

Tasmanian
Natural Resource
Management Council

Annual Report
2004-2005

*Judy Jackson MHA
Minister for Environment and Planning*

Dear Minister

It is my pleasure to present the 2004-2005 Annual Report of the Tasmanian Natural Resource Management Council, in accordance with section 8 of the Natural Resource Management Act 2002.

This was the Council's second full year of operations, after beginning in February 2003. At the beginning of this year it was expected that by its end the Council would have finalised its advice to you on the Regional Strategies and the Regional Investment Proposals, and that they would have been accredited and approved by both the State and Australian governments. The advice was finalised, and Council members contributed considerable out-of-session work to it, as well as to earlier feedback to the Regional Committees. However, for various reasons the announcements were delayed and did not occur in this year.

The main focus of the Council at the start of the year was the two-day meeting that occurred on the first two days of the 2004-05 year, 1 and 2 July. These meetings allowed the Regional Committees to discuss issues arising from their strategy development efforts with all those who would be involved in the accreditation of the strategies.

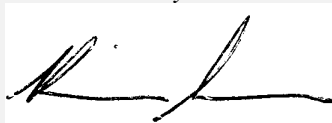
This was also the first meeting of the Natural Resource Management Advisory Group. This body was established under the Natural Heritage Trust Extension (NHT2) Bilateral Agreement. It consists of the Council, together with two members, Ian Dickenson and Meredith Roodenrys, who are jointly appointed by you and the relevant Australian Government Ministers. It thus allows members of the Council to participate in direct discussion with senior Australian Government officers, and has provided a useful forum to bring together the key parties in Tasmanian NRM.

There were a number of changes in membership during 2004-05. Four members resigned – Steven Fleming, David Elliott, Fran Healy and Alex Schaap. I thank them all for their participation and contribution, and welcome their replacements: David Henderson, the new nominee of the Cradle Coast NRM Committee, and Maureen Bennett, the new nominee of the Northern NRM Committee. Two other new members were appointed in July 2005.

With the first regional strategies and regional investment proposals in place, the role of the Council is expected to be less demanding this year. The Council will remain informed and interested in regard to regional activities, and will be providing advice on the next round of investment proposals in early 2006. But is also pleased to acknowledge the regions' greater capacity and autonomy at this stage of their development.

Finally, the Council is due to undergo a new round of appointments in late 2005, though current members will be free to stand again. I look forward to continuing to chair this body, and feel confident that it will go on providing useful and considered advice, as well as providing a valuable opportunity to bring together key stakeholders in natural resource management in the State.

Yours sincerely



*Kim Evans
Chair, Natural Resource Management Council
28 October 2005*

1 Introduction

The Natural Resource Management Council was established under the *Natural Resource Management Act 2002* ('the Act'). This legislation implemented the Natural Resource Management Framework that was launched in February 2002, following a year of development that included two full rounds of public consultation.

The NRM Council is a core element of the NRM Framework. It provides high-level advice to the Government, through the Minister for Environment and Planning. Unlike the three Regional Committees, it has no direct role in the administration of programs and projects. The Council does, however, have close links to the Regional Committees, both through cross-membership and through many of its activities (as described below).

The Council is the subject of Part 2 of the Act. It consists of not more than 16 persons. Four are specified: the Secretary of the Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment, and one member nominated by each of the three Regional Committees – Northern, North-Western (Cradle Coast) and Southern. The remainder are to be 'persons with experience, skills and knowledge in natural resource management selected from nominations as the Minister may determine'.

The Council is directed to 'provide a balance of natural resource management interests in the State', and as far as practicable to comprise equal numbers of men and women. One member is appointed by the Minister as Chair. In December 2002 it was announced that Kim Evans, Secretary of the Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment, would be the inaugural Chair. The initial nominees of the three Regional Committees were formally appointed in April 2003.

During 2004–05 there were two changes in membership and two late resignations, for which replacements were appointed in July. These changes are outlined in the list of members (Appendix 1). As required under the Act, the Council continues to comprise members representing a wide range of industry, community and conservation interests.

The Council's role is to advise the Minister on a range of matters, listed in section 7(1) of the Act. They include two specific issues on which the Minister must make decisions under the Act: the State natural resource management priorities, and the accreditation criteria for regional strategies. Other matters are: funding priorities and the implementation of funding programs; effective means of ensuring consistency and coordination in natural resource management throughout the State, and of increasing community capacity; the effectiveness and efficiency of activities carried out under the regional strategies; and any other matter referred to it by the Minister.

The Council has a central role in the accreditation of regional strategies. First, the Council is to advise the Minister on the accreditation criteria (a task completed in 2003). Then, when the Regional Committees have prepared their drafts, they are submitted to the Council, which advises the Minister on whether they conform to the accreditation criteria. This has been the focus of much of the Council's work during 2004–05.

In undertaking this accreditation responsibility, Council members act largely as members also of the Natural Resource Management Advisory Group. This body was established under the Natural Heritage Trust Extension (NHT2) Bilateral Agreement. The Advisory Group consists of the Council, with the addition of two members, Meredith Roodenrys and Ian Dickenson, appointed jointly by the Australian and State Ministers. The first meeting of the NRM Advisory Group was on 1 July 2004.

Importantly, meetings of the Advisory Group may be attended by the members of the Joint Steering Committee as observers. This allows the meetings to include the senior Australian Government officers who take part in the major decisions in which the Council is interested, such as accreditation of regional strategies and approval of regional investment proposals.

The Council is to submit an annual report to the Minister by 31 October each year. This allows time for it to consider the annual reports of the Regional Committees, which must be submitted to the Minister and the Council by 30 September. The Council's annual report is to be tabled in both Houses of Parliament within 10 sitting days of its receipt by the Minister.

Note: The Council is supported by the Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment, through the Strategic Policy and Planning Division. The Executive Officer is Alan Haig, Senior Policy Analyst (Strategic Issues).

2 Activities of Council from 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005

(a) Meetings

The Council met twice in the period 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005 (see Appendix 2 for details). However, it also continued the practice begun in 2004–05, of splitting into three working groups to consider the draft regional strategies. All members were involved by email, and with only unavoidable absences, also participated in meetings held to consider each of the strategies in turn.

Council decided at its first meeting that it would generally hold every second meeting in Hobart, with the others alternating between Launceston and Burnie. This pattern was disrupted in 2004–05, with fewer formal meetings and more work being done out-of-session and through the working groups. However, Regional Committees sent representatives to the July and February Advisory Group meetings, and by 30 June 2005 planning was well under way for an “NRM Symposium” to be held in Launceston on 17 August, to which all Regional Committee members were invited.

(b) Major Issues Considered

Development of Regional Strategies:

Council business was dominated by the consideration of progress towards accreditation of the regional strategies, discussed at the meeting on 1–2 July 2004.

The Council decided that it should invite all the Regional Committees to meet the Natural Resource Management Advisory Group on 2 July 2004. This would allow the committees to discuss issues arising from their strategy development efforts with all those who would be involved in the accreditation of the strategies: the Council, the Advisory Group, and members of the Joint Steering Committee (who finalise the advice to Australian Government and State Ministers on accreditation).

It had been hoped that by 30 June 2004 all regions would be able to produce their first major products, the ‘consultation drafts’ of their strategies. However, only the Southern region had produced such a draft by the July 2004 meeting.

The meetings were arranged to involve two-hour discussions with representatives of each Regional Committee, with presentations by the committees to be followed by discussion. The Council and Advisory Group members were prepared with comments and suggestions on each Region's progress to date.

The meetings confirmed that the Council was able to offer valuable advice both to Government and to the Regional Committees in relation to the broad range of issues encompassed by its statutory responsibilities.

The Council agreed that a full assessment of the drafts and a response to the Regions should be finalised out-of-session. The agreed process involved three Working Groups, which first met during June 2004 in preparation for the meetings of 1–2 July in Launceston and produced a draft submission on NRM South's consultation draft. They had also considered interim papers from the other two Regions.

Similar meetings were held later as the drafts of the other regional strategies became available over the following months. In each case Council provided substantial written comment back to the Regions.

All three Regions had completed their Draft Regional Strategies by the meeting on 10 February 2005, with only minor adjustments still to be made.

The final Regional Strategies were submitted in late February and early March. The advice provided by the NRM Advisory Group to the Joint Steering Committee meeting on 11 February was in due course a significant element in the advice given to Ministers by the JSC advising accreditation of the three strategies. Accreditation was approved by Ministers in March and April but a formal announcement was delayed until 25 July 2005.

Regional Investment Proposals:

Council members received early drafts of the regional investment proposals before the February 2005 meeting, and in their capacities as members of the NRM Advisory Group they discussed them with the Regional Committee representatives at the meeting.

It was agreed then that the final advice to the Joint Steering Committee would be prepared out-of-session, unless any significant problems emerged that required a further meeting. Progress thereafter was not easy, but not such as to require another meeting. The NRM Advisory Group agreed a position out-of-session and provided favourable advice on the final regional investment proposals, submitted in April. That advice was again taken into account by the JSC at its meeting of 27 April, which resolved to advise approval of the three proposals.

The Ministerial approvals were granted in June, and the announcements were made jointly with those for accreditation, in July.

NRM Advisory Group:

As is evident from the foregoing summaries, there is not an entirely clear distinction between the roles of members when acting as Council members, or as part of the NRM Advisory Group. The latter consists of the NRM Council plus two members appointed jointly by the State and Australian Government Ministers. The two additional members are Meredith Roodenrys, a former Chair of the State's NHT State Assessment Panel, and Ian Dickenson, a farmer with long experience in agricultural, private forestry and NRM organisations.

A useful aspect of the Advisory Group's meetings is the provision for Joint Steering Committee members to attend as observers. The effect is to bring to the table the senior Australian Government officials most closely involved with Tasmanian NRM issues (the State members of the JSC are already present as either members or executive officer of the Council).

In a formal sense it is clear that the Council provides advice to the State Minister only, as well as feedback to the Regional Committees (represented among its membership). But it is also evident that members have to consider essentially the same issues and drafts when acting as Advisory Group members, with their role there being to advise the Joint Steering Committee on a narrower range of issues.

Despite its inherent untidiness, this arrangement appears to have produced very reasonable outcomes. The range and experience of the members make the Council / Advisory Group a valuable sounding-board and source of advice to all the parties involved in natural resource management in the State – the Regional Committees, the State Government, and the Australian Government.

APPENDICES:

1 LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE TASMANIAN NATURAL
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

(Includes summary qualifications and a Note)

2 MEETINGS AND ATTENDANCES

(Includes a Note on changes to Tasmanian Natural Resource Management
Council membership)

Appendix 1

LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE
TASMANIAN NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
AS AT 30 JUNE 2005

SECTOR	NAME AND QUALIFICATIONS
State Government Chair	<p>Kim Evans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretary, Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment since 1999 • Twenty years experience in management of Tasmania's primary industries and natural resources
Representative from Cradle Coast Natural Resource Management Committee	<p>David Henderson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecturer/tutor & Sub-Dean Arts Faculty University of Tasmania and Studying for Masters degree (Social Planning & Development) • Organic farmer (raspberries) • Member of Burnie Environment Centre, Tarkine National Coalition, TIAR Social Research Group (chair), landcare groups and fire brigade • Experience in Queensland in COAG Water reform policy & RFA social assessment
Representative from Northern Natural Resource Management Regional Committee	<p>Maureen Bennett</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretary and Public Officer of NRM North Association • Director Farming Business and Cheese Manufacturing Business • Director Landcare Australia Ltd • Member of Tasmanian NHT State Assessment Panel, General Committee Tas Landcare Association, Steering Committee for Landcare Promotions Officer Project, Steering Committee for Mole Creek Karst System Project

SECTOR	NAME AND QUALIFICATIONS
Representative from Southern Natural Resource Management Regional Committee	<p>Tony Ferrier</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manager Environment and Development Services, Huon Valley Council, since 1996 • Qualifications in Natural Resources, Urban and Regional Planning and Surveying • Member of Greening Australia (Tas) Board • Managed Huon Healthy Rivers Project since 1996 • Broad knowledge of RMPS and relationship between NRM and statutory planning • Extensive previous NSW State agency experience across integrated catchment and public land management
Local Government	<p>Allan Garcia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Director, Local Government Association of Tasmania; formerly Manager Policy, 1999-2003 • Extensive senior experience in variety of State Government agencies including Dept of State Development, Tasmania Development & Resources, Department of Premier & Cabinet, Departments of Construction and Transport • Background in business & accounting
Aboriginal Community	<p>Ralph Purdon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member, Aboriginal Land Council of Tasmania, and nominated by ALCT for this position • Has worked for the Parks and Wildlife Service for the past ten years • Experienced in fire management, fuel reduction and maintenance of parks and historic and cultural heritage sites, including assessment and maintenance of Aboriginal heritage sites. Has an indepth understanding of natural resources relating to the Aboriginal cultural and natural heritage of Tasmania
Industry – Forestry	<p>Anthony (Tony) Cannon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director Forestry Services, Forest Enterprises Australia Ltd • Employed since 1978 in management of private forests, reforestation & eucalypt plantation establishment in Tasmania, with plantation experience also in NSW & Qld

SECTOR	NAME AND QUALIFICATIONS
Industry – Farming	<p>Roderick Thirkell-Johnston</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Former president TFGA and Chair of TFGA Environment Committee, past member National Farmers Federation Environment Committee & other leadership positions in agricultural industry • 40 years practical farming experience in the wool, poppy, grains, vegetable & cattle industries • Chair Community Review Committee on Threatened Species
Industry – Marine	<p>Colin Dyke</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chairman of Directors of family owned company involved in marine & land farming • Represented fishing and aquaculture industries on diverse committees including Scientific Research Advisory Groups, State Policy on Water Quality, State Coastal Policy, Ballast Water Management, Marine & Marine Industries Council • Experience in landcare groups, strategic municipal planning & catchment management planning
Conservation	<p>Michael Lynch</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director, Tasmanian Conservation Trust • Involved with development & operation of the Resource Management & Planning System, and development of Threatened Species Strategy, Forest Practices Code, Nature Conservation Strategy, Wetlands Strategy, State Coastal Policy, State Policy on the Protection of Agricultural Land, & Marine Protected Areas Strategy • Extensive experience in broad suite of NRM issues & legislation • Member of Tasmania <i>Together</i> Progress Board & the NHT State Assessment Panel

SECTOR	NAME AND QUALIFICATIONS
Community	<p>Frances Healy (<i>resigned – see Note</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior executive with the National Oceans Office • Former CEO Greening Australia (Tas) • Former Program Leader, Business Development & Communication, CSIRO Division of Marine Research; Communication Manager, CSIRO Division of Oceanography; extensive experience in State government • Member of many bodies including Tasmanian Marine Farming Planning Review Tribunal, Resource Management & Planning Tribunal, & Tasmanian Salinity Strategy Steering Committee • Background in botany, zoology, communications, education
Community	<p>Helen Geard</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • President, Tasmanian Landcare Association • Member, Greening Australia (Tas) Board • Landcare facilitator with Southern Midlands Landcare Office, with extensive involvement in catchment management plans and weed management strategies • Background in Environmental Studies, Administration & Information Technology
State Government	<p>Jamie Bayly-Stark</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistant Director Policy, Department of Premier & Cabinet • Long experience in natural resource management issues as a senior officer in the Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment prior to moving to DPAC • Member of Joint Steering Committee for NAP and NHT
State Government	<p>Alex Schaap (<i>resigned – see Note</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Manager, Resource Management & Conservation Division, DPIWE • Co-chair of Joint Steering Committee for NAP and NHT • Whole of government member of North West and Southern Regional NRM Committees • Background in fisheries & marine resources

SECTOR	NAME AND QUALIFICATIONS
Hydro Tasmania	<p>Andrew Scanlon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal Consultant, Environment & Resource Analysis Group, Hydro Tasmania • Responsible for management of Hydro Tasmania's ISO 14001 Environmental Management System • Key role in development of Hydro's water management, greenhouse response & renewable energy programs, with extensive experience in land rehabilitation & remediation projects, environmental impact assessment & auditing
University / Education	<p>Robert Clark</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professor and Deputy Head, School of Agricultural Sciences, University of Tasmania, with extensive research experience particularly in plant sciences • Director, Tasmanian Institute of Agricultural Research • Member of Tasmania <i>Together</i> Community Leaders Group

Note on members:

- ❑ Frances Healy and Alex Schaap resigned in June 2005. Their replacements are Catherine Nicholson and John Whittington respectively, who were appointed in July 2005.
- ❑ North West – Steven Fleming resigned in January 2005. David Henderson (the nominated proxy) was appointed in March 2005. The new nominated proxy is Paul Smith.
- ❑ North – David Elliott resigned in July 2004. Maureen Bennett was appointed in February 2005. The nominated proxy continues to be Geoff McLennan OAM.
- ❑ South – Tony Ferrier continued as member. The nominated proxy continues to be Maria Weeding.

Appendix 2**MEETINGS AND ATTENDANCES****(a) Meetings**

The Council met twice:

- Meeting 8 – Thursday 1 July 2004, at Launceston (2pm – 3.45pm)
- Meeting 9 – Thursday 10 February 2005, at Hobart (10.00am – 4.30pm) – which that was largely conducted as a meeting of the Natural Resource Management Advisory Group

In addition, on 2 July 2004 members participated, as members of the NRM Advisory Group, in a meeting with the Regional Committees to discuss the Southern NRM Committee's Draft Strategy, to hear from the Northern and Cradle Coast NRM Committee on the progress of their strategies, and to clarify with all three regions major issues around the accreditation process and criteria.

(b) Attendance

	MEETINGS	
	No. 8 (1/7/2004)	No. 9 (10/2/2005)
MEMBERS (as at 30 June 2005)		
Kim Evans State Government – Chair	✓	✓
Tony Ferrier Nominee of Southern NRM Committee	✓	✓
Steven Fleming Nominee of Cradle Coast NRM Committee	<i>Apology</i>	<i>See Notes Below</i>
David Henderson Nominee of Cradle Coast NRM Committee	<i>See Notes Below</i>	✓
David Elliott Nominee of Northern NRM Committee	✓	<i>See Notes Below</i>
Maureen Bennett Nominee of Northern NRM Committee	<i>See Notes Below</i>	✓
Ralph Purdon Aboriginal Community	✓	<i>Apology</i>
Allan Garcia Local Government	✓	✓
Andrew Scanlon Hydro Tasmania	✓	✓
Anthony (Tony) Cannon Industry – Forestry	✓	✓
Roderick Thirkell- Johnston Industry – Farming	✓	✓
Colin Dyke Industry – Marine	<i>Apology</i>	<i>Apology</i>
Michael Lynch Conservation	✓	✓

	MEETINGS	
MEMBERS (as at 30 June 2005)	No. 8 (1/7/2004)	No. 9 (10/2/2005)
Frances Healy Community	✓	✓
Helen Geard Community	✓	<i>Apology</i>
Robert Clark University / education	✓	✓
Jamie Bayly-Stark State Government	✓	✓
Alex Schaap State Government	✓	✓
Total members in attendance	14	13

Notes:

- David Henderson replaced Steven Fleming as Cradle Coast representative in March 2005, but attended the February meeting as the proxy for Steven Fleming, who had recently resigned. Steven was an apology for the July meeting.
- David Elliott was replaced by Maureen Bennett after the July meeting. David Elliott was present for the July meeting.