

27 August 2008

The Secretary
Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

The Secretary

LGAAQ Response into Natural Resource Management and Conservation

The Local Government Association of Queensland welcomes the opportunity to provide input into the Senate review pertaining to natural resource management and conservation challenges. Due to time constraints please find outlined below a brief list of keys issues identified by the Association on-behalf of member Councils in Queensland and include:

- A key success of Commonwealth investment in natural resource management (NRM) programs has been the introduction of regional delivery and implementation under the National Action Plan for Salinity & Water Quality (NAPSWQ) and Natural Heritage Trust Mark 2 (NHT 2). As a major stakeholder, local government is increasingly supporting regional NRM partnerships that demonstrated positive progress towards genuine coordination and integration of NRM in a local, regional and state context. Conversely, Commonwealth investment in NRM has been undermined by a lack of program continuity (i.e. resources and program structure/function) both during and between elected Commonwealth government terms resulting in a compromise of stakeholder and community participation.
- As outlined above a general lack of program continuity undermines the momentum of existing networks, projects and landholder participation.
- A key benefit of the regional approach to NRM planning and management has been the recognition of local governments' key role in NRM initiatives at a local level through both its Integrated Planning Act (IPA) regulatory role (e.g. land use controls) and through other programs and initiatives (e.g. rate incentives for conservation, acquisition of conservation land, pest management, etc). Furthermore, the program framework closely aligns with an existing regional planning framework established under IPA and provisions of the Act in relation to the formation and role of Regional Planning Advisory Committees of which local government is a participant.

In the context of this response it is important to note that Local Government is a significant stakeholder in NRM across the State. According to ABS figures, Local Government in Queensland spent some \$691 million on natural resource management related matters in 2002/03. This represented 36% of estimated outlays on NRM by Local Government across Australia, a significantly higher proportion than Queensland's population share.

Should you wish to discuss this matter further, please contact the Association's **NRM Project Coordinator, Malcolm Petrie** on (07) 3000 2202.

Yours sincerely

Greg Hoffman PSM
DIRECTOR
POLICY AND REPRESENTATION

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