
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Ms Radcliffe

Thank you for your letters dated 7 August 2008 inviting the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry to make public submissions to the Inquiry into natural resource management and conservation challenges.

The Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry share responsibility for delivery of the Australian Government's environment and sustainable agriculture programs, which have traditionally been broadly referred to under the banner of 'natural resource management'.

In light of this shared interest and responsibility, the departments have prepared the attached joint submission addressing the terms of reference for the Inquiry.

Please contact Ms Mary Colreavy, Assistant Secretary, Australian Government Land and Coasts (02 6272 5818 or mary.colreavy@nrm.gov.au) if you require any further information or assistance.

Senior officials of both departments would be pleased to provide the Inquiry with further assistance if invited to appear at hearings in due course.

Yours sincerely

David Borthwick
Secretary
Department of Environment, Water,
Heritage and the Arts
21 August 2008

Phillip Glyde
A/g Secretary
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and
Forestry
22 August 2008



SUBMISSION TO THE SENATE INQUIRY INTO NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND CONSERVATION CHALLENGES

AUGUST 2008

Background

On 26 June 2008, the Senate referred the following matters to the Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport for inquiry and report by 27 November 2008:

- i. the lessons learned from the successes and failures of three decades of Commonwealth investment in resource management including Landcare, the Natural Heritage Trust, The National Action Plan on Salinity and Water Quality, and other national programs,
- ii. how we can best build on the knowledge and experience gained from these programs to capitalise on existing networks and projects, and maintain commitment and momentum among land-holders,
- iii. the overall costs and benefits of a regional approach to planning and management of Australia's catchments, coasts and other natural resources,
- iv. the need for a long-term strategic approach to natural resource management (NRM) at the national level,
- v. the capacity of regional NRM groups, catchment management organisations and other national conservation networks to engage land managers, resource users and the wider community to deliver on-the-ground NRM outcomes as a result of the recent changes to funding arrangements under the Caring for our Country program, and
- vi. the extent to which the Caring for our Country program represents a comprehensive approach to meeting Australia's future NRM needs.

Introduction

Australia's environment, with its iconic areas such as the Great Barrier Reef, the Wet Tropics, the Snowy River and the Australian Alps, along with our coastal areas, forests, rivers, wetlands and unique wildlife is at the centre of our national identity and our economy. Australia derives a significant proportion of the nation's wealth from its environmental assets, including agriculture, mining and tourism.

These environmental assets provide crucial ecosystem services such as regulating the climate, purifying water, absorbing and transforming wastes, preventing disease and providing the genetic resources that are the basis for many medicines.

There will be significant costs to the Australian economy and the welfare of all Australians if these assets are allowed to degrade. They are very expensive, and sometimes impossible, to replace. While most ecosystem services are unpriced and do not have a monetary value, the Great Barrier Reef alone adds more than \$5 billion to the Australian economy each year, and food exports annually total around \$24 billion, although annual production losses due to degradation are around \$1.2 billion.

Australia's natural resources are under grave threat from climate change, water scarcity, pollution, the legacy of past land management change such as inappropriate land clearing, feral animals, weeds, and unsustainable farming practices and inappropriate development, particularly in coastal and peri-urban areas.

The Australian Government recognises that national leadership is required to redress the decline in the health of Australia's landscapes, protect its national environmental assets, facilitate sustainable and productive natural resource management and use, support viable rural communities and better engage with Indigenous Australians in these actions.

The Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry share responsibility for delivery of the Australian Government's environment and sustainable agriculture programs, which have traditionally been broadly referred to under the banner of 'natural resource management'.

The departments offer the following joint comments in relation to the Senate Inquiry's Terms of Reference.

- i. To assist the Committee's efforts to develop a good understanding of the lessons learned from the successes and failures of the past, the departments have provided a list of formal independent program evaluations and other evaluations by the Australian National Audit Office of the Australian Government's previous natural resource management programs (Attachment A).
- ii. In designing Caring for our Country, which is a key initiative directed at improving the health of the Australian environment, the Australian Government is seeking to build on the knowledge and experience of the past. While Caring for our Country involves a new orientation, its design and implementation is being undertaken in a way that supports existing expertise, partnerships and landscape-scale approaches; addresses the weaknesses of past programs; and maintains and enhances the commitment and capacity of all stakeholders, including landholders.
- iii. In 2008, in its report on regional delivery of the Natural Heritage Trust, the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) found that:
 - The rationale for regional delivery was to be more strategic and results focused at a regional scale ... Given the scale of the NRM challenge across Australia and past experiences, it was a reasonable model in the circumstances.
 - There is little evidence as yet that the [Australian Government's natural resource management] programs are adequately achieving the anticipated national outcomes or giving sufficient attention to the 'radically altered and degraded Australian landscape.
 - At the present time it is [also] not possible to report meaningfully on the extent to which the outputs from on-ground actions being undertaken by regional NRM organisations contribute to the outcomes sought by government.

There is a general consensus that, if well designed, the overall benefits of regional delivery should outweigh the costs. At the current time there is, however, room for significant improvement, including better measurement of, and accountability for, the outcomes from the Australian Government's investments through regional providers. Improved targeting of investment and reporting on performance is a key area for improvement in all environment and resource management programs.

- iv. There is a clear need for a long-term strategic approach to natural resource management at the national level. Caring for our Country aims to deliver this by introducing some important reforms to the Australian Government's approach:
- A single goal to provide clear direction;
 - A set of six national priority area for investment;
 - A business approach to investment:
 - An annual business plan (or 'investment prospectus');
 - Set clearly defined outcomes for the things that will be achieved by 2013 and short 1-3 year targets to stay on track;
 - Funding to get the best value for money, including investments that will deliver against multiple priority areas and multiple targets and outcomes;
 - Annual reports on what has been achieved.
 - Streamlined administration - a single portal for processing funds:
 - a secure internet portal and a toll-free telephone number;
 - standardised information, funding, contracting and reporting arrangements.
- v. It is difficult to assess and compare the capacity of the many different regional organisations and networks that engage the community to deliver on-ground outcomes. It is too early to assess any change in their capacity as a result of recent changes to funding arrangements under Caring for our Country. The new program commenced six weeks ago, with 2008-09 being a year of transition while longer-term program design and delivery details are developed. Improving community capacity and being able to measure change in capacity is a priority for Caring for our Country.
- vi. This submission provides information and input relevant to the Inquiry's Terms of Reference, including on the question of the extent to which the Caring for our Country program represents a comprehensive approach to meeting Australia's future NRM needs.

Caring for our Country

In March 2008, the Australian Government announced 'Caring for our Country', which an ongoing program for investment in the future of the environment and sustainable natural resource management in Australia.

Caring for our Country, which commenced on 1 July 2008, has as its goal, "an environment that is healthy, better-protected, well-managed, resilient, and that provides essential ecosystem services in a changing climate."

Key aspects of the new program include

- establishing five-year program outcomes and shorter-term (one to three year) targets to guide priorities for investment;
- an annual Caring for our Country business plan inviting proposals from all relevant organisations to undertake activities that will contribute to achieving the national priorities, outcomes and targets;

- a streamlined and integrated system for managing information, funds, contracts, acquittals and reporting;
- providing certainty for long-term decisions by supporting programs of investment that span multiple years;
- introducing a consistent assessment process to select investments (this is being trialled through the Caring for our Country Open Grants process);
- establishing clear and uniform requirements for monitoring and reporting on progress (to be included in all funding agreements) and the framework for the annual Caring for our Country report card; and
- introducing improved web-based tools for accessing and sharing data and information about investments, outcomes and natural resource management activity across Australia.

Caring for our Country integrates the delivery of four previous Australian Government programs: the Natural Heritage Trust; the National Landcare Program; the Environmental Stewardship Program; and the 2007 election commitment to expand the employment of Indigenous Rangers under the Working on Country Program.

Caring for our Country will focus investment in six national priority areas:

- the national reserve system;
- biodiversity and natural icons;
- coastal environments and critical aquatic habitats;
- sustainable farm practices;
- natural resource management in remote and northern Australia, and
- community skills, knowledge and engagement.

As part of the investment in these priority areas, Caring for our Country will implement a number of the government's 2007 election commitments, including:

- rescue the Great Barrier Reef;
- repair our fragile coastal ecosystems;
- save the endangered Tasmanian Devil;
- improve water quality in the Gippsland Lakes;
- improve water quality in the Tuggerah Lakes;
- fight the Cane Toad menace;
- employ additional Indigenous Rangers;
- expand the Indigenous Protected Area network; and
- assist Indigenous Australians enter the carbon trading market

The Caring for our Country 'Transition Year' (2008-09)

When it announced Caring for our Country in March 2008, the Australian Government advised that 2008-09 would be a transition year in which:

- all the 2007 election commitments would start to be implemented;

- regional bodies would be funded to undertake actions from their current regional investment strategies that contribute to the national priorities while assisting them to make the transition to the new arrangements;
- funding would be provided to other urgent works that contribute to national priorities while establishing more comprehensive and strategic funding arrangements for future years; and
- more efficient and effective program support, administration and evaluation arrangements would be established.

As part of the transition year, and in order to ensure that funds continued to flow to regional groups, the design and delivery of the program in 2008-09 has the following features:

- Open Grants;
- Community Coastcare Grants;
- Sustainable Practice Grants;
- Regional investment strategy submissions;
- Working on Country projects (employment of Indigenous Rangers);
- National Reserve System and Indigenous Protected Areas (options for property purchase or 'in perpetuity' covenanting);
- Environmental Stewardship (covenanting of priority areas of Box Gum Grassy Woodland); and
- Reef Rescue regional investments.

During the transition year, a number of activities that had previously received funding under the Natural Heritage Trust are continuing to be funded because they will make a substantial contribution to the outcomes being sought under Caring for our Country.

Eighteen such projects were approved, with an investment of \$22.8 million in 2008-09. These projects included activities such as:

- supporting ongoing efforts to eradicate foxes from Tasmania;
- commencing a program to eradicate rabbits and rodents from Macquarie Island;
- containing Red Imported Fire Ants and completing the eradication of Electric Ants and Crazy Ants;
- maintaining the Australian Government's contribution to the cost of managing the Wet Tropics and Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Areas; and
- continuing the Weeds of National Significance program.

Much of the fundamental architecture of Caring for our Country will not be fully operating until 2009-10. For example, the first business plan (or investment prospectus) is about to be released.

- This will clearly articulate the Australian Government's vision for what Caring for our Country will deliver by 2013, the first series of short-term targets for action, and the priority actions, regions and programs that the Government considers a high priority for investment.
- The business plan or prospectus will provide an integrated and comprehensive overview of priorities for funding across each of the different elements of Caring for our Country.

- It will call for proposals for investment that respond to the priorities identified in the plan. This means that individuals, regional groups, industry, NGOs and other relevant delivery partners will be able to see in the one place, at the one time, the Australian Government's priorities for investment.
 - And will only need to submit the one proposal to address the business plan, rather than responding to multiple calls for grants.
- To provide for future certainty, there will be the capacity to approve a proportion of investment proposals for multiple years.

As a result, the departments consider that it is far too early to make assessments about the way in which Caring for our Country is being implemented. Nor would it be accurate to use the experience of the first six weeks of the transition year as an indicator of future program delivery.

Previous Australian Government programs

Prior to the introduction of Caring for our Country, the Australian Government had delivered a range of environment and sustainable agriculture programs, in particular the Natural Heritage Trust, National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality and the National Landcare Program.

The Natural Heritage Trust, established under the *Natural Heritage Trust Act 1997*, provided over \$3.1 billion to conserve environmental and natural resources. Since 2002, the Trust was delivered through national, regional and local investment streams. Regional delivery commenced with the establishment of 56 community-based regional natural resource management bodies. Under bilateral agreements with the states and territories, the Australian Government invested significant resources to help develop regional plans through these bodies.

The National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality provided \$700 million between 2001-02 and 2007-08 to address salinity and water quality issues in priority regions across Australia.

The National Landcare initiative was established in 1992, and targeted the adoption of sustainable management practices by primary producers.

Lessons from previous programs

A number of evaluations and reviews of the Natural Heritage Trust, National Action Plan and National Landcare Program have been undertaken. In February 2008, the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) released its latest audit of the regional delivery arrangements under the Trust and National Action Plan.

- A full list of reviews and evaluations is provided in [Attachment A](#).
- The reports from all of these reviews and evaluations are publicly available on the joint departments' website (www.nrm.gov.au).
- The 2008 ANAO report is available at www.anao.gov.au.

The Australian Government recognises that landscape-scale change is most effectively achieved where communities have a sense of ownership of the issues. The regional model has built on the success of landcare in building community understanding and capacity for better environmental management and established a broader framework for community engagement, ownership and participation.

There currently exists an extensive network of regional bodies, government and non-government organisations, industry groups, Indigenous rangers, volunteers, banks and businesses who are actively engaged in natural resource management. The regional model has attracted some of the most talented community leaders in regional Australia. These people are a great asset and represent enormous goodwill and a pool of expertise to assist in achieving the landscape-scale change necessary to underpin long-term environmental sustainability.

There is an immense diversity of models, issues, challenges and approaches adopted by the 56 regional groups across Australia. A summary of the current regional arrangements is attached ([Attachment B](#)).

While having some significant benefits, the regional model also presents some unique challenges and risks.

2008 Report by the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO)

In 2008, the ANAO released its report (No. 21) on the *Regional Delivery Model for the Natural Heritage Trust and National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality*. Relevant comments from the ANAO's conclusion are provided below.

The departments accepted the ANAO's four recommendations, as outlined in its report and these recommendations have been taken into account in the design, and implementation of Caring for our Country.

The ANAO reached a number of conclusions in its audit.

“The rationale for regional delivery was to be more strategic and results focused at a regional scale. This was supported by well designed bilateral agreements between the Australian Government and the States/Territories and a comprehensive planning and accreditation process based on the ‘best available’ science. Given the scale of the NRM challenge across Australia and past experiences, it was a reasonable model in the circumstances.

Progress in implementing improvements in administration following ANAO Audit Report No 17, 2004–05 has been comprehensive and well focused on significant risks. The Australian Government has been well supported by State Governments and regional bodies in improving administration. Nevertheless, significant areas of non compliance by State agencies with the bilateral agreements have been identified and will require attention leading into NHT 3. In particular, attention will need to be given to addressing the transparency and accountability of Australian Government funds managed by the States/Territories—particularly in terms of meeting the auditing requirements of the agreements and offsetting unspent funds remaining in State or Territory holding accounts.

The quality and measurability of the targets in the regional plans is an issue for attention and is being addressed in some States. This should be considered nationally—especially as the absence of sufficient scientific data has limited the ability of regional bodies to link the targets in their plans to program outcomes. Dissemination of good practice and, in particular, the documentation of the cost effectiveness of actions funded through the program will need to be a priority for NHT 3.

There is evidence that activities are occurring ‘on the ground’. For example, [the Department of the] Environment’s 2006–07 Annual Report commented that the programs have ‘helped to protect

over eight million hectares of wetlands, have treated over 600 000 hectares of land to reduce salinity and erosion, and have involved some 800 000 volunteers in on-ground conservation work'. However at the present time it is not possible to report meaningfully on the extent to which these outputs contribute to the outcomes sought by government ... The absence of consistently validated data, the lack of agreement on performance indicators and any intermediate outcomes has significantly limited the quality of the reporting process.

Overall, the ANAO considers there is insufficient information to make an informed judgement as to the progress of the programs towards either outcomes or intermediate outcomes. There is little evidence as yet that the programs are adequately achieving the anticipated national outcomes or giving sufficient attention to the 'radically altered and degraded Australian landscape' highlighted in the 1996 Australia: State of the Environment Report. Performance measurement has been an ongoing issue covered by three previous ANAO audits since 1996–97 and should be a priority for attention in the lead up to NHT 3."

The 'Keogh Report'

In September 2005, the then Natural Heritage Ministerial Board commissioned an independent Reference Group, chaired by Mr Kim Keogh, to look at the regional delivery of Australian Government natural resource management programs.

To complete the task the Reference Group travelled throughout Australia meeting with individuals, groups and representatives from state and national organisations. The aim was to identify stakeholders, determine how they felt about the regional arrangements and programs and how these could be improved.

The following comments on the strengths and weaknesses of the previous programs are drawn from the Reference Group's report to the Ministerial Board. These findings, which mirror those of the ANAO, have also helped to inform the design of Caring for our Country.

The things that worked

- "Natural resource management (NRM) is an issue widely supported by community, governments, and industry and non-government organisations ... there is an overwhelming sense of commitment from those involved in NRM, and a strong desire to continue to build on a model that has the capacity to focus regionally but deliver nationally."
- "Significant human capital, time and financial resources have gone into building the necessary links between communities, industry and government for the successful regional delivery of natural resource programs."
- "The partnership between the Australian Government and state and territory governments has been instrumental in leading regional delivery of NRM."
- NRM engages multiple stakeholder interests and a broad and frequently complex spectrum of issues. For example, the economic and environmental elements of NRM are closely interrelated - and have significant national importance - and effective measures therefore involve the achievement of both environmental and economic objectives. Reconciling these diverse interests in a way that produces desirable NRM outcomes requires a strategic approach to NRM planning and investment;

- Many NRM issues require a sustained, long-term commitment to address environmental degradation and repair, and to develop a more sustainable approach to the use of Australia's natural resources;
- That strategic landscape-scale change is most effectively achieved where communities have a sense of ownership over planning and investment decisions, and are therefore prepared to make the investments in time, resources and better practices to achieve good outcomes.”

Case Study: GroWest Project, Port Phillip and Westernport CMA, Victoria

GroWest is an umbrella program established by landholders and other stakeholders to deal holistically with a range of issues including the loss of natural and agricultural assets, weed infestation, loss of biodiversity, erosion, water quality, soil degradation and salinity. The program is:

- *Assisting landholders to combat weeds and other land management issues;*
- *Providing an opportunity to attract and coordinate funding for land improvement;*
- *Addressing the community pressure to find a solution for many of the problems described.*

The program provides economic benefits as well as environmental and social benefits.

Economic benefits include: increased land value; employment; access to funding and expertise to enable activities; and reclamation of land and increased productivity.

Environmental benefits include: increased stability of land; increased habitat for native plants and animals; increased linkages between areas of native vegetation; and improved condition of waterways.

Social/community benefits include: community recognition and understanding of local natural resource issues; sense of pride in working to resolve local land management issues; increased cooperation between sectors of the community; and increased attractiveness of the landscape.

The program aims to use funding of \$500,000 per year to leverage contributions of around \$2 million per year over a three-year period. This will be achieved by attracting funds directly for specific activities and by building links between the program, landholders and other initiatives to attract funds into the area for complementary work.

The problems, challenges and things to be addressed

- “Some key sectors, such as the primary industry sector and local government, are yet to be wholly engaged.”
- “There is no apparent strategy for engaging national NGOs in the regional model. National NGOs find that they are still able to engage with local groups but struggle to engage with regions.”
- “Engaging with CMAs can be very difficult, as they sometimes don’t see the community knowledge and information being as valuable as scientific research. There are also concerns over the lack of transparency in determining where funding goes and there is a perception that this often happens without consulting the broader community on its values.”
- There is widely varying capacity between regions to deliver the programs, highlighting the important oversighting role that the Australian Government has and needs to continue with.”
- “Regional delivery has ... led to trade-offs and inconsistency on delivering national issues such as biodiversity planning. National driver programs are needed to ensure the Australian Government is meeting its national and international obligations.”
- “Streamlining programs into one program (with a small grants program included) would simplify delivery ...; create greater equity of access and better program recognition.”
- “Reporting has been limited to ‘how busy’ regions have been rather than their achievements against benchmarks for natural assets. A future model could establish a small number of research and monitoring sites in each region to collect long-term data sets.”
- “Greater consideration needs to be given to policy instruments that can supplement government funding for NRM to reduce reliance on program funding.”
- “The aspects of future programs that require further investment include risk analysis, priority setting, delivery mechanisms, evaluation based on clear benchmarks, approved accounting systems, and measuring expenditure against achievement. Transaction costs could be reduced through better-designed reporting processes and accountability through exception and auditing could be considered.”
- Regions would “appreciate more direct guidance from governments to help them understand what standards are expected. The areas where they are particularly keen to have greater direction are in governance arrangements, target setting and project reporting, determining priorities for investment, and engagement and communication with regional stakeholders.”
- “Regions would like the flexibility that block funding can provide, e.g. helping them deliver outcomes rather than projects.”
- A “greater focus [should] be given to coastal issues and marine issues, and better integration arrangements developed between coastal, marine and riparian issues.”
- “More effort is required to promote and communicate the benefits accruing to urban communities from sustainable agricultural production.”
- “Consideration [should] be given to regional boundary adjustment taking into account region size, remoteness, population base and the effectiveness of current engagement.”
- “A process [should] be developed where stewardship payments may be made available to those landholders who can demonstrate a public good outcome, through improved resource management systems.”

Summary

In summary, the Keogh report found that the regional delivery approach has resulted in a much greater level of professionalism and strategic thinking in the way natural resources are being managed than under previous programs and projects.

There were some problem areas with the way investment was delivered, including delays in receiving approved funding, lack of flexibility in spending funds to take account of seasonal and other impacts that delayed projects, and inconsistency in investment allocations.

There was frustration that some NRM programs were being delivered outside the regional model, for example the National Landcare Program and Community Water Grants. This led to frustration in communities trying to work out where to seek funding, as well frustration for regional bodies trying to deliver strategic outcomes against a range of competing mechanisms.

Difficulties in obtaining sufficient baseline data and underpinning science for regional target-setting which contributed to inconsistency in the way projects were designed and monitored. This was compounded by insufficient time and resources being allocated to the monitoring and evaluation of projects, and poor access to existing data and technical expertise.

An evolutionary program

In its design of Caring for our Country, the Australian Government is seeking to build on the positive legacy not just of the Natural Heritage Trust and related programs, but the continual evolution and improvement over the past 20 years of approaches to achieving NRM outcomes.

Caring for our Country is being designed, however, in a way that will address the weaknesses of previous programs (as outlined above in the summary of findings from the ANAO and the Keogh review). In particular, the program seeks to provide:

- Ongoing support for regional natural resource management bodies to maximise community involvement and ownership of activities, including through the provision of guaranteed base-level funding to maintain core staff and capacity.
- A clear articulation of the Australian Government's desired goal, outcomes and project reporting expectations through documents such as the annual business plan.
- Better guidance on the Australian Government's priorities for investment, which may include advice on preferred scale, type and location of investment.
- A clear framework in which the Australian Government can choose to invest in the activities offering the highest potential return on investment for its national priorities.
- The capacity for effective action is taken on those issues that cannot be adequately addressed through regional delivery - because of lack of expertise or a low priority within a regional context - or that require more extensive co-operation between regions than currently exists. Related to this is an improved capacity to focus investment in areas of Australian Government responsibility (for example on matters of national environmental significance);
- A much greater emphasis on accurate, timely and consistent monitoring, evaluation and reporting, including release of an annual report card that will track progress against specific targets.
- An integrated program with less administrative overload, greater flexibility, greater certainty and an emphasis on outcomes rather than bureaucracy;

- The capacity for committed community bodies (for example, landcare groups, local coastal action groups, bush restoration groups, ‘frog watch’ and ‘waterwatch’ groups, toad busters) to continue to participate in activities that will contribute to national priorities and build social capital.
- A single integrated program structure that allows biodiversity, landcare and sustainable farming, coastal management, weeds and Indigenous environmental issues to be addressed in the most effective way possible.
- A program that uses best available information, science and decision making frameworks to establish priorities for investment.
- Support for the continued evolution and development of ‘fully effective regions’, or regions that can:
 - transparently and objectively demonstrate that they are able to deliver (on time and within budget) on the desired outcomes of a range of different investors;
 - demonstrate that their proposed package of investments represents the greatest value for money and return on investment;
 - develop wide-ranging and comprehensive partnerships with key groups in their community and across all natural resource management priorities
 - work across their borders with other regions, local councils, state government and industry to achieve the necessary changes, particularly as these changes often require cross-regional and cross-catchment activity;
 - secure investment from sources beyond government.

Caring for our Country and the regional model

Under Caring for our Country, the Australian Government continues to support the regional model, but in a way that combines the provision of some longer-term security of funding, with support and encouragement for the continued growth, independence and outcomes focus of regional bodies. It also provides incentives for regions to work with other skills or networks.

Caring for our Country provides regional bodies with a guaranteed base-level of funding. These funds can be used to support regional body operations and pay for works in regional plans and investment strategies that complement and contribute to the outcomes, targets and priorities of Caring for our Country.

In 2007-08, the 56 regional natural resource management organisations who operate across Australia received a total of \$181.8 million under the Natural Heritage Trust and the National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality for activities identified in their regional investment strategies.

In 2008-09, the 56 regional organisations are guaranteed to receive a total of \$159 million under Caring for our Country. This equates to 88 per cent of the funds they received in 2007-08.

To allow regional bodies to plan with some certainty, in April this year, the Australian Government advised every region of the exact amount of funding they are guaranteed to receive in 2008-09.

Caring for our Country partnerships in practice - Reef Rescue:

In May 2008, the Australian Government announced its \$200 million five year commitment to improve the quality of water entering the Great Barrier Reef and enhance the reef's capacity to respond to the effects of climate change. Reef Rescue, under Caring for our Country, will provide incentives for land managers within the Reef's catchment to adopt farm practices that are known to improve water quality and farm productivity. A comprehensive research and monitoring program will support the incentive scheme and overall management of the reef's lagoon will be improved through implementation of an Indigenous partnerships program, part of which will develop and implement Traditional Use of Marine Resource Agreements.

The need for targeted investment under Reef Rescue to help meet its objectives was recognised. Through existing reef science, the Government identified areas within the reef's catchment that pose a significant and immediate threat to the Reef lagoon in terms of water quality. These areas are predominantly located in high rainfall areas in close proximity to the reef where excessive influxes of nutrients threaten the reef's health. The Government indicated that sediments and chemicals are also significant but long term threats to the reef and is taking early action to also address these pressures. An annual review of the outcomes of Reef Rescue and emerging reef science will be used to refine and guide Government investment.

Key to the success of Reef Rescue will be the cooperation and collaboration of those involved and associated with protecting the Reef. A strong partnership has been forged between reef agricultural industries, reef catchment regional bodies and WWF-Australia. The Australian Government indicated that the value of this joint venture in delivering Reef Rescue and together with the Queensland Government will be negotiating outcomes under Reef Rescue through this partnership in the first year.

Up to \$30 million has been made available by the Government under Reef Rescue in 2008-09.

From 2009-10, the Australian Government will provide, as a minimum, \$138 million each year to regional natural resource management organisations. This equates to 76.7 per cent of the 2007-08 funding received by regional organisations under the Natural Heritage Trust and National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality.

Under the Natural Heritage Trust and National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality, regional natural resource management organisations were restricted to accessing a dedicated 'regional pool' of funds (\$181.8 million in 2007-08) and occasional access to additional funds through small state-wide competitive funding rounds.

Under Caring for our Country, regional bodies are eligible to seek, or will participate in the activities and benefits from a much larger pool of Caring for our Country funds (totalling almost \$300 million in 2008-09).

- Attachment B provides a summary of the combined funds received by each regional group in 2007-08 under the Trust and National Action Plan and the 'guaranteed funds' they will each receive in 2008-09 under Caring for our Country.

For example, in the Caring for our Country transition year (2008-09), as well as \$159 million guaranteed regional funding, up to \$132.1 million in funding is being allocated through a range of processes, including:

- Landcare Sustainable Practice Grants – up to \$18 million in 2008-09 – successful projects announced July 2008;
- National Reserve System – up to \$25.6 million in 2008-09 – applications closed 27 June 2008;
- Community Coastcare – up to \$20 million in 2008-09 – applications closed 25 July 2008;
- Open Grants (including further opportunity for landcare activities) – up to \$25 million in 2008-09 – applications closed 1 August 2008;
- Working on Country – up to \$6 million in 2008-09 – applications closed 11 August 2008;
- Environmental Stewardship – up to \$7.5 million in 2008-09
- Reef Rescue – up to \$30 million in 2008-09 through targeted programs of investment to be developed by regions, industry and other relevant stakeholders.

Regional natural resource management bodies have been encouraged to apply for funding under all these components.

Caring for our Country after 2008-09

From 2009-10 on, a streamlined and simplified process will be introduced for accessing Caring for our Country funds. Evaluations of the Natural Heritage Trust and National Landcare Program found that the program design needed to be simplified and accountability requirements streamlined.

Rather than having separate requirements for funding, contracts, monitoring, reporting and information sharing for each individual component of the program, Caring for our Country will integrate, simplify and streamline all these requirements into one consistent approach.

- Finalising the details of this new arrangement is one of the priority activities being carried out in the transition year - a standard contract is progressively being introduced for all investments made under Caring for our Country.

A Caring for our Country business plan, to be released in September each year, will outline the Australian Government's five year program outcomes, short term targets and priorities for investment. The Caring for our Country business plan will invite proposals from groups seeking funding to undertake actions that will contribute to achieving national targets and priorities. All potential funding recipients will be able to see at one time, and in one document, the full range of program activities and outcomes in which the Australian Government is looking to invest in that year.

Specifically, the annual Caring for our Country Business Plan will act as the Australian Government's 'investment prospectus.' It will:

- identify the priority 1-3 year targets that we are seeking to commit investment to (and how those targets relate to the overall five year outcomes); and
- Invite proposals for activities that will contribute to the delivery of the priority targets.

The best arrangements for delivering an integrated package of activities for a particular geographic region or natural asset will be selected, based on:

- the contribution the arrangements will make to the delivery of specified targets;

- value for money;
- best delivery mechanism (such as direct purchase, market based instruments, small grants or negotiating planning system reforms); and
- most appropriate delivery agents (such as consortiums or partnerships, regional natural resource management organisations, local governments, universities, Australian Government and state agencies, non-government organisations and industry groups).

Investment proposals must ensure Australian Government funding achieves the specified targets through strategic, collaborative and integrated activities for a particular asset or geographic region.

Regions and other interested groups will not need to submit multiple applications for funding. A single response to the business plan is all that will be required and regions will be encouraged to use their regional plans and regional investment strategies to articulate their proposed programs of activity in response to the business plan.

The first plan is currently being prepared.

The departments are drawing on tools such as the Investment Framework for Environmental Resources (INFFER) to give maximum rigour and accountability to Caring for our Country funding decisions. INFFER is an asset-based approach to natural resource management. The core aim of INFFER is to help natural resource management investors to achieve the highest value natural resource outcomes that are possible with the available resources.

The departments will be incorporating the key principles and processes from such tools into the development of outcomes, draft targets and the business plan and these should flow through to the assessment and funding recommendations. More robust investment principles will be embedded in future business plans and funding assessments.

In particular, the departments have used or propose to use:

- hard data from scientific assessments, national reports and lists and landholder surveys to identify asset values and threats;
- assessment by experts from government agencies;
- consultation with external experts, academics, community and regional stakeholders on the validity of draft outcomes;
- scientific data and multi-criteria analysis to identify geographical priority; and
- an expert panel

to help determine assets of critical significance and the feasibility of potential investment to achieve priority outcomes.

These steps will assist the Australian Government to clearly identify priority investments in the 2008-09 Caring for our Country business plan and inform future guaranteed regional allocations. It is also propose to incorporate a number of elements from INFFER and other 'evidence-based' decision making tools in the assessment of Caring for our Country funding proposals for reef rescue, open grants, cane toads and possibly others. These include the capacity of the proposal to achieve results against the outcomes and targets mentioned above, the extent of public benefit, the feasibility of success and risk of failure and the clear documentation of expected project outcomes to enable effective evaluation.

These processes will embed robust principles for identification of priorities and assessment of funding proposals in the transition year.

These arrangements have been designed in response to evaluations of the Australian Government's previous NRM programs that found that clearer procedures are needed to promote national priorities through the regional investment model; that an outcome-based structure is needed and, associated with this, a standard, quantified monitoring and evaluation system is essential.

Evidence based decision making principles and tools

Most investment frameworks (including tools such as INFFER), recommend that decision making processes use a series of key principles to help define preferred investments. In general, these principles include:

- consultation to identify values;
- identifying assets;
- an assessment of the assets to determine value, threats, what interventions could be applied, what the goal for the asset is, technical feasibility and risks related to adoption;
- extent of public benefit;
- short list the assets and interventions that have good prospects of success based on feasibility and available budgets;
- consider the balance of the investment portfolio; and
- finally, identify the likely outcomes from investment to use as targets.

Research also suggests that where the level of public funding for programs is small compared to the overall scale of the issues, great precision is not necessary to value assets. For example, the author of the INFFER tool, Dr Pannell (University of Western Australia) states that “what is necessary is to know whether assets fall into the “exceptionally significant” group and that estimation of asset significance may involve a combination of assessments by experts from government agencies, community members or regional group staff or members.”

Caring for our Country specifically recognises that the long timeframes required to achieve resource condition change need long term funding and certainty of approach. Caring for our Country is an ongoing program. The Australian Government has announced its intention to spend \$2.25 billion in the first five years of the program. This provides long term funding and certainty – and will allow a strategic approach to be adopted consistent with the timeframes required to achieve real improvement.

Funding contracts will be signed for all activities supported by Caring for our Country. In some cases (and particularly for the transition year), these contracts will run for up to one year. In other cases (particularly after the transition year), multi-year contracts will be offered as a means of providing security to proponents and ensuring activities can be designed to take account of seasonal, staff and planning requirements to achieve long-term change.

Improved partnerships

A new partnership with the states

Caring for our Country adopts three principles to guide further improvements to the Australian Government's working relationship with state and territory governments: mutual benefit; administrative simplicity and efficiency; and maintenance of effort. Rather than the complex joint decision making arrangements established under the Natural Heritage Trust and National Action Plan, the Australian Government will work cooperatively with states to invest in mutually beneficial actions that achieve shared outcomes in our national priority areas for investment.

While the Australian Government will no longer insist on complex arrangements for measuring state contributions (such as the lengthy, bureaucratic and unreliable process of measuring 'in-kind' contributions), the states have been advised that the Australian Government expects they will continue to invest in natural resource management programs at a level that is at least equivalent to that invested under the Trust and National Action Plan.

The Australian Government has indicated that it will continue to work with the states in designing implementation arrangements for Caring for our Country and in particular, it will look for opportunities for cooperative delivery throughout the life of the program. For example, this may take the form of jurisdictions adding complementary state priorities, outcomes and targets to those identified by the Australian Government in its Caring for our Country Business Plan; and mutual investment by the two levels of government in activities to achieve shared priorities.

The details of this new partnership with the states will be developed as part of future bilateral agreement negotiations with each state and territory government.

Caring for our Country Facilitators

Under Caring for our Country, \$8 million per annum has been allocated to fund the new national network of Caring for our Country facilitators, including extending the Indigenous Land Management Facilitator Network.

The Caring for our Country Facilitator Network has been planned in response to concerns about the lack of clarity and duplication that was a criticism of some of the previous facilitator arrangements. Caring for our Country facilitators assist government, industry and community stakeholders to gain a good understanding of how to engage with and participate in Caring for our Country initiatives.

The facilitators will provide leadership, and support investment to:

- build partnerships and greater participation across the natural resource management community;
- help people and groups access knowledge, communicate more effectively and continuously learn; and
- improve business management skills and governance in community organisations.

All regional organisations have been given the opportunity to apply for Caring for our Country funds to continue to employ regional or local facilitators that are considered to be valuable in their ongoing work and necessary to achieve Caring for our Country outcomes.



ATTACHMENT A

Evaluations and reviews of previous Commonwealth NRM programs

The following is a list of the most relevant reviews and evaluations of different components of the Natural Heritage Trust, the National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality and the National Landcare Program.

Except where separately identified, the reports from each of these reviews and evaluations can be accessed from <http://www.nrm.gov.au/publications/index.html>

An evaluation of the Natural Resource Management facilitator network - 2007

Evaluation of coastal, estuarine and marine outcomes of regional investment - 2006

Evaluation of salinity outcomes of regional investment - 2006

Evaluation of significant invasive species (weeds) outcomes of regional investment - 2005

Evaluation of the Australian Government Envirofund - 2005

Evaluation of the biodiversity outcomes of regional investment - 2006

Evaluation of the current governance arrangements to support regional investment - 2005

Evaluation of the effectiveness of bilateral agreements between the Australian Government and State/Territory Governments for the regional component of the extension of the Natural Heritage Trust - 2006

Evaluation of the National Investment Stream of the Natural Heritage Trust - 2006

Evaluation of the sustainable agriculture outcomes of regional investment - 2006

Evaluation of the sustainable industry initiatives – National Landcare Program - 2008

Creating our Future: Report of the Agriculture and Food Policy Reference Group (the ‘Corish’ Report) - 2006

http://www.agfoodgroup.gov.au/publications/next_generation

Review of arrangements for regional delivery of Natural Resource Management programmes (the ‘Keogh’ Report) - 2006

The Senate Committee report into the Extent and Economic Impact of Salinity in Australia – 2006

http://www.aph.gov.au/Senate/committee/ecita_ctte/completed_inquiries/2004-07/salinity/report/report.pdf

Regional Delivery Model for the Natural Heritage Trust and the National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality. ANAO Performance Audit Report No. 21, 2007-08

http://www.anao.gov.au/search.cfm?cat_id=23&arg=

ATTACHMENT B: SNAPSHOT TO REGIONAL NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ORGANISATIONS (AUGUST 2008)

Region	Regional Body	Governance	Size of Region (km ²)	Chair	No of Board Members (incl. Chair & vacancies)	Staff Numbers (at July 2008)	Regional Allocations 2007-08 (NHT & NAP) ¹	Caring for our Country Base Funds 2008-09
New South Wales								
Border Rivers - Gwydir	Border Rivers – Gwydir Catchment Management Authority (www.brq.cma.nsw.gov.au)	Statutory body	50,500	Mr Bob Crouch (A/g)	5	40.3	\$2,745,058	\$2,460,000
Central West	Central West Catchment Management Authority (www.cw.cma.nsw.gov.au)	Statutory body	92,200	Mr Tom Gavel	7	53	\$3,522,055	\$3,240,000
Hawkesbury Nepean	Hawkesbury Nepean Catchment Management Authority (www.hn.cma.nsw.gov.au)	Statutory body	22,000	Mr John Klem	6	55.8	\$4,654,619	\$3,370,000
Hunter- Central Rivers	Hunter- Central Rivers Catchment Management Authority (www.hcr.cma.nsw.gov.au)	Statutory body	37,000	Dr WEJ Paradise	7	63.2	\$5,845,336	\$3,810,000
Lachlan	Lachlan Catchment Management Authority (www.lachlan.cma.nsw.gov.au)	Statutory body	84,700	Mr Robert Gledhill	7	62	\$3,665,958	\$3,370,000
Lower Murray Darling	Lower Murray Darling Catchment Management Authority (www.lmd.cma.nsw.gov.au)	Statutory body	63,000	Mr Mark King	6	24	\$1,906,357	\$2,110,000
Murray	Murray Catchment Management Authority (www.murray.cma.nsw.gov.au)	Statutory body	35,170	Mr Tim Sheed (A/g)	7	41.87	\$5,088,758	\$4,300,000
Murrumbidgee	Murrumbidgee Catchment Management Authority (www.murrumbidgee.cma.nsw.gov.au)	Statutory body	84,000	Mr Lee O'Brien	5	54.5	\$4,918,766	\$4,530,000
Namoi	Namoi Catchment Management Authority (www.namoi.cma.nsw.gov.au)	Statutory body	42,000	Mr Jim McDonald	7	44	\$2,566,755	\$2,580,000
Northern Rivers	Northern Rivers Catchment Management Authority (www.northern.cma.nsw.gov.au)	Statutory body	50,000	Ms Judy Henderson	7	39	\$6,711,312	\$4,410,000
Southern Rivers	Southern Rivers Catchment Management Authority (www.southern.cma.nsw.gov.au)	Statutory body	28,000	Ms Pam Green	7	48.56	\$4,943,278	\$3,680,000
Sydney Metro	Sydney Metro Catchment Management Authority (www.sydney.cma.nsw.gov.au)	Statutory body	1840	Mr Bob Junor	7	27	\$1,731,951	\$750,000
Western	Western Catchment Management Authority (www.western.cma.gov.au)	Statutory body	230,00	Mr Rory Treweeke	6	30.3	\$2,693,924	\$2,400,000
Total NSW							\$50,994,127	\$41,010,000

Region	Regional Body	Governance	Size of Region (km ²)	Chair	No of Board Members (incl. Chair & vacancies)	Staff Numbers (at July 2008)	Regional Allocations 2007-08 (NHT & NAP) ¹	Caring for our Country Base Funds 2008-09
Australian Capital Territory								
ACT	ACT Natural Resource Management (www.tams.act.gov.au/live/environment/landcare_and_catchment_management)	ACT Council (Reports to ACT Chief Minister)	2358	Dr Sarah Ryan	6	5.6	\$2,355,444	\$1,350,000
Total ACT							\$2,355,444	\$1,350,000
Northern Territory								
Northern Territory	NT Natural Resource Management (www.nrmbnt.org.au)	Incorporated body	1.35m million	Mr Mike Clarke (A/g)	7	7	\$7,287,920	\$4,275,000
Total NT							\$7,287,920	\$4,275,000
Queensland								
Border Rivers & Maranoa-Balonne	Queensland Murray Darling Committee (www.qmdc.org.au)	Incorporated body	102,730	Mr Peter Blundell	8	50	\$3,892,225	\$2,640,000
Burdekin	Burdekin Dry Tropics NRM (www.bdtprm.org.au)	Unlisted company	140,675	Mr Mark Stoneman	10	36	\$6,155,690	\$2,670,000
Burnett Mary	Burnett Mary Regional Group Inc (www.bmrq.org.au)	Incorporated body	56,000	Mr Russell Stewart	12	27.46	\$1,362,636	\$2,050,000
Cape York	There is currently no designated regional NRM body for the Cape York Peninsula region. The Cape York Peninsula Development Association is providing these services on an interim basis.		137,000		0	0	\$1,265,412	\$1,660,000
Condamine	Condamine Alliance (www.condaminealliance.com.au)	Unlisted company	27,500	Ms Anne Pfeiffer (A/g)	10	16.8	\$2,650,364	\$1,980,000
Desert Channels	Desert Channels Queensland Inc (www.dcq.org.au)	Incorporated body	510,000	Mr Peter Douglas	14	17	\$545,115	\$1,600,000

Region	Regional Body	Governance	Size of Region (km ²)	Chair	No of Board Members (incl. Chair & vacancies)	Staff Numbers (at July 2008)	Regional Allocations 2007-08 (NHT & NAP) ¹	Caring for our Country Base Funds 2008-09
Fitzroy Basin	Fitzroy Basin Association (www.fba.org.au)	Incorporated body	156,000	Mr Ted Scott	10	32.5	\$1,593,282	\$2,860,000
Mackay Whitsunday	Reef Catchments Mackay Whitsunday (www.mwnrm.org.au)	Incorporated body	10,785	Mr Royce Bishop	10	14.6	\$541,982	\$1,150,000
Northern Gulf	Northern Gulf Resource Management Group (www.northerngulf.com.au)	Unlisted company	194,000	Mr John Bethel	7	15	\$1,012,916	\$1,310,000
South East (QLD)	SEQ Catchments Ltd (www.seqcatchments.com.au)	Unlisted company	23,000	Mr Gordon French	6	39.45	\$2,993,870	\$2,640,000
Southern Gulf	Southern Gulf Catchments Ltd (www.southerngulf.com.au)	Unlisted not for profit company	235,000	Mr Paul Warren	7	12	\$2,883,000	\$1,500,000
South West Queensland	South West NRM Group (www.southwestnrm.org.au)	Unlisted company	237,100	Mr Tom Garrett	5	14	\$1,371,000	\$1,310,000
Torres Strait	Torres Strait Regional Authority (www.tsra.gov.au)	Statutory Body		Mr John Toshi Kris	20	9	\$1,731,395	\$940,000
Wet Tropics	Terrain Natural Resource Management (www.terrain.org.au)	Unlisted company	22,000	Mr Mike Berwick	10	43.3	\$526,850	\$1,450,000
Total QLD							\$28,525,737	\$25,760,000

Tasmania								
North	NRM North Committee (www.nrmtas.org/regions/north/vision.shtml)	Statutory body	25,000	Mr Richard Ireland	12	30	\$1,637,973	\$1,970,000
North West	Cradle Coast NRM Committee (www.nrmtas.org/regions/cradle/vision.shtml)	Statutory body	22,500	Mr Rick Rockliff	17	11.4	\$1,284,678	\$2,060,000
South	NRM South (www.nrmtas.org/regions/south/vision.shtml)	Statutory body	25,500	Dr Christine Mucha	14	13.1	\$1,665,858	\$1,800,000
Tasmania Total							\$4,588,509	\$5,830,000

Victoria								
Corangamite	Corangamite Catchment Management Authority (www.ccma.vic.gov.au)	Statutory body	13,340	Dr Peter Greig	9	57.5	\$2,730,121	\$3,050,000

Region	Regional Body	Governance	Size of Region (km ²)	Chair	No of Board Members (incl. Chair & vacancies)	Staff Numbers (at July 2008)	Regional Allocations 2007-08 (NHT & NAP) ¹	Caring for our Country Base Funds 2008-09
East Gippsland	East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority (www.egcma.com.au)	Statutory body	21,051	Mr Leo Hamilton (A/g)	9	23.4	\$2,415,000	\$2,350,000
Glenelg Hopkins	Glenelg-Hopkins Catchment Management Authority (www.glenelg-hopkins.vic.gov.au)	Statutory body	26,000	Mr Peter Dark	9	64	\$2,736,042	\$3,250,000
Goulburn Broken	Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority (www.gbcma.vic.gov.au)	Statutory body	24,000	Dr Huw Davies	9	47.77	\$3,820,917	\$4,450,000
Mallee	Mallee Catchment Management Authority (www.malleecma.vic.gov.au)	Statutory body	39,000	Ms Joan Burns	9	39.2	\$2,177,859	\$3,525,000
North Central	North Central Catchment Authority (www.nccma.vic.gov.au)	Statutory body	3 Million	Mr Ian MacBean	9	67	\$2,910,972	\$3,650,000
North East	North East Catchment Management Authority (www.necma.vic.gov.au)	Statutory body	19,800	Ms Sarah Nicholas	9	41.7	\$2,770,000	\$2,610,000
Port Phillip & Westernport	Port Phillip & Westernport Management Authority (www.ppwcma.vic.gov.au)	Statutory body	12,800	Mr Andrew Grant	9	22	\$2,948,000	\$3,150,000
West Gippsland	West Gippsland Catchment Authority (www.wgcma.vic.gov.au)	Statutory body	17,685	Ms Liz Clay	9	77.82	\$3,303,000	\$3,060,000
Wimmera	Wimmera Catchment Management Authority (www.wcma.vic.gov.au)	Statutory body	23,500	Mr Barry Hall	9	58.1	\$2,302,667	\$3,280,000
Total VIC							\$28,114,578	\$32,375,000

Western Australia								
Avon	Avon Catchment Council (www.avoncm.org.au)	Incorporated body	117,700	Ms Merrilyn Temby	9	13.2	\$4,149,961	\$4,609,000
Northern Agricultural Region	Northern Agricultural Catchments Council (www.nacc.com.au)	Incorporated body	70,000	Mr Chris King	7	23	\$7,506,398	\$4,599,000
Rangelands	Rangelands Regional NRM Coordinating Group (www.rangelandswa.info/)	Incorporated body	1.85m	Mr Bill Mitchell	11	7	\$4,875,000	\$4,410,000
South Coast	South Coast NRM Group (www.southcoastnrm.com.au)	Incorporated body	54,000	Mr Garry English	13	34.6	\$6,913,680	\$5,921,000

Region	Regional Body	Governance	Size of Region (km ²)	Chair	No of Board Members (incl. Chair & vacancies)	Staff Numbers (at July 2008)	Regional Allocations 2007-08 (NHT & NAP) ¹	Caring for our Country Base Funds 2008-09
South West	South West NRM Group (www.swcatchmentscouncil.com)	Incorporated body	50,000	Mr David Gardner (A/g)	17	21.5	\$11,785,755	\$6,651,000
Swan	Swan NRM Group (www.wrc.wa.gov.au/swanavon/index)	Incorporated body	770,000	Mr Colin Heinzman	18	22	\$2,039,000	\$3,230,000
Total WA							\$37,269,794	\$29,420,000

South Australia								
Alinytjara Wilurara	Alinytjara Wilurara Integrated Regional NRM Group (www.awnrm.sa.gov.au)	Statutory body	107,000	Ms Marilyn Ah Chee	10	11	\$1,956,045	\$1,990,000
Adelaide & Mount Lofty Ranges	Adelaide & Mount Lofty Ranges NRM Board (www.amlnrm.sa.gov.au)	Statutory body	5,355	Ms Yvonne Sneddon	17	66	\$3,249,689	\$2,280,000
Eyre Peninsula	Eyre Peninsula NRM Board (www.epnrm.sa.gov.au)	Statutory body	55,000	Mr Brian Foster	14	43	\$3,329,798	\$2,070,000
Kangaroo Island	Kangaroo Island NRM Board (www.kinrm.sa.gov.au)	Statutory body	4,370	Ms Janice Kelly	13	14.2	\$881,452	\$1,450,000
Northern & Yorke	Northern & Yorke NRM Board (www.nynrm.sa.gov.au)	Statutory body	37,800	Mr Merv Lewis	14	24.1	\$1,298,154	\$1,698,000
SA Murray Darling Basin	SA Murray Darling Basin NRM Board (www.samdbnrm.sa.gov.au)	Statutory body	70,000	Mr Bill Paterson	13	83	\$5,091,520	\$5,080,000
Arid Lands	South Australian Arid Lands (www.saalnm.sa.gov.au)	Statutory body	538,000	Mr Chris Reed	13	10.45	\$2,573,871	\$1,800,000
South East	South East NRM Board (www.senrm.sa.gov.au)	Statutory body	21,000	Mr Jim Osborne	13	31.3	\$4,273,541	\$2,612,000
Total SA							\$22,654,070	\$18,980,000

¹ The 2007-08 regional figures are based on the best available information as at May 2008 on the allocation of National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality and Natural Heritage Trust funding across regions. There may be some variation between these figures and the actual distribution of expenditure by region at the end of the 2007-08 financial year.