

# **NRM SOUTH**

**The Southern Natural Resource Management Regional Committee**

## **SOUTHERN REGIONAL NRM STRATEGY**

### **ROLES AND FUNCTIONS DISCUSSION PAPER**

**November 2003**

NRM South has developed a series of Discussion Papers to get feedback from the community on natural resource management issues and options. Your feedback will inform the next step: development of a draft Southern NRM Strategy, expected to be released for consultation in April 2004.

**Please send your comments on the Discussion Papers to:**

Vanessa Elwell-Gavins  
Coordinator, NRM South  
C/o GPO Box 44  
HOBART TAS 7001

or Email: [nrmsouth@nht.tas.gov.au](mailto:nrmsouth@nht.tas.gov.au)

**Closing date for comments: Monday, 19 January 2004**

**NRM South gratefully acknowledges funding support from the Natural Heritage Trust Extension and the National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality. NRM South is also grateful to the many people who have contributed to the development of each of the Discussion Papers.**

## CONTENTS

SUMMARY .....	2
ROLES AND FUNCTIONS: THE ISSUES & CHALLENGES .....	2
ROLES AND FUNCTIONS: FUTURE NEEDS .....	4
<i>Suggested directions</i> .....	4
<i>Preferred model for planning, communication and investment</i> .....	5
NRM STRATEGY .....	5
SUMMARY OF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT.....	6

## SUMMARY

Responsibility for managing natural resources rests with many agencies, organisations and individuals.

- **Public and individual land managers** control the majority of the resources so their management practices have an enormous impact on the region's natural resources.
- **Local Government** has a significant role through general powers for management of their municipalities, including planning, development, regulatory responsibilities, service delivery and communications
- **Industries** in the region directly and indirectly affect the style of management practices adopted, as do the buying practices of consumers in the domestic, national and international markets.
- The activities of **local communities and community groups** change attitudes, build local knowledge and skills and provide an important volunteer labour force to do the on-ground work required.
- The **Australian and Tasmanian Governments** have a major impact through their legislative frameworks, policies and guidelines, funding practices, program allocations and extension networks.

With these multiple stakeholders, effective operationalisation and prioritisation of investment in the Southern NRM strategy will require:

- Commitment from all relevant stakeholders
- Effective integration, coordination and partnerships, and
- Appropriate focus and direction for resources allocated to and investment in NRM

## ROLES AND FUNCTIONS: THE ISSUES & CHALLENGES

All residents and visitors to Tasmania's Southern region are consumers or users of natural resources. We all benefit from the food and fiber produced in or transported into the region. We all use energy to heat or cool our houses and hotel rooms, to run our computers, light up our evenings and keep our food from perishing too quickly. We all drink and wash in water, whether collected on our roofs or in dams and water catchments. Many of us water our gardens or crops. We all use a variety of paper products and many of us prefer the more natural look and feel of timber products

rather than plastics, concrete or alternatives (all of which are derived in any case from natural resources, such as petroleum, many of which are not renewable). We all share the lifestyle benefits of living in an environment sufficiently attractive to also bring substantial numbers of visitors to Southern Tasmania.

We are all critically dependent on natural resources. We all benefit when our natural resources are managed well, and we all suffer if the resource is damaged, used up or in limited supply. Therefore we all share responsibility for the health of the natural resource systems that we use.

Where we all benefit, governments talk about 'public good'. Governments are often prepared to pay to ensure that the 'public good' is maintained. Where we benefit as individuals, governments talk about 'private good' and expect the beneficiaries or users to pay.

In a market-based economy, we expect the cost of the goods and services we use to include the cost of production as well as a bit of profit for all the people along the supply chain, from farmer to packager, transporter, wholesaler and retailer.

In a global economy, with an emphasis on supplying bulk commodity markets, there are increasing pressures to reduce costs and to source our goods and services from the cheapest supplier. This puts pressure on the producers to produce their goods and services at the lowest possible cost. When this occurs, the market tends to be driven by the ability to produce goods in quantity. 'Quality' will generally only be recognised and rewarded where the costs of producing that 'quality' can be recouped through the market place. Farmers and other primary producers are generally forced by their markets to produce their goods at the cheapest possible price. If they don't do this, we will often happily source our goods from overseas, where labour is cheaper or the level of production is far higher or there are fewer pressures to ensure appropriate quality applies along the whole chain of production and supply. There is generally little thought given to the social and environmental costs of doing this.

With this reality, all primary producers, whether of terrestrial, aquatic or marine products, face pressures to 'cut corners' to ensure that their products remain competitive. In this operating environment, protection of soils or stream banks or native vegetation or estuaries is rarely directly rewarded through the prices the farmer or forester is able to achieve in the market place.

Given we are all users and consumers of natural resources, we must all share responsibility for managing the natural resource base on which we all depend. Effective natural resource management requires allocation and acceptance of roles and responsibilities broadly across the whole community, from Australian, State and local governments, industry, public and private land managers, and from the organisational level to the individual (see Summary of Roles and Functions at the end).

These multiple responsibilities have resulted in a plethora of policies, legislation, regulations, strategies, guidelines and operating requirements, as each sector has come to grips with aspects of the overall natural resource management picture that directly

interest them. In most cases this has been without reference to the roles and responsibilities of others.

Responsibility for natural resource management, like many other aspects of human endeavour, is typified by a segmented approach with each interest in its separate 'silo', rarely recognising its intersection with other interests.

With the best of intentions, this ad hoc approach is not working.

### **ROLES AND FUNCTIONS: FUTURE NEEDS**

It is important to put in place mechanisms that ensure:

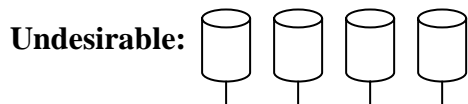
- Effective operationalisation and prioritisation of the Southern NRM strategy
- Commitment from all relevant stakeholders
- Effective integration and partnerships, and
- Appropriate focus and direction for resources and investment allocated to NRM in Southern Tasmania

### ***Suggested directions***

- The *Tasmanian Natural Resource Management Act 2002* has put in place some administrative structures, through the Tasmanian NRM Council and the regional NRM committees in Tasmania's three NRM regions, which should result in regional strategies. Although these strategies will not result in changes to the already complex policy environment, they should influence all stakeholders, including governments, to review current practice and consider the changes within their sphere of influence that may need to be made.
- There will continue to be multiple responsibilities for NRM and every organisation or individual should accept their responsibilities (see Table: Regional Groups: Their Roles and Responsibilities)
- While it is not possible (nor desirable) to simplify completely the layers of responsibility or eliminate them, better focus on NRM roles and responsibilities, together with coordination and integration, is essential, as is the elimination of duplication.
- With the current proliferation of bodies and organisations, it would be inappropriate to suggest putting in place yet another body. However, consideration may need to be given to ensuring that existing bodies are appropriately constituted, have access to the right skills set for the task at hand, have appropriate terms of reference and have a charter to provide overall leadership and direction for NRM, both within each sector and between sectors.
- For example, membership of NRM South may require a different skill set (eg legal or financial management skills) once the strategy is being implemented. Government agencies may require new inter-departmental or intra-departmental groups to provide an integrated approach to implementation of different policies, and reduce the tendency to operate in isolated 'silos'.

- There are multiple points of influence and many potential opportunities to initiate change.
- Every stakeholder should consider the mechanisms they may need to maximise communication, coordination and integration of planning, policy, and funding, both internally and with external players.

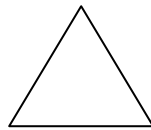
*Current model of NRM planning, communication and investment*



**NRM in ‘silos’ – isolated pockets of responsibility which do not talk to each other**

*Preferred model for planning, communication and investment*

**NRM STRATEGY**



**Each sector communicating with others, with overarching leadership required to represent all interests and make sure that each of the sectors contributes to implementation of the strategy**

- The Southern NRM Strategy should result in new partnerships, as our stakeholders recognise how working together may benefit them more than the status quo.
- The State and Australian Governments should take responsibility for resourcing the proper implementation of their respective policies and legislation to achieve the objectives for NRM.
- In developing the Southern regional investment strategy and the investment strategy for the Tasmanian Priority Region for the National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality (NAP), NRM South will explore the best options to leverage participation in NRM and ensure each stakeholder group is able to play its part in meeting agreed regional NRM goals.
- Agreements reached should be cemented in a ‘charter’ or memorandum of understanding, outlining the specific roles, responsibilities, commitments and

expected outcomes from investment and action by each stakeholder organisation.

- Implementation of the Southern and NAP regional investment strategies will require a modular approach within an overarching NRM framework. Each ‘module’ or program area will be responsible for managing the relevant issues, implementing relevant investment streams, and addressing changing priorities as parts of the strategy are implemented and different stakeholders have the capacity to invest in different parts of the strategy.
- Implementation of the Southern NRM strategy may require establishment of new networks, eg expert advisory bodies, comprising all relevant interests, to coordinate implementation of and manage investment in each ‘module’ of the strategy, coordinate monitoring, evaluation and reporting and ensure investment delivers results. For example, the module on weeds would require coordination and communication between DPIWE, Forestry Tasmania, Private Forestry Tasmania, the forestry and agriculture industries, Parks & Wildlife Service, community groups, local government, private sector, and NGOs.
- NRM South is committed to transparent planning and a ‘level playing field’ and will work through the Southern NRM Strategy, the Tasmanian NRM Council and in partnership with the Cradle Coast and Northern Regions to achieve this. Each sector should be required to meet the same NRM standards and be subject to the same level of scrutiny in line with their NRM impacts and needs. Guidelines for good management, codes of practice, environmental management systems and resources to support equitable implementation over a realistic timeframe will all be considered.

## **SUMMARY OF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

The following table identifies the major Southern regional stakeholders in NRM. Each partner in the Southern Regional Strategy could be asked to commit to a charter or memorandum of understanding which outlines proposed functions, responsibilities, commitments and planned targets and outcomes.

<p><b>NRM South</b> Southern NRM Regional Committee, which has statutory responsibilities including setting regional NRM priorities &amp; promoting NRM principles, developing and facilitating implementation of a Southern NRM regional strategy, coordinating implementation of national funding programs at regional level and seeking, allocating and managing funds to implement the strategy. Other responsibilities include monitoring &amp; evaluating implementation of the strategy &amp; ensuring appropriate education &amp; training in NRM</p>
<p><b>Tasmanian NRM Council</b> Advises the Minister for Primary Industries, Water and Environment on NRM</p>

matters, including priorities for NRM, priorities for funding, accreditation of regional strategies, the effective means of ensuring statewide consistency & coordination in NRM & increasing community capacity, & effectiveness & efficiency of implementation.

**Individuals**

All regional residents can contribute to better NRM, through proper management of their own properties and/or by contributing to work on public land and/or by supporting policies, programs & land & water management decisions.

**Land managers**

Land managers are the key group impacting on the health of regional natural resources. Their management decisions affect the health of the resources they are responsible for, and in many cases have significant off-site impacts.

**Regional community, as represented by membership of the Southern Regional Southern NRM Association Inc**

Representing regional stakeholders and parent body for NRM South. Central role in successful NRM. The community must support and be involved in initiatives in natural resource management, including environmental awareness and sustainable practices

**Local government**

An important influence on NRM through its wide-ranging responsibilities as a regulator, infrastructure and service provider and funder. Specific functions include planning and management, land use planning, development approvals, revenue raising through rates and charges, and delivery of a variety of services, such as local road construction and maintenance, water, sewerage, waste management, building controls, regulatory responsibilities (eg public health & environmental health), economic development, tourism development, community and cultural development & communications. Local government also owns and/or manages large areas of land, including coastal reserves. Local government has established the **Southern Tasmanian Councils Board** comprising the 12 Southern Councils to coordinate regional development priorities and partnerships with the State Government and other key stakeholders. The Councils are: Brighton, Central Highlands, Clarence, Derwent Valley, Glamorgan Spring Bay, Glenorchy, Hobart, Huon Valley, Kingborough, Sorell, Southern Midlands, Tasman.

*Local Government Regional Bodies/Agreements include*

- **Hobart Water**, representing eight local government areas responsible for bulk water supply to the Greater Hobart area, and some water to support irrigation, as well as catchment planning
- **Southern Waste Management Authority**, representing all 12 Councils & responsible for regional waste minimization strategy development and implementation

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Southern Tourism Task Force</b>, representing all 12 Councils, Tourism Tasmania and Tasmania’s South Regional Tourism Association. Responsible for implementation of Southern Tourism Business Plan, including Southern Southern Touring Route Strategy and Southern Event Development Strategy</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Derwent Estuary Program</b>, a partnership between the State government, 6 local Councils surrounding the Derwent Estuary and industry. The DEP is responsible for coordinated implementation of an Environmental Management Plan, Monitoring Program and Foreshore Strategy for the Derwent Estuary. The DEP is an example of a government-industry partnership which is achieving substantial natural resource objectives. This is a very successful model and could be applied elsewhere.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Southern Regional Development Partnership Agreement</b> between the 12 Southern Councils and State Government, committing to integrated regional development priorities including tourism, events, economic and infrastructure development, NRM, health and community services</li> </ul>
<p><b>Australian Government</b> In partnership with the State and Territory Governments, provides national leadership for NRM.</p>
<p><b>Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment</b> Key policy responsibility for NRM, as well as primary industries, environmental management and land and water management. Develops and implements relevant legislation and policies and administers relevant programs [<b>check Annual Report</b>]. Delivers a wide range of services across the Food, Agriculture and Fishing industries, resource management and conservation, information and land services, environment, water resources.</p>
<p><b>Other state agencies, Boards and organisations</b> Responsible for delivering State Government responsibilities in a broad range of areas, including State development, infrastructure, energy and resources, tourism, parks &amp; heritage, Aboriginal affairs, forest policy and state roads. Development and implementation of statewide policies such as Tasmania Together</p>
<p><i>Some key agencies with targeted and very relevant briefs include</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Resource Planning &amp; Development Commission</b>. Responsible for implementing the Resource Management and Planning System, which sets the policy &amp; broad directions for land use planning &amp; controls by local government</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Private Forestry Tasmania</b>. Develops and implements policy for management of forests on private land (whether owned by corporates or individuals</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Forest Practices Board</b>. Responsible for developing, updating and</li> </ul>

implementing the Forestry Code of Practice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Parks &amp; Wildlife Service.</b> Administers relevant Acts and ensures Tasmanian parks &amp; public reserves are managed appropriately.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Public land managers: Forestry Tasmania.</b> Manages State forest land for multiple purposes as required under the Forestry Act.</p>
<p><b>Public land managers: Hydro</b> Administers relevant Acts. Responsible for planning and delivery of Tasmania’s hydro-electricity and other sources of electricity</p>
<p><b>Landcare, coastcare, rganizin, water watch and ‘friends of’ groups</b> Community-based networks responsible for planning and on-ground works in selected local areas, rganizing training, workshops and community information events. Groups are an important part of community capacity building.</p>
<p><b>Aboriginal groups</b> The major Aboriginal organisations operating in the region include: Tasmanian Aboriginal Land Council, Aboriginal Land Council of Tasmania, Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre, South East Tasmanian Aboriginal Corporation (SETAC) &amp; Palawa Aboriginal Corporation. They directly control areas of land (eg Oyster Cove, Murrayfield on Bruny Island). Understanding of Aboriginal culture and relationship with the land is an important part of NRM.</p>
<p><b>University of Tasmania &amp; TAFE Sector</b> The university and TAFE sector provides a high level of service and produce graduates with an extensive knowledge of regional NRM. They have an ongoing role in providing support to natural resource managers through training for people who deliver a range of NRM services.</p>
<p><b>Research organisations</b> Regional organisations involved in research, such as the Tasmanian Institute of Agricultural Research (TIAR), and Tasmanian Aquaculture and Fisheries Institute (TAFI), as well as the University of Tasmania, CSIRO Marine Research Laboratories, the CRC for Temperate Hardwood Forestry and DPIWE address the gaps in our NRM knowledge base &amp; Research &amp; Development Corporations. Their research programs should guide students into research activities in line with regional research priorities and make their expertise and research outcomes accessible to a range of research users.</p>
<p><b>Education sector</b> The education sector, particularly primary, secondary and adult providers, have a vital role in raising community awareness of natural resource issues and in many instances in delivering on-ground outcomes. Where possible, curriculum should include regionally relevant information. Continued participation in activities is needed to ensure current and future generations of land managers have the capacity to</p>

successfully manage regional natural resources.

**Industry**

Through its operating practices, industry is able to exert significant influence over NRM outcomes, both through its management of its operations and waste products and as a natural resource user.

**Wholesalers & retailers**

Responsible for distribution of primary produce. Often influence farm practices.

**Peak organisations**

Lobby groups (such as Tasmanian Conservation Trust), industry organisations (such as Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Tasmanian Fishing Industry Council, Forestry and Forest Industry Council and Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association) and other peak organisations (such as Housing Industry Association) represent major interests within the community, are often able to exert influence over their members, reflect an important voice within the community and can themselves implement measures to improve the sustainability of regional natural resources.

**Service providers: NGOs**

Non-government service providers such as Greening Australia and Conservation Volunteers Australia and Wildcare provide important support to the community to change behaviours, raise awareness, build skills and deliver support for on-ground works through teams of volunteers.

**Service providers: Private sector**

Private sector service providers (such as consultancy firms) provide a variety of services such as on-farm research, extension and advice. They can be highly influential in ensuring land management practices are environmentally sound.

**Other organisations**

Many other organisations at a local or broader level have a direct interest in one or more aspects of NRM. Examples include Hobart Ports Corporation, Marine and Safety Tasmania (MAST), Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS), Wellington Park Trust, and Mountain Festival Inc.

**QUESTIONS**

- 1. Are there other groups whose roles and responsibilities for delivering natural resource management should be identified in the Southern NRM Strategy?**

**Who are these other groups? What do they do?**

- 2. Do you agree with the way we have identified roles and functions? Are there others?**
- 3. Do you agree with the principles suggested in the section on Future Needs?**
- 5. What suggestions would you make to improve the allocation of roles and functions in relation to achieving NRM outcomes?**
- 6. Would you or your organisation be prepared to commit to a ‘charter’ or Memorandum of Understanding, for implementing your functions and responsibilities under the Southern NRM Strategy and specifying the outcomes you will be delivering?**
- 7. How could we improve the quality of decision-making for NRM?**