



**Australian Government**

**Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry**

**Department of the Environment and Heritage**

**NATURAL  
RESOURCE  
MANAGEMENT  
MINISTERIAL  
COUNCIL**

**Record and Resolution**

**Thirteenth Meeting  
Melbourne  
18 April 2008**

**and Joint Meeting with the  
Primary Industries Ministerial Council**



**RECORD AND RESOLUTIONS**

**OF THE**

**NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

**MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**

*“To promote the conservation and sustainable use  
of Australia’s natural resources.”*

**THIRTEENTH MEETING  
MELBOURNE, 18 APRIL 2008**

**and**

**JOINT MEETING WITH THE  
PRIMARY INDUSTRIES MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**

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NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT MINISTERIAL COUNCIL

THIRTEENTH MEETING  
MELBOURNE, 18 APRIL 2008

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**NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**

**THIRTEENTH MEETING  
MELBOURNE, 18 APRIL 2008**

**COUNCIL PARTICIPANTS**

**Australian Government**

The Hon. Peter Garrett MP (Chair)      Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts

The Hon. Tony Burke MP      Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Senator The Hon. Penny Wong      Minister for Climate Change and Water

**New South Wales**

The Hon. Verity Firth MP      Minister for Climate Change and the Environment

The Hon. Nathan Rees MP      Minister for Water

**Victoria**

The Hon. Tim Holding MLA      Minister for Water

The Hon. Gavin Jennings MLC      Minister for Environment and Climate Change

**Queensland**

The Hon. Craig Wallace MP      Minister for Natural Resources and Water

**Western Australia**

The Hon. David Templeman      Minister for the Environment  
Minister for Climate Change

Mr Martin Whitely MLA      Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for  
(representing The Hon. Kim Chance)      Agriculture and Food

The Hon. John Kobelke MLA      Minister for Water Resources

**South Australia**

The Hon. Rory McEwen MP      Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries  
Minister for Forests

The Hon. Gail Gago MP      Minister for the Environment and Conservation

**Tasmania**

The Hon. David Llewellyn MHA      Minister for Primary Industries and Water  
Minister for Energy and Resources

**Northern Territory**

The Hon. Chris Natt MLA      Minister for Primary Industry and Fisheries

The Hon. Leonard Kiely MLA      Minister for Natural Resources, Environment and  
Heritage

**Australian Capital Territory**

Mr Jon Stanhope MLA

Minister for Environment, Water and Climate  
Change

**New Zealand**

The Hon. Steve Chadwick MP

Minister for Conservation

**Australian Local Government Association**

Cr Bill Mitchell

Councillor

**OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE**

*[\* Denotes member of the Natural Resource Management Standing Committee]*

**Australia Government**

Mr David Borthwick \* Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage  
and the Arts

Mr Michael Callaghan

Dr James Horne

Mr Tony Slatyer

Ms Donna Petrachenko

Ms Barbara Butt

Ms Susannah Zuckerman

Ms Sue Ludwig

Mr Daryl Quinlivan Department of Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry

Mr Rod Shaw

Dr Rob Vertessy

Bureau of Meteorology

Dr Michael Coughlan

Mr Bruce Stewart

Mr Tom Hatton

CSIRO

**New South Wales**

Ms Wendy Stamp

Department of Primary Industries

Ms Jennifer Ranson

Ms Lisa Corbyn\*

Department of Environment & Climate Change

Mr Tim Rogers

Mr David Harriss

Department of Water and Energy

**Victoria**

Mr Kevin Love

Department of Sustainability & Environment

**Queensland**

Mr Scott Spencer \*

Department of Natural Resources & Water

Ms Debbie Best

Mr Robert Setter \*

Department of Primary Industries & Fisheries

Mr Bruce Turner

Mr Terry Wall \*

Environmental Protection Agency

Ms Nancy Esler

Mr Tony Roberts

**Western Australia**

Mr Ian Longson \*

Department of Agriculture & Food

Mr Keiran McNamara \*

Department of Environment and Conservation

**South Australia**

Mr Geoff Knight \*

Department of Primary Industries and Resources

Dr Don Plowman

Mr Rob Freeman \*

Department of Water, Land & Biodiversity

Mr Andrew Johnson

Conservation

Prof Rob Lewis

Ms Julie Mrotek

Mr Stephen Forbes

Department for Environment and Heritage

**Tasmania**

Mr Kim Evans \*

Department of Primary Industries, & Water

**Northern Territory**

Mr Jim Grant \*

Department of Natural Resources, Environment  
and The Arts

Mr Rod Gobbey

Department of Primary Industry, Fisheries and  
Mines

**Australian Capital Territory**

Mr Hamish McNulty \*

Department of Territory and Municipal Services

**New Zealand**

Mr Lindsay Gow \*

Ministry for the Environment

Mr Brian Sheppard

Department of Conservation

**ALGA**

Mr John Pritchard \*

Australian Local Government Association

Dr Rosemary James

**Secretariat** Ms Kate Woffenden  
Ms Dawn Manning  
Ms Judi Lilley  
Ms Catherine Knight

**NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT MINISTERIAL COUNCIL****THIRTEENTH MEETING  
MELBOURNE, 18 APRIL 2008****2008 REGIONAL CHAIRS  
(Community Forum)**

Council met with representatives of the sixth Regional Chairs Forum, formerly known as the Community Forum. In particular, Regional Chairs were seeking guidance from the new federal government on how their roles would integrate with the newly released Caring for our Country.

Regional Chairs were seeking clarity in key areas of:

- Collaboration:  
a clear framework for how Regional Chairs collaborate to deliver outcomes in Caring for our Country;
- Engagement:  
the opportunity to be engaged in developing the Caring for our Country Business Plan and the criteria for selecting competitive investment; and
- Integration:  
a clear understanding of how Caring for our Country, water and climate change policies would be integrated, to guide integrated regional implementation.

Regional Chairs also informed Council of the desired regional outcomes such as:

- regional policies;
- resource condition targets (20 years);
- intermediate outcomes (5-10 years and sub-regional);
- actions taken; and
- outputs and outcomes achieved.

**PRESENTATION OF THE 18<sup>TH</sup> MCKELL MEDAL**

As part of the Council's meeting with the NRM Regional Chairs, the 18<sup>th</sup> McKell Medal was awarded on behalf of Council to Wulford and Marie Parsons of Port Vincent, South Australia by the Australian Government Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, the Hon Tony Burke MP.

**NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**

**THIRTEENTH MEETING  
MELBOURNE 18 - APRIL 2008**

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**NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT MINISTERIAL COUNCIL****THIRTEENTH MEETING  
MELBOURNE - 18 APRIL 2008**

The Hon. Peter Garrett MP, the meeting Chair, welcomed all Ministers to the thirteenth meeting of the Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council and acknowledged the traditional owners of this area, the people of the Kulin Nation and their elders, past and present.

The Chair especially welcomed newly appointed Ministers to their first Council meeting, namely:

- Gavin Jennings, Minister for Water, Environment and Climate Change, Victoria;
- Tim Holding, Minister for Water, Victoria; and
- Steve Chadwick, Minister of Conservation, NZ.

Apologies were noted from:

- Joe Helper, Victorian Minister for Agriculture;
- Tim Mulherin, Queensland Minister for Primary Industries and Fisheries;
- Kim Chance, Western Australian Minister for Agriculture and Food (represented by Martin Whitely);
- John Ford, Western Australian Minister for Fisheries, (represented by David Templeman);
- Karlene Maywald, South Australian Minister for Water Security;
- Michelle O'Byrne, Tasmanian Minister for Environment, Heritage, Parks and the Arts; and
- Trevor Mallard, New Zealand Minister for the Environment.

<b>Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 13
	<b>LOCATION:</b> MELBOURNE
	<b>DATE:</b> 18 APRIL 2008
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 13.1</b>

### FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR MANAGING WATER ISSUES

1. Senator the Hon. Penny Wong was invited to speak to Council and address water issues as the new federal government Minister for Climate Change and Water.
2. Council was informed that the new forward work program agreed by COAG would develop concrete actions on high priority water management issues in both rural and urban Australia which included accelerating commitments previously made under the National Water Initiative. Consultation on the forward work program had already commenced and would continue over the coming months. The four priority areas are:
  - addressing over allocation and improving environmental outcomes;
  - enhancing water markets;
  - urban water reforms; and
  - human resources, skills and information.
3. Senator Wong also advised that a number of urgent actions needed to be completed by COAG at its meeting in July 2008 and that these included:
  - extending the CSIRO 'sustainable yields' study to include northern Australia, South-West Western Australia and Tasmania;
  - better coordination of existing water recovery programs in the Murray-Darling Basin (MDB);
  - review the 4 per cent cap on permanent trade out of irrigation districts in the southern MDB;
  - ensuring compatible registers are in place by April 2009 and examining the feasibility of moving to a national common register;
  - assess the performance of water supply and wastewater systems in remote communities including remote Indigenous communities;
  - release of the Council for the Australian Federation draft urban water planning principles for targeted consultation; and
  - conduct a comprehensive national audit of skills needs and gaps in the water sector.
4. Council was also informed of the historic agreement over the future of water management in the Murray-Darling Basin and that there would be a single institution known as the Murray-Darling Basin Authority, which would be the sole body responsible for managing the Basin.

<b>Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 13
	<b>LOCATION:</b> MELBOURNE
	<b>DATE:</b> 18 APRIL 2008
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 13.2</b>

### BOM REPORT ON NEW ROLE IN WATER INFORMATION

1. The Bureau of Meteorology's (BOM's) new role in water information is set out in the Water Act (2007) (Section 7) and includes:
  - (a) issuing standards for water data measurement and transmission;
  - (b) aggregating all water information and make it freely available via the web, with value-added analyses;
  - (c) conducting regular national water resource assessments;
  - (d) producing an annual national water account; and
  - (e) providing regularly updated water availability forecasts.
  
2. The Bureau has been allocated new funding of \$450 million over 10 years to carry out these functions, including:
  - (a) establishment of core staffing and infrastructure (\$210 million);
  - (b) purchasing special data sets, tools and knowledge (\$160 million); and
  - (c) improving hydrologic observing systems (\$80 million).
  
3. An additional \$10 million has been provided to the Bureau by the National Water Commission to develop the first phase of the Australian Water Resources Information System (AWRIS).
  
4. The Bureau's existing range of hydrological services, including national flood forecasting and warning services, would be integrated with the new role in water information.
  
5. Activity so far has been focused on:
  - (a) establishment of appropriate governance and consultative mechanisms to guide the establishment and conduct of the new role;
  - (b) awareness raising of the Bureau's new role across the Australian water sector;
  - (c) drafting of regulations to support s.126 of the Act, requiring holders of water information to give it to the Bureau;
  - (d) recruiting and training staff;
  - (e) establishment of a five year funding Program (entitled *Modernisation and Extension of Hydrologic Monitoring Systems*) to assist water information collectors, and particularly the state and territory water agencies, to improve their hydrologic monitoring systems;
  - (f) commencement of a project to build the Australian Water Resources Information System (AWRIS); and
  - (g) development of a research collaboration (entitled *Water Information Research and Development Alliance (WIRADA)*) with CSIRO to provide essential R&D support for the new role.

*Governance and Consultative Mechanisms*

6. The governance and consultative mechanisms that have been established include:
  - (a) The Australian Water Information Advisory Council (AWIAC), made up of key industry leaders. AWIAC provides strategic oversight of the activities of the Bureau of Meteorology's new venture in water information. AWIAC's role is primarily an advisory one (it is not a Board of Management), covering emerging water information needs and ways to achieve the best return on investment. AWIAC had its first meeting on 25 February 2008;
  - (b) The Jurisdictional Reference Group on Water Information (JRGWI), made up of two representatives from each of the jurisdictions. JRGWI plays a key role in bringing together the national water information activities of the Bureau with the regional water information activities undertaken by the states and territories. JRGWI membership is by invitation of the Director of Meteorology, based on the recommendations of the Department of Premier and Cabinet (or equivalent) in each jurisdiction. JRGWI had its first meeting on 31 January 2008;
  - (c) Nomination of 'lead water agencies' in each jurisdiction to act as a focus for communication and coordination of water information matters. Discussions are continuing in all jurisdictions in this regard; and
  - (d) Sponsorship of a range of specialist workshops. Specialist workshops on five priority topics have already been held and similar meetings will be coordinated as the Bureau's role develops.
  
7. Water Information seminars targeting the water sector and related groups were delivered in all Australian capital cities. These seminars attracted over 1150 participants with audience size ranging from 75 (Darwin) to over 200 (both Adelaide and Melbourne). These seminars attracted a diverse range of representatives from both private and public organisations including federal, state and local governments, private consultants, water sector manufacturers and distributors, R&D and education institutions and professional and environmental associations.
  
8. The Bureau has also been spending time with important stakeholder groups, primarily for consultation *viz* the regulations but also for the purposes of raising awareness of its new role in water information. Some of the groups the Bureau has met with include:
  - the Water Act Working Group
  - the members meeting of the Water Services Association of Australia
  - the NWC Commissioners
  - the Board of Irrigation Australia Limited
  - the Minerals Council of Australia
  - representatives of individual irrigation corporations
  - selected Catchment Management Authorities
  - selected urban water authorities
  - the Australian Hydrographers Association
  - *lead water agencies* via the Jurisdictional Reference Group on Water Information
  - the Murray-Darling Basin Community Advisory Committee.

*Water Act 2007 - Regulations*

9. Drafting instructions regarding the giving of water information to the Bureau have been issued to the Office of Legislative Drafting and Publishing to draft regulations to support s.126 of the Water Act. This follows a 3-month consultation process including initial discussions with the Water Legislation Working Group. The drafting instructions have also been discussed at JRGWI, in public seminars, at various boards and at open workshops in Hobart, Perth and Darwin. The regulations are currently scheduled for registration in May 2008.

*Recruitment*

10. The Bureau has so far employed an additional 34 staff in Canberra and Melbourne to undertake its responsibilities under the Water Act. Recruitment action is underway for a further 52 staff, including 32 hydrologists across four levels of expertise and experience. As attracting suitably qualified hydrological staff has been an issue, the current campaign has included a significant overseas component and discussions are also planned with state and territory water agencies to enable the optimum use of scarce hydrological expertise in Australia. Also, a training course is being developed in anticipation of a need to fill gaps in specialised areas. It is intended that this training program will be open to others in the Australian water sector.

*Modernisation and Extension of Hydrologic Monitoring Systems Program*

11. Bids for funding for 2007-08 under the *Modernisation and Extension of Hydrologic Monitoring Systems Program* closed on March 31 and applications have been received from all states and territories. The proposals called for a range of activities including assistance with coordination and monitoring within the jurisdictions, improving the accuracy of existing networks through new technologies and improved procedures, improving the currency of existing networks through the use of telemetry, improving procedures for the management of data and enhancing monitoring network coverage. All investments under the program must lead to improvements in the Bureau's capacity to fulfill its new water information functions.

*Australian Water Resources Information System (AWRIS)*

12. The Australian Water Resources Information System (AWRIS) is a system for delivering robust and reliable, nationwide information on water availability, water quality and water usage. It will be the authoritative repository for water data and reporting in Australia. AWRIS will be the system the Bureau uses for delivering the water information products required in its new role. The project to build this system has commenced, guided by a Steering Committee chaired jointly by the Bureau and the National Water Commission, who have provided \$10m under the Raising National Water Standards Program to build the first phase of the system. It is intended that the first phase of AWRIS will become operational in January, 2010, with 'beta' versions released prior to this date.

*Water Information Research and Development Alliance (WIRADA)*

13. The Bureau does not intend to build an internal research capability to serve the needs of the new water information role. The approach being followed is to co-

invest with CSIRO through a *Water Information Research and Development Alliance*, but also engage with other research providers (universities, Water CRC, etc) on an as required basis. The scope of the research will span water information systems, a range of foundation data products, water accounting and assessment, and water forecasting. A funding agreement with CSIRO is in the final stages of negotiation and some initial research is already underway.

## **RESOLUTION**

14. Council **NOTED** the progress achieved by the Bureau of Meteorology in implementing its roles and responsibilities under the Water Information part of the Water Act 2007.

<b>Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 13
	<b>LOCATION:</b> MELBOURNE
	<b>DATE:</b> 18 APRIL 2008
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 13.3</b>

### URBAN WATER REFORM

1. On 20 April 2007 Council (NRMMC 12) agreed to discuss at its next meeting *“the range of key policy issues raised by pending reports on urban water issues including approaches to planning, pricing and investment in general and community confidence in recycling options in particular”*.
2. To assist Council, a synthesis paper was prepared by the Joint Steering Committee for Water Sensitive Cities (JSCWSC) under the National Water Initiative Committee based on the range of recent urban water reports and policy papers of national scope prepared by industry, governments and other stakeholders. The synthesis paper is provided at [Annex A](#).
3. Key outcomes from the 26 March 2008 COAG meeting that relate to urban water reform include agreement to:
  - enhance the effectiveness of water markets and assess water supply in remote communities;
  - release for consultation eight key principles for urban water reforms; and
  - commission the development of a new work program of water reform which, *inter alia*, will address the key challenges in urban water with the final proposal to be put forward for consideration in October 2008.
4. A review of the recent urban water reports has identified four key areas for possible improvements to urban water management. These areas include:
  - (a) urban water planning – to improve water security and build in climate change resilience;
  - (b) financial frameworks and pricing – to support sustainability;
  - (c) enhancing water markets; and
  - (d) building community confidence and meeting community expectations (in supply security, new water sources and water quality).
5. On 20 December 2007 COAG established a Working Group on Climate Change and Water and requested a report for its meeting on 26 March 2008. The report included a stocktake of key challenges facing urban water supply and an

indicative forward work program encompassing long-term planning, improving supply and demand scenarios, water reform and supply options. The Synthesis Report was taken into account in developing the stocktake and forward work program.

## **RESOLUTIONS**

6. Council:

- (a) **NOTED** the *Synthesis of Recent and Pending Urban Water Reports – Shaping Strategic Urban Water Reform Priorities* (Synthesis Report) provided at Annex A; and
- (b) **NOTED** the key outcomes of the 26 March 2008 COAG meeting that relate to urban water reform.

**ANNEX A:** Synthesis Report of Recent and Pending Urban Water Reports

<b>Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 13
	<b>LOCATION:</b> MELBOURNE
	<b>DATE:</b> 18 APRIL 2008
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 13.4</b>

### WATER METERING

1. The National Water Initiative requires the development of national water meter specifications for implementation from 2007.
2. At the April 2007 meeting, the Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council (NRMMC) endorsed the completion date of September 2007 for the draft national and jurisdictional Non-Urban Water Metering Implementation Plans. This date was revised due to delays in completing critical supporting work. A completion date of July 2008 appears more likely. Significant additional investment will be required to accelerate the necessary work to implement the plans.
3. There are a number of issues to be considered to ensure the appropriate measurement performance of meters before they are installed, and during installation and service. These include:
  - additional investment to cover the pattern approval and laboratory verification of the full range of meter types and capacities;
  - further development of in-situ (in-field) volumetric testing and verification. The cost effectiveness also needs to be evaluated; and
  - well established and resourced compliance mechanism (the current Commonwealth legislative framework provides for a compliance mechanism for pre-installation verification only – verification is by an accredited testing authority).
4. Until a means of in-situ volumetric verification of meters can be identified, a quality assurance approach to the installation, maintenance, auditing and reporting of the meters and their operation – the Metrological Assurance Framework (MAF) – represents the best available practical option.
5. The MAF recognises the various arrangements within each jurisdiction and is based on the principles of: consistency; legal enforcement; traceability; certification; acceptable levels of confidence; flexibility; certainty and accountability.
6. The MAF is outlined in Annex B and described in the National Framework for Non-urban Water Meter Standards discussion paper at Annex C (noting that further work is required to finalise details in the discussion paper before it evolves into a policy paper). Annex A outlines the scope of the National Framework for Non-Urban Water Metering.

7. The expected outcome of the MAF is an acceptable level of confidence in the establishment and ongoing operation of meters, such that they continue to operate as far as possible within the maximum permissible error limit of 5 per cent.
8. It is proposed that non-urban metering be initially implemented through the MAF, supported by the combination of the *National Measurement Act 1960 (Commonwealth)* and state water legislation.
9. To implement the proposed approach, a National Non-urban Water Metering Implementation Work Plan has been developed. The progress of this plan is outlined at Annex D.
10. Following completion of the documentary standards by the National Measurement Institute and Standards Australia (expected to be April 2008), it is proposed that the Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research be asked to initiate consultation with the water industry as preparation for lifting the relevant water meter exemptions in the utility metering provisions of the *National Measurement Act 1960 (Cth)*. It is important to note that the current exemptions in this Act can *only* be modified once the necessary infrastructure is in place. Once the exemptions are modified, this Act will provide for pattern approved and laboratory verified meters.
11. Currently, trade measurement provisions for in-situ verification of measuring instruments are administered by states and territories. The Uniform Trade Measurement Legislation used by these jurisdictions contains exemptions in regard to reticulated water meters. As no universal and cost-effective technical approach to in-situ volumetric verification has yet been demonstrated, these exemptions will need to remain. The exemptions will, however, need to be extended to include non-reticulated meters and thereby align with the framework outlined in this paper.

## RESOLUTIONS:

12. Council:
  - (a) **AGREED IN PRINCIPLE** to the scope of the National Framework for Non-Urban Water Meter Standards as described in Annex A *Scope of the National Framework for Non-Urban Water Metering*;
  - (b) **AGREED IN PRINCIPLE** to support for the Metrological Assurance Framework outlined at Annex B and described in the National Framework for Non-urban Water Meter Standards discussion paper at Annex C, noting that further work is required to finalise details in the discussion paper;
  - (c) **AGREED** that the Chair of the Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council write to:
    - (i) the Ministerial Council for Consumer Affairs to propose an amendment to the Uniform Trade Measurement Legislation to ensure that the associated exemptions align with the policy approach outlined in this paper; and

- (ii) the Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research to initiate consultation with the water industry in preparation for modifying the relevant exemptions applying to water utility metering provisions of the *National Measurement Act 1960 (Commonwealth)*.
- (d) **NOTED** the progress of the National Non-Urban Metering Implementation Work Plan at Annex D; and
- (e) **NOTED** the jurisdictional metering implementation plans will be completed for July 2008.

**ANNEX A:** Scope for the National Framework for Non-Urban Water Metering

**ANNEX B:** Proposed Metrological Assurance Framework

**ANNEX C:** National Framework for Non-urban Water Meter Standards Discussion Paper

**ANNEX D:** Progress of the National Non-Urban Water Metering Work Plan

## SCOPE OF THE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR NON-URBAN WATER METERING

This table sets the scope for application of the agreed metering approach

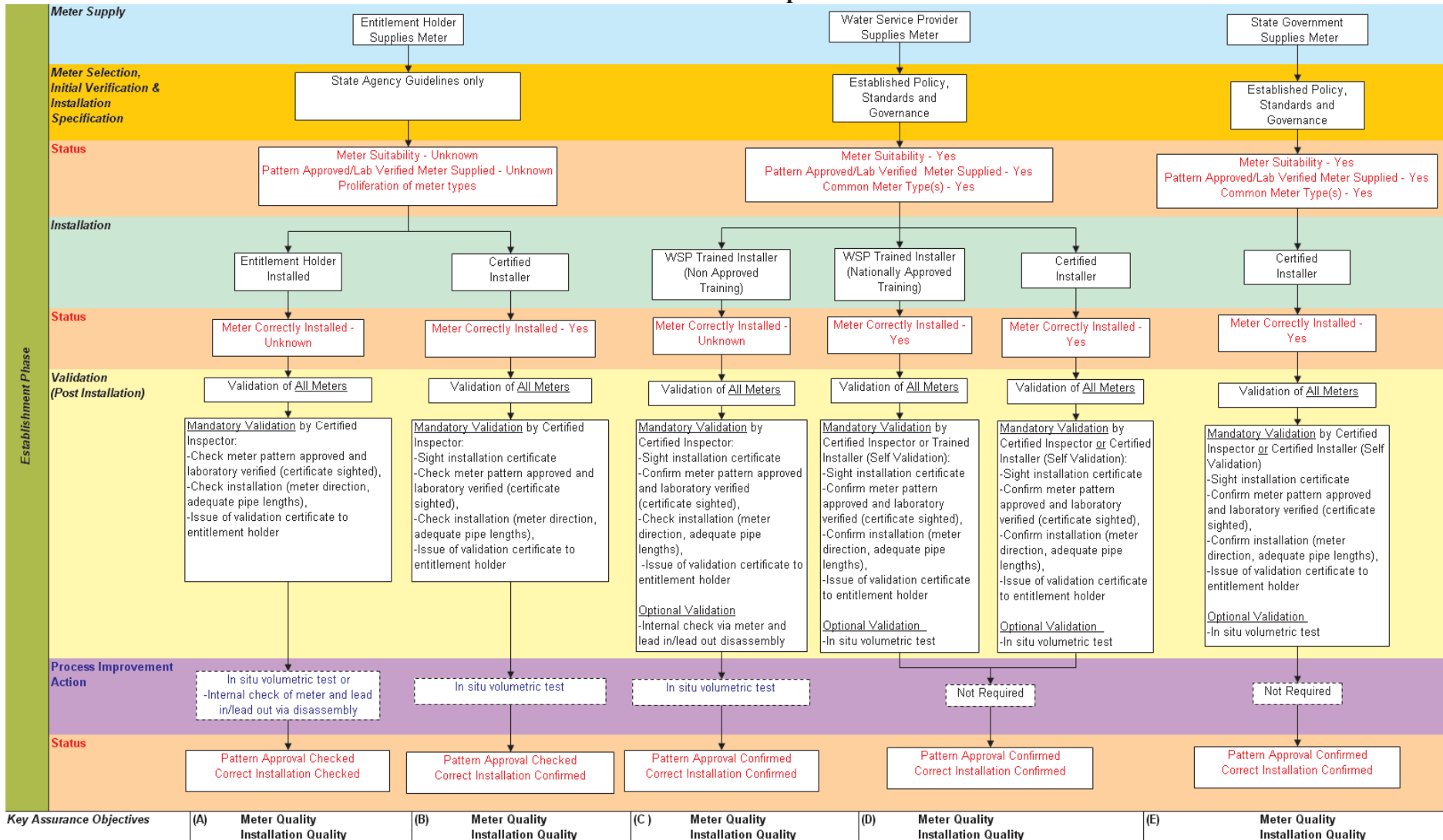
<b>Situation</b>	<b>Entitlement</b>	<b>Result of Water Sharing Plan, Water Management Plan or other arrangement</b>	<b>Meter requirement</b>	<b>Approach</b>
Water extracted under a specific authorisation from a natural resource for direct use by entitlement holder	Licence attached to land	Below a risk or management threshold as defined by a Water Sharing Plan or Water Management Plan or appropriate legislation or policy	No meter required	Manage as a compliance approach
		Above a risk or management threshold as defined by a Water Sharing Plan or Water Management Plan, or a normal licensed extraction or appropriate legislation or policy	Meter required	<i>National Framework for Non-Urban Water Metering to apply</i>
	Licence not attached to land	Below a risk or management threshold as defined by a Water Sharing Plan or Water Management Plan or appropriate legislation or policy	No meter required	
		Above a risk or management threshold as defined by a Water Sharing Plan or Water Management Plan, or a normal licensed extraction or appropriate legislation or policy	Meter required	
	Entitlements seeking to trade	Created as an outcome from a Water Sharing Plan or Water Management Plan or appropriate legislation or policy	Meter required	
Water extracted by a Water Service Provider from a natural resource under a specific authorisation and distributed as part of a water supply scheme (normally described as a “Rural Water Supply Scheme” and taken by customers including	Water Service Provider authorised to take a “bulk supply”	WSPs take water under a range of authorisations and are required to report on take. This take from a natural resource. Note that State Implementation Plans will identify where this is an issue	Meter/ Measurement required	<i>National Framework for Non-Urban Water Metering to apply</i>
	Tradable entitlement held by customers	Created as an outcome from a Water Sharing Plan, Water Management Plan, or as part of establishing the water supply scheme	Meter required	

Situation	Entitlement	Result of Water Sharing Plan, Water Management Plan or other arrangement	Meter requirement	Approach
irrigators, industry and local governments, from channels, pipelines or supplemented / regulated river)	Non tradable authority to take water held by a customer	This is where a decision is made for a meter to be installed and used for charging or other resource management reasons.	Meter required	
		Below a risk or management threshold, and where a cost / benefit decision has identified that there is no value in having a meter (this may be an individual domestic supply or a minimum charge take of water)	No meter required	Manage as a minimum charge customer in the scheme
Water extracted under a general statutory authorisation (eg riparian stock & domestic or groundwater outside of a declared management area)	No Licence or specific authorisation required to take water	Not Applicable; or confirmed by a water sharing or water management plan that no specific entitlement required	No meter required	No action required

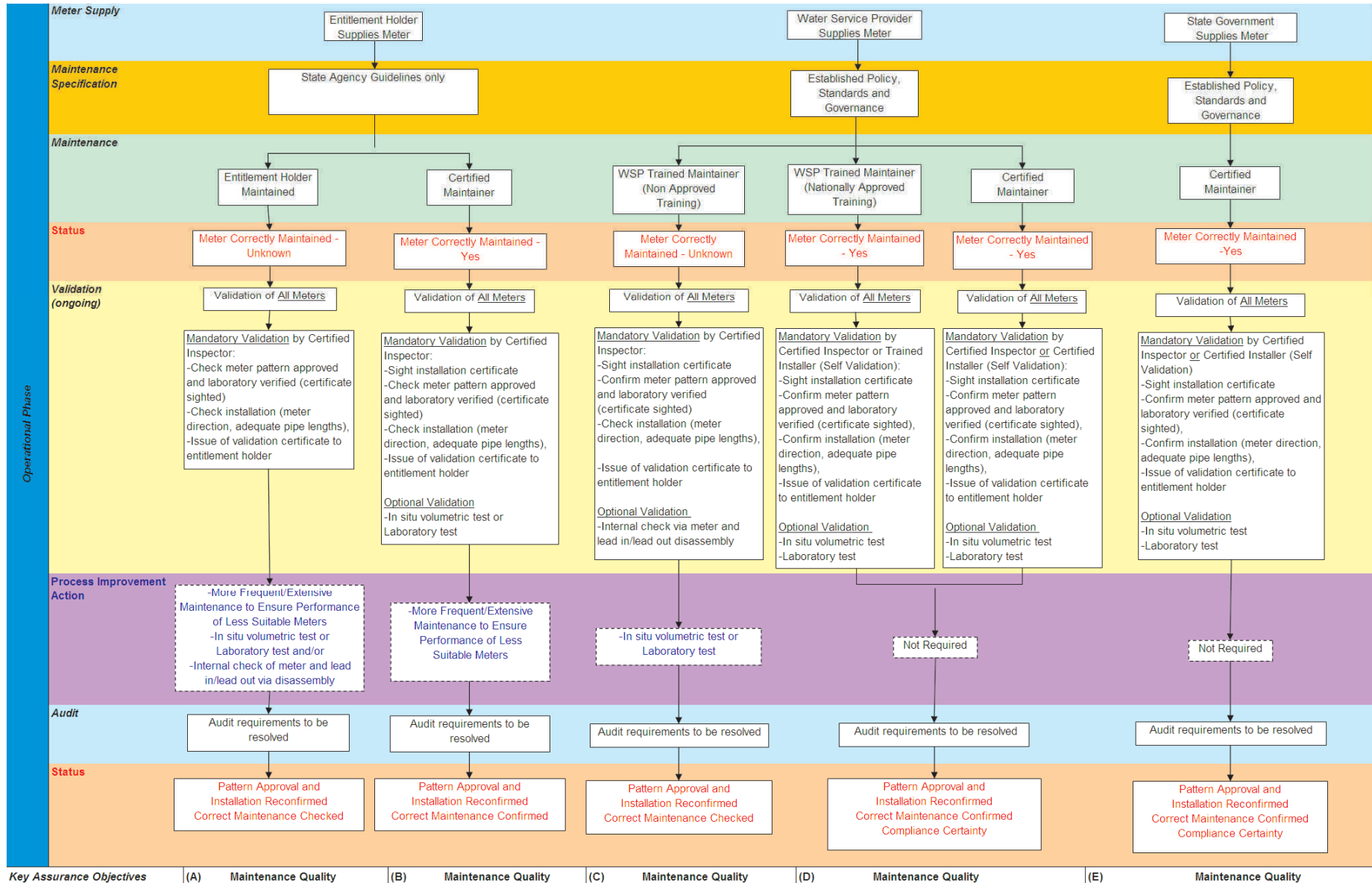
The next step is to set out how to implement this under respective state water legislation and relevant trade measurement legislation

Work in progress - Metrological Assurance Framework

Establishment phase



## Operational Phase



## NATIONAL NON-URBAN METERING IMPLEMENTATION PLAN PROGRESS

Action	Who responsible	Progress
<p>The National Measurement Institute (NMI) to develop Pattern Approval standards for non-urban water meters to give legal traceability and confidence in meters prior to installation and operation.</p>	<p>NMI</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To date, the National Measurement Institute (NMI) has published two of the four essential pattern approval standards. These are:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ NMI M10-1 Meters intended for the metering of Non-urban water in full flowing pipes (Pattern Approval); and</li> <li>➤ NMI M11-1 Meters intended for the metering of Non-urban water in open channels and partially filled pipes.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The final two standards to be published by the end of April 2008 are:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ NMI M10-2 Meters intended for the metering of Non-urban water in full flowing pipes – Part 2: Test Methods; and</li> <li>➤ NMI M11-2 Meters intended for the metering of Non-urban water in open channels and partially filled pipes – Part 2: Test Methods.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Standards Australia to develop Australian Standards for the installation and maintenance of non-urban water meters.</p>	<p>Standards Australia and GHD Pty Ltd</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The six companion product specifications for the NMI standards being developed by Standards Australia and GHD Pty Ltd are expected to be finalised by the end of April 2008.</li> </ul>
<p>Upgrade and accredit existing testing facilities in order for new non-urban water meters to be tested against the forthcoming NMI Pattern Approval Standards.</p>	<p>DEWHA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In order for a test facility to be technically and legally suitable to undertake testing for Pattern Approval purposes, it must hold accreditation to the international standard of ISO/IEC 17025 or its Australian equivalent and be appointed as an Approving Authority under the National Measurement Regulations 1999.</li> </ul> <p>To ensure appropriately accredited testing facilities are available as soon as possible to undertake pattern approval testing for the new NMI standards, the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts has called for funding applications to upgrade and accredit existing testing facilities. The call for funding applications closed in November 2007 and the assessment process is now approaching finalisation.</p>

Action	Who responsible	Progress
<p>The water industry works with the Australian Government, the NMI and the MEG to establish a national industry training and certification scheme for the installation, maintenance, and validation of the meters and their operation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The training and certification scheme could form the basis for a system of recognition of in-field personnel in any non-urban metering framework post 1 July 2010.</li> </ul>	Irrigation Australia Limited	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Irrigation Australia Limited has been contracted to establish a cost-effective Industry Training Framework. The framework, an industry-based certification program, is expected to be completed by 1 July 2008.</li> </ul>
<p>Jurisdictions, through their relevant water legislation, require a quality assurance approach that would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>water access entitlement holders must use pattern approved meters</li> <li>meters to be installed and maintained in line with the Metrological Assurance Framework</li> </ul>	Jurisdictions, MEG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The jurisdictions are continuing to draft their jurisdictional implementation plans outlining how the metering standards are to be adopted in their jurisdiction. These plans are expected to be finalised by 1 July 2008.</li> <li>To assist jurisdictions to prepare their implementation plans, the Australian Government has invested in an accelerated stocktake of meters and meter installations across Australia. The stocktake is expected to be completed by the end of March 2008.</li> <li>For national application of the metering standards, regulations will need to be in place for lifting relevant exemptions under the National Measurement Act 1960 (Cth) related to the use of pattern approved meters; and for applying exemptions under the Uniform Trade Measurement Legislation and National Measurement Act 1960 (Cth) to the provisions relating to in-situ verification until such time as such verification is considered feasible.</li> <li>Until a means of in-situ volumetric verification of meters can be identified, the Metrological Assurance Framework, still a work in progress, at <b>Annex B</b> has been developed as a quality assurance approach to the installation, maintenance, auditing and reporting of the meters and their operation.</li> </ul>
<p>Australian Government and jurisdictions undertake an education and awareness campaign RE the new standards and training and certification scheme.</p>	Australian Government and jurisdictions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A MEG communication strategy document is under development.</li> <li>Irrigation Australia Limited is holding its annual conference in May 2008. As part of the conference, DEWHA is sponsoring a half day water metering seminar on behalf of the MEG.</li> </ul>

Action	Who responsible	Progress
<p>Chair of the NRMMC to write to the Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research to initiate consultation with the water industry in preparation for modifying the relevant exemptions applying to water utility metering provisions of the <i>National Measurement Act 1960 (Commonwealth)</i>.</p>	<p>Chair of NRMMC on behalf of the NRMMC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This action will occur following the completion of the documentary standards by the National Measurement Institute and Standards Australia and the development of the metering implementation plans.</li> <li>• It is important to note that the current exemptions in this Act can <i>only</i> be modified once the necessary infrastructure is in place.</li> </ul>

<b>Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 13
	<b>LOCATION:</b> MELBOURNE
	<b>DATE:</b> 18 APRIL 2008
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 13.5</b>

## WATER ACCOUNTING

1. The Water Accounting Development Committee (WADC) was established (by NRMMC 11) in February 2007. The committee oversees the *National Water Accounting Development* project, which is funded under Raising National Water Standards and matching in-kind state contributions.
2. The NRMMC 12 (November 2006) requested the WADC:
  - (a) begin a process to develop water accounting standards;
  - (b) develop a set of user information requirements, including a cost-benefit analysis; and
  - (c) deliver demonstration water accounting systems, through pilot projects, to deliver reporting required by initial water accounting standards.
3. As standards are developed, Council will be asked to approve the final step in the Initial Standard Development Process (Annex A), which relates to the issuing of standards. As the Bureau of Meteorology may take carriage of the issuing of standards, there may need to be a future adjustment to the Initial Standard Development Process. For example, the process could be split between standard development (WADC responsibility) and standard issuing (BoM responsibility).
4. The National Water Accounting Development Workplan (Annex B) may require further revisions relating to the later steps in the current standard development process.
5. The findings from the User Information Requirements study are summarised at Annex C.
6. Jurisdictions and the Murray-Darling Basin Commission have nominated pilot projects to iteratively test and inform the outputs from the *National Water Accounting Development* project (Annex D). WADC is working closely with jurisdictional officers via a Jurisdictional Reference panel to ensure ongoing alignment between the pilot projects and the objectives of the *National Water Accounting Development* project.
7. The development of widely accepted water accounting standards requires extensive consultation with a broad group of external stakeholders during the iterative stages of development. An external website ([wadc.gov.au](http://wadc.gov.au)) has been

constructed by the National Water Commission (NWC). The process of stakeholder engagement and information dissemination via the *National Water Accounting Development* project external website is at [Annex E](#).

## RESOLUTIONS

1. Council:
  - (a) **AGREED** the Initial Standard Development Process ([Annex A](#));
  - (b) **AGREED** the National Water Accounting Development project 2008 and 2009 NRMCC Workplan ([Annex B](#)), noting that further revisions relating to the later steps in the current standard development process may be required;
  - (c) **NOTED** the findings from the User Information Requirements study ([Annex C](#));
  - (d) **NOTED** the *National Water Accounting Development* Pilot Plan progress report ([Annex D](#)); and
  - (e) **NOTED** the process of stakeholder engagement and information dissemination via the *National Water Accounting Development* project external website ([Annex E](#)).

**ANNEX A:** Initial Standard Development Process

**ANNEX B:** National Water Accounting Development project 2008 and 2009 NRMCC Workplan

**ANNEX C:** Findings from the User Information Requirements study conducted for the *National Water Accounting Development* project

**ANNEX D:** *National Water Accounting Development* project Pilot Projects Progress Report

**ANNEX E:** Process for stakeholder engagement and information dissemination via the *National Water Accounting Development* project external website

## **INITIAL STANDARD DEVELOPMENT PROCESS (as approved by Standing Committee on 14 March 2008)**

The Natural Resource Ministerial Council at meeting 11 (24 November 2006) required the WADC to deliver a *standard development process by July 2007*.

The National Water Initiative Committee at meeting 18 (24 February 2007) **recommended** to the Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council that *cost benefit analyses are undertaken on individual standards during the standard development process, rather than on the User Information Requirements*.

The *Stocktake and Analysis of Australia's Water Accounting Practice* report proposed a process based on that used by Standards Australia. That proposed process has been further modified in an endeavour to propose a process that suits the circumstances in which the initial standards for water accounting are to be developed.

It is argued that Water Accounting Standards will need to be widely accepted in order to achieve the stated outcomes of water accounting in the National Water Initiative to *support public and investor confidence in the amount of water being traded, extracted for consumptive use, and recovered and managed for environmental and other public benefit outcomes*.

### **Initial Standard Development Process**

The proposed Initial Standard Development Process is summarised in **Figure A**. The principles on which the process is based and an explanation of each step in the process are set out in the ensuing paragraphs.

The proposed process is based on several principles. The process is intended to:

- a) Be simple and easy to understand;
- b) Be open and transparent, so that all people with an interest have the opportunity to be involved or to know that their interest is represented;
- c) Be inclusive, with active and diverse participation sought by the full range of interests, particularly those who will be directly affected by the standard and including those that will benefit by the standard as well as those that must comply with the standard (or to whom the standard is to apply). To this end, for example, the JRP is closely involved in providing input and assistance to WADC in all stages of the Standard Development Process;
- d) Engage skilled people from the accounting discipline and the technical disciplines prominent in the water industry and in turn to contribute to building capacity in water accounting; and
- e) Seek agreement and involve a constant search for common ground.

An explanation of each step in the process follows:

**Step 1 - Justification for Initial Standard prepared:** documenting arguments of why a standard is necessary. This is likely to include the benefits that can be expected from the existence and application of the proposed standard and weighing such expected benefits against the costs of not preparing the standard. The justification is likely to be predominately qualitative and to reflect the provisions and priorities of the NWI Agreement relating to water resource accounting. This step is likely to be undertaken in the first instances by the WADCO in close consultation with the JRP and may include references to the Conceptual Framework and User Information Requirements.

**Step 2 - Comment on justification for Initial Standard sought and considered:** involves making the documented justification available publicly as well as proactively referring it to parties with a known interest in water accounting development in general and the specific standard in particular. Comment received is to be acknowledged, recorded and considered as an input to the next step. The WADCO will need to progressively build a database of interested parties and promote public awareness of water accounting development to ensure engagement with interested and affected parties is as extensive as practicable.

**Step 3 - Justification for Initial Standard reviewed and agreed:** an assessment of the justification and a recommendation by WADC to seek agreement of NWIC on the justification of the initial standard. The case for the standard will in part draw on Step 2, and needs to be sufficiently strong to proceed to the next step. It is anticipated that the justification for the proposed standard would be included in the draft standard.

**Step 4 - Draft Initial Standard prepared:** involves an iterative process of drafting, referral to others including the JRP, reviewing (based on feedback and reflection) and improving the content of the standard and is to be conducted in conjunction with the fifth step. This step may require the formation of a Drafting Team, comprising members drawn from the WADCO and the JRP and people with appropriate technical skills drawn from accounting and water industry relevant disciplines. Specific technical task teams or a sub committee of practitioners drawn from parties directly affected by the proposed standard may also be required.

**Step 5 - Iterative development through pilot projects and consultation:** involves consideration and testing of versions, or parts of versions, of the draft standard by pilot project teams as well as other targeted consultation and the provision of feedback to inform further drafting and improvement of the standard. The JRP is an important forum for coordinating testing via the pilot projects and for sharing outcomes.

**Step 6 - Comment from a wider group of relevant stakeholders on the draft is sought and considered:** once the draft initial standard is at the stage where it can be considered near complete and workable (as an initial standard) and when comment from a broader range of interests is warranted. Sufficient time will need to be allowed for parties to respond. Comment received is to be acknowledged, recorded and considered as an input to the next step.

**Step 7 - Final Draft Initial Standard prepared:** reviewing and improving the draft standard, based on comment received, to a quality sufficient to proceed to the next step.

**Step 8 – Cost-benefit analysis and impact assessment prepared:** is about establishing that the benefits to the community of application of the standard will exceed the cost of compliance with the standard. It is recognised that a standard may be developed such that its application is intended to be different by degree or circumstance and this may need to be taken into account. The cost-benefit analysis and impact assessment may be undertaken through a consultancy.

**Step 9 - Comment and agreement on Final Standard sought:** is about taking into account each of the different viewpoints involved in the development of the standard and the implications of application of the standard. Through this step a high degree of agreement on the implementation of the final standard is being sought. Within a drafting team or sub committee an adequate agreement may be say eighty per cent support. At this step, there will be a recommendation by WADC to seek agreement of NWIC on the agreement on the final standard.

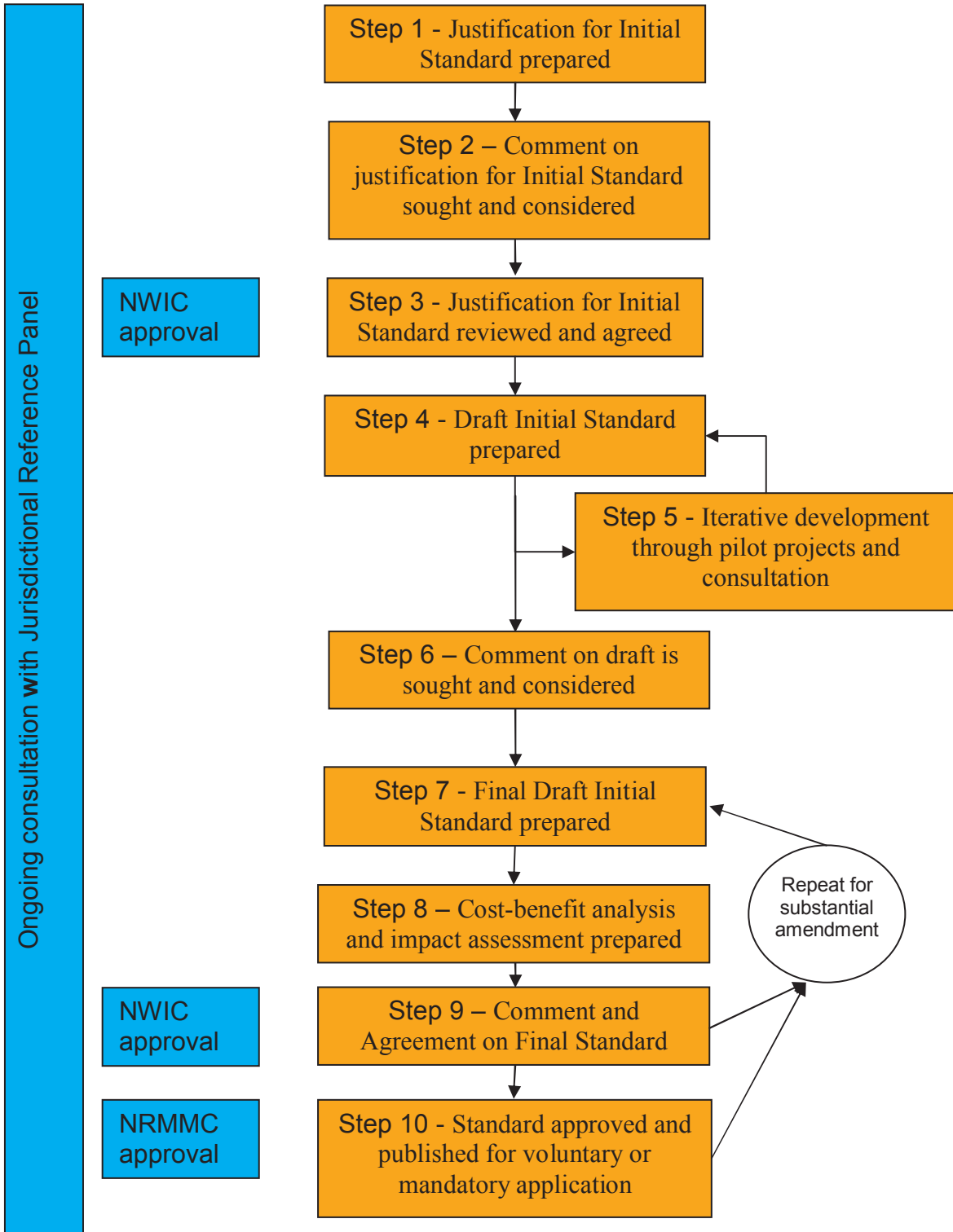
**Step 10 - Standard approved and published for voluntary or mandatory application:** involves the WADC agreeing to the standard. The standards will clearly be

for voluntary application, perhaps in a targeted manner, for a nominated period so that further trialling can occur. Referral via the NWI Committee to the NRMCC is also intended. A feedback loop, **Repeat for substantial amendment**, from Step 9 or 10 to Step 7 is included to provide for substantial amendment to content which if necessary, is likely to require further cost benefit analysis or impact assessment. This is likely to be needed for example when the application of a standard is to change from voluntary to mandatory.

### **Future Improvement**

Experience with the development of the initial standards will inevitably lead to learning about better practice for each step in the proposed process and enable additional detail or options to be progressively added to the description of each step. It may also result in the need to amend the process itself, by adding or subtracting steps. It is intended that the WADCO would keep the WADC informed of this experience and learning, make refinements as appropriate and seek endorsement to amend the process if needed.

**Figure A: Proposed Initial Standard Development Process**



**NATIONAL WATER ACCOUNTING DEVELOPMENT PROJECT 2008 AND 2009  
NRMMC WORKPLAN**  
*(as approved by Standing Committee on 14 March 2008)*

<b>Deliverable</b>	<b>NRMMC Workplan</b>
Findings from User Information Requirements study	<b>NRMMC13 (April 2008)</b>
Australian Water Accounting Standards workplan	<b>NRMMC14 (November 2008)</b>
Water Accounting Framework	<b>NRMMC15 (April 2009)</b>
AWAS1: General Purpose Water Reports - Step 10	<b>NRMMC16 (November 2009)</b>
AWAS2: Market Disclosures - Step 10	<b>NRMMC16 (November 2009)</b>
AWAS3: Utilisation of Water - Step 10	<b>NRMMC16 (November 2009)</b>
Recommendations ongoing institutional arrangements	<b>NRMMC16 (November 2009)</b>
Recommendations for the water accounting regulatory framework	<b>NRMMC16 (November 2009)</b>
Completion of the <i>National Water Accounting Development</i> project	<b>NRMMC17 (April 2010)</b>

**FINDINGS FROM THE USER INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS STUDY  
CONDUCTED FOR THE *NATIONAL WATER ACCOUNTING DEVELOPMENT*  
PROJECT**

1. A User Information Requirements study was undertaken with objectives :
  - (a) to detail the information requirements and associated rationale of water information users to inform the scope and development of water accounting;
  - (b) to understand the contribution that financial accounting can bring to water accounting, thereby fostering public and investor confidence in accordance with the National Water Initiative; and
  - (c) to inform how water accounting could interact with the wider reforms around water information projects being coordinated by the Bureau of Meteorology.
  
2. The findings from the report are summarised as follows:
  - (a) **Accounting discipline:** A disciplined approach to recording and reporting water information was deemed crucial to generate confidence in that water information;
  - (b) **Role of financial accounting:** The financial accounting discipline was identified as offering great potential for enhancing the assessment of performance and accountability of water managers;
  - (c) **Decision Usefulness:** It was felt that water accounting information should be potentially useful for a broad range of stakeholders;
  - (d) **Generally accepted accounting standards:** Users felt that water accounting standards should be generally accepted by the parties affected by the standards. This is enabled through an extensive stakeholder consultation process during standard development;
  - (e) **Consistent and comparable reporting formats:** The need for consistent reporting was acknowledged, where reports should be prepared on an accrual basis where relevant, in accordance with widely accepted accounting standards;
  - (f) **Qualitative characteristics:** It was felt that water accounting information should be: relevant, reliable, understandable, comparable and credible;
  - (g) **Assurance:** Credible information was argued to be directly assisted or enabled by a formal (independent) assurance function; and
  - (h) **Consolidation and disaggregation:** It was agreed that information should be capable of being disaggregated, as well as consolidated.

**PROCESS FOR STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION  
DISSEMINATION VIA THE *NATIONAL WATER ACCOUNTING  
DEVELOPMENT* PROJECT EXTERNAL WEBSITE**

*(as approved by Standing Committee on 14 March 2008).*

1. Consultation draft is provided to NWIC parties through the Jurisdictional Reference Panel, on the understanding that WADCO will take account of any concerns arising from the Jurisdictional Reference Panel and will elevate any such issues to NWIC for discussion if required;
2. Consultation draft document is approved by WADC;
3. Consultation draft is reviewed by the NWC to ensure it meets the Australian Government internet guidelines;
4. NWIC is informed out of session of the new content to be posted on the website;
5. WADC approved consultation draft is posted on the website with appropriate caveats, clearly stating that it is a consultation draft only and has not been approved by the parties to the National Water Initiative;
6. Targeted Stakeholders are contacted to inform them that draft materials are available on the website for comment;
7. These steps are repeated for each iteration of the draft document; and
8. When the consultation draft has been finalised, it will be provided to NRMCC via NWIC for discussion and approval.

<b>Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 13
	<b>LOCATION:</b> MELBOURNE
	<b>DATE:</b> 18 APRIL 2008
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 13.6</b>

### NATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMERS' WATER ACCOUNTS

1. *NWI 66 iv* requires the "...development of national guidelines for customers' water accounts that provide information on their water use relative to equivalent households in the community by 2006".
2. At NRMCM 11 meeting (November 2006), Council endorsed the release of the *National Guidelines for Residential Customers' Water Accounts*.
3. Council agreed that Ministers:
  - (a) report back on progress in implementing the guidelines within their jurisdictions; and
  - (b) requested Standing Committee to investigate the need for further research to support the uptake of improved billing practices by water service providers.

#### *Progress in implementing the guidelines*

4. The Water Services Association of Australia (WSAA) undertook a survey of its member water utilities and asked them to provide a short status report on how their current water accounts compare with the voluntary guidelines, and whether there are plans for water accounts in future to include content consistent with the guidelines. The results of this survey and an explanation of the varying levels of complexity by which a utility can choose to report a customer's water use can be found at Annex A.
5. Ten (out of eighteen) water utilities responded to the survey representing four states and a mixture of major urban and regional customers. All have implemented at least basic (level 1) information on customers' bills – that is customers' own water use compared to the previous billing period and the same time last year. Some of the large regional water utilities are exploring expanding customer information to intermediate (level 2) information – a comparison to local area average. Of the major urban water utilities, some have implemented advanced (level 3 and 4) billing information – a comparison of households of similar size and efficient water usage.

#### *Further research proposed*

6. There are concerns among some water utilities about the cost and complexity of implementing advanced billing information. To this end, the former Australian Government Minister responsible for Water announced funding for a project in October 2007 that would quantify water savings from smart water bills for

residential customers. Their consumption would then be compared to other customers receiving standard water bills to observe any changes in consumption.

7. SA Water was the initial proponent, but withdrew and the NWC has since approached Hunter Water and Yarra Valley Water to undertake the project.
8. Funding for the project was granted by the Minister for Climate Change and Water, Senator the Hon. Penny Wong, on 5 March 2008. The results of the project will be made available to water utilities across Australia. The exercise is expected to take at least 12 months.

## **RESOLUTIONS**

9. Council:
  - (a) **NOTED** the status of implementation of the *National Guidelines for Residential Customers' Water Accounts*; and
  - (b) **NOTED** that the NWC is commissioning research to determine the costs of implementation of the guidelines.

**ANNEX A:** Extent of the Implementation of the National Guidelines for Residential Customers' Water Accounts

## EXTENT OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMERS' WATER ACCOUNTS

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### BASIC

#### Level 1

- Customers' own water use compared to previous billing period;
- Customers' own water use compared to same time last year.

### INTERMEDIATE

#### Level 2

- Customers' own water use compared to metropolitan/urban average;
- Customers' own water use compared to local area average.

### ADVANCED

#### Level 3

- Customers' own water use compared to household (indoor) of same size;
- Customers' own water use compared to water efficient household (indoor) of same size.

#### Level 4

- Customers' own water use compared to household and garden of same size;
  - Customers' own water use compared to water efficient use by same household and garden size.
- 

*This information was supplied by the Water Services Association of Australia (WSAA) through a survey they conducted in 2007.*

Comments by various Water Companies:

#### **City West Water (VIC)**

- Committed to providing appropriate information
- Customers currently receive average daily water use per household in litres for the period, info presented in a graph comparing the current and previous four quarter's use
- Additionally a newsletter with a table comparing household size and the litres used per day in a water efficient home (essentially advanced Level 3)
- Sufficient scope to develop Level 4 following a review and scoping of a new bill from 2007 to 2009

#### **Gippsland Water (VIC)**

- Currently provides Level 1
- Exploring Level 2 – no set timeframe

#### **Goulburn Valley Water (VIC)**

- Currently Level 1
- Progressing to Level 2 is subject to results achieved by others who have progressed beyond Level 1
- Complex for GVW because of area north and south of the Great Dividing Range, vastly different usage patterns depending on location

### **Hunter Water (NSW)**

- Current account meet criteria for Level 1 & part Level 2
- Current info on water consumption and water savings tips limited to general information as insert with summer account
- Planning Level 2 compliance by end of 2007-2008 as system development and bill re design required
- To achieve Level 3 & 4 the following required:
  - Collection of household consumption data
  - Market research to determine what the customers would like to see on their bills to assist them with initiatives
  - System development
  - Bill redesign
- Future consideration by committee could be examining the commercial opportunities
- Currently limited information on e-bills – industry to take a position in order to drive market acceptance

### **SA Water (SA)**

- Cost of implementing to full extent could be substantial
- During 06/07 project developed to gauge benefits
- Project aimed to expose a subset of SA Water’s customers to smart bills and monitor their consumption over a period of time
- Funding has been sought

### **South East Water (VIC)**

- Accounts display “Advanced Level 4” information

### **Sydney Water (NSW)**

- For several years have included a comparative graph
- Information enhanced to show targets for householders
- Currently bills provide information at “advanced level three”
- “Level four” available on website
- General comments re understanding the effect of different target consumptions on consumer behaviour

### **Western Water (VIC)**

- For 3 years have included “neighbourhood average” using a graph compares average household usage and individual household usage
- Only concern is that customers already doing better could ease up, observation only

### **Water Corporation (WA)**

- Completed review
- New account compares favourably, at intermediate level, with National Guidelines
  - Customers usage compared to same period pervious year and local area average for single residential property

- Presented graphically with actual litres per day calculated and noted separately

### **Yarra Valley Water (VIC)**

- Accounts display advanced Level 4 information
- Update data provided on 'typical' and 'efficient' water usage comparisons to reflect gains in water savings made by the community, i.e. both the typical and efficient comparators continue to reduce, thus supporting the provision of comparative data as a tool to influence water using behaviours.

<b>Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 13
	<b>LOCATION:</b> MELBOURNE
	<b>DATE:</b> 18 APRIL 2008
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 13.7</b>

### PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. The NWI Performance Indicator Working Group developed an initial set of Performance Indicators as agreed in the NWI Agreement. The primary purpose of the performance indicators is to assist the National Water Commission with the biennial assessment of the NWI, commencing with the third assessment in 2010-11. The assessment will appraise the extent to which actions contribute to the national interest including an assessment of the impacts on regional, rural and urban communities.
2. The initial set of indicators was agreed by NRMMC at its ninth meeting subject to further refinement. That refinement has been completed.
3. The revisions fall within the following broad categories:
  - (a) Minor changes to improve accuracy and consistency;
  - (b) Amendments to take account of data availability or constraints;
  - (c) Changes to the order of indicators to clarify information flow; and
  - (d) Some updated wording.
4. The NWI Committee discussed the financial indicators with the Australian Bankers Association, including obstacles to their development.
5. Following consideration of these obstacles, the NWI Committee resolved to not proceed with a financial indicator.
6. NWIC proposes the set of indicators at Annex A be endorsed by Council without the financial performance indicators.

### RESOLUTION

7. Council **ENDORSED** the performance indicators at Annex A.

**ANNEX A:** Summary – Revised Set of National Water Initiative Performance Indicators against Original Set of Performance Indicators agreed by NRMMC

**SUMMARY - REVISED SET OF NATIONAL WATER INITIATIVE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AGAINST ORIGINAL SET OF PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AGREED BY NRMMC**

National Water Initiative Objective	Indicator presented to NRMMC 9	Revised Indicator
<b>Objective 1.</b> <b>Clear and nationally-compatible characteristics for secure water access entitlements</b>	1.1 - Access to finance based on water entitlements.	This indicator was removed.
	1.2 - Number of decisions by governments that revoke or change the characteristics of entitlements and the volumes affected.	1.1 – The number of decisions by governments that revoke or change the security of statutory water access entitlements and the reasons for these decisions
<b>Objective 2.</b> <b>Transparent, statutory-based water planning.</b>	2.1 - Proportion and volume of water systems that are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. planned;</li> <li>b. not planned but identified as requiring a plan;</li> <li>c. not planned but identified as not requiring a plan; and</li> <li>d. unplanned and not assessed</li> </ul>	2.1 – The proportion of <u>surface water</u> systems and proportion of water volume used [ <u>of inflow and storage volume</u> ] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Covered by a water plan</li> <li>b) Not covered by a water plan, but identified as requiring one</li> <li>c) Not covered by a water plan and not yet assessed in terms of requirement, or</li> <li>d) Not covered by a water plan but identified as not requiring one.</li> </ul>
		2.2 – The proportion of <u>groundwater</u> systems and proportion of water volume used [ <u>of aquifer recharge and storage volume</u> ] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Covered by a water plan</li> <li>b) Not covered by a water plan, but identified as</li> </ul>

National Water Initiative Objective	Indicator presented to NRMCC 9	Revised Indicator
		<p>requiring one</p> <p>c) Not covered by a water plan and not yet assessed terms of requirement, or</p> <p>d) Not covered by a water plan but identified as not requiring one.</p>
<p><b>Objective 3.</b></p> <p><b>Statutory provision for environmental and other public benefit outcomes, and improved environmental management practices - <i>To assess the environmental and other public benefit outcomes in plans:</i></b></p>	<p>3.1 - Proportion of water used for consumptive and environmental purposes.</p>	<p>3.1 - Proportion of water use for consumptive and <u>non-consumptive</u> purposes</p>
	<p>3.2 - Extent to which environmental and other public benefit outcomes defined in water plans are achieved.</p>	<p>3.2 - Extent to which <u>actions have been implemented to achieve</u> environmental and other public benefit outcomes defined in water planning frameworks (for 2004 - 05).</p>
	<p>3.3 - Improved resource condition.</p> <p>a) Total nitrogen + flow leaving sub-catchment or whole catchment</p> <p>b) Total phosphorus + flow leaving sub-catchment or whole catchment</p> <p>c) Turbidity OR total suspended solids + flow</p> <p>d) Total dissolved solids + flow OR electrical conductivity</p>	<p>3.3 - Improved resource condition outcomes</p>

National Water Initiative Objective	Indicator presented to NRMCC 9	Revised Indicator
	3.4 Number and proportion of water systems for which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) High conservation value water system components have been identified;</li> <li>b) Plans addressing high conservation value water system components have been completed; and</li> <li>c) Actions consistent with the above Plan have been undertaken.</li> </ul>	3.4 - Number and proportion of water systems for which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) High conservation value aquatic ecosystems have been identified;</li> <li>b) Plans or other instruments addressing high conservation value components have been completed; and</li> <li>c) Actions consistent with the plan have been undertaken</li> </ul>
<i>To assess improved environmental management, including amongst water service providers and environmental water managers:</i>	3.5 - Number and category of environmental incidents.	3.5 - Environmental compliance by urban water service providers
		3.6 - Environmental compliance by rural water service providers.
<b>Objective 4.</b>  <b>Complete the return of all currently over-allocated or overused systems to environmentally-sustainable levels of extraction</b>	4.1 - Number and proportion of water systems for which a water plan has been completed that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) have not been assessed for overallocation;</li> <li>b) have been assessed for overallocation and are determined not to be overallocated;</li> <li>c) are assessed as being overallocated (and level of overallocation) with a pathway in place to address overallocation; and</li> <li>d) are assessed as being overallocated (and the level of overallocation) with no pathway in place to address overallocation.</li> </ul>	4.1 - Number and proportion of water systems for which a water plan has been completed that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) have not been assessed for overallocation;</li> <li>b) have been assessed for overallocation and are determined not to be overallocated;</li> <li>c) are assessed as being overallocated (and the level of overallocation) with a pathway in place to address the overallocation; and</li> <li>d) are assessed as being overallocated (and the level of overallocation) with no pathway in place to address the overallocation.</li> </ul>

National Water Initiative Objective	Indicator presented to NRMCC 9	Revised Indicator
	<p>4.2 - Number and proportion of water systems for which a water plan has been completed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) have not been assessed for overuse;</li> <li>b) have been assessed for overuse and are determined not to be overused;</li> <li>c) are assessed as being overused, and have a pathway in place to address overuse; and</li> <li>d) are assessed as being overused, and have no pathway in place to address overuse.</li> </ul>	<p>4.1 - Number and proportion of water systems for which a water plan has been completed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) have not been assessed for overallocation;</li> <li>b) have been assessed for overallocation and are determined not to be overallocated;</li> <li>c) are assessed as being overallocated (and the level of overallocation) with a pathway in place to address the overallocation; and</li> <li>d) are assessed as being overallocated (and the level of overallocation) with no pathway in place to address the overallocation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 5.</b>  <b>Progressive removal of barriers to trade in water and meeting other requirements to facilitate the broadening and deepening of the water market, with an open trading market to be in place - <i>For assessing market activity:</i></b></p>	<p>5.1 - Percent (by volume and number) of entitlements / allocations traded permanently, temporarily or leased.</p>	<p>5.1 - Percent (by volume and number) of entitlements / allocations traded permanently, temporarily or leased.</p>
<p><i>For assessing activities that facilitate trade, including removal of barriers to trade:</i></p>	<p>5.2 - Water trade approval times.</p>	<p>5.2 - Water trade approval times</p>
	<p>5.3 - Price of registering the trade in relation to total price of trade.</p>	<p>5.4 - Cost of doing a trade of a water entitlement, including permanent and temporary trade</p>

National Water Initiative Objective	Indicator presented to NRMCC 9	Revised Indicator
	5.4 - Number and proportion of applications to trade rejected by State and Territory approval authorities, by reason for rejection.	5.3 - Number and proportion of applications rejected by State & Territory approval authorities, by reason for rejection.
<b>Objective 6.</b> <b>Clarity around the assignment of risk arising from future changes in the availability of water for the consumptive pool.</b>	No specific indicator. Compliance with the NWI requirements to be assessed as part of annual reporting to the NRM Ministerial Council and COAG.	6.1 - Application of risk management framework in jurisdictions and regular public reporting to aid risk management.
<b>Objective 7.</b> <b>Water accounting which is able to meet the information needs of different water systems in respect to planning, monitoring, trading, environmental management and on-farm management.</b>	7.1 - Percentage of total water, and proportion of water systems, accounted for, audited and reconciled in accordance with the agreed accounting system standards. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) <math>(\text{Volume water accounted for in accordance with the agreed accounting system standards} / \text{total volume of water}) \times 100.</math></li> <li>b) <math>(\text{Number of water systems accounted for in accordance with the agreed accounting system standards} / \text{number of water systems}) \times 100</math></li> </ul>	7.1 - Percent of total water and proportion of water systems accounted for, audited and reconciled in accordance with the agreed accounting system standards
<b>Objective 8.</b> <b>Policy settings which facilitate water use efficiency and innovation in urban and rural areas – for assessing water use efficiency and innovation in rural sector:</b>	8.1 - Rate of use of more efficient irrigation systems. OR 8.1 - [Change in irrigation efficiency.]	8.1 - Rate of use of more efficient irrigation systems
	8.2 - Gross Value Irrigated Agricultural Production per megalitre.	8.2 - Gross value of irrigated agricultural production by state per ML.
	8.3 - Water application rates for irrigated agriculture.	8.3 - Water application rates for irrigated agriculture.

National Water Initiative Objective	Indicator presented to NRMCC 9	Revised Indicator
	8.4 - Extent of Great Artesian Basin Pressure Recovery.	Indicator removed. No target pressure surface has yet been agreed on.
<i>For assessing water use efficiency and innovation:</i>	8.5 - Household water use per person per annum by state.	8.4 - Household water use per annum.
	8.6 - Percentage of water supplied to users by source.	8.5 - Percentage of water supplied to users by source.
	8.7 - Percentage of water lost in distribution systems.	8.6 - Percentage of water losses in distribution systems.
		8.7 - Consistency of pricing arrangements – lower bound
	8.8 - Rate of return being generated on asset base.	8.8 - Consistency of pricing arrangements – Upper bound Rate of return being generated on asset base for rural providers. Rate of return being generated on asset base for urban providers.
	8.9 - Operating costs per ML of water delivered.	8.9 - Operating costs per ML of water delivered.
	8.10 - Money invested in water infrastructure by water service providers.	8.10 – Money invested in water infrastructure by water service providers.
<b>Objective 9.</b> <b>Addressing future adjustment issues that may impact on water users and</b>	No specific indicator has been developed for this objective. Compliance with the NWI requirements is to be assessed as part of annual reporting to the NRM Ministerial Council and	

National Water Initiative Objective	Indicator presented to NRMCC 9	Revised Indicator
communities.	COAG.	
<p><b>Objective 10.</b></p> <p><b>Recognition of the connectivity between surface and groundwater resources and connected systems managed as a single resource.</b></p>	<p>10.1 - Proportion and volume of water resource plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) with no assessment of interconnected surface and groundwater systems;</li> <li>b) that identify interconnected surface and groundwater systems but do not have integrated management; or</li> <li>c) have integrated management for interconnected surface and groundwater systems.</li> </ul>	<p>10.1 – Proportion and <u>spatial area</u> within water plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) with no assessment of connectivity between surface and groundwater systems;</li> <li>b) that are assessed and have no connectivity between surface and groundwater systems;</li> <li>c) that identify interconnected surface and groundwater systems but do not have integrated management; or</li> <li>d) have integrated management for interconnected surface and groundwater systems.</li> </ul>

<b>Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 13
	<b>LOCATION:</b> MELBOURNE
	<b>DATE:</b> 18 APRIL 2008
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 13.8</b>

## GUIDELINES FOR WATER RECYCLING – PHASE TWO

1. Council endorsed the *National Water Quality Management Strategy (NWQMS) Australian Guidelines for Water Recycling – Managing Health and Environmental Risks: Phase 1* in November 2006. In June 2006, Council initiated Phase 2 of guideline development comprised of the ‘Augmentation of Drinking Water Supplies’, ‘Stormwater Reuse’ and ‘Managed Aquifer Recharge’ modules.
2. The EPHC and the NRMCMC are jointly developing the Phase 2 guidelines. Endorsement of the guidelines will also be considered by the NHMRC. A Joint Steering Committee including representatives from the EPH and NRM Standing Committees, health agencies, NHMRC, the National Water Commission and the water industry has been established to oversee the development of the Phase 2 guidelines. Expert working groups have been established to develop each module and consultants appointed to undertake specific projects in relation to each of the modules. The NEPC Service Corporation has provided project management services for the development of the guidelines.

### **Augmentation of Drinking Water Supplies.**

3. The ‘*Augmentation of Drinking Water Supplies*’ (Annex A) module is for Council’s consideration for endorsement. This module has been prepared by the ‘*Augmentation of Drinking Water Supplies*’ working group with input from health agencies, including the NHMRC, and input from a consultancy on recycled water quality standards and was subject to a nation-wide public consultation process during 2007 (see below).
4. This module will be a first as no other country has developed comprehensive national guidelines dealing with the use of recycled water to augment drinking water supplies. The module will provide a scientific basis to facilitate the safe use of recycled water for drinking in proposed and future recycling schemes.
5. The module describes how to apply the risk management framework prescribed in Phase 1 of the guidelines to the specific use of recycled water for drinking. This is also consistent with the risk management approach set out in the *Australian Drinking Water Guidelines*.
6. An issue of concern has been the chemical content of recycled water (particularly with regard to substances such as pharmaceuticals and endocrine disrupting agents). The development of the module has been supported by an expert consultancy, including leading Australian toxicologists, to focus on this issue. The consultancy was commissioned and funded jointly by the National Water Commission and the Queensland Government and it is expected that the

consultancy report will be made available as a supporting document to the guidelines.

7. A draft of the '*Augmentation of Drinking Water Supplies*' module was released for public comment from July to September 2007. A series of public meetings was held in all state and territory capitals and a workshop of key stakeholders was convened in collaboration with the NHMRC. Thirty submissions were received on the guidelines. A summary of submissions and responses to those submissions is attached ([Annex B](#)).
8. The public consultation process revealed an increasing level of community acceptance of the need for guidelines for augmentation of drinking water supplies with recycled water. This included support from opponents of proposed schemes. The module was generally recognised as providing comprehensive guidance on developing and assessing augmentation of drinking water supplies schemes. Where concerns were raised, they tended to question the technical capacity of suppliers and regulators to implement the guidelines rather than question the content of the guidelines themselves. Other comments suggested amendments or additions of text. The comments did not suggest changes to the principles or the basic approach adopted in the guidelines.
9. It is important to note that the guidelines are a tool for those governments and local councils that wish to pursue this path. The decision on whether or not to augment drinking supplies with recycled water will always be a matter for the relevant jurisdiction or local government authority.

### **Managed Aquifer Recharge**

10. The draft *National Water Quality Management Strategy (NWQMS) Australian Guidelines for Water Recycling: Managed Aquifer Recharge* ([Annex C](#)) module has been prepared by the Managed Aquifer Recharge working group with substantial input through a consultancy with CSIRO Land and Water. The module describes how to apply the risk management framework set out in Phase 1 of the guidelines for the specific purpose of managed aquifer recharge as a method of recycling water and represents a valuable resource to the emerging science of managed aquifer recharge. Council should note that the attached draft will undergo technical edit before being released for public consultation.

### **Stormwater Re-use**

11. The draft *National Water Quality Management Strategy (NWQMS) Australian Guidelines for Water Recycling: Stormwater Re-use* ([Annex D](#)) module has been prepared by the Stormwater Re-use working group with input from expert consultancies. The module describes how to apply the risk management framework set out in Phase 1 of the guidelines for the specific purpose of harvesting and re-using stormwater for non-potable uses. Note that potable use of stormwater is addressed in the *Augmentation of Drinking Water Supplies* module. Council should note that the draft will undergo technical edit before being released for public consultation.

### **Consultation on Stormwater Re-use and Managed Aquifer Recharge**

12. Advice has been commissioned from a consultant on a suitable public consultation strategy for the two modules. The package of materials available to support public consultation will include analysis of key issues, key messages, sample Question and Answers and Frequently Asked Questions. It is proposed to use a similar

consultation process as was used for the *Augmentation of Drinking Water Supplies* module. Consultation will include peer review by internationally recognized experts in the respective fields.

## RESOLUTIONS

13. Council:

- (a) **ENDORSED** the document *National Water Quality Management Strategy (NWQMS) Australian Guidelines for Water Recycling: Augmentation of Drinking Water Supplies (Annex A)* as one of three modules comprising Phase 2 of guideline development and as suitable guidance for those governments that choose to implement indirect potable reuse;
- (b) **AGREED** to publish the document *National Water Quality Management Strategy (NWQMS) Australian Guidelines for Water Recycling: Augmentation of Drinking Water Supplies (Annex A)* on the EPHC and NRMCC websites;
- (c) **ENDORSED** the drafts of the other Phase 2 modules as a suitable basis for public consultation - *National Water Quality Management Strategy (NWQMS) Australian Guidelines for Water Recycling: Managed Aquifer Recharge (Annex C)* and *National Water Quality Management Strategy (NWQMS) Australian Guidelines for Water Recycling: Stormwater Re-use (Annex D)*;
- (d) **AGREED** to release the draft documents *National Water Quality Management Strategy (NWQMS) Australian Guidelines for Water Recycling: Managed Aquifer Recharge (Annex C)* and *National Water Quality Management Strategy (NWQMS) Australian Guidelines for Water Recycling: Stormwater Re-use (Annex D)* for public consultation in the period April 2008 to June 2008; and
- (e) **NOTED** that the Environment Protection and Heritage Council (EPHC) also considered the three modules at its meeting on Thursday 17 April and that these modules will be considered by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) at its meeting on Thursday 24 April.

**ANNEX A:** *National Water Quality Management Strategy (NWQMS) Australian Guidelines for Water Recycling: Augmentation of Drinking Water Supplies*

**ANNEX B:** Summary of Submissions and Responses on the draft *National Water Quality Management Strategy (NWQMS) Australian Guidelines for Water Recycling: Augmentation of Drinking Water Supplies*

**ANNEX C:** Draft *National Water Quality Management Strategy (NWQMS) Australian Guidelines for Water Recycling: Managed Aquifer Recharge*

**ANNEX D:** *National Water Quality Management Strategy (NWQMS) Australian Guidelines for Water Recycling: Stormwater Re-use*  
*[Annexes A-D are held by the Secretariat]*

<b>Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 13
	<b>LOCATION:</b> MELBOURNE
	<b>DATE:</b> 18 APRIL 2008
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 13.9</b>

**REVISION OF THE NATIONAL WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT  
STRATEGY - AUSTRALIAN DRINKING WATER GUIDELINES (2004)**

1. The National Water Quality Management Strategy (NWQMS) *Australian Drinking Water Guidelines* (2004) (ADWG) is Australia's authoritative guideline on managing drinking water quality. Its development was jointly funded by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) and NRMMC and the final document endorsed by them.
2. The ADWG (2004) provides a framework and detailed guidance for managing drinking water supplies to assure safety and aesthetic quality at point of use. As a benchmark document under the NWQMS, it is based on the best scientific evidence and defines good quality water and how to achieve and assure it.
3. In 1998, NHMRC and the former Agriculture and Resource Management Council of Australia and New Zealand (ARMCANZ) established a joint committee, the Drinking Water Review Coordinating Group, to oversee and manage the review of the ADWG (1996) version which led to the ADWG (2004). In 2001-2002, responsibility for NWQMS matters transferred from the former ARMCANZ and the Australian and New Zealand Environment Conservation Council (ANZECC) to NRMMC. The ADWG continues to be developed under the auspices of the NHMRC and NRMMC, for example a Chapter 8 was endorsed by NRMMC in 2006.
4. ADWG development was given greater impetus by the Sydney water crisis of 1998, when it was suspected that water supplies were contaminated by *Cryptosporidium* and *Giardia*. In part due to these problems, the ADWG 2004 features an innovative risk management framework to deal with all stages of the processes of managing drinking water quality including compliance with a guideline value, rather than relying disproportionately on compliance with a guideline value alone.
5. The most recent content in the ADWG (2004) dates from 2003 and since then it has become apparent that a number of important areas of the document needed revision in the light of new information, developments in assessment of risk and the need to improve the monitoring chapters.

***Process for revision***

6. NHMRC is planning a major revision of the ADWG and proposes continued collaboration with NRMMC and agencies such as the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts (DEWHA), state agencies and other stakeholders.

7. It is proposed that the recently established NHMRC Water Quality Advisory Committee (WQAC), containing representatives from the Commonwealth, state agencies, the water industry and scientific experts oversees this major work over the next two years. There would also be supporting “in house” management by NHMRC staff. The WQAC would provide regular updates to NRMMC and NHMRC, including seeking approvals for key decisions. Membership of the WQAC and its Terms of Reference are at Annex A.
8. The first meeting of the WQAC in June 2007 discussed priority areas for review of the ADWG (2004), including the recommendations of several stakeholder groups. It is proposed that an expert reference group comprising Australian scientific and technical experts (Annex B) will develop the revised guidelines, focusing on six priority areas (below).
9. The WQAC will oversee and coordinate information gathering by the reference groups over a seven month period, liaising with the technical writer to produce the draft guidelines. The WQAC will finalise the draft guidelines and recommend to NRMMC and NHMRC targeted and public consultations, as well as independent peer review. Following these consultations and review, the draft guidelines will be revised and submitted to the NHMRC and NRMMC for approval.

#### ***Matters for revision***

10. The work will comprise revision of the six areas identified through the consultation process and prioritised by the WQAC.
  - Microbiology
  - Disinfection By-products
  - Physical/Chemical Treatment Quality (Inorganics)
  - Organics
  - Monitoring Chapters (9/10)
  - Issues to be addressed directly by the WQAC (e.g., implementation of the Guidelines and use of DALYs)
11. Annex B also gives further details on issues for review under the six priority areas.
12. The concept of Disability Adjusted Life Years (DALYs) as a measure of risk has been introduced into the NWQMS *Australian Guidelines for Water Recycling: Managing Health and Environmental Risks – Phase 1* (2006) and is being used in the Phase 2 volume (see NRMSC 15, Resolution 15.4). It is important in the revision to align the ADWG with this newer approach to risk.

#### ***Budget***

13. The estimated cost for the review of the ADWG is \$663,750. Budget details are at Annex C. The Water Services Association of Australia (WSAA) has agreed to contribute \$30,000 to the revision. For the balance, \$633,750, it is proposed that NHMRC and NRMMC each contribute 50 per cent, i.e., \$316,875 on a cost sharing basis, similarly to previous revisions of the ADWG. NRMMC contributions for each jurisdiction are set out in Annex C.

**Timeframes**

14. It is intended that the revised guidelines be released by the Councils in the first half of 2009. A detailed timeline is at Annex D.
15. The first phase of the revision is expected to produce a draft guidelines document by mid 2008, followed by consultation and review in September-November 2008. After revision, a final version is expected to be ready for submission to NHMRC and NRMCC for clearance in the first half of 2009.

**Communication Strategy**

16. The communication strategy (Annex E) will ensure that all stakeholders involved with the revision of the ADWG are kept informed of progress and involved in the review. The key stakeholders are: NHMRC, NRMCC, DEWHA, Australia Water Association (AWA), Water Services Association of Australia (WSAA), Environmental Health Committee (enHealth) (a sub-committee of the Australian Health Protection Committee), Department of Health and Ageing, state and territory agencies and water authorities.
17. A copy of this proposal has been forwarded to EPHC for information.

**RESOLUTIONS**

18. Council:
  - (a) **ENDORSED** the proposal for a revision of the *Australian Drinking Water Guidelines (2004)* under the National Water Quality Management Strategy, including the proposed draft budget, project management arrangements and Terms of Reference, scope, timelines and communication strategy; and
  - (b) **AGREED** to provide \$316,750 towards the proposed revision, with jurisdictional contributions based on the standard funding formula, noting that NHMRC is also providing \$316,750 on a cost sharing basis and that the Water Services Association of Australia (WSAA) is providing \$30,000.

**ANNEX A:** NHMRC Water Quality Advisory Committee Membership and Terms of Reference

**ANNEX B:** Reference Groups for revision of ADWG 2007-09

**ANNEX C:** Draft Budget for the Revision of the ADWG

**ANNEX D:** Timeframe for Revision of the ADWG

**ANNEX E:** Project Communication Strategy for Development of the ADWG

**NHMRC WATER QUALITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP  
TERMS OF REFERENCE**

1. Professor Don Bursill (Chair)
2. Dr David Cunliffe (South Australian Department of Human Services)
3. Dr Karin Leder (Monash University)
4. Dr Martha Sinclair (Monash University)
5. Associate Professor Greg Leslie (University of New South Wales)
6. Dr Stuart Khan (University of New South Wales)
7. Peter Donlon (Western Water)
8. Chris Davis (University of Technology Sydney)
9. Jan Bowman (Victorian Department of Human Services)
10. Professor Tania Sorrell (University of Sydney at Westmead)
11. Peter Mosse (Water Treatment Alliance in Australia)
12. Tom Mollenkopf (AWA)
13. Adam Lovell (WSAA)
14. Charles Lewis (Australian Government Department of the Environment, Water Heritage and the Arts (DEWHA))

## **NHMRC ADWG REFERENCE GROUP**

### **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

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The Australian Drinking Water Guidelines Reference Group will:

1. Provide rapid scientific and technical advice to the Water Quality Advisory Committee (WQAC), on information relevant to the revision of the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines(ADWG);
2. Under the direction of WQAC prepare and refine reports comprising the technical advice to assist the technical writing of the revised ADWG;
3. Collaborate with WQAC and the technical writer to revise the ADWG to a standard required by the NHMRC and NRMCC;
4. Prepare scientific advice in a variety of formats including but not limited to:
  - Manuals
  - Fact sheets
  - Guidelines
  - Consumer brochures
  - Discussion papers
  - Information for agenda papers; and
5. Be available to attend relevant teleconferences and meetings as required.

The Reference Group will commence on 1 October 2007 and finish on 30 June 2009.

## REFERENCE GROUPS FOR REVISION OF ADWG 2007-09

WQAC member	Reference Group Members	Issues for review
<b>Reference Group 1: Microbiology</b>		
David Cunliffe	Mike Burch (Australian Water Quality Centre)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alternative indicators</li> <li>• Coliforms</li> <li>• Cryptosporidium/Giardia</li> <li>• Cyanobacteria</li> <li>• E-Coli</li> <li>• Emerging Pathogens</li> <li>• Heterotrophic Plate Counts</li> </ul>
Martha Sinclair	Melita Stevens (Melbourne Water Corporation)	
Karin Leder	Dan Deere (Water Futures)	
Tania Sorrell		
<b>Reference Group 2: Disinfection By-products</b>		
Martha Sinclair -	Paul Byleveld (NSW Health)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chloral Hydrate</li> <li>• Chloraminated furanones</li> <li>• Chlorine</li> <li>• Cholrate</li> <li>• Haloacetonitriles</li> <li>• NDMA (nitrosodimethylamine)</li> </ul>
Charles Lewis	Andrew Humpage (Australian Water Quality Centre)	
	Robert McKenzie (Victorian Department of Human Services,)	
<b>Reference group 3: Physical/Chemical Treatment Quality (Inorganics)</b>		
Peter Mosse	Mary Drikas (Australian Water Quality Centre)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aesthetics</li> <li>• Ammonia</li> <li>• Arsenic</li> <li>• Barium</li> <li>• Beryllium</li> <li>• Boron</li> <li>• Desalination – treatment/decisions</li> <li>• Iodine</li> <li>• Iron</li> <li>• Manganese</li> <li>• Monochloramine</li> </ul>
Peter Donlon	Richard Walker (Water Corporation of WA)	
Chris Davis	Keith Craig (Veolia Water Australia)	

WQAC member	Reference Group Members	Issues for review
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nitrite/nitrate</li> <li>• pH/alkalinity</li> <li>• Primary and secondary disinfection</li> <li>• Tin</li> <li>• Total dissolved solids</li> <li>• True colour</li> <li>• Turbidity</li> <li>• Uranium (chemical)</li> </ul>
<b>Reference Group 4: Organics</b>		
Stuart Khan	Glen Shaw (Griffith University)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Atrazine</li> <li>• Poly Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs)</li> <li>• Epichlorohydrin</li> <li>• Chlorpicrin</li> <li>• Pesticides</li> </ul>
	Jim Fitzgerald (South Australian Department of Health)	
	Heather Chapman (Queensland Health Scientific Services)	
	Fred Leusch (Queensland Health Scientific Services)	
	Adam Lovell (Sydney Water Corporation and WSAA)	
<b>Reference Group 5: Monitoring Chapters (9/10)</b>		
Peter Donlon,	Dan Deere (Water Futures)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review 98% target E-Coli</li> <li>• Performance with regulatory targets</li> <li>• Chlorine – classification measurement</li> <li>• Ensure fact sheets include methodology&amp;dates for review</li> <li>• Review discussion of monitoring in the ADWG with respect to NWQMS Doc 7 Australian</li> </ul>
Peter Mosse	John Howard (South Australian Water Corporation)	
Jan Bowman	David Sheehan (Victorian Department of Human Services)	
Charles Lewis		

WQAC member	Reference Group Members	Issues for review
		Guidelines for Water Quality Monitoring and Reporting (2000) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Turbidity methods</li> </ul>
<b>WQAC Issues</b>		
Chris Davis	John Woolard (ACT Health)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DALY – upper limits</li> <li>• Performance targets</li> </ul>
Don Bursill	Greg Stewart (Sydney South Western Area Health Services)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Framework issues/accreditation</li> <li>• Research Gaps – synergistic effect of pathogens</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FSANZ discrepancies (Arsenic) – bottled water</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cyanogen chloride</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pharmaceuticals and personal care products</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guidance on converting guidelines into legislation</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ethics and social justice issues</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indigenous – implementation</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Antibiotics</li> </ul>

**DRAFT BUDGET FOR THE REVISION OF THE ADWG****TABLE 1**

<b>Project Costs</b>	<b>07-08</b>	<b>08-09</b>	<b>Total</b>
Sitting fees (\$350/day) based on 5 days/year for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 17 Reference group members;</li> <li>• 13 (WQAC members), includes 1 Chair</li> </ul>	\$54,870	\$54,870	
Sitting fees x 2/year - WQAC face to face meetings to progress ADWGGRG work.	\$6,547	\$6,744	
Travel, Venue and Catering for WQAC Committee Meetings x 2/year	\$7,584	\$7,811	
Reference Group Meeting x2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Including WQAC members</li> <li>• Includes total of 31 members, 1 Chair</li> <li>• 2 secretariat</li> <li>• Venue, travel &amp; catering</li> </ul>	\$39,890		
Technical Writer		\$40,000	
Public Consultation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advertising in a major public newspaper</li> <li>• Documentation and consideration of submissions</li> </ul>		\$8,000	
Independent review		\$12,000	
Printing of Guidelines, development and printing of overview document and extension activities such as workshops to promote understanding and use of the Guidelines		\$150,000	
Launch		\$30,900	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$108,891</b>	<b>\$310,325</b>	<b>\$419,216</b>

**TABLE 2**

<b>Staff Costs</b>	<b>07-08</b>	<b>08-09</b>	<b>Total</b>
Represents the cost of 0.5 FTE of one APS6 Position	\$40,209	\$41,416	
0.2 FTE of one EL1 for the term of the project	\$17,901	\$18,438	
0.2 FTE of one EL2	\$21,850	\$22,505	
Indirect costs	\$40,500	\$41,715	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$120,460</b>	<b>\$124,074</b>	<b>\$244,534</b>

**TOTAL EXPENDITURE**

<b>Project Costs</b>	\$419,216
<b>Salary Costs and oncosts</b>	\$244,534
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$663,750
Less Water Services Association of Australia (WSAA) contribution	\$30,000
Balance, for NHMRC and NRMCC to fund	\$633,750
<b>Proposed NRMCC contribution (50% of balance)</b>	<b>\$316,875</b>
<b>Proposed NHMRC contribution (50% of balance)</b>	<b>\$316,875</b>

It is proposed that the NRMCC contribution be funded in accordance with the standard cost sharing formula as follows:

<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>\$,000</b>
Australian Government	50.00%	\$158,437
New South Wales	16.570%	\$52,506
Victoria	12.357%	\$39,156
Queensland	9.837%	\$31,171
Western Australia	4.977%	\$15,771
South Australia	3.773%	\$11,956
Tasmania	1.186%	\$3,758
Australian Capital Territory	0.798%	\$2,529
Northern Territory	0.502%	\$1,591
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>\$316,875</b>

State and territory health departments have indicated they would cover costs of reference group member's from their agencies.

**TIMEFRAME FOR REVISION OF THE ADWG**

<b>TASK</b>	<b>BY WHOM</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>
Establish Reference Group and TOR for the Reference Group	Project Officer	November 2007
Initial teleconferences x 5 with the WQAC and Reference subgroups to identify purpose and roles.	Project Officer, WQAC and Reference Group members	January 2008
Information gathering	Reference Group and WQAC	January 2008 to April 2008
5 face to face meetings between WQAC representative and Reference Groups to collate and discuss progress	Project Officer, Reference Group members, WQAC	April – May 2008
Face to face WQAC meeting to receive and discuss first drafts of work submitted by the Reference Groups	Project Officer, WQAC and representatives of each Reference Group members + technical writer	End May 2008
Fine tuning of reference group input if required	Reference Group, Technical Writer	Mid June 2008
Draft guidelines submitted to NHMRC and WQAC	Technical Writer	End June 2008
Approach NHMRC & NRMMC for approval to undergo targeted and public consultation and independent review	Project Officer, WQAC	Mid July 2008
Public and targeted consultation phase	Project Officer	September-November 2008
consideration of submissions and inclusion into guidelines as appropriate – meeting of Reference Group	Technical writer, WQAC & Reference group	December 2008
Independent review	Consultant	Feb 2009
Incorporation of comments from Independent Reviewer and provision of final draft guidelines	Technical Writer	March 2009
Submission to Council of NHMRC and NRMMC for Consideration and recommendations	Project Officer	March/April 2009
Minute to CEO for approval	Project Officer	April 2009
Printing, uploading and dissemination / implementation	Project Officer	May/June 2009

## PROJECT COMMUNICATION STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE ADWG

The review of the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines (ADWG) requires a collaborative approach between the NHMRC and NRMMC with both having to approve the revised guidelines.

This communication strategy aims to ensure that all stakeholders involved with the revision of the ADWG are kept informed of progress and are involved in relevant stages of the review. The key stakeholders are: The Council and the Executive of the NHMRC, NRMMC, the Australian Government Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts (DEWHA), the Australian Water Association, the Water Services Association of Australia (WSAA), the Environmental Health Committee (enHealth) (a sub-committee of the Australian Health Protection Committee), the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing, state and territory agencies and water authorities.

To ensure that all stakeholders are appropriately informed of progress, the NHMRC propose the following strategies:

Council of NHMRC	-Updates and requests for advice through an agenda paper for each session. - <i>NHMRC Act 1992</i> requires Council approval to progress public consultation of draft guidelines, and recommends CEO approval of final guidelines.
Executive of NHMRC	-Minutes to the Chief Knowledge and Development Officer at relevant milestones, but no less than one minute every 6-8 weeks.
NRMMC	-DEWHA representative on WQAC to keep NRMMC, NRMMC & relevant sub-committees informed of the progress through agenda papers. State and territory agencies represented on NRMMC would be likewise informed. -NRMMC requires approval of draft guidelines prior to public consultation and release of final guidelines.
Department of Environment and Water Resources (DEWHA)	-DEWHA has a representative on the NHMRC's WQAC. He has responsibility to keep DEWHA informed of progress.
Australia Water Association (AWA)	-Progress reports can be provided to AWA for inclusion in their newsletter every 3 months, or at significant milestones. -WQAC has an AWA representative.
Water Services Association of Australia (WSAA)	- Progress reports can be provided to WSAA for inclusion in their newsletter every 3 months, or at significant milestones - WQAC has a WSAA representative.

enHealth	-Agenda Papers can be provided at relevant milestones in the revision of the ADWG and through enHealth, state and territory health agency representatives can be kept informed. -WQAC has the Chair of enHealth as a member.
Department of Health and Ageing	-Progress reports can be provided every 3 months, or at significant milestones, to the Office of Health Protection.

<b>Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 13
	<b>LOCATION:</b> MELBOURNE
	<b>DATE:</b> 18 APRIL 2008
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 13.10</b>

#### MURRAY-DARLING BASIN SUSTAINABLE YIELDS PROJECT

1. Dr Hatton, Director of CSIRO's *Water for a Healthy Country* Research Flagship, provided to Council an update on results to date from the Murray-Darling Sustainable Yields Assessment.
2. Results included summaries of climate and development impacts on regional water resources and future availability and security of water under present water sharing arrangements. Of note was the great variation in impacts and diversions under these arrangements across the Basin. Dr Hatton noted that the Assessment was preparing its last few regional reports and final report.

<b>Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 13
	<b>LOCATION:</b> MELBOURNE
	<b>DATE:</b> 18 APRIL 2008
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 13.11</b>

### FUTURE NRM DIRECTIONS

1. The Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts, the Hon. Peter Garrett MP advised Council that the Rudd Government recognised that there was a pressing need to protect Australia's unique natural environment and to continue to improve the sustainable management of our natural resources. This would be a key investment in Australia's future. Minister Garrett advised of the government's new ongoing program for investing in the future of Australia's environment and natural resources – the Caring for our Country Program, which will commence on 1 July 2008.
2. The Caring for our Country Program is designed to:
  - achieve clear, measurable and more strategic outcomes against national environment and natural resource priorities;
  - respond to the pressing need to do things better and to make real and measurable progress; and
  - include transitional arrangements to minimise disruption.
3. Council heard that Caring for our Country would bring leadership, accountability and a coherent and coordinated approach to Commonwealth investment in this area. It would address the defects of the previous approach by streamlining delivery, reducing red tape and improving the capacity to measure outcomes.
4. Minister Garrett remarked that the excellent spirit of cooperation by States and Territories had enabled good progress to date with the implementation of Caring for our Country. Officials had met with joint state chairs in all jurisdictions to provide additional information and had mapped out a way forward. Chairs and Chief Executives from all regional bodies were also consulted.
5. Jurisdictions and regions were currently working towards developing investment proposals for the transition year. Transition support allocations to regions were expected to be finalised and approved in May. This would ensure regions received funds from July 2008, thus minimising disruption.
6. Details of transition year arrangements for investment of funds not specifically allocated to regions are also being determined. There would be a transparent, administratively simple but robust process which would ensure public investment was targeted and delivered in a way that would contribute to the national priorities while also recognising the transition year.

7. Minister Garrett said he believed that Caring for our Country would simplify the delivery of the Commonwealth's investment in environment protection and sustainable resource management. He advised there were many issues still to be resolved in terms of the detailed design, and that the transition year provided an opportunity to come up with the most efficient and effective arrangements.

<b>Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 13
	<b>LOCATION:</b> MELBOURNE
	<b>DATE:</b> 18 APRIL 2008
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 13.12</b>

**NATURAL RESOURCE POLICIES AND PROGRAMS  
WORK IN PROGRESS**

1. Council agreed in April 2005, to eight, broad *Priority Areas* to carry forward its Work Plan in 2005-2008. The *Priority Areas* established then, included:
  - (a) effectiveness of the regional delivery model;
  - (b) water;
  - (c) decline in biological diversity and maintenance of healthy ecosystem function;
  - (d) sustainable land management;
  - (e) policy and programs to support ecosystem enhancement through ecosystem services;
  - (f) adapting to climate change;
  - (g) managing invasive species; and
  - (h) conservation and ecologically sustainable development of marine resources.
  
2. Responsibility for overseeing Council's Work Plan in these *Priority Areas* has been delegated, through Standing Committee, to:
  - the Natural Resource Policies and Programs Advisory Committee: (a) and (c-g)
    - when fully operational, the National Biosecurity Committee will have responsibility for (g);
  - the National Water Initiative Advisory Committee: (b);
  - the Marine and Coastal Advisory Committee: (h).
  
3. In reviewing Council's Work Plan during 2007, the Natural Resource Policies and Programs Committee (NRPPC) revised its own strategic directions and identified knowledge and information management as an issue of strategic importance to Council. A summary of the revised strategic directions, which are being incorporated into the NRPPC work program (2008-2010) is at Annex A.
  
4. The NRPPC noted the broad ambit of knowledge and information which is a cross-cutting issue for Council's Work Plan, but agreed it was important to encourage a more cohesive and integrated approach across NRM. The NRPPC agreed to champion and provide leadership on knowledge and information management issues by:
  - identifying emerging natural resources management issues based on best available science and future information needs;
  - identifying risks of potential policy failure due to knowledge and information gaps;

- identifying other knowledge and information policies and programs e.g. National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy (NCRIS) and how these activities may contribute to progressing Council's objectives; and
- identifying storage and retrieval challenges of knowledge management.

### ***Strategic Needs for Data and Information***

5. Knowledge and information are critical to meet policy requirements, tactical assessments and program evaluation and to underpin adaptive management responses in natural resources management. A commitment is required from all jurisdictions to work collaboratively to meet individual needs and requirements.
6. Access to compatible, reliable, and relevant information and data is an essential component to NRM policy development, NRM delivery, and formulation of innovative solutions. There is significant investment in NRM knowledge and data and a general acceptance that this investment can be better integrated to improve its utility. Joint and co-investment, collaborative research and innovative partnerships offer opportunities for expansion of projects and enhanced credibility.
7. Many ecosystems have thresholds beyond which reversal to the previous healthy condition is extremely costly, if possible at all. Information is essential, so that interventions can be made prior to irreversible changes occurring, in managing the risk of substantial costs being passed on to future governments and the public.
8. The rising public profile of NRM issues, coupled with increased public investment in NRM programs, is leading to greater public scrutiny of environmental programs and greater need to demonstrate the outcomes of public investment. In addition, the increasingly international nature of NRM issues (e.g., climate change, biodiversity decline) requires data and information capable of withstanding international scrutiny and demonstrating adherence to international obligations.
9. Addressing the causes and consequences of climate change and variability is increasing the demand for accurate and reliable information on Australia's natural resource base. Issues such as predicting likely landscape water yields, changes in land use suitability and developing appropriate conservation strategies for a new climatic regime require a high data density.

### ***Institutional Arrangements to Support Data and Information Needs***

10. A number of national programs, partnerships and projects are underway in relation to knowledge and information e.g., Environmental Reporting Systems Joint Working Group (under the NRPPC); the National Land and Water Resources Audit (NLWRA), the National NRM Monitoring and Evaluation Framework; and the Australian Agriculture and Natural Resources Online database (AANRO). Significantly, the new arrangements for the Bureau of Meteorology under the *Water Act 2007* have created new investments in water data. While acknowledging it cannot assume responsibility for progressing all knowledge and information management needs for Council, as part of its forward work plan the NRPPC will consider longer term knowledge, data and information collections to inform broader natural resource management issues.

***Environmental Reporting Systems***

11. There is a continuing need for an effectively coordinated national environmental reporting system. The key characteristics of such a system were described in a paper prepared by the Environmental Reporting Systems Joint (NRMSC-EPHSC) Working Group and considered out-of-session by Standing Committee in March 2008. The NRPPC has tasked the Joint Working Group with developing an implementation plan for an integrated national environmental information system. The implementation plan will also consider existing institutional arrangements and their role, and tools to support data and information access and use/retrieval.

***National Land & Water Resources Audit (NLWRA)***

12. The NLWRA Advisory Council and the Spatial Information Council-ANZLIC developed an '*Information for Sustainability*' Statement of Intent, which was noted by Standing Committee out-of-session in November 2007.
13. In collaboration with the Australian Government and state and territory agencies, the NLWRA has devoted considerable effort to defining the nature of a strategic approach to natural resource data collection and information system development, including identifying data needs and standards, and establishing linked information systems.
14. The Australian Government has recently reviewed the NLWRA's National Coordination Committees (as at [Annex C](#)) to:
- document their current roles and responsibilities related to meeting the delivery of data requirements under the National NRM Monitoring and Evaluation framework, specifically to (i) assess current capacity and examine options to enhance capacity, and (ii) document constraints affecting current work; and
  - summarise their roles and responsibilities not related to the National NRM Monitoring and Evaluation framework.

Findings from the review have been received by the Australian Government, and will be made available for NRPPC consideration in mid-2008.

***Australian Agriculture and Natural Resources Online database (AANRO)***

15. PISC-NRMSC and the rural Research and Development Corporations have agreed to the redevelopment of AANRO as a key component to improving NRM knowledge dissemination. Land and Water Australia has been appointed the managing agent and will engage a new supplier to host the database and website.

**RESOLUTIONS**

16. Council:
- (a) **NOTED** that the Natural Resource Policies and Programs (Advisory) Committee has reviewed Council's Work Plan at [Annex A](#), and has revised its strategic directions for undertaking the *Priority Areas* delegated to it, during 2008-2010 (see [Annex B](#));

- (b) **AGREED** that knowledge and information management is fundamental to NRM policy, and **ENDORSES** the request that knowledge and information management be included as a *Priority Area* under Council's Work Plan;
- (c) **AGREED** that Standing Committee, through its Advisory Committee, will oversee development of the *Priority Area: Knowledge and Information Management*, in its work plan for 2008-2010; and
- (d) **NOTED** that the Environmental Reporting Systems Joint Working Group will assist the Advisory Committee in the development of a Knowledge and Information Management work plan.

**ANNEX A:** Strategic Directions for the Natural Resource Policies and Programs Committee's Work Program (2008-2010)

**ANNEX C:** NLWRA National Coordination Committees

## STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS FOR NRPPC'S WORK PROGRAM (2008-2010)

### 1. FUTURE NRM POLICIES

#### *Drivers of change*

- 1.1 Natural resources management (NRM) operates in a dynamic and complex environment. Some of the major issues that are likely to influence the future direction of the sector include
- impact of the urban/peri-urban environment and related social demands
  - impact of climate change and related public perception
  - impact of economic structures on land use and resource use
  - impact of new scientific advice and the increased capacity of reporting structures to flag change
  - impediments to change, such as tax treatment
- 1.2 It is essential that NRPPC remain an effective agent of change by developing and utilising policy instruments to drive change in a targeted manner, and utilising agencies' operational and technical capacities to identify emerging drivers of change. Flexibility and adaptability must be built within the policy framework by maintaining strong partnerships with Government and research and development sectors.

#### *Continental-scale strategies*

- 1.3 Actions for creating continental-scale ecological linkages and strengthening the National Reserve System (NRS) are being actioned by the NRS Task Group as identified in *A National Approach to Biodiversity Decline* Report (NRMMC 9, October 2005) and include:
- (a) Accelerate the expansion of the National Reserve System to establish a comprehensive, adequate and representative system that also incorporates the principles of connectivity and resilience;
  - (b) Support active management to maintain biodiversity values in perpetuity;
  - (c) Provide incentives and mechanisms to conserve biodiversity on private, leasehold, crown and indigenous lands; and
  - (d) Build a system that can provide for adaptation to climate change.
- 1.4 Strategic and lateral thinking around multiple uses of reserves, and policy for off-reserve management is required. NRPPC is preparing a separate paper for NRMSC's consideration later in the year, seeking to draw attention to and elaborate on these broader issues.

#### *Ecosystem Services*

- 1.5 Natural resource managers and policy makers are realising the potential of ecosystem services to achieve multiple outcomes within NRM Regions. NRPPC sponsored a paper to NRMSC (September 2007) on *Ecosystems Services Approach: Implications for NRM Policy and Programs* but further discussions are required on progressing new policy tools to enhance ecosystems services, including options other than market based instruments, and these are scheduled for NRPPC's May 2008 meeting.

## 2. FUTURE NRM PROGRAMS

### *NRM Programs*

- 2.1 Regional delivery remains a significant component of NRM. NRMMC 11 (November 2006) agreed to the principles to guide Future NRM Programs in both the types of investments and activities that Government would support in a proposed third phase of the Natural Heritage Trust (NHT). However, in the light of the recent Federal Elections, future Australian Government Programs are being reworked.
- 2.2 It has been recognised too that a more targeted approach may be required in some areas of NRM to ensure best return on investment. For example, recent salinity research highlighted that a more targeted approach to investment is needed to address salinity to ensure protection and improve effectiveness of high-value natural resources, and built, cultural and social assets.
- 2.3 Furthermore, enhancing employment opportunity in NRM for Indigenous communities is a significant issue. NRMSC 14 (September 2007) agreed that the successor program to NHT2 is to be used to reinforce and encourage Indigenous participation in regional NRM, by designing investment criteria to facilitate Indigenous programs and projects. NRPPC is co-sponsoring a separate paper to the joint session of PISC-NRMSC to further address Indigenous employment.

### *Knowledge and Information*

- 2.4 Presentations to NRPPC during 2007 on the National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy (NCRIS) and the NLWRA's Australian Natural Resources Information Infrastructure emphasised the need to consider knowledge and information in the context of future NRM needs. NRPPC has agreed policy and initiatives in this area could be better coordinated nationally by elevating the status of knowledge and information management to a *Priority Area* for the NRMMC's Work Program. A separate agenda paper recommends this approach for NRMMC endorsement.

### *Delivery through people*

- 2.5 A key issue for NRM delivery is the ability to build, maintain and engage capacity in regions to deliver NRM programs. This is important for engaging with community, responding to changing circumstances and ensuring that policy is developed with community, rather than for community. The NRM Regional Chairs' annual forum is just one component that can be utilised. NRPPC is mindful of the increased focus on market mechanisms to achieve NRM outcomes and its potential impact on how community is currently involved, including its ability to influence delivery of NRM through the marketplace. Furthermore, Indigenous engagement in NRM and the wider social, cultural and economic benefits that can be achieved through NRM, is a priority.

### 3. INTEGRATION OF NRM

#### *Links between catchment and coasts*

- 3.1 At the terrestrial and marine interface NRM requires connectivity of issues and integration of initiatives across NRM boundaries. Policy formulation and decision-making requires strong leadership and collaboration with relevant parties in the context of physical linkages, values and benefits, whilst recognising the challenges.
- 3.2 NRPPC will continue to collaborate with the Marine and Coastal Committee (MACC) to progress NRMMC's *Priority Area* of Conservation and Ecologically Sustainable Development of Marine Resources, and other cross-cutting issues.

#### *Fire and natural values management*

- 3.3 Fire management in the landscape must incorporate a full range of management objectives, to minimise conflict and protect and restore natural values of the region. Climate change, forest fuel loads and fire ecology, investment in preparedness, research directed at improved risk management, implementing fire hazard assessments and modifying fire management practices all have a role to play.
- 3.3 Improvements in knowledge management and increasing operational co-operation have been identified as essential foundation so that policies can be refined and tailored to the changing climatic conditions and the full range of management objectives. NRPPC is currently supporting the Forest Fire Management Group (under PISC) in its Inquiry into Forest & Rangelands Fire Management – Policy and Research, and the development of a response for PIMC-NRMMC at a national level.

#### *Catchments, NRM and Water*

- 3.4 The current drought has highlighted the need for NRM managers, landholders and the broader community to be cognisant of the links between NRM and longer-term business sustainability and ensure that key NRM assets can be maintained through periods of increased stress, and resilience is built into management programs.
- 3.5 Drought conditions have had significant impacts on a range of natural processes such as fire, soils, plants and animals and water, subsequently impacting on NRM assets. For example, fires are expected to increase in frequency and intensity; poor groundcover exposes soil to increased erosion; native vegetation is under increased pressure from grazing by livestock and other animals; and invasive pests and plants have increased opportunities to establish themselves. There is a need for NRPPC to consider NRM in the context of drought recovery and preparedness for NRM assets.

#### *Carbon-Water-Energy markets*

- 3.6 Emissions trading appears an inevitable component of managing climate change as a means for driving improved energy efficiencies and the development and adoption of new and existing low-emissions technologies<sup>1</sup>. It also has the potential to encourage the development for trade of offsets such as forest plantations.
- 3.7 The recently-elected Australian Government's policy position is to implement an emissions trading scheme by 2010. Investment is required to ensure the economy

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<sup>1</sup> See 'Federal Labor's Clean Energy Plan To Help Tackle Climate Change' media statement 14 November 2007, <http://www.alp.org.au/media/1107/msloo143.php>

(including industries such as the agricultural sector) is prepared for emissions trading.

- 3.8 NRPPC has noted that while carbon sequestration (such as plantations and farm forestry) can provide positive outcomes, arrangements need to be integrated into policy and planning now, to prevent damage to hydrology and biodiversity resources and to encourage better outcomes with respect to these ecosystem services. The *energy-water-climate change* linkage must also be well established e.g., in a conceptual framework, in Australia's planning for the future.

## NLWRA NATIONAL COORDINATION COMMITTEES

**NB.** shaded cells indicate the NCC may report directly to the Natural Resource Policies and Programs Advisory Committee

NLWRA THEMATIC AREAS	NATIONAL COORDINATION COMMITTEE	REPORTING	Input to other processes.
Salinity	National Coordinating Committee for Salinity (NCCS)	NLWRA Advisory Council (information)	
Soil condition	<b>National Committee on Soil and Terrain (NCST)</b>	NRPPC (policy) NLWRA Advisory Council (information)	
Inland aquatic ecosystem integrity	<b>Aquatic Ecosystems Task Group</b>	NRPPC (policy) NLWRA Advisory Council (information)	National Water Commission
- River condition	<b>River Health Indicators Contact Group</b>	NRPPC (policy) via the Aquatic Ecosystems Task Group NLWRA Advisory Council (information)	as above
- Wetlands	<b>Wetlands &amp; Waterbirds Taskforce</b>	NRPPC (policy) via the Aquatic Ecosystems Task Group NLWRA Advisory Council (information)	
Water quality	Executive Steering Committee for Australian Water Resource Information (ESCAWI)	NWIC (policy) NLWRA Advisory Council (information)	
- Nutrients			
- Turbidity			
- Surface water salinity			
Estuarine, coastal and marine	Intergovernmental Coastal Advisory Group (ICAG)	MACC (policy) NLWRA Advisory Council (information)	
Native vegetation	<b>Executive Steering Committee for Australian Vegetation Information (ESCAVI)</b>	NRPPC (policy) NLWRA Advisory Council (information)	SoE
Significant native species and ecological communities	Biodiversity Assessment 2008 Working Group	NLWRA Advisory Council	
Invasive species:	<b>Vertebrate Pests Committee (VPC)</b>	NRPPC (policy) NLWRA Advisory Council (information)	AusBIOSEC
- Invasive vertebrates			
- Invasive vegetation	<b>Australian Weeds Committee (AWC)</b>	NRPPC (policy) NLWRA Advisory Council (information)	AusBIOSEC
Social and economic aspects of NRM	Social-Economic National Coordinating Committee (SENCC)	NLWRA Advisory Council (information)	
- Land managers			
- Regional groups			
- Community			
Land Use	Executive Steering Committee on Australian Land Use Mapping (ESCALUM)	NLWRA Advisory Council (information)	
	Technical Advisory Group for Australian Land Use Mapping (TAGALUM)		
Rangelands	<b>Australian Collaborative Rangelands Information System (ACRIS) Management Committee</b>	NRPPC (policy) NLWRA Advisory Council (information)	SoE
Signposts for Australian agriculture	Signposts Reference Group	DAFF	

<b>Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 13
	<b>LOCATION:</b> MELBOURNE
	<b>DATE:</b> 18 APRIL 2008
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 13.13</b>

### STRATEGIC DIRECTION FOR THE NATIONAL RESERVE SYSTEM

1. The Hon. Peter Garrett AM, Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts, advised Council of incorporation of the National Reserve System (NRS) as one of the six priority areas for national investment through the \$2.25 billion Caring for our Country initiative.
2. Council was informed of the \$180 million commitment over the next five years for the future development of Australia's NRS in order to revitalise the program, which would play a vital role in protecting biodiversity against climate change.
3. Minister Garrett advised that this investment would work alongside the \$50 million committed through Caring for our Country for Indigenous Protected Areas to safeguard the most distinctive and vulnerable landscapes.
4. A number of key changes would be made to the NRS. Some are:
  - instituting a three year funding cycle;
  - improved monitoring and reporting on on-ground biodiversity outcomes;
  - clear conservation targets; and
  - greater accountability.
5. The NRS component of Caring for our Country would also help farmers and other private landholders protect crucial sections of habitat on their working properties where conserving these habitats would make a tangible contribution to the NRS.
6. Council heard that over the next five years the NRS would have a particular focus on the remaining bioregions with very low levels of protection such as arid lands of Central Australia and Mitchell grass country of north-western Queensland. The NRS would also target areas of conservation significance on a global scale such as the world's largest relatively intact sub-tropical savannah, which stretches across Australia's north from Cape York to the Kimberly.
7. Minister Garrett advised that the Directions Statement for the NRS will be reviewed and updated to reflect:
  - more realistic short-term targets;
  - improved linkages with the Convention on Biological Diversity;
  - response to climate change challenge and to build on the work of CSIRO's *Impacts of Climate Change on the NRS* study; and
  - address in more detail the adequacy of the NRS and identify practical options for improving the resilience of key biodiversity values found in protected areas and on adjoining lands.

**RESOLUTION**

8. Council **REQUESTED** the Natural Resource Policies and Programs Committee's National Reserve System Task Group, as a priority, to undertake a review of the National Reserve System Directions Statement and to provide a draft for Council's consideration in November 2008.

<b>Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 13
	<b>LOCATION:</b> MELBOURNE
	<b>DATE:</b> 18 APRIL 2008
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 13.14</b>

### MARINE AND COASTAL – WORK-IN-PROGRESS

1. The Marine and Coastal Committee (MACC) provides advice and support through the Natural Resource Management and Primary Industries Standing Committees to Ministers on issues of national significance relating to the conservation and ecologically sustainable development of marine and coastal ecosystems and resources.
2. Significant priorities in recent years in this regard have been:
  - A national approach to Integrated Coastal Zone Management;
  - Development of a National System for Marine Pests;
  - Fisheries management issues such as ecosystem management and aquaculture;
  - A national system for Marine Protected Areas; and
  - Addressing marine biodiversity decline.

Recent progress on these priorities have included:

#### ***Progress in implementing the National System of Marine Protected Areas***

3. There has been significant progress across all jurisdictions in establishing Marine Protected Areas, with 32 out of 41 provincial bioregions (78 per cent) having within them declared Marine Protected Areas.
4. Australia remains a world leader in the development of Marine Protected Areas and is well placed to deliver on its international commitments by 2012. However some significant work remains to be done.

#### ***Marine Biodiversity Decline***

5. MACC has endorsed the report *A National Approach to Addressing Marine Biodiversity Decline*.
6. The report identifies five key system-wide threats to marine biodiversity, where existing responses should be enhanced and where national scale attention is required for new actions. The five key system-wide threats are: climate change, resource use, land-based impacts, marine biosecurity, and marine pollution.
7. NRMMC 13 item 4E provides more detail on the *A National Approach to Addressing Marine Biodiversity Decline Report*.

#### ***Climate Change***

8. MACC has considered options for further engagement in marine climate change responses.
9. A National Fisheries and Climate Change Workshop was held in October 2007 and attended by jurisdictional representatives. MACC noted that the Australian

Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) will be coordinating the development of a *National Climate Change Action Plan for Fisheries and Aquaculture* (National Action Plan). MACC noted the draft Terms of Reference for the development of the National Action Plan.

10. A draft National Interim Climate Change Response Plan for Fisheries and Aquaculture has been prepared for use as a guide and discussion focus for the development of the National Action Plan.
11. At the next MACC 27 meeting on 23 May, further discussion about the need for a MACC climate change working group will take place. Consideration will be given to existing climate change working groups, particularly the NRPPC's Climate Change in Agriculture and NRM Task Group (CLAN).

***National System for the Prevention and Management of Marine Pest Incursions***

12. The work on development of the national system is nearing completion with an agenda item prepared for NRMCC/PIMC recommending, *inter alia*, that:
  - (a) A new commencement date for mandatory ballast water arrangements be applied twelve months from the date of passage of Commonwealth legislation;
  - (b) A review of the ANZECC (Australian and New Zealand Environment and Conservation Council) Code of Practice for Antifouling and In-Water Hull Cleaning and Maintenance be conducted; and.
  - (c) A proposed alternative cost-sharing formula for emergency responses to marine pest incursions based on risk.

***Progress of the Threat Abatement Plan (TAP) for Marine Debris***

13. A Threat Abatement Plan and Background Paper is being released for public consultation. The TAP will come back to MACC for discussion about prioritisation and implementation.

***Ornamental Fish Management Implementation Group***

14. The final report '*A Strategic Approach to the Management of Ornamental Fish in Australia*' was released by the Federal Agriculture Minister (as chair of NRMCC) in July 2007. There has been good progress with implementation of the recommendations in the strategic plan.

***Crime in Fisheries Report – Update***

15. The Australian Institute of Criminology and the Australian Crime Commission have completed a risk assessment of criminal activity leading to the Crime in Fisheries Report. The report is tabled on the NRMCC agenda as item 5B along with a proposal to seek nationally consistent legislation.
16. In early 2008, Peter Harris, Secretary of Victoria's Department of Sustainability and Environment, took on the role as Chair of MACC. He has suggested a review of the previous MACC work plan to include a stronger focus on climate change and research and development.
17. A table of the proposed strategic directions is attached in Annex A.
18. Further discussion of the proposed strategic directions is currently taking place out of session by MACC members and a finalisation of the strategic directions is likely to take place at the MACC 27 on 23 May 2008.

**RESOLUTIONS**

19. Council:

- (a) **NOTED** the Marine and Coastal Committee's (MACC) progress with the key priorities; and
- (b) **NOTED** the MACC is reviewing its strategic directions.

<b>Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 13
	<b>LOCATION:</b> MELBOURNE
	<b>DATE:</b> 18 APRIL 2008
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 13.15</b>

**MARINE BIODIVERSITY DECLINE - A NATIONAL APPROACH TO  
ADDRESSING MARINE BIODIVERSITY DECLINE REPORT**

1. On 29 October 2005 Council received a report from the Biodiversity Decline Working Group of the Natural Resource Policies and Programs Committee outlining a number of recommendations in relation to developing a national approach to addressing terrestrial biodiversity decline. At that meeting, Council agreed that the scope of the national approach to biodiversity decline be extended to include marine biodiversity.
2. On 21 April 2006 Council agreed that a Working Group to progress the Marine Biodiversity Decline report would be set up under the Marine and Coastal Committee (MACC).

***Marine Biodiversity Decline***

3. Key findings of the Report (at Annex A) are that:
  - there are major gaps in our knowledge of Australia's marine biodiversity;
  - despite these knowledge gaps there are observable declines in some areas of Australia's marine biodiversity;
  - five key broad-scale threats to Australia's marine biodiversity are climate change, resource use, land-based impacts, marine biosecurity, and marine pollution; and
  - a national approach is required to coordinate effort across jurisdictions to address marine biodiversity decline.
4. The Report sets out a national approach to addressing marine biodiversity decline focussed on the themes of improving the effectiveness of program delivery, measuring success, improving the knowledge base and responding to the key threats to marine biodiversity identified in the Report. The Report proposes eight key directions under the above themes.
5. The Report is a product of the collective contributions of the jurisdictional representatives on the Working Group and separate input from jurisdictions. There is broad agreement on the substance of the Report.
6. The Marine and Coastal Committee will advise Standing Committee on work toward the proposed directions coming from the Report. Standing Committee will provide advice to Council as appropriate.

***Marine Protected Areas***

7. Extending and managing networks of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in Commonwealth and state and territory waters is one of the key measures to address marine biodiversity decline.

8. Australian governments are committed to implementing the National Representative System of Marine Protected Areas (NRSMPA) and have made substantial progress in recent years. The report entitled *Progress in Implementing the National Representative System for Marine Protected Areas* (at [Annex B](#)) prepared by the National Marine Protected Areas Working Group provides an update on progress.
9. Since 2003 Australian governments have identified approximately 240,000 km<sup>2</sup> of ocean for inclusion in the NRSMPA. There are currently around 200 MPAs within Australian waters representing approximately 10 per cent of Australia's marine jurisdiction. In addition, advances are being made in the integrated planning methods used to design MPA networks.
10. The ongoing development and implementation of the NRSMPA will continue with careful planning and with regard for existing and complementary conservation and management measures.
11. Following the significant progress with the establishment of the NRSMPA, challenges to the program will shift toward the management of the MPA estate and developing a new reporting framework.
12. Australia is well placed to meet its international commitment of delivering the NRSMPA by 2012 and continues to be a world leader in the development of MPAs.

## RESOLUTIONS

13. Council:
  - (a) **ENDORSED** the report entitled *A National Approach to Addressing Marine Biodiversity Decline* (the Report) at [Annex A](#);
  - (b) **NOTED** that Standing Committee will provide advice to Council as appropriate on work toward the proposed directions in the Report;
  - (c) **NOTED** the report entitled *Progress in Implementing the National Representative System for Marine Protected Areas*; and
  - (d) **AGREED** to the public release of the Marine Biodiversity Decline Report and update on progress in implementing the NRSMPA.

**ANNEX A:** *A National Approach to Addressing Marine Biodiversity Decline – A Report to the Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council*

**ANNEX B:** *Progress in Implementing the National Representative System of Marine Protected Areas*  
*[Annexes A-B are held by the Secretariat]*

<b>Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 13
	<b>LOCATION:</b> MELBOURNE
	<b>DATE:</b> 18 APRIL 2008
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 13.16</b>

**REVIEW OF THE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE MANAGEMENT AND  
MONITORING OF AUSTRALIA'S NATIVE VEGETATION**

1. The Native Vegetation Framework is a high level strategic document for native vegetation management in Australia. The Native Vegetation Framework was first agreed by the former Australian and New Zealand Environment and Conservation Council in 1999 and adopted and republished by the Council in 2001.
2. Key elements of the Native Vegetation Framework are: a vision, principles and desired outcomes; best practice management and monitoring mechanisms and attributes; and jurisdictional work plans – outlining actions, timelines and monitoring arrangements. The Native Vegetation Framework helps to meet Australia's obligations under the international Convention on Biological Diversity.
3. In April 2004, Council directed NRMSC to review and update the Native Vegetation Framework, including the range of costs and benefits of native vegetation management. Council also noted that all governments reconfirmed their commitment to the need for native vegetation retention. At the end of 2004 the Natural Resource Policies and Programs Committee (NRPPC) established a multi-jurisdictional Native Vegetation Framework Review Task Group. From 2004 all jurisdictions worked together to produce a draft revised Native Vegetation Framework and in 2006 agreed to undertake internal consultation across relevant agencies within their jurisdictions.
4. The Native Vegetation Framework has been an important driver for the development of native vegetation management policy and legislation in all jurisdictions. The 2005 NRMBC Biodiversity Decline Working Group report identified the three major threats to biodiversity as: climate change, invasive species and loss of habitat. Therefore the conservation of native vegetation plays a critical part in Australia's management of these threats. A nationally agreed policy framework will be central to ensuring a harmonised and collaborative approach.
5. Many vulnerable ecosystems exist on private land. A nationally agreed policy framework should recognise that Australia's private land owners and managers are responsible for over 60 per cent of all land in Australia. Their engagement is essential to realise environmental benefits on a broad national basis.
6. The latest drafting on the revised Native Vegetation Framework was in mid 2006. Since then the review of the National Biodiversity Strategy has commenced through NRPPC, and has made considerable progress towards a new national

policy framework that will address the increasing challenges of climate change, invasive species and habitat loss.

7. The Native Vegetation Framework addresses land clearance, a key threatening process listed under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Act 1999* (EPBC Act). At the time of listing, the Environment Minister at the time decided, on the advice of the Threatened Species Scientific Committee, not to establish a Threat Abatement Plan for this process primarily because such a Plan would not contribute any threat mitigation over and above existing measures such as the National Vegetation Framework and state vegetation legislation. This decision is now due for review in accordance with the EPBC Act. In early February 2008 Minister Garrett wrote to state and territory ministers and other stakeholders to begin consultation on this review and requested that the Threatened Species Scientific Committee provide him with fresh advice about whether or not this decision is still appropriate.
8. It is timely for NRMSC to finalise the review of the Native Vegetation Framework, taking into account the relevant developments since 2006.

## RESOLUTIONS

9. Council:
  - (a) **CONFIRMED** the importance of the *National Framework for the Management and Monitoring of Australia's Native Vegetation* (Native Vegetation Framework) as the national policy framework for achieving a reversal in the long-term decline of Australia's native vegetation and an improvement in the condition of existing native vegetation; and
  - (b) **AGREED** that the Natural Resource Management Standing Committee (NRMSC) finalise the review of the Native Vegetation Framework, taking account of the concurrent review of the *National Strategy for the Conservation of Australia's Biological Biodiversity* (National Biodiversity Strategy), and report to Council in 2009.

<b>Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 13
	<b>LOCATION:</b> MELBOURNE
	<b>DATE:</b> 18 APRIL 2008
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 13.17</b>

**CRIME IN FISHERIES – NATIONAL APPROACH TO MANAGING CRIME IN  
THE AUSTRALIAN FISHING INDUSTRY**

1. In 2004 Council was provided briefing by the Australian Crime Commission (ACC) on organised crime in Australian fisheries. Council agreed to DAFF commissioning the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) to undertake a study of organised crime in the fishing industry. Terms of reference for the study were provided, including determining the extent of organised criminal involvement in the seafood industry; the risk posed to management arrangements; the adequacy of legislation and deterrence; national consistency; adequacy of operational arrangements to respond to emerging issues; capacity for enhancement of policing methods; and the extent to which inter-agency cooperation can be developed.
2. The AIC Study has now been published but not released, and has been provided to jurisdictions under embargo to allow a response to be developed for consideration by Council.
3. The AIC study identifies ways forward with legislation including: offences and powers; need for greater operational flexibility to undertake compliance operations effectively with more skilled officers; greater operational collaboration; and information sharing and systematic intelligence collection at a national level to detect and monitor crime and support targeted operations. Refer Annex B for a summary of the study.
4. The Australian fishing industry is vulnerable to organised crime. The industry comprises small businesses with relatively little cohesion and organisation, susceptible to infiltration by criminal elements that may operate vertical business, collude with processors and distributors and have overseas links. Criminal activity may not be readily detected, particularly if activities are geographically remote, as the existence of multiple fisheries agencies fragments compliance activities. If detected it may only be subjected to minor penalties in part due to the treatment of fisheries offences by magistrates as being relatively minor.
5. The Standing Committee agreed in September 2007 to further addressing organised crime in Australian fisheries through the preparation for consideration by Council of:
  - a national consistent approach requiring implementation of legislative and operational measures including collection and use of intelligence and other information; and
  - a best practice approach including legislative, operational policy and resourcing by each jurisdiction to reduce the risk of crime involvement in fisheries.

6. Since the ACC briefing provided to Council in 2004, a range of actions have been initiated by jurisdictions within the existing legislative and policy frameworks dealing with a number of operational responses to serious and cross border crime in fisheries. However, a number of responses have been limited in their effectiveness because of limitations imposed by inconsistent or complementary legislative provisions across jurisdictions.
7. The absence of a 'national coordinated fisheries intelligence database' impairs the ability to detect organised and cross border crime, so this is one of the key measures that should be included in a national consistent approach. This capacity to collect and share information to better detect crime would drive enforcement operations involving collaboration across jurisdictions and with police agencies. Also, a consistent approach would recognise the seriousness of offences and ensure greater consistency with penalties across jurisdictions. The specific legislative detail will need to be worked through within each jurisdiction.
8. Following the AIC study, the Marine and Coastal Committee, via the Australian Fisheries Management Forum, have considered further measures to enhance fisheries enforcement capacity and have recommended both changes to legislation and operational policy to achieve the outcomes sought by Standing Committee at point 9 in Annex C.
9. It is recognised that not all elements proposed by the AIC report will necessarily be supported with national consistent legislation hence a number strategies have been identified as a best practice approach. Jurisdictions are strongly encouraged to implement these measures. These best practice measures include operational and legislative responses to deter criminal activity through such measures as greater investigative capacity and flexibility with use of enforcement resources; expansion of document schemes and flexibility with tiered offence levels incorporated in legislation.
10. ACC report *Organised Crime Australia*, released in 2008, identified seven key issues and trends shaping organised crime. One of these trends was expansion into new industries, including environmental crime.
11. The work done to date by fisheries agencies, the ACC and the AIC demonstrates the issue of crime by fishers is real and there is an increasing involvement of organised crime. Failure to put effective legislative restrictions in place nationally will increase the likelihood that organised crime syndicates will exploit inconsistencies and deficiencies to further infiltrate the fishing industry and avoid detection and successful prosecution.
12. The proposed nationally consistent legislative framework potentially requires the reassessment of aspects of legal policy in some jurisdictions, particularly in relation to mutual recognition of sentences and the sharing of intelligence information. Hence to ensure that the recommendations are supported at a whole of government level in each jurisdiction, it may be advantageous to seek the support from the Ministerial Council of Attorneys General, or COAG, as well as at Cabinet level in each jurisdiction.
13. Organised criminal activity is also known to have infiltrated other natural resources sectors. The illegal resource trade includes timber, minerals and wildlife. Given the increasing interest by organised crime syndicates and the fact

that these crime issues span a number of portfolios, it may be advantageous to seek COAG endorsement for this national reform and its extension across a number of related natural resource industries. It would be appropriate for any fisheries based response to be expanded to these areas if practical.

14. Not pursuing a nationally consistent approach in dealing with fisheries (and other natural resources) crime will inevitably impact on industry and the sustainability of the resources. This is because criminal or illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing activity threatens sustainable resource use due to over harvesting, could have consequences for the reputation of the respective industry and may compromise food safety (in the case of fish).
15. Involvement of serious or organised crime groups is already perceived as a personal safety concern by fisheries and wildlife compliance officers in most jurisdictions.

## RESOLUTIONS

16. Council:
  - (a) **NOTED** the National Study of Crime in the Australian Fishing Industry was undertaken by the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) in conjunction with the Australian Crime Commission (ACC) was completed in mid 2007 (Annex A);
  - (b) **NOTED** that the ACC report *Organised Crime Australia* released in 2008 identified seven key issues and trends shaping organised crime including expansion into new industries, such as environmental crime;
  - (c) **AGREED** that the findings of the National Study on Crime in the Australian Fishing Industry report warrant nationally consistent action to address the identified risks to minimise the targeting Australian fisheries and other environmental assets by organised crime;
  - (e) **AGREED** to implement nationally consistent legislative and operational measures as detailed in Annex C to address the identified risks;
  - (f) **AGREED** that the Joint Chairs of Council write to the Chair of the Ministerial Council of Attorneys General and the Ministerial Council for the Administration of Justice seeking endorsement for the proposed nationally consistent legislative measures, requesting each respective Attorney General and Justice Ministers to work with the Minister responsible for fisheries to implement the measures;
  - (g) **AGREED** to pursue the implementation of the best practice measures recommended in Annex C; and

- (h) **AGREED** to release the National Study of Crime in the Australian Fishing Industry report subject to agreeing to the proposed response recommendations.

**ANNEX A:** Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC), *A National Study of Crime in the Australian Fishing Industry* – full report

**ANNEX B:** Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC), *A National Study of Crime in the Australian Fishing Industry* - Summary

**ANNEX C:** Australian Fisheries Management Forum - Recommended response to National Consistent Approach and Best Practice legislative and operational approaches  
*[Annexes A-C are held by the Secretariat]*

<b>Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 13
	<b>LOCATION:</b> MELBOURNE
	<b>DATE:</b> 18 APRIL 2008
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 13.18</b>

### FINANCIAL REPORT

1. Standing Committee is required to report to Council on all expenditures agreed within its limit of \$1 million in any one instance
  - decisions on expenditure above \$1million are taken by Council.
2. A summary of the financial items considered by NRMSC 15 and to be considered by NRMMC 13 is at Annex A.

### RESOLUTION

3. Council **NOTED** the financial expenditure agreed by Standing Committee.

**ANNEX A:** Summary of expenditure items

**SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURE****Agreed by NRMSC 15 out-of-session****1. 2008 NATIONAL NRM REGIONAL CHAIRS' FORUM PROGRESS REPORT**

Funding for the Forum from National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality funds, with the following member contribution according to the COAG pro rata formula:

	%	\$
Australian Government	50.0	90,000
New South Wales	16.9	30,420
Victoria	12.4	22,320
Queensland	9.4	16,920
Western Australia	4.9	8,820
South Australia	3.9	7,020
Tasmania	1.2	2,160
ACT	0.8	1,440
Northern Territory	0.5	900
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>180,000</b>

**Agreed by NRMSC 13 in-session****2. REVISION OF THE NATIONAL WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY - AUSTRALIAN DRINKING WATER GUIDELINES (2004)**

Agreement for the provision of \$316,750 towards the proposed revision, with jurisdictional contributions based on the standard funding formula, noting that NHMRC is also providing \$316,750 on a cost sharing basis and that the Water Services Association of Australia (WSAA) is providing \$30,000

**Agreed by Joint NRMCC and PIMC in session****3. ELECTRIC ANT ERADICATION PROGRAM**

Funding of \$2.816 million for 2008-09 and 2009-10 for the Electric Ant Eradication Program, subject to successful review of the program and jurisdictions' budgetary processes with member contributions as follows:

		2008-09	2009-10
	%	\$	\$
Australian Government	50.0	701,500	706,500
New South Wales	19.2	269,376	271,296
Queensland	11.6	162,748	163,908
Victoria	9.9	138,897	139,887
Western Australia	4.6	64,538	64,998
South Australia	2.5	35,075	35,325
Australian Capital Territory	1.0	14,030	14,130
Tasmania	0.6	8,418	8,478
Northern Territory	0.6	8,418	8,478
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,403,000</b>	<b>1,413,000</b>

**THE FOLLOWING ITEMS WERE CONSIDERED OUT-OF-SESSION**

<b>Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 13
	<b>LOCATION:</b> MELBOURNE
	<b>DATE:</b> 18 APRIL 2008
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 13.19</b>

*Finalised Out-of-Session 5 September 2007*

## MARKET BASED INSTRUMENTS – CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM

1. In 2006, Council agreed that a work program focusing on capacity building, skills development and communication should be developed under Round Two of the MBI Pilot Program. Council allocated the remaining funding under the MBI Pilot Program to the task but did not formally approve expenditure.
2. A scoping study (Annex A) was undertaken presenting three options for the delivery of Capacity Building. Standing Committee endorsed Option Three and its detailed Implementation Plan (Annexes B and C).
3. Key findings identified from the scoping study were:
  - a significant gap in understanding of the mechanics of MBIs, what is required to establish MBIs, and how they might be applied or implemented in specific regions or to address specific issues;
  - perceptions of complexity and risk tend to reinforce the desirability of continuing with existing approaches, such as regulation;
  - perceived high establishment and administration costs of an MBI are also a barrier;
  - a need for greater understanding of the legislative and regulatory framework in which MBI is implemented; and
  - a need to develop some standard processes and frameworks to apply to metrics to assist with benchmarking activities to assist decision makers.
4. Three delivery options were proposed to address the impediments to adoption of MBIs with Option Three being endorsed by Standing Committee. This option is the preferred delivery mechanism, as experience, existing expertise and networks can be utilised to identify regional needs, to ensure that a consistent message is adopted and allow more funding to be used for stakeholder needs, rather than staffing.
  - Option Three – The Program will develop a ‘toolkit’ employing flexible delivery mechanisms to account for and address varying levels of experience and engagement across regions. The Program also aims to better utilise existing knowledge brokers through engaging the Natural Resource Management Facilitator Network to help connect Catchment Management Authorities, regional bodies, practitioners and experts. Program products such as fact sheets, case studies, decision support tools, training packages and workshops will be rolled out in stages and will be delivered by one or more jurisdictions.
5. An Implementation Plan was developed in consultation with the Natural Resource Policies and Programs Committee, the MBI Working Group, States and

Territories, Regional Bodies and the Natural Resource Management Facilitators Network. The Implementation Plan has been approved by Standing Committee.

6. The Implementation Plan outlines the detailed on-ground operations and outcomes to be achieved over the next 12 months and complement, where possible, current regional capacity building activities.
7. Funding for the MBI Pilot Program ceases on 30 June 2008 and the timely commencement of the Capacity Building Program is critical to the success of the program.

## **RESOLUTIONS**

8. Council:
  - (a) **APPROVED** expenditure of up to \$1.2 million under the National Market Based Instruments (MBI) Pilot Program for the proposed Capacity Building Program identified and recommended as Option Three by Standing Committee; and
  - (b) **NOTED** that Standing Committee has approved the proposed Implementation Plan for this Program.

**ANNEX A:** Market Based Instruments - Capacity Building Program – Scoping Study Project

**ANNEX B:** Market Based Instruments Capacity Building Program – Option Three Overview

**ANNEX C:** Market Based Instruments Capacity Building Program – Detailed Implementation Plan  
*[Annexes A-C are held by the Secretariat]*

<b>Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 13
	<b>LOCATION:</b> MELBOURNE
	<b>DATE:</b> 18 APRIL 2008
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 13.20</b>

*Forwarded Out-of-Session for Information 18 July 2007*

**AUSTRALIAN GUIDELINES FOR WATER RECYCLING  
MANAGING HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS – PHASE 2**

1. Council agreed at its April 2007 meeting (meeting 12) to refer approval of the public consultation for the draft *Augmentation of Drinking Water Supplies* module of Phase 2 of Australian Guidelines for Water Recycling to the Environment Protection and Heritage Council (EPHC) at its 1 June 2007 meeting.
2. EPHC agreed to release the draft module subject to the views of the Australian Public Health Committee (AHPC). Formal advice from the AHPC supporting release was received on 21 June 2007.
3. The *Augmentation of Drinking Water Supplies* module of Phase 2 of Australian Guidelines for Water Recycling will be made available on the EPHC website from 18 July 2007.
4. In view of the intense media interest around recycled water for drinking in some jurisdictions the attached Fact Sheet/Frequently Asked Questions (Annex B) will be published with the guidelines to assist understanding of the purpose and content of the guidelines.
5. In addition the attached Media Question and Answer Sheet (Annex C) has been prepared to assist Ministers in responding to any enquiries they may receive on the draft module.

**RESOLUTIONS**

6. Council:
  - (a) **NOTED** the release for public consultation the draft *Augmentation of Drinking Water Supplies* module of Phase 2 (Annex A) of Australian Guidelines for Water Recycling; and
  - (b) **NOTED** that a parallel process of these guidelines is being conducted under the auspices of Environment Protection and Heritage Council.

**ANNEX A:** Australian Guidelines for Water Recycling: Managing Health and Environmental Risks (Phase 2)

**ANNEX B:** Fact Sheet/Frequently Asked Questions

**ANNEX C:** Media Question and Answers

*[Annexes A-C are held by the Secretariat]*

<b>Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 13
	<b>LOCATION:</b> MELBOURNE
	<b>DATE:</b> 18 APRIL 2008
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 13.21</b>

*Finalised Out-of-Session 7 December 2007*

### FUTURE OF THE CSIRO AND BUREAU OF METEOROLOGY SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL REPORT

1. There has been a view that a more focused science effort is required to support regional delivery of natural resource management programs. In May 2002 Council agreed that scientific and technical advice would be provided to it annually, through a publicly available report prepared by CSIRO and BoM, and presented by their representatives on Standing Committee. The first report was delivered to Standing Committee in March 2004 and to Council in April 2004.
2. In response to the first report, Council asked Standing Committee, through its Advisory Committee, to provide specific advice to CSIRO-BoM with respect to the components or areas of the NAP/NHT programs that would benefit most from the delivery of timely and relevant advice in the following report.
3. In June 2005 Council agreed out-of-session that the reporting framework for the CSIRO-BoM report be extended to every second year. Terms of reference for the 2006 report were determined by a reference group under Standing Committee's Advisory Committee.
4. The second report was delivered to Standing Committee out-of-session in early 2006. Standing Committee did not agree to forward that report to Council.
5. The report has been, to date, fully funded by CSIRO-BoM.
6. The two CSIRO-BoM reports have confirmed that the scale and complexity of the science challenges involved in natural resource management do not lend themselves to simple and prescriptive solutions. Consequently, it has been difficult to identify specific measures that should be progressed to Council (this was the reason for Standing Committee not forwarding the 2006 report to Council).
7. The reports have been specifically relevant to the regional delivery of natural resource management programs rather than to providing policy advice for Ministerial decision-making. The 2006 report was referred to the Australian Government NRM Team by Standing Committee.
8. The mechanism of providing regular reports of this nature direct to Council does not appear to be an effective method for improving the identification and uptake of best available science by natural resource management agencies and regional bodies. Given that the development of these reports is an impost on CSIRO-BoM resources, Standing Committee has endorsed a recommendation to Council to discontinue the biannual reports.

9. At its meeting in February 2007, the Standing Committee's Advisory Committee (Natural Resource Policies and Program Committee) endorsed an option for any future reports where Standing Committee would consider engaging CSIRO-BoM expertise to address specific issues, thereby targeting the use of such expertise more effectively. Funding arrangements would need to be agreed on a case-by-case basis.

## RESOLUTIONS

10. Council:
  - (a) **AGREED** that preparation of the biennial Scientific and Technical Report on natural resource management, by the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) and the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) for the Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council (NRMMC), be discontinued;
  - (b) **NOTED** that the CSIRO and BoM will continue to provide advice to the NRMMC to address specific issues where scientific expertise could be targeted more effectively; and
  - (c) **NOTED** that funding arrangements for CSIRO and the Bureau of Meteorology advice to NRMMC will be agreed on a case-by-case basis.

<b>Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 13
	<b>LOCATION:</b> MELBOURNE
	<b>DATE:</b> 18 APRIL 2008
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 13.22</b>

*Finalised Out-of-Session 11 June 2008*

**NATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR RAMSAR WETLANDS  
MODULE ON DESCRIBING ECOLOGICAL CHARACTER**

1. On 20 October 2006 the Standing Committee agreed to the development and proposed content of the *National Guidelines for Ramsar Wetlands*.
2. These guidelines are being developed to facilitate improved management of Ramsar sites and maintenance of ecological character, in line with government commitments under the Ramsar Convention and responsibilities under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act).
3. The guidelines are being developed as a series of modules, or chapters, on topics including: introduction to the Ramsar Convention; process for nominating Ramsar wetlands; developing ecological character descriptions; requirements for mapping Ramsar wetlands; and ongoing management issues for Ramsar sites.
4. There will be approximately 9 modules (including some fact sheets), which will vary in size. The development of the different chapters or modules will be staggered over the next 12-18 months.
5. Consultation with jurisdictions agreed that the preferred process was to have the modules endorsed nationally and disseminated for use as they are completed, rather than as a single package at the end of the process. This will enable publication and immediate use.
6. Agreement to these two modules by Council will authorise their final release.

***Module on Mapping Specifications***

7. At the October 2006 meeting, Standing Committee endorsed the first Ramsar guideline module on mapping specifications.
8. The first module, *Mapping Specifications for Australian Ramsar Wetlands* (Annex A) was developed by a working group of the Wetlands and Waterbird Taskforce, chaired by Victoria.
9. The mapping specifications outline the standards for delineation of boundaries, data capture and management and map production for Ramsar wetlands. They are intended to provide guidance to managers of Ramsar wetlands and agencies that have a role in the preparation and approval of documentation for Ramsar wetlands. They will also be useful in an EPBC Act context, by ensuring adequate and accurate mapping of Ramsar site boundaries.

***Module for Developing Ecological Character Descriptions***

10. The second module, *National Framework and Guidance for Describing the Ecological Character of Australia's Ramsar Wetlands* (the Framework, [Annex B](#)) was endorsed by Standing Committee on 21 September 2007.
11. The Framework has been developed by the Australian Government Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts using:
  - the outcomes from a national workshop held in Canberra in May 2006;
  - the *Framework for Describing Ecological Character of Ramsar Wetlands* developed by the Victorian Department of Sustainability and Environment; and
  - substantial input from jurisdictions through the Wetlands and Waterbirds Taskforce.
12. The Framework has undergone extensive consultation during its development and is being used in its draft form to prepare ecological character descriptions for a number of Ramsar-listed wetlands. Once completed, these descriptions will become worked examples of how to use the Framework.
13. The Framework will provide a standard approach to developing ecological character descriptions for Australian Ramsar sites and ensure that they contain the minimum set of required information.
14. The ecological character description of a wetland provides the baseline description of the wetland at a given point in time, which can be used to assess change in the ecological character of the wetland. Ecological character descriptions can be used to:
  - develop a management plan for the site;
  - design a monitoring program to detect change in ecological character;
  - assist in reporting to the Australian Government and the Ramsar Convention about any changes in the ecological character of Ramsar sites; and
  - assist in environmental impact assessment.
15. The Framework will be made publicly available (to guide wetland managers in the preparation of ecological character descriptions for their sites) on the Australian Government Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts website and as a publication.
16. Application of the Framework at Ramsar sites may result in further refinement – it should be seen as a ‘living document’. It will also be reviewed after five years.
17. Guidance on the implementation of the Framework is provided at [Annex C](#). Ecological character descriptions will be developed for all Australian Ramsar sites. The Wetlands and Waterbirds Taskforce is developing a workplan to give effect to this outcome.

18. This work is of international interest and the Department of the Environment, Water Heritage and the Arts will forward the Australian Framework to the Ramsar Secretariat's Scientific and Technical Review Panel for information.

## RESOLUTIONS

19. Council:
- (a) **ENDORSED** the first Ramsar guideline module on mapping specifications, at Annex A, for final release; and
  - (b) **ENDORSED** the second Ramsar guideline module on developing ecological character descriptions and guidance for its implementation, at Annexes B and C, for final release.

**ANNEX A:** Mapping Specifications for Australian Ramsar Wetlands

**ANNEX B:** National Framework and Guidance for Developing Ecological Character Descriptions of Australia's Ramsar Wetlands

**ANNEX C:** Implementation of the National Framework and Guidance for Developing Ecological Character Descriptions of Australia's Ramsar Wetlands  
*[Annexes A-C are held by the Secretariat]*

<b>Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 13
	<b>LOCATION:</b> MELBOURNE
	<b>DATE:</b> 18 APRIL 2008
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 13.23</b>

*Forwarded Out-of-session for Information 4 February 2008*

### NATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION FOR THE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF SHARKS (SHARK-PLAN)

1. Worldwide concern for the status of shark populations led the FAO to develop an International Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks (IPOA Sharks). In May 2004, Australia released its Shark-Plan in response to this international agreement.
2. The Shark-Plan is a strategy for addressing shark conservation and management issues on a nationally coordinated basis and demonstrates to the international community that Australia is committed to addressing these issues. It was developed in collaboration with the Australian Government, States, Northern Territory, fishing industry, Indigenous people, recreational fishers, scientists and non-government organisations.
3. In July 2002, the Marine and Coastal Committee established the Shark Implementation and Review Committee (SIRC) to oversee the implementation of the Shark-Plan. Membership includes one representative of the fisheries agency from each state and the Northern Territory, and members from each of the Australian Government Departments of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (including the Bureau of Rural Sciences), and the Environment and Heritage (now DEWHA) and the Australian Fisheries Management Authority.
4. In 2005 an update of the SIRC, was provided out of session to the Natural Resource Management Standing Committee (NRMSC).
5. The Shark-Plan was provided to COFI prior to its meeting in March 2005, thereby meeting our commitment to the IPOA Sharks. In preparation for each COFI meeting, the FAO distributes a questionnaire to all FAO members to report, *inter alia*, on their national implementation of the different IPOAs. Australia completed this questionnaire, which covers our NPOA sharks, and submitted it to the FAO by the due date for the 2007 meeting.
6. The fifth meeting of SIRC was held on 3 May 2007. The SIRC discussed the upcoming review of the shark assessment report (which supports and informs the Shark-Plan), and the Shark-Plan. The process for the update of the assessment report and a work plan for undertaking the review of the assessment report and the Shark-Plan are provided at [Annex A](#).
7. A 12 month SIRC work plan is provided at [Annex B](#) and was adopted by the MACC in July 2007.

8. A stakeholder workshop was held in Sydney in 2007. The objective of the workshop was to provide information on activities undertaken and currently underway to meet the actions in the Shark-Plan and to engage stakeholders. The workshop provided an overview of Shark-Plan progress, presented the four regional operational plans and recent research and also sought input from stakeholder groups. The workshop received positive feedback from participants.

## **RESOLUTIONS**

9. Council:
  - (a) **NOTED** that Australia's Shark-Plan as agreed by Council in 2004, was provided to the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) of the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), prior to its 26<sup>th</sup> meeting in March 2005; and
  - (b) **NOTED** that the shark assessment report is to be reviewed and updated by the Bureau of Rural Sciences (BRS), prior to a review of the Shark-Plan in 2008.

**ANNEX A:** Process and Work Plan for the Update of the Assessment Report and Review of the Shark-Plan

**ANNEX B:** SIRC 2007/2008 Work Program and Action List

## PROCESS AND WORK PLAN FOR THE UPDATE OF THE ASSESSMENT REPORT AND REVIEW OF THE SHARK-PLAN

SIRC5 agreed the following in relation to the update of the assessment report:

- The purpose of the assessment report is to assist the development of a revised Shark-Plan.
- The assessment should consider the review of the effectiveness of the Shark-Plan and be included within the update of the assessment report as one document.
- The review of effectiveness will include a report against the performance indicators in the Shark-Plan and be guided by page 26 of the Shark-Plan. The review will focus on government actions against the Shark-Plan.
- The assessment report does not need to include specific detail on all shark management measures in Australia, but could include information such as the status of shark fisheries across Australia.
- The updated assessment report could refer to the original document as a reference, where possible.
- BRS has the scope to consider what is included in the updated assessment report and should seek direction from SIRC as needed.

May-07	1 <sup>st</sup> NPOA/Shark-Plan Stakeholder workshop
May-07	SIRC 5th meeting
Jul-07	Sign-off by MACC on process for review (meeting 13 July 2007) BRS review assessment and progress against Shark-Plan Research input into draft BRS review SIRC input into draft BRS review
Oct/Nov 07	update of progress provided to MACC (t/conference 7 Nov)
mid-Jan 2008	SIRC sign-off of BRS review
Jan/Feb 08	provide assessment report to MACC
Feb-08	Comments on existing Shark-Plan sought from stakeholders (BRS review report distributed to stakeholders to assist in their review of Shark-Plan)
Feb-08	SIRC 6th meeting
Mar-08	SIRC draft NPOA 2008 Stakeholder workshop to provide input into draft NPOA 2008 SIRC 7th meeting
Jul-08	Sign off draft NPOA for public comment – MACC
Jul/Aug 08	Public exhibition of draft NPOA 2008
Sep-08	SIRC consideration of public submissions
Sep-08	Summary of submissions and preferred strategy report
Sep-08	NRM Standing Committee meeting
Oct-08	Finalise NPOA 2008
Nov-08	NRM Ministerial Council

## SIRC 2007/2008 WORK PROGRAM AND ACTION LIST

## ANNEX B

	Issue / Activity	Relevant MinCo Resolution	Actions required	SIRC Agenda Item	Product & timeframe	Responsibility (Responsible person)	Progress (Actions taken)	Issues (incl. Funding implications)
<b>Shark-Plan Implementation and Review Committee (SIRC)</b>								
The SIRC oversees implementation of Australia's National Plan of action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks (Shark-Plan).								
1.	<b>SIRC Meetings</b>		SIRC 6  SIRC 7		February 08  May/June 08	SIRC Members  SIRC Members		
2.	<b>Workshop</b>		1-day workshop with external stakeholders to seek input on the draft revised Shark-Plan		May/June 08	SIRC Members		
4.	<b>Operational Plans</b>		Jurisdictions to report on status against NPOA and operational plans on web reporting tool for 2005, 2006 and 2007.		December 07			
5.	<b>Reporting on Shark-Plan</b>		Report to MACC on progress of implementing the Shark-Plan  Prepare a background information paper for stakeholders and distribute background paper and status report to stakeholders		July 07  Sept 07	SIRC Members and Secretariat  SIRC Members and Secretariat		
6.	<b>Review of Shark Assessment Report and National Plan of Action (NPOA)</b>		Commence review of shark assessment report  Updated shark assessment report provided to MACC  Draft Shark-Plan  MACC sign-off of draft NPOA for public comment		August 07  Jan/Feb 07  March 08  July 08	BRS  SIRC  SIRC  MACC		NHT funds
7.	<b>Shark-Plan Committee and Progress</b>		Finalise the Communiqué outlining the activities of the Committee and progress on implementing the Shark-Plan		August 07	Secretariat		

<b>Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 13
	<b>LOCATION:</b> MELBOURNE
	<b>DATE:</b> 18 APRIL 2008
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 13.24</b>

*Forwarded Out-of-session for Information 4 February 2008*

### INTEGRATED COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT (ICZM)

1. In October 2003, Council endorsed the *Framework for a National Cooperative Approach to Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM Framework)*. Jurisdictions, including the Australian Local Government Association, developed an Implementation Plan for the Framework that the NRM Ministerial Council endorsed out-of-session in May 2006.
2. The *Implementation Plan* sets out, under strategic priority areas, nationally cooperative actions within nominated timeframes. As far as possible, these actions are consistent with, and build on coastal zone planning and management initiatives in each jurisdiction. Achievements to date represent jurisdictional best efforts.
3. Since the last annual report sound progress has been made in implementing the plan by all jurisdictions. Priority Area 7 of the *Implementation Plan* requires jurisdictions to prepare an annual progress report to the NRM Ministerial Council.

#### Achievements

4. Highlights of the actions progressed since the last annual report include:
  - considerable investment by the Australian Greenhouse Office (AGO) to proceed with the 'first pass' national assessment of Australia's coastal vulnerability to climate change;
  - contracting of the National Land and Water Resources Audit by the AGO to provide coastal habitat mapping as input to the coastal vulnerability assessment;
  - contracting of Geoscience Australia to develop a national map of coastline stability. This work is being undertaken by the University of Tasmania using a method developed by Mr Chris Sharples in his assessment of Tasmania's coastal vulnerability;
  - purchase of mid-resolution SPOT Digital Elevation Model data for Australia's coastline and offshore islands up to 20m above high water mark to provide significantly improved capacity to model flooding and inundation at a national scale;
  - commencement of four years of research by Marine and Tropical Science Research Facility focusing on tropical rainforest and water quality in World Heritage Wet Tropics, the Great Barrier Reef and Torres Strait;
  - development of water quality improvement plans through the NHT funded Coastal Catchments Initiative in selected high priority areas in all jurisdictions;
  - contracting the delivery of detailed acid sulfate soils maps in five areas across Australia experiencing development pressure; and

- agreement on estuarine, coastal and marine indicators. Draft protocols for the indicators are being reviewed in response to state trials.
5. Full details of achievements can be found in the Implementation Plan for a *National Cooperative Approach to Integrated Coastal Zone Management – 2006-07 Progress Report* at Annex A.

### Emerging Issues

6. Over the past year, the Intergovernmental Coastal Advisory Group (ICAG) has observed an increased focus nationally on particular coastal zone management issues (see Annex B). These include:
- planning for population change (Priority Area 5); and
  - understanding and managing/adapting to climate change (Priority Area 3);
  - managing coastal acid sulfate soils (part of Priority Area 2)
7. The prominence of these issues reflects the trend along the Australian coastline for increased settlement and intensification of development (known as the ‘sea change’ phenomenon).
8. These issues intersect a range of biophysical, social and environmental issues within the coastal zone and have strong implications for planning and policy development across all levels of government.
9. The full implementation of the ICZM Framework, particularly in relation to the pressing issues identified above, will require strategic partnerships and stronger engagement with the relevant planning agencies and other Ministerial Councils. In particular, there is a range of actions that fall outside the responsibility of the NRMCC and a concerted effort will need to be made over the next year to ensure other Ministerial Councils give priority to ICZM implementation (for example, improving sustainable growth planning for the recreation and tourism industries; and improving the capacity of state, territory and local government bodies to plan for population change in coastal areas).

### RESOLUTIONS

10. Council:
- (a) **NOTED** the progress report on actions within the *Implementation Plan for the Framework for a National Cooperative Approach to Integrated Coastal Zone Management (Annex A)*; and
  - (b) **NOTED** the pressing coastal management issues identified by the Intergovernmental Coastal Advisory Group (ICAG).

**ANNEX A:** *Implementation Plan for a National Cooperative Approach to Integrated Coastal Zone Management – 2006-07 Progress Report*

**ANNEX B:** Pressing Issues Identified by the Intergovernmental Coastal Advisory Group  
*[Annexes A-B are held by the Secretariat]*

<b>Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 13
	<b>LOCATION:</b> MELBOURNE
	<b>DATE:</b> 18 APRIL 2008
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 13.25</b>

*Finalised Out-of-Session 26 March 2008*

### MCKELL MEDAL 2007 AWARD

1. The McKell Medal publicly recognises excellence and achievement in natural resource management in Australia. The award commemorates the outstanding contribution made in the fields of soil and land conservation by Sir William McKell, a former Premier of NSW and Governor-General of Australia.
2. The McKell Medal Advisory Panel manages the selection process and reports to Standing Committee through the Natural Resource Policies and Programs Committee.
3. The presentation function for the McKell Medal is normally held in conjunction with an appropriate high-profile national event. The 17<sup>th</sup> (2006) Medal winner, Ms Kate Hadden was awarded her medal by the then Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, at the NRM Regional Chairs' Forum held in conjunction with the Council meeting in Brisbane in April 2007.
4. Nominations are sought each year from individuals or individuals in partnership by advertising widely through a broad range of government and non-government agencies and organisations. Nominations for the 18<sup>th</sup> (2007) Medal closed on 23 November 2007. A total of 14 nominations were received.
5. The selection criteria requires nominees to demonstrate one or more of the following:
  - community leadership in ethical land stewardship at local, regional, state or national level;
  - development and implementation of highly effective and innovative educational and promotional programs; and
  - delivery and promotion of research activities or the application of research findings that have a significant contribution to the above criteria.
6. Nominees should demonstrate self motivation, preferably be current NRM practitioners and be prepared to promote the ethic of sound NRM practice.
7. The McKell Medal Advisory Panel, in considering the nominations for the 18<sup>th</sup> (2007) Medal, noted both the considerable contribution of all the nominees to natural resource management, and the high standard of nominations in relation to the selection criteria.
8. The McKell Medal Advisory Panel met on 28 November 2007 and recommended that the 18<sup>th</sup> (2007) Medal be awarded to Wolford and Marie Parsons of Port Vincent, South Australia. A summary of the Parson's background and achievements is at [Annex A](#).

9. The presentation function will be held in conjunction with NRM Regional Chairs' Forum in Melbourne on 18 April 2008.
10. As is usual practice, the McKell Medal Advisory Panel recommends that the winner's name be embargoed until the presentation.

#### **RESOLUTION**

11. Council **ENDORSED** the recommendation of the McKell Medal Advisory Panel that the 18<sup>th</sup> (2007) Medal be awarded to Wolford and Marie Parsons of Port Vincent, South Australia.

**ANNEX A:** Nomination Summary of Mr Wolford and Mrs Marie Parsons

**NOMINATION SUMMARY OF MR WOLFORD and MRS MARIE PARSONS**

Wolford Parsons is a leading example of someone who accepted the need to change one's own behaviour and to follow through with the necessary action. The Wolford family took over management of the 630 ha farm, 'The Springs', at Port Vincent in South Australia in 1975. By 1982, his father and brother had left the farm. Resisting the pressure to walk away, Wolford and Marie believed that with hard work and good management, they could restore the land and make it a sustainable operation.

About three decades ago dryland salinity emerged as a major environmental threat and a constraint to profitable and sustainable land management. Wolford and Marie's approach was to incorporate marginal land back into a whole-of-farm system rather than focusing on the profitable land only. Three hundred thousand trees and shrubs, 45 kilometres of fencing, and countless hours of labour later, the family had not only controlled the spread of salinity, improved the visual amenity of the property, provided habitat for native flora and fauna, but have converted what were unprofitable parts of their farm into real assets. Wolford and Marie have successfully worked through a sequence of issues from identifying problems, possessing the commitment to start on-ground remedial work, through to incorporating rehabilitated land into the whole-farm plan.

The Parsons have been vocal and enthusiastic advocates for 'doing well by doing good' and have established collaboration with the local primary school to provide children with a hands-on approach to learning. This ongoing education program has expanded across the region and now the Parsons' property regularly hosts visits from school and university students, researchers, extension specialists and farmer groups. Wolford and Marie have hosted research programs on innovative grazing management on saltbush-based pastures that have attracted national interest. Mr Parson has been approached to present his story on managing salinity to the International Salinity Forum in Adelaide in April 2008.

Mr Parsons was a member of the Yorke Peninsula Soil Conservation Board (1997-2005) and is a current member of the Northern and Yorke Peninsula NRM Committee. He has been invited to speak to the South Australian State Parliament, to bankers and financiers; and to research and extension forums.

Mr Parsons has been awarded a number of landcare awards, including: Commonwealth Bank Regional *Ibis Award* winner, Mid North and Yorke Peninsula, 1999; finalist, National Landcare Program Individual winner, 1999; South Australia National Landcare Program, individual winner, 2005; and South Australia National Landcare Award for a primary producer, 2005 and 2006.

Wolford and Marie Parsons have shown by example how to improve land stewardship for multiple benefits - economic and natural resource sustainability.

<b>Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 13
	<b>LOCATION:</b> MELBOURNE
	<b>DATE:</b> 18 APRIL 2008
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 13.26</b>

*Forwarded Out-of-Session for Information 13 February 2008*

**ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND HERITAGE COUNCIL (EPHC)  
STRATEGIC PLAN FOR 2008-10**

1. The Environment Protection and Heritage Council (EPHC) Secretariat advised NRMCMC members that the EPHC is in the process of finalising its Strategic Plan for the next three years.
3. The draft 2008-10 Strategic Plan was developed by members of the Environment Protection and Heritage Standing Committee, who represent the environment and heritage agencies of all Australian jurisdictions and New Zealand. The draft Strategic Plan sets out strategic directions for embracing ongoing and new challenges of environment protection and heritage conservation into the future, and builds on the achievements of the previous (2006-08) EPHC Strategic Plan.
4. Copies of the draft Strategic Plan for 2008-10 were forwarded to NRMCMC members for their consideration prior to the EPH Standing Committee and Council meetings with a request that any comments be forwarded direct to the EPHC Secretariat.
5. Copies of the draft EPHC Strategic Plan for 2008-10 and the previous 2006-08 EPHC Strategic Plan is at Annex A.

**RESOLUTIONS**

6. Council:
  - (a) **NOTED** the Environment Protection and Heritage Council's draft Strategic Plan for 2008-10 and the previous Strategic Plan for 2006-08 (Annex A); and
  - (b) **NOTED** that comments on the 2008-10 draft Strategic Plan were to be forwarded direct to the EPHC Secretariat

**ANNEX A:** EPHC draft Strategic Plan for 2008-10 and 2006-08 Strategic Plan  
*[Annex is held by the Secretariat]*

<b>Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 13
	<b>LOCATION:</b> MELBOURNE
	<b>DATE:</b> 18 APRIL 2008
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 13.27</b>

*Finalised Out-of-Session for Decision 4 July 2008*

### AUSTRALIA'S VIRTUAL HERBARIUM PROJECT – ACHIEVEMENTS AND FUTURE ACTIVITIES

1. Australia's Virtual Herbarium (AVH) is a world-first, web-based botanical database containing comprehensive and detailed information on Australia's native plants. It is a collaborative project between the Australian Government, State and Territory herbaria and the private sector, initiated in 2001 through the former Australian and New Zealand Environment and Conservation Council. AVH has improved the accessibility to, and accuracy of, information on Australia's native plant species.
2. In April 2006, the AVH Board of Trustees provided a progress report to Council. The report noted the good progress achieved at that stage but drew attention to the shortfall in funding due to the less than anticipated funding raised from corporate and philanthropic (non-government) donations. Subsequently, additional funding was provided by the Australian Government from the Natural Heritage Trust and by private philanthropists, to enable phase 2 of the AVH to proceed until 30 June 2008.
3. The AVH project is achieving specific objectives in line with its original mandate. AVH now has on-line approximately 98 per cent of the vascular plant specimens collected in Australia and held in major Australian herbaria. Annex A illustrates the information entered into the AVH database by State and Territory herbaria as at November 2007.
4. Incorporation of AVH enhancements such as images, descriptions and identification tools also continues as information becomes available.
5. Information from AVH is now being used by a wide range of government, private sector, research, and community users to achieve a diversity of environmental objectives. Australia's Virtual Herbarium provides data on Australian native plant species and weeds with numerous benefits to the Australian and international communities, including:
  - effective prevention through the early warning system for invasive weed species;
  - more effective land use planning through better informed decision-makers and land managers;
  - improved access and reliable data for research and practical applications such as landcare, the biotechnology industry, mining, agriculture and biosecurity;
  - improved access to comprehensive accurate data on Australian native plants to assist in conservation planning and prioritisation; and

- better conservation and management of Australia's native plants.
6. Success of the project is evident in the steady increase in the number of web hits to the AVH website. Each herbarium has continued to report to the AVH Trust Board an increase in hits to their state/territory web portals of the AVH. There has also been a steady increase in the number of direct requests to herbaria to assist in specialised plant specimen research utilising AVH data.
  7. Benefits from the project are demonstrated by the following examples where AVH data has contributed to improved environmental outcomes:
    - climate change analysis: Victorian students have used bioclimatic modelling on AVH data to investigate the climatic factors that control the distribution of Australian macrofungi – vitally significant in forests – which help to break down dead organic material into simple compounds usable by growing plants;
    - biodiversity knowledge: A project in South Australia, in partnership with the University of California, is making a global assessment of biodiversity richness and endemism in Mediterranean ecosystems via analysis of AVH specimen data; and
    - revegetation to improve rural productivity: Land managers in the Cootamundra/Harden area of NSW used AVH to determine what botanical species characterised the area before extensive land clearing, while developing plans to restore native vegetation on farms, which in turn will assist to enhance rural sector productivity.
  8. The success of the AVH project has directly led to the development of the Atlas of Living Australia, for which the AVH project provides the model.
  9. While the AVH has met the original milestones set by Ministers, much remains to be done, for example, inclusion in the AVH of significant university and regional herbaria collections; improved tools for accessing and searching the database; and broadening the scope of the AVH to complete the inclusion of non-vascular flora (algae, mosses, lichen, fungi).
  10. The AVH Board has agreed to continue to support the AVH project and to raise and distribute funds for these purposes, which are consistent with the original Trust deeds.

## RESOLUTIONS

11. Council:
  - (a) **NOTED** the achievements and future activities of Australia's Virtual Herbarium (AVH) Project; and
  - (b) **ENDORSED** continued collaboration and participation of all jurisdictions in the AVH project.

**ANNEX A:** Progress in Databasing by State/Territory Herbaria  
*[Annex is held by the Secretariat]*

**JOINT MEETING OF THE  
NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND  
PRIMARY INDUSTRIES  
MINISTERIAL COUNCILS**

**17 APRIL 2008**

**NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND  
PRIMARY INDUSTRIES MINISTERIAL COUNCILS**

**JOINT MEETING  
MELBOURNE - 17 APRIL 2007**

**COUNCIL PARTICIPANTS**

**AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT**

The Hon. Peter Garrett MP (Chair) Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts

The Hon. Tony Burke MP Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

**NEW SOUTH WALES**

The Hon. Verity Firth MLA Minister for Climate Change and the Environment

**VICTORIA**

The Hon. Joe Helper MLA Minister for Agriculture

The Hon. Gavin Jennings MLC Minister for Environment and Climate Change

**QUEENSLAND**

The Hon. Tim Mulherin MP Minister for Primary Industries and Fisheries

**WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

Mr Martin Whitely MLA Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for  
(Representing The Hon. Kim Chance) Agriculture and Food

The Hon. David Templeman MLA Minister for the Environment  
Minister for Climate Change

The Hon. John Kobelke MLA Minister for Water Resources

**SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

The Hon. Rory McEwen MP Minister Agriculture, Food and Fisheries

The Hon. Gail Gago MLC Minister for Environment and Conservation

**TASMANIA**

The Hon. David Llewellyn MHA Minister for Primary Industries and Water  
Minister for Energy and Resources

**NORTHERN TERRITORY**

The Hon. Chris Natt MLA Minister for Primary Industry and Fisheries

The Hon. Leonard Kiely MLA Minister for Natural Resources, Environment and  
Heritage

**AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL  
TERRITORY**

Mr Jon Stanhope MLA

Minister for Environment Water, and Climate  
Change

**NEW ZEALAND**

The Hon. Steve Chadwick MP

Minister of Conservation

**OBSERVER**

Cr Bill Mitchell

Australian Local Government Association

**OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE**

- \* Denotes member of the Primary Industries Standing Committee (PISC) or Natural Resource Management Standing Committee (NRMSC)

**Australian Government**

Mr Daryl Quinlivan                      Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry  
 Mr Tom Aldred  
 Mr Phillip Glyde  
 Dr Cliff Samson  
 Mr Ian Thompson

Mr David Borthwick \*                      Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and  
 the Arts  
 Mr Mike Callaghan  
 Mr Tony Slayter  
 Dr James Horne  
 Ms Donna Petrachenko  
 Ms Barbara Butt  
 Ms Sue Ludwig  
 Ms Susannah Zuckerman

Mr Ian Carruthers                      Department of Climate Change

Dr Geoff Love \*                      Bureau of Meteorology  
 Dr Michael Coughlan

Ms Joanne Daly \*                      CSIRO

**New South Wales**

Dr Richard Sheldrake \*                      Department of Primary Industries  
 Ms Wendy Stamp  
 Ms Jennifer Ranson

Ms Lisa Corbyn \*                      Department of Environment and Climate Change  
 Mr Tim Rogers

**Victoria**

Mr Richard Bolt \*                      Department of Primary Industries  
 Mr Peter Bailey  
 Dr Bruce Kefford  
 Mr Luke Wilson

Mr Kevin Love                      Department of Sustainability and Environment

**Queensland**

Mr Robert Setter \*                      Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries  
 Mr Bruce Turner

Mr Scott Spencer \*                      Department of Natural Resources and Water  
 Ms Debbie Best

Mr Terry Wall \*                      Environmental Protection Agency  
 Ms Nancy Esler  
 Mr Tony Roberts

**Western Australia**

Mr Ian Longson \*

Department of Agriculture and Food

Mr Keiran McNamara \*

Department of Environment and Conservation

Dr Paul Biggs \*

Forest Products Commission

**South Australia**

Mr Geoff Knight \*

Primary Industries and Resources SA

Dr Don Plowman

Mr Rob Freeman \*

Department of Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation

Mr Andrew Johnson

Professor Rob Lewis

Ms Julie Mrotek

Mr Stephen Forbes

Department for Environment and Heritage

**Tasmania**

Mr Kim Evans \*

Department of Primary Industries and Water

Mr Andrew Blakesley

Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources

**Northern Territory**

Mr Rod Gobbey

Department of Primary Industry, Fisheries and Mines

Mr Jim Grant \*

Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts

**Australian Capital Territory**

Mr Hamish McNulty \*

Department of Territory and Municipal Services

**New Zealand**

Mr Lindsay Gow \*

Ministry for the Environment

Mr Brian Sheppard

Department of Conservation

**Observers**

Mr John Pritchard \*

Australian Local Government Association

Dr Rosemary James

**Secretariat** Ms Kate Woffenden  
 Ms Dawn Manning  
 Ms Catherine Knight  
 Ms Judi Lilley

**NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND PRIMARY INDUSTRIES**

**MINISTERIAL COUNCILS**

**JOINT MEETING  
MELBOURNE - 17 APRIL 2008**

<b>Res'n. No.</b>	<b>Item Title</b>	<b>Joint Item No.</b>	<b>Page No.</b>
13.28	Climate Change – Future Directions	3A	113
13.29	Update on Climatic Conditions	3B	116
13.30	National Agricultural Monitoring System (NAMS)	3C	117
13.31	Advancing Indigenous Employment in Natural Resource Management and Primary Industries	3D	120
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13.33	National System for the Prevention and Management of Introduced Marine Pest Incursions	3F	126
13.34	Red Imported Fire Ant Eradication Program	3G	133
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**NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND PRIMARY INDUSTRIES**

**MINISTERIAL COUNCILS**

**JOINT MEETING  
MELBOURNE, 17 APRIL 2008**

**CHAIRMAN'S OPENING COMMENTS**

The Chairman welcomed Ministers to the joint meeting of the Primary Industries and Natural Resource Management Ministerial Councils.

Apologies were received from:

- Kim Chance, Minister for Agriculture and Food, WA; who is represented by Martin Whitely
- Jon Ford, Minister for Fisheries, WA
- Karlene Maywald, Minister for Water Security, SA
- Michelle O'Byrne, Minister for Environment, Parks, Heritage and the Arts, Tasmania
- Ian Macdonald, Minister for Primary Industries, NSW
- Trevor Mallard, Minister for the Environment, NZ.

<b>Natural Resource Management Primary Industries Ministerial Councils</b>	<b>JOINT MEETING</b>
	<b>LOCATION: MELBOURNE</b>
	<b>DATE: 17 APRIL 2008</b>
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 13.28 (PIMC 13.25)</b>

### CLIMATE CHANGE – FUTURE DIRECTIONS

1. The Australian Government's climate change policy is built on three pillars: reducing Australia's greenhouse gas emissions; adapting to unavoidable climate change; and helping to shape a global solution. There have been a number of major developments in relation to this national approach to climate change, including the establishment of the Department of Climate Change. Notably:
  - (a) the Australian Government ratified the Kyoto Protocol in December 2007 and is working towards a post-2012 multi-lateral agreement for addressing climate change that is equitable and effective and includes agreement on a long-term global goal for emissions reductions;
  - (b) the Australian Government is committed to introducing an emissions trading scheme by 2010 and will finalise design elements by the end of 2008; and
  - (c) initial design principles that will guide the development of emissions trading over the next year or so include:
    - (i) the scheme will be a 'cap and trade' scheme that has maximum practical coverage of greenhouse gas emissions and industry sectors and is designed to link with other countries' schemes;
    - (ii) scheme caps will be designed to place Australia on a low emissions path in a way that best manages the economic costs of transition and provides incentives to develop and invest in low-emissions technologies;
    - (iii) the scheme will address the competitive challenges facing emission-intensive trade-exposed industries in Australia; and
    - (iv) the scheme will address the impact on strongly affected industries and measures will be developed to assist households, particularly low income households, to adjust to the impact of carbon prices.
  
2. The Government will take a careful and deliberate approach to finalising the scheme design and draw on many sources of advice to achieve the best policy outcomes. The policy development process will be informed by the design work of the Department of Climate Change, and also take account of the recommendations and advice of Professor Ross Garnaut, modelling undertaken by the Australian Treasury, and the work completed by the National Emissions Trading Taskforce and the report of the Task Group on Emissions Trading.
  
3. The Garnaut Climate Change Review was commissioned in April 2007 by Australian state and territory governments to examine the impacts of climate change on the Australian economy and recommend policy frameworks to improve the prospects for sustainable prosperity. The Review, due to report in September 2008, will be an important input to the Government's thinking on a range of climate change policy issues.

4. In December 2007, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) agreed to establish a Working Group on Climate Change and Water. COAG agreed that part of the indicative forward work program from March 2008 for the Climate Change and Water Working group would be to look at long term adaptation to climate change including accelerating the implementation of actions under the National Adaptation Framework endorsed in April 2007. The Framework includes actions to assist vulnerable sectors including agriculture, biodiversity, forestry, coastal and water resources, across all jurisdictions.
5. The Australian Government has established a Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility, which will lead Australia's researchers in generating robust biophysical, social and economic information that decision makers need to manage the risk of climate change. CSIRO has established a new Flagship on climate change adaptation.
6. The Government will fast track the implementation of the National Agriculture and Climate Change Action Plan to help Australian agriculture better manage climate change. The Government will also fast track the development of Action Plans for both the forestry and fisheries industries. This is in addition to fast tracking the development of the Climate Change Adaptation Plan for Australia's World Heritage and Iconic Areas.
7. Officials are implementing a number of national action plans for the Councils on climate change issues including:
  - The National Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan - a review of this action plan will commence after the completion of the national biodiversity vulnerability assessment and of the review of the National Biodiversity Strategy in 2009.
  - The National Agriculture and Climate Change Action Plan – a desktop review of this action plan is underway, with a draft report due later this month.
8. The Government will invest \$130 million over four years in the Australia's Farming Future initiative to assist Australian primary industry sectors to adapt and respond to climate change.
9. Discussion about future directions for climate change and biodiversity, agriculture, coasts, water and natural resource management will:
  - (a) draw on national processes including those of the Garnaut Climate Change Review and be informed by work undertaken to design a national emissions trading scheme;
  - (b) consider current actions under the National Climate Change Adaptation Framework, including the development of new action plans and review of existing climate change action plans, and establishment of the Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility; and
  - (c) draw on key early messages and knowledge gaps identified from the Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council (NRMMC) climate change priority actions.
10. The current NRMMC priority climate change actions are due for completion in 2008. The CLAN Working Group is overseeing the implementation of these actions. It was proposed that the NRMMC in November 2008 consider an updated CLAN work program to address priority areas in agriculture and NRM that:

- draws on key early messages and knowledge gaps from results of the NRMCC priority actions;
  - maps current actions under the National Climate Change Adaptation Framework;
  - complements and contributes to the objectives of other national processes including those of the Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility and the Garnaut Climate Change Review; and
  - draws on priority areas as identified in the review of the National Agriculture and Climate Change Action Plan and in other relevant plans, including the National Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan.
11. Recommendations for targeted projects, budgetary requirements and implementation timeframes within each major thematic area will be developed. CLAN will provide advice on recommendations for targeted projects that meet these objectives to NRMCC's November 2008 meeting.

## RESOLUTIONS

12. Councils:
- (a) **NOTED** recent developments in relation to the national approach to climate change; and
  - (b) **NOTED** consideration of future directions for climate change and biodiversity, agriculture, coasts, water and natural resource management will take into account a range of relevant national climate change policy processes.

<b>Natural Resource Management Primary Industries Ministerial Councils</b>	<b>JOINT MEETING</b>
	<b>LOCATION: MELBOURNE</b>
	<b>DATE: 17 APRIL 2008</b>
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 13.29 (PIMC 13.26)</b>

### UPDATE ON CLIMATIC CONDITIONS

1. Dr Geoff Love, Director of Meteorology, provided Council with a briefing on current climate conditions and outlook. Following is a short summary of Dr Love's presentation.
2. The presentation noted that one of the major climate events of the previous three months had been an extended period of high temperatures over South Australia during March. Numerous records were broken during this heatwave, which lasted from 1-17 March. Through the warmer months, rainfall in the Murray Darling Basin had ranged from average in the south to above average in parts of the north. In contrast, much of South Australia, western Queensland and the southern two-thirds of the Northern Territory had recorded below to very much below average rainfall.
3. Despite some areas of good warm season rainfall, long term deficits persist over much of southern Australia with very low inflows to major water storages. While the La Niña event, which had brought very heavy spring and summer rainfalls to the east coast and to eastern parts of inland Queensland, was virtually over, it was unlikely that there would be a rapid swing to generally drier El Niño conditions. The odds for above average rainfall through the early winter months lie between 60 and 70 per cent in a broad band covering far northern Western Australia, most of the Northern Territory, northwest and southern Queensland, and the far north of New South Wales. Over the rest of the country the chances of exceeding above average winter rainfall lie mainly between 45 and 60 per cent.

### RESOLUTION

4. Councils **NOTED** the presentation on climatic conditions by the Bureau of Meteorology.

<b>Natural Resource Management Primary Industries Ministerial Councils</b>	<b>JOINT MEETING</b>
	<b>LOCATION: MELBOURNE</b>
	<b>DATE: 17 APRIL 2008</b>
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 13.30 (PIMC 13.27)</b>

### NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL MONITORING SYSTEM

1. The National Agricultural Monitoring System (NAMS) is a collaborative project developed under the PIMC with the key objective 'to streamline the Exceptional Circumstances (EC) application and assessment process, through the ongoing collation of agreed data sets and analyses'.
2. PIMC 8 (April 2005) agreed that a review of the NAMS was required by 30 June 2008. PISC 12 (March 2007) requested that the Industries Development Committee (IDC) undertake the review.
3. The review concluded that the NAMS successfully met its primary objective of assisting in streamlining the EC application and assessment processes. The NAMS has benefited all investors to varying degrees, in terms of reduced time and costs to complete and assess EC applications. The report also identified issues, which if addressed, would improve the capacity of the NAMS to support stakeholders and current drought policy.
4. The IDC found that the investment in the NAMS by PIMC has been worthwhile and a major step forward in developing more consistent approaches to current drought declaration processes and that the NAMS needs to be ongoing to support future drought policy in Australia.
5. The review identified a number of improvements to the system and recommends that 'additional investment is required to make the NAMS more user friendly and flexible' and 'that the level of resourcing for the NAMS be set to include the ongoing maintenance, the cost of accessing data and some further development in functionality'.
6. PISC agrees with the review's key recommendation that the NAMS should undergo a period of consolidation to improve the tool's functionality. Specifically, further work would address the issues of data provision and timeliness, greater adaptation to and improved flexibility for individual investor needs and continuing to build the knowledge and confidence of users.
7. The review identified that 'the NAMS provides a widely available web-based tool to explore the immediate past climate, production and economic agricultural performance of a region and develop an understanding of the inherent risks in agricultural systems. Access to this information will become increasingly important in the face of climate and market change and the need to adjust to those changes.'
8. PISC recognises that the NAMS has potentially other important applications and uses that would be valuable to jurisdictions and other stakeholders not directly

involved in the EC processes. PISC is supportive, in principle, of further expanding the scope of the NAMS, particularly into the area of drought preparedness, climate change adaptation and risk management, although any proposal needs to stand alone as a separate business case.

9. The review highlighted that while existing governance arrangements have been successful, they should be adjusted to provide a more focused control on finance, performance and risk management. PISC is supportive of the review recommendation for a smaller, high level, NAMS Board of Management to be implemented with other recommendations of the review following clarification of future drought policy.
10. The drought policy improvements being pursued by PIMC may result in substantial changes to drought policy and programs. PISC considers that development of the NAMS should be put on hold until the policy context within which the NAMS would operate is clearer and supports the IDC recommendations that implementation of the review needs to take account of future drought policy.
11. PISC supports the IDC recommendation that \$1.22 million would be sufficient to maintain the NAMS for 2008-09 pending the outcome of future uses for the NAMS in light of a new drought policy. PISC recognises that a funding level of \$1.22 million in 2008-09 will reduce stakeholder and administrative support and remove communication and stakeholder liaison support. If this level of funding was continued beyond 2008-09, the base capacity of the NAMS would be potentially eroded.
12. Members noted that a review of drought policy was being conducted by CSIRO and the Bureau of Meteorology and proposed that the role of NAMS be considered as part of the review

## RESOLUTIONS

13. Councils:
  - (a) **NOTED** PISC's advice on the effectiveness of the National Agricultural Monitoring System (NAMS), which concludes that the tool has successfully met its primary objective of assisting in streamlining the Exceptional Circumstances (EC) application and assessment processes;
  - (b) **NOTED** that the need for a tool to support current and future drought policy implementation remains important;
  - (c) **AGREED** to put on hold the implementation of recommendations of the review conducted by the Industries Development Committee for PISC including new governance arrangements for the NAMS and any future development of the NAMS, pending clarification of future drought policy;
  - (d) **AGREED** to the proposed reduced funding requirement of \$1.22 million which is adequate for the continued operation and maintenance of the NAMS in 2008-09, to be funded under the current cost sharing arrangements and with member contributions as follows; **NOTING** this reduced funding will

have implications for the type and level of work undertaken; and the operation and stability of the system:

	%	\$
Australian Government (DAFF)	50.00	611,062
New South Wales	12.57	153,621
Victoria	11.74	143,477
Queensland	10.82	132,233
Western Australia	7.09	86,648
South Australia	6.04	73,816
Northern Territory	0.48	5,866
Tasmania	1.23	15,033
Australian Capital Territory	0.02	244
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>1,222,000</b>

- (e) **REQUESTED** that as part of the PIMC review of drought policy, CSIRO and BOM provide advice on the role NAMS can play under any new drought policy.

<b>Natural Resource Management Primary Industries Ministerial Councils</b>	<b>JOINT MEETING</b>
	<b>LOCATION:</b> MELBOURNE
	<b>DATE:</b> 17 APRIL 2008
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 13.31</b> (PIMC 13.28)

**ADVANCING INDIGENOUS EMPLOYMENT IN NATURAL RESOURCE  
MANAGEMENT AND PRIMARY INDUSTRIES**

1. Employment is a key element in meeting the challenges of Indigenous disadvantage and promoting reconciliation that is meaningful for Indigenous peoples. Other elements include improved health and housing, a safe family environment, law and order, and education. It is important for these elements to be addressed in a holistic manner, to maximise positive outcomes for Indigenous communities.
2. NRM and PI provide a wide range of opportunities for Indigenous employment. Many of these activities were highlighted in the 2006-2007 Annual Report. Further opportunities are outlined in Annex B.
3. NRMSC 14 (September 2007) agreed that NHT3 (or its replacement) is one mechanism to be used to reinforce and encourage Indigenous participation in regional NRM by designing investment criteria to facilitate Indigenous programs and projects. NRMSC 14 also noted the recent removal of Community Development Employment Program (CDEP) in the Northern Territory and the importance of this funding to Indigenous NRM programs.
4. Currently, CDEP funding is used to provide training and development components for a range of NRM and PI programs. In many cases CDEP funding provides foundation funding, which is topped up by NRM and PI programs. CDEP is an Australian Government initiative for unemployed Indigenous peoples. CDEP was previously provided under the Department of Workplace Relations but more recently (since the Federal election) is likely to be administered by the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA).
5. Recent changes to CDEP (mid-2007) resulted in the removal of CDEP from urban and major regional centres across Australia. Furthermore, the Northern Territory Emergency Response on 23 July 2007 outlined that CDEP in the Northern Territory would progressively be replaced with 'real' jobs, training and mainstream employment programs. These policy changes have emphasised the vulnerability of many NRM and PI programs operating in regional and remote areas that provide employment for Indigenous peoples.
6. Given that the newly-elected Australian Government has indicated a review of CDEP, the Indigenous Working Group has prepared information to:
  - highlight the current benefits of CDEP to NRM and PI programs;
  - list opportunities that NRM and PI programs and projects bring to CDEP including examples; and

- identify components of CDEP, NRM and PI programs that should continue in the reformed CDEP or equivalent.
7. Indigenous Australians are major stakeholders in the management and protection of Australia's natural resources. A discussion paper on improving opportunities for Indigenous employment in NRM and PI has been prepared ([Annex B](#)). The discussion paper also addresses the more general opportunities available through the national funding of regional NRM and the important issue of contracting out NRM functions to Indigenous communities. Each jurisdiction has undertaken consultation on the paper, with relevant Indigenous bodies and groups.
  8. Regional NRM bodies such as NRM Boards and catchment authorities provide significant opportunities for progressing Indigenous employment initiatives at a regional level, especially in relation to establishing partnerships with Indigenous groups, training, career development, capacity building and business enterprise opportunities. The NRM Regional Chairs' forum may provide an appropriate mechanism to consider ways to progress Indigenous employment initiatives. It is suggested that jurisdictions consider ways to progress Indigenous employment initiatives in NRM and PI in their state/ territory.

#### **Benefits of CDEP to NRM and PI programs**

9. A number of NRM and PI programs are used to supplement CDEP arrangements, especially in remote Indigenous communities. This includes programs operating with grants or funding from such programs as Natural Heritage Trust and National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality (NHT & NAP), Envirofund, Community Water Grants, Indigenous Heritage and Indigenous Protected Areas. Some examples are provided in [Annex A](#).
10. Whilst it has been difficult to quantify the number of NRM and PI programs utilising CDEP participants, some examples are provided in [Annex A](#). Anecdotal evidence suggests that without CDEP funding (or its equivalent), the opportunities that NRM and PI programs can offer for Indigenous employment will be limited as well as reducing the achievements of specific NRM and PI outcomes.
11. Without additional funding through CDEP, many NRM and PI programs would operate at a severely restricted capacity both in the number of people employed and the environmental, economic and social outcomes achieved.
12. Programs are not without their challenges. Urban, rural and remote Indigenous communities have different challenges and opportunities. Often in remote areas employment opportunities are not readily attainable due to absence of significant commercial or private sector employment opportunities. In these situations economic development may be viewed as a process that might enhance Indigenous participation with local, regional and national economies rather than purely enhanced market engagement, high formal employment and high and growing income.
13. Where economic development activities may be restricted, NRM and PI programs provide indigenous communities with opportunities for meaningful engagement in 'looking-after-country', as NRM and PI activities are often the only sources of income for many remote communities.

14. Recent examples from SA and Northern Australia indicate that the establishment of NRM and PI programs are important for Indigenous people because these programs are consistent with cultural perspectives of people where working on country is part of a holistic approach to society and culture. This approach enables close linkage between western perspectives and Indigenous management arrangements, which reinforce culture, traditional practices and the importance of traditional owners and knowledge, and also provide a bridge that young people can use between cultures with beneficial employment, education and health outcomes.

#### **Opportunities that NRM and PI programs provide to CDEP**

15. Within the NRM arena there is increasing recognition of the need to establish strong partnerships between Government, private enterprises and communities to fully realise NRM and PI outcomes that are socially, economically and environmentally feasible. Whether these occur via a reformed CDEP or an equivalent program, there is significant potential to become a partnership catalyst to create sustainable employment opportunities for Indigenous people and communities involving Government, private business, training and development entities.

#### **CDEP or equivalent**

16. It is recognised that economic development will be the foundation of the Australian Government's efforts to improve Indigenous livelihoods and that the Australian Government views education and training, supporting local enterprise, and providing better business support as key components of progressing towards economic self-reliance.
17. NRM and PI programs offer opportunities for education, training and employment for Indigenous people as well as opportunities for business enterprise development. Whatever the outcome of the CDEP reform process, it is important that governments at all levels recognise the great and continuing potential for NRM and PI programs to bring benefits to Indigenous communities, especially in remote areas with poorly developed labour markets. NRM and PI programs therefore need a secure place in whole of government policy settings that target improved Indigenous employment.
18. In discussion on this item, members outlined their jurisdiction's programs in relation to Indigenous employment and including the engagement and training of Indigenous rangers.

#### **RESOLUTIONS**

19. Councils:
  - (a) **AGREED** to support the creation of ongoing full-time and part-time jobs for Indigenous people through the purchase of environmental services, as well as encouraging the NRM and PI programs to actively engage Indigenous communities, with the aim of providing capacity building opportunities; developing business-oriented employment and broader skills exchange including support networks; supporting skills development; establishing community infrastructure assisting employment; and linking to whole-of-government programs, where appropriate;

- (b) **NOTED** the types of Natural Resources Management (NRM) and Primary Industries (PI) programs that utilise Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) as base funding (Annex A);
- (c) **NOTED** the opportunities for Indigenous employment and engagement in NRM and PI, outlined in Annex B; and
- (d) **REQUESTED** that each jurisdiction consider ways to progress Indigenous employment initiatives in NRM and PI in their state/ territory and provide a snap-shot of progress in the Annual Report, specifically in relation to:
- increasing awareness amongst Indigenous peoples on opportunities for employment within NRM and PI;
  - establishing partnerships with Indigenous groups;
  - providing opportunities for training, career development and workforce development;
  - supporting Indigenous communities to engage where appropriate, through capacity building and planning; and
  - creating Indigenous business enterprise opportunities, and integrating NRM and PI programs across multiple policy domains, for example, education, economic, employment and health.

**ANNEX A:** NRM and PI programs that utilise CDEP as base funding for Indigenous employment

*[Annex is held by the Secretariat]*

**ANNEX B:** Key Issues: Indigenous Employment and Engagement in NRM and PI

*[Annex is held by the Secretariat]*

<b>Natural Resource Management Primary Industries Ministerial Councils</b>	<b>JOINT MEETING</b>
	<b>LOCATION: MELBOURNE</b>
	<b>DATE: 17 APRIL 2008</b>
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 13.32 (PIMC 13.29)</b>

### PROGRESS IN THE ENHANCEMENT OF AusBIOSEC

1. AusBIOSEC is the Australian Biosecurity System for Primary Production and the Environment. Australia's biosecurity system strives to mitigate pest and disease risks to Australian businesses and jobs in primary production and related industry sectors such as manufacturing, tourism, hospitality and transport. These biosecurity systems also protect our environment, social amenity and human health from pests and diseases.
2. Australia already has very effective arrangements in place for managing biosecurity, particularly for primary industries. However, there are opportunities to identify and address gaps in the current system, particularly to integrate systems that protect the environment and social amenity, and achieve significant national benefits from improved collaboration and coordination across all levels of government.
3. The enhancement of AusBIOSEC is a whole-of-government project, which was established in October 2005 under the leadership of a joint Steering Group of the Natural Resource Management and Primary Industries Standing Committees.

#### **Intergovernmental Agreement**

4. Version 1.0 of the AusBIOSEC Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) at Annex A sets out an overarching framework for continuous improvement of Australia's biosecurity systems. The IGA also outlines the ways in which Australia's national and state and territory governments can assist each other in managing their responsibilities via collaborative programs, sharing of resources and other cooperative approaches.
5. The IGA aims to achieve and promote:
  - (a) reduced negative impacts of pests and diseases on biodiversity; primary production, product integrity and market access; the built environment; and social amenity and quality of life;
  - (b) more efficient and timely emergency responses to outbreaks of pests and diseases;
  - (c) maintenance of Australia's favourable international reputation for freedom from many pests and diseases, outstanding primary production integrity and diverse ecosystem sustainability;
  - (d) improved management of pests and diseases and reduction of their impacts;
  - (e) cost-effective, science and risk-based biosecurity management; and
  - (f) continuous improvement in biosecurity arrangements.
6. The IGA builds on and is consistent with related arrangements (such as the Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement) and does not displace or replace

the operation of any of these arrangements. The IGA accords with Australia's international rights and obligations and adds to Australia's overall objective of continued compliance with international obligations.

#### **National biosecurity institutional arrangements**

7. New national biosecurity policy institutional arrangements were agreed by PISC 14/NRMSC 15 (September 2007). These new arrangements provide a more strategic and holistic approach to decision making on biosecurity issues. Under these arrangements, a National Biosecurity Committee (NBC) will be established by 1 July 2008.
8. The new Environmental Biosecurity Committee (EBC) has been established and met for the first time on 12 February 2008.

#### **RESOLUTIONS**

9. Councils:
  - (a) **ENDORSED IN PRINCIPLE**, subject to whole-of-government clearance processes, version 1.0 of the Intergovernmental Agreement;
  - (b) **AGREED** to finalise whole-of-government clearance processes within their jurisdictions on the Intergovernmental Agreement, for final endorsement at the November 2008 Ministerial Council meeting; and
  - (c) **NOTED** progress in implementing the new national biosecurity institutional arrangements.

**ANNEX A:** AusBIOSEC Intergovernmental Agreement Version 1.0  
*[Annex is held by the Secretariat]*

<b>Natural Resource Management Primary Industries Ministerial Councils</b>	<b>JOINT MEETING</b>
	<b>LOCATION: MELBOURNE</b>
	<b>DATE: 17 APRIL 2008</b>
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 13.33 (PIMC 13.30)</b>

**NATIONAL SYSTEM FOR THE PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT OF  
INTRODUCED MARINE PEST INCURSIONS**

1. Interim cost-sharing arrangements for emergency eradication responses have been in place since 2001 and these were formalised in the Intergovernmental Agreement on a National System for the Prevention and Management of Marine Pest Incursions (Marine IGA).
2. In November 2006, the Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council and the Australian Transport Council endorsed the final elements of the National System for the Prevention and Management of Marine Pest Incursions (the National System) and the framework for the National Ballast Water Management Arrangements.

**Marine IGA Emergency Response Cost-Sharing Formula**

3. An alternative risk-based formula for marine emergency response cost sharing, incorporating state population and the level of risk (in terms of the length of coastline potentially impacted by that pest), has been developed and agreed through the AusBIOSEC process. The revised model is consistent with the terrestrial and freshwater models that have also been agreed through AusBIOSEC. All jurisdictions have agreed to the revised model.
4. It was proposed that a new Marine IGA, that is substantially the same as the current document, be signed as the most efficient way to amend the existing agreement. Annex A, which outlines the cost-sharing formula, is the main section requiring amendment. The proposed text of Annex B that would form the new Marine IGA (in conjunction with the existing body text and Annex A) is also at Annex A. Section 7 is the only text that has altered relative to the existing Annex B.
5. It was proposed that a new clause clarifying that the new Marine IGA will supersede all prior agreements or arrangements between the parties (particularly the current Marine IGA and the interim arrangements prior to that document) also be added to the Marine IGA.
6. The new Marine IGA should only come into effect when all parties have signed. If all parties do not agree to the proposed amendments then the signatories may wish to initiate steps to formalise the current Marine IGA (through an amendment to the commencement provisions) and no changes will be made to the current cost sharing formula.
7. To ensure consistency of treatment for jurisdictions in different emergency events, standard procedures for using the cost-shared formula will be outlined in the Consultative Committee on Introduced Marine Pest Emergencies (CCIMPE) Standard Operating Guidelines.

### **Ballast Water**

8. Significant progress has been made on the development of operational procedures for ballast water. Most aspects of the procedure for on-board inspections have been agreed. Consideration is still being given to one aspect of the procedure relating to what is considered a minor non-compliance for the percentage of ballast exchange where there are some conflicting view points between jurisdictions. Aspects of the operational procedures relating to the compliance strategy, cost recovery and fee for service, case by case risk assessment procedures, testing of supporting IT system, communications strategy, inspection targeting strategy, ballast water treatment system verification and approval process and sediment management are being progressed.
9. In relation to ballast water legislation, the Australian Government agreed to drafting priority for ballast water legislation during the Autumn 2008 sitting of Parliament, with a view to its introduction to Parliament later in the year. The states and the Northern Territory have advised that they need to see the Commonwealth bill before they will be able to progress their legislation. It was proposed that the target implementation date be revised and tied to the availability of the Commonwealth legislation.
10. Legislation is required in all jurisdictions to implement the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments and enable Australia to ratify. The preferred approach is consistent with the obligations of the parties to the Marine IGA, with the Australian Government taking responsibility for legislation for internationally sourced ballast water and the states/Northern Territory taking responsibility for legislation for Australian sourced ballast water.

### **Biofouling**

11. The Best Practice Management Guidelines for the Prevention of Biofouling are being finalised for production and communication to the following sectors: Commercial Fishing Vessels; Non-Trading Vessels; Petroleum Vessels; Commercial Shipping; Aquaculture; Trading Ports; and Recreational Vessels.
12. Each jurisdiction is taking responsibility for the implementation of biofouling management arrangements and design and production of communication materials to support uptake of biofouling guidelines within their respective jurisdictions. The Australian Government intends to proceed with the implementation of biofouling management requirements for all international vessels arriving in Australia.
13. There are currently no international treaty obligations or standards in relation to the management of biofouling. Therefore a legislative approach by all jurisdictions is not required for biofouling as reflected in the Marine IGA (which establishes that the states/Northern Territory will ensure that vessels travelling between Australian locations are subject to agreed measures to minimise the risk of translocating marine pests through biofouling). This approach also reflects the difficulty in regulating some domestic vessels for biofouling (eg. recreational vessels).
14. It was proposed that a review of the Australian and New Zealand Environment and Conservation Council (ANZECC) Code of Practice for Antifouling and In-Water Hull Cleaning and Maintenance be conducted. The review will consider whether an alternative approach to the ANZECC Code of Practice that promotes controlled in-

water cleaning as part of a comprehensive strategy to minimise the presence of fouling on vessels is appropriate. The strong discouragement of in-water cleaning in the ANZECC Code of Practice will also be reviewed to determine if it is more appropriate to allow in-water cleaning in circumstances when it will lead to a risk reduction.

15. In discussion on this item, Mr Jon Stanhope, Australian Capital Territory (ACT) Minister for Environment, Water and Climate Change, advised that the ACT is not a signatory to the draft marine IGA and does not have marine legislation. Mr Stanhope indicated that as the Commonwealth administers this aspect of Jervis Bay there may be a gap in legislative cover and administrative arrangements for Jervis Bay.
16. Members agreed to seek advice on costs and funding options including industry contributions to implement the supporting arrangements identified in the IGA.

## RESOLUTIONS

17. Councils:
  - (a) **AGREED IN PRINCIPLE**, subject to whole-of-government clearance processes, to the revised text for the Intergovernmental Agreement on a National System for the Prevention and Management of Marine Pest Incursions (Marine IGA);
  - (b) **AGREED** to commence formal whole-of-government clearance processes within their jurisdictions on the Marine IGA, for finalisation at the November 2008 Ministerial Council meeting;
  - (c) **AGREED** that the new Marine IGA should come into effect only when all parties have signed the document;
  - (d) **AGREED** to a new commencement date for mandatory ballast water arrangements be applied twelve months from the date of passage of Commonwealth legislation;
  - (e) **AGREED** that the integration of the Marine Pest Intergovernmental Agreement be investigated under the AusBIOSEC framework in the future;
  - (f) **AGREED** to a review being conducted of the ANZECC (Australian and New Zealand Environment and Conservation Council) Code of Practice for Antifouling and In-Water Hull Cleaning and Maintenance;
  - (g) **NOTED** progress in developing consistent national ballast water legislation and operational procedures, and finalising implementation arrangements for best management practice guidelines for biofouling; and
  - (h) **REQUESTED** NRMSC to provide advice on costs and funding options, including industry contributions to implement the Supporting Arrangements identified in the IGA.

## PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE MARINE IGA

### New or amended clauses

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The following are amendments or new clauses that should be inserted in the new Marine IGA.

### *New Part XI*

#### **PART XI – PREVIOUS AGREEMENTS**

##### 31. Agreement Supersedes

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- 31.1. From the date this Agreement comes into effect in respect of each Party, this Agreement supersedes all previous agreements and arrangements, whether written or otherwise, as between the Parties, jointly and severally, in relation to the subject matter of this Agreement.

*Amendment to Annex B Set out in Clause 7 on the following pages.*

### EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

#### **EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS**

##### **1. Principles and arrangements for the management of marine pest emergencies**

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- 1.1 The following principles and arrangements apply to the management of marine pest emergencies that:
- (a) Cater for national decision making that provides for collective decisions involving all levels of government where such decisions are necessary for an effective response.
  - (b) Augment arrangements in which the combat jurisdiction is the primary decision-maker in combating the outbreak in accordance with emergency management arrangements.
  - (c) Provide flexibility, responsiveness, and allow for rapid decision making.

##### **2. Decision making bodies**

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- 2.1 The level at which decisions are made will depend upon the extent and nature of the issue in question. In practice the main national decision making group will be the National Management Group for Marine Pest Emergencies, as advised by the Consultative Committee on Introduced Marine Pest Emergencies (CCIMPE). Only very high level matters will be referred to members of Ministerial Council or First Ministers.

##### **3. National Management Group for Marine Pest Emergencies**

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- 3.1 The National Management Group for Marine Pest Emergencies will be the national management forum through which the Parties invoke cost sharing arrangements to conduct an emergency eradication response to marine pest emergencies of national significance on the basis of advice provided by CCIMPE. The National Management Group will also determine, from time to time, increases in the emergency response funding, that CCIMPE

can draw against in accordance with national cost sharing arrangements to assist emergency investigations.

#### **4. National Management Group for Marine Pest Emergencies Representation**

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- 4.1 Standing Committee will provide this role.

#### **5. Consultative Committee on Introduced Marine Pest Emergencies**

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- 5.1 CCIMPE will be the national technical forum through which the Parties participate in the technical aspects of marine pest emergencies of national significance. To assist in determining whether an incursion is likely to be eradicable, CCIMPE will also determine, from time to time, when emergency response funding should be provided up to \$50,000 (GST exclusive), or as varied from time to time by the National Management Group, to assist an affected jurisdiction to conduct:
- (a) an emergency investigation; and
  - (b) trials of prospective eradication tools.
- 5.2 CCIMPE will provide the national technical forum to enable timely, well-informed decision-making in response to:
- (a) an incursion arising from the introduction of a marine pest; and
  - (b) an incursion arising from the translocation of a marine pest.
- 5.3 CCIMPE will act in accordance with the following terms of reference:
- (a) To inform and consult with all CCIMPE representatives when an initial investigation within a jurisdiction demonstrates reasonable suspicion of an incursion of an agreed pest of concern;
  - (b) To facilitate the national communication of relevant information from the CCIMPE representative of an affected jurisdiction regarding the detection of an exotic marine species in Australia's marine environment, and to evaluate such information;
  - (c) To determine whether the detection of an exotic marine species meets the Emergency Marine Pest Plan (EMP Plan) criteria for a marine pest emergency, and in that event, to declare CCIMPE and EMP Plan operational and to assist an affected jurisdiction by advising on appropriate response strategies;
  - (d) To enable activation of emergency response funding to assist an affected jurisdiction investigate if an incident meets the criteria of a marine pest emergency as specified in EMP Plan;
  - (e) To enable activation of emergency response funding to assist an affected jurisdiction investigate the effectiveness of prospective emergency tools;
  - (f) To refer proposals to the National Management Group for Marine Pest Emergencies to enable activation of funding assistance under cost-sharing arrangements agreed between the Parties, when an incident meets the criteria of a marine pest emergency as specified in EMP Plan;
  - (g) To provide technical advice to an affected jurisdiction on emergency response proposals, and to provide ongoing technical assistance to an affected jurisdiction during the course of a marine pest emergency, and to facilitate access to appropriate technical expertise that is required to assist CCIMPE's deliberations;
  - (h) To progressively evaluate and review responses to marine pest incidents to enhance future response arrangements;
  - (i) To determine when an emergency response to the detection of a marine pest of concern is no longer appropriate, and to provide technical advice, as requested, to jurisdictions on ongoing management and control requirements, including interim management and control measures to minimise the likelihood of further spread; and
  - (j) To review and amend CCIMPE's Operating Guidelines as required.

## **6. CCIMPE Representation**

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- 6.1 Standing Committee members of the Australian Government will nominate four representatives, covering environment, agriculture, fisheries and scientific research portfolios, one of whom will be chair.
- 6.2 Standing Committee members of the states and the Northern Territory will each nominate one representative of their jurisdiction.
- 6.3 Jurisdictional representatives are to liaise within their jurisdiction to ensure that relevant (non-lead) agencies are kept informed, and appropriately involved, in marine pest emergencies.

## **7. Cost sharing between the Parties**

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- 7.1 Parties will share the eligible costs of emergency responses as follows:
  - (a) 50% share from the Australian Government and a 50% share collectively from the states and the Northern Territory
  - (b) Individually the states and the Northern Territory contribution to the 50% share calculated on the basis of the risk-based model outlined in 7.2.
- 7.2 The risk-based model will determine the individual contribution by each state and the Northern Territory to their 50% collective share of emergency response funding. This share will be apportioned according to the following:
  - (a) Of the states and Northern Territory collective share, only those parties potentially affected by the agreed pest of concern will contribute.
  - (b) The risk-based model is based on a combination of the State/Northern Territory coastline potentially at risk and the states' and Northern Territory's capacity to pay. Therefore, the individual shares will be calculated by:

State share =

(A) number of people in the potentially affected length of coastline in that jurisdiction

(B) total number of people in the potentially affected length of coastline in Australia

Where:

- (i) the total number of people in a potentially affected length of coastline in a State Party's or Territory Party's jurisdiction is determined by assuming that 1% of the jurisdiction's length of coastline potentially affected (risk) equates to 1% of the jurisdiction's population (beneficiaries).
- (ii) When determining the total number of people in a potentially affected area:
  - (A) the potentially affected length of coastline in a jurisdiction, expressed as a percentage of the total length of coastline of that jurisdiction, determines the risk faced by a jurisdiction; and
  - (B) the potentially affected length of coastline is represented by the potential distribution of a marine pest as calculated in accordance with the CCIMPE Operating Guidelines or such other guidelines as the Parties may agree in writing apply.
- (iii) the total number of people potentially affected in Australia is the sum of all of the potentially affected people in the jurisdictions of the affected parties.

Noting that this excludes the Australian Capital Territory, as it is not a signatory to the Marine IGA.

For the purposes of this model the variables will be determined in the following way:

- Population parameters will use the most recently available Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Australian Demographic Statistics. The New South Wales population will not include that of Jervis Bay.
  - Length of coastline parameters will use the most recently available Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) found at [www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au). The New South Wales coastline will not include the Jervis Bay territory.
  - Length of coastline affected will be determined using temperature tolerances for the species and Australian Sea Surface Temperatures. The temperature tolerance for the species is calculated according to the critical life limiting phase range (Bureau of Rural Sciences 2008) and mapped against the Australian coastline using Sea Surface Temperature data provided by the NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory found at <http://podac.jpl.nasa.gov>. Detailed procedures for the method for determining the length of coastline affected (both in Australia and within each jurisdiction) are prescribed in the CCIMPE Operating Guidelines or such other guidelines as the Parties may agree in writing apply.
- 7.3 The combined contribution by the Australian Government, and the states and Northern Territory to declared emergencies will be capped at \$5 million (GST exclusive) on a rolling two year basis. Any requirement for additional funding, in any two years, will be referred to the Ministerial Council for approval.

<b>Natural Resource Management Primary Industries Ministerial Councils</b>	<b>JOINT MEETING</b>
	<b>LOCATION: MELBOURNE</b>
	<b>DATE: 17 APRIL 2008</b>
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 13.34 (PIMC 13.31)</b>

### RED IMPORTED FIRE ANT ERADICATION PROGRAM

1. Red Imported Fire Ant (RIFA) detection in Brisbane in February 2001 led to one of the largest and most complex responses to an exotic pest in Australia.
2. The NRM Council endorsed a five year eradication program in 2001 and subsequently agreed to a sixth year extension in April 2004. The basis for the endorsement was a cost benefit analysis that predicted the cost to the Australian community would be at least \$8.9 billion dollars over the next 30 years.
3. NRMMC has noted satisfactory progress of the eradication program against agreed milestones and has continually endorsed funding for each financial year of the program.
4. NRMMC 12/PIMC 12 (April 2007) agreed in principle to a five year program to achieve freedom from fire ants, but agreed only to two years funding of \$23.971 million, subject to individual jurisdictions' budgetary processes and with a review to validate the continuation of the program.
5. NRMMC 11 (November 2006) agreed to \$1.53 million funding for a three year eradication program for the Gladstone incursion with \$0.42 million required in 2006-07 and \$0.58 million required in 2007-08.
6. The eradication program has achieved great success, with the Gladstone RIFA incursion seemingly eradicated and a massive reduction in the RIFA population in south east Queensland. Only implementation of the eradication program has prevented RIFA having a significant effect across these areas and has also prevented spread to other states or significantly beyond the originally-identified points of infestation in Queensland.
7. Preliminary modelling of the RIFA population suggested that infestation would continue to be detected until 2009-10. With infestation continuing to be detected this is being confirmed. However, the majority of detections now consist of only one or a few colonies.
8. A major focus of the eradication program is to find the last remaining pockets of infestation. Investigations into novel techniques that aim to increase the effectiveness and coverage of surveillance above current methodology are continuing in consultation with the program's scientific partners.
9. In April 2007, NRMMC and PIMC agreed in principle to a five year extension for the continuation of the eradication program in south east Queensland, with an initial

allocation of two years' funding of \$23.971 million, subject to individual jurisdiction's budgetary processes.

10. Following the Federal Government May 2007 budget, \$10.274 million was allocated to eradication programs for fire ants for the next two years. With the Gladstone program included, the total shortfall in Australian Government funding is \$2.268 million over two years compared with that agreed in NRMMC-PIMC resolutions.
11. Other states (Western Australia and South Australia) have indicated that they will only match the contribution made by the Australian Government. If all funding partners follow suit this will result in a shortfall of \$3.849 million.
12. The reduction in funding has the potential to put the large investment (\$189 million to June 2008) made toward the eradication program at risk, but modelling and the cost benefit analysis may clarify this. The program will work with its funding and scientific partners to modify the 2008-09 work program to investigate whether eradication remains viable with the reduced funds.
13. Funding beyond 2008-09 for the RIFA eradication campaign is dependent on a review to validate the continuation program. Scientific modelling, updating of the cost benefit analysis and a program to increase the level of community support are being completed to provide information for this review and the results of these will be available for presentation to Council in November 2008.

## RESOLUTIONS

14. Councils:
  - (a) **NOTED** satisfactory progress of the National Red Imported Fire Ant Eradication Program;
  - (b) **NOTED** the current funding shortfall for the National Red Imported Fire Ant Eradication Program in 2008-09;
  - (c) **NOTED** that based on current estimates, funding for 2008-09 could be \$7.061 million, compared to the \$10.91 million agreed by Councils in November 2006 and April 2007;
  - (d) **ENDORSED** the following changed reporting milestones for the National Red Imported Fire Ant Eradication Program:
    - (i) Red Imported Fire Ant Treatment program conducted to the satisfaction of the Tramp Ant Strategic Management Committee – reported at the end of each financial year;
    - (ii) Red Imported Fire Ant Active and Passive Surveillance programs completed to the satisfaction of the Tramp Ant Strategic Management Committee – reported at the end of each financial year;
    - (iii) analysis and evaluation of new Red Imported Fire Ant detections identifies no significant risk to the eradication program – reported at the end of each financial year;

- (iv) scientific evaluation and assessment supports the continuing technical feasibility of eradication – reported at the end of each financial year;  
and
- (v) the existing cost benefit analysis to be reviewed to capture the knowledge gained during the implementation of the program and to attempt to capture the full economic, environmental and social impacts of the Red Imported Fire Ant infestations compared to eradication costs by June 2008.

<b>Natural Resource Management Primary Industries Ministerial Councils</b>	<b>JOINT MEETING</b>
	<b>LOCATION: MELBOURNE</b>
	<b>DATE: 17 APRIL 2008</b>
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 13.35 (PIMC 13.32)</b>

## REVIEW OF THE NATIONAL ELECTRIC ANT ERADICATION PROGRAM

1. NRMCM 12/PIMC 12 (April 2007) gave approval in principle to a four year program to eradicate Electric Ants, agreeing to the first two years of funding of \$4.067 million (2006-07 to 2007-08) with remaining funding of \$2.816 million (2008-09 to 2009-10) subject to a review to validate the continuation of the program.
2. The National Tramp Ant Committee (NTAC) established an Electric Ant Review Panel to assess the program. The review panel assessed the success of the Electric Ant Eradication Program using criteria from the International Plant Protection Convention and PLANTPLAN.
3. The review panel concluded the eradication of Electric Ants is technically feasible and the Electric Ant Eradication Program has implemented internationally agreed processes that support its objective of eradication. Gauged against the recently established AusBIOSEC national significance criteria, the program would also qualify to continue as a national response program. The review panel came to its conclusions based on the following:
  - verification of eradication success – the surveillance undertaken indicates a high level of success in controlling Electric Ant populations;
  - eradication process – the Electric Ant Eradication Program is supported by specialised protocols and is applying the learnings gained from other tramp ant eradication programs;
  - delimitation – the Electric Ant infestation appears to be confined to Smithfield and Kewarra Beach. The Kewarra Beach detection was reported by the public and indicates the success of awareness program;
  - containment – quarantine regulations have been implemented to prevent spread by humans, and are being achieved through a community engagement program;
  - treatment and control measures – surveillance data from the field indicates that the baiting treatments are highly effective
  - knowledge base – the foundation of the Electric Ant Eradication Program and its continuing operational elements are underpinned by expert input from international and domestic sources;
  - documentation – the operational and community engagement data is managed using the sophisticated and successful existing Red Imported Fire Ant database; and
  - program review – under the current Electric Ant review process the procedures are adequate and provide continuous assessment of progress in Electric Ant eradication. Criteria will also be developed to confirm the point

at which eradication can be declared.

4. The Electric Ant treatment program is well advanced, with most areas having received five rounds of treatment. No ants have been detected in surveillance since September 2007.
5. The Report on the Review of the Electric Ant Eradication Program, provided by the review panel to the National Tramp Ant Committee meeting in December 2007, is at Annex A.

## RESOLUTIONS

6. Councils:
  - (a) **NOTED** the Review of the National Electric Ant Eradication Program found that the Program is consistent with international and domestic guidelines for eradication programs and is on track to achieving its goal of eradication (Report at Annex A);
  - (b) **ENDORSED** the Review's key recommendation that the Electric Ant Eradication Program's performance meets the requirements for continued funding, as agreed at the joint NRMCC-PIMC meeting in April 2007; and
  - (c) **AGREED** to continue funding of \$2.816 million for 2008-09 and 2009-10 for the Electric Ant Eradication Program, subject to successful review of the program and jurisdictions' budgetary processes as detailed below:

		2008-09	2009-10
	%	\$	\$
Australian Government	50.0	701,500	706,500
New South Wales	19.2	269,376	271,296
Queensland	11.6	162,748	163,908
Victoria	9.9	138,897	139,887
Western Australia	4.6	64,538	64,998
South Australia	2.5	35,075	35,325
Australian Capital Territory	1.0	14,030	14,130
Tasmania	0.6	8,418	8,478
Northern Territory	0.6	8,418	8,478
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,403,000</b>	<b>1,413,000</b>

**ANNEX A:** Review of the National Electric Ant Eradication Program  
*[Annex is held by the Secretariat]*

<b>Natural Resource Management Primary Industries Ministerial Councils</b>	<b>JOINT MEETING</b>
	<b>LOCATION: MELBOURNE</b>
	<b>DATE: 17 APRIL 2008</b>
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 13.36 (PIMC 13.33)</b>

### NEXT MEETINGS

1. Dates for meetings of the Natural Resource Management, Primary Industries and Environment Protection and Heritage Ministerial Councils in 2008 were agreed by the relevant Councils in April 2007.
2. The proposed locations reflect the decision in 2002 to rotate Council meetings between all non-Australian Government members and to rotate Standing Committee meetings between New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia (with costs for Standing Committee meetings to be shared by all Australian jurisdictions).
3. The dates of 16-17 October 2008 previously set and agreed to by Councils clash with the parliamentary sitting schedules of several states. Revised dates of 6-7 November, when no jurisdictions have sitting commitments, are proposed.
4. The Council meetings proposed for October 2009 were to be hosted by Tasmania. However, Council meetings scheduled for November 2007 in Western Australia were not held due to the federal election. Western Australia has requested to host the late 2009 meetings.
5. PISC 14 and NRMSC 15 (March 2008) agreed that Primary Industries and Natural Resource Management Ministerial Councils would be best served by meeting separately and not jointly, and similarly for the respective Standing Committees.

### RESOLUTION

6. Councils **AGREED** to meeting arrangements in 2008 and 2009 as follows:

<b>2008</b> Standing Committees Ministerial Councils	11/12 September 6/7 November	New South Wales South Australia
<b>2009</b> Standing Committees Ministerial Councils Standing Committees Ministerial Councils	19/20 March 23/24 April September October	Victoria Tasmania South Australia Western Australia

<b>Natural Resource Management Primary Industries Ministerial Councils</b>	<b>JOINT MEETING</b>
	<b>LOCATION: MELBOURNE</b>
	<b>DATE: 17 APRIL 2008</b>
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 13.37 (PIMC 13.34)</b>

### A NATIONAL APPROACH TO THE TRANSLOCATION OF KANGAROOS

1. Mr Jon Stanhope, Australian Capital Territory (ACT) Minister for Environment, Water and Climate Change, raised the issue of a national approach to the translocation of kangaroos. The ACT Government is of the view that it is appropriate that NRMCMC initiates a discussion about these matters with the aim of investigating whether or not the issue of translocation and the management of over abundant populations requires a national approach to achieve consistency across the jurisdictions.
2. The welfare of a contained kangaroo population and the protection of a nationally endangered native grassland with the ACT has been elevated to an international level through the media. In particular the issue of translocation has become a focal point for community and scientific debate.
3. In August 2007 a panel of experts provided a report to the Department of Defence concerning the Belconnen Naval Transmission Station (BNTS), ACT.
4. In February 2008 a panel of experts also provided a report to the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment on the above site.
5. Based on the respective reports of each panel of experts, all the experts agree on the following:
  - the natural temperate grasslands and the threatened species within the grassland at BNTS should be preserved and urgent action needs to occur;
  - the current condition of the grassland is poor;
  - the main cause of the current poor condition of the grassland is heavy grazing pressure by the eastern grey kangaroos (the kangaroos). The situation is compounded by the drought;
  - the current density of kangaroos is preventing recovery of the grassland and threatening its long term sustainability;
  - kangaroo numbers at BNTS (within the fenced area) should dramatically be reduced;
  - the most humane method of removing the kangaroos from BNTS would be through shooting. However, the Australian Federal Police will not agree to the use of firearms because of public safety concerns. In the absence of the use of firearms, the next best method for the humane removal of the kangaroos is by sedation by darting following by euthanasia by lethal injection;
  - no expert requested or supported a specific research project involving the translocation of kangaroos at BNTS, nor any allocation of funds for such a study;
  - no release sites have been nominated; and

- all kangaroos remaining at BNTS are therefore to be part of long-term fertility control research with numbers not to exceed more than 1 per hectare subject to an adaptive management approach within the constraints on kangaroo numbers required for fertility control research.
6. The Hon. Peter Garrett AM, Australian Government Minister for the Environment Heritage and the Arts, advised that he would be discussing with his Department the issues raised by Mr Stanhope.
  7. It was proposed that Council work to progress quickly the National Code of Practice for the Humane Shooting of Kangaroos and Wallabies and that a progress report from Standing Committee be brought to the NRMCC meeting in November 2008.

## RESOLUTIONS

8. Councils:
  - (a) **NOTED** a presentation by Mr Jon Stanhope MLA concerning culling of kangaroos in the Australian Capital Territory; and
  - (b) **REQUESTED** the Natural Resource Management Standing Committee report to Council in November 2008 on progress with the National Code of Practice for Humane Shooting of Kangaroos and Wallabies.

# PRIMARY INDUSTRIES AND NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT MINISTERIAL COUNCILS

## Communiqué

18 APRIL 2008

Natural Resource Management, Environment, Water and Primary Industries Ministers from across Australia met in Melbourne on Friday 18 April 2008 to consider issues affecting Australia's natural resources and primary production sectors. This was the thirteenth meeting of the Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council (NRMMC), which also met jointly with the Primary Industries Ministerial Council (PIMC) on 17 April. Specific issues dealt with by the Councils in the two meetings are detailed below.

### **NRMMC 13 and PIMC 13**

#### **Climate Change – Future Directions**

Ministers discussed the central importance of climate change for primary industries and natural resource managers. They noted progress towards the design of the Australian emissions trading scheme and opportunities for engagement in framing the way forward. National action to address the impacts of climate change was also discussed.

Councils also emphasised the need to advance strategic mitigation and adaptation issues for the sectors and agreed to maintain the focus on improving knowledge about greenhouse gas emissions and about options to adapt to climate change. Ministers noted progress on a number of preliminary vulnerability assessments and agreed to consider future directions for climate change at their meeting in November.

#### **National Agricultural Monitoring System (NAMS)**

Councils agreed to continue the operation of the NAMS in 2008-09. They noted a review of the effectiveness of the NAMS, which concluded that the tool had met its primary objective of assisting in streamlining the Exceptional Circumstances application and assessment processes. Council will further consider the role of the NAMS as part of the PIMC review of drought policy.

#### **Advancing Indigenous Reconciliation in Primary Industries and Natural Resource Management**

Councils agreed to support the creation of ongoing full-time and part-time jobs for Indigenous people through the purchase of environmental services. They will encourage natural resource management and primary industry programs to engage actively with Indigenous communities in providing opportunities for capacity building and development of business-orientated employment and business skills, as well as establishing the community infrastructure for assisting employment.

### **Australian Biosecurity System for Primary Production and the Environment (AusBIOSEC)**

Councils endorsed, in principle, a draft Intergovernmental Agreement for enhancing Australia's biosecurity system for primary production and the environment (AusBIOSEC). The AusBIOSEC arrangements will improve Australia's capacity and capability to respond to increasing pest and disease threats in a more systematic and timely manner. This will increase the effectiveness of national responses and minimise the costs caused by pests and diseases. The enhancements to AusBIOSEC include extending existing arrangements in the primary production sector to tackle pests and diseases that largely impact on the environment and social amenity. It is anticipated that Councils will be presented with a finalised Intergovernmental Agreement for signature later in the year.

### **National System for the Prevention and Management of Introduced Marine Pest Incursions**

Councils endorsed a new risk-based cost sharing formula for marine pest emergencies. This new formula is based on jurisdictions contributing funding to eradicate marine pest outbreaks according to the risk to their state. The Australian Government will continue to contribute fifty per cent of the costs of emergency responses. The Intergovernmental Agreement on a National System for the Prevention and Management of Marine Pest Incursions (Marine IGA) will be revised to incorporate the new formula.

Councils also agreed that consistent national ballast water requirements should come into effect 12 months after implementation of Commonwealth laws which are being developed. Council agreed that the ANZECC Code of Practice for Hull-cleaning should be reviewed to increase the practical in-water cleaning options for industry to manage biofouling without increasing the threat to the environment.

### **Red Imported Fire Ant Eradication Program**

Councils agreed that Queensland has made excellent progress towards eradicating Red Imported Fire Ant since it was initially detected in Brisbane in 2001 and that the program remains on track for eradication to date.

### **Electric Ant Eradication Program**

Councils noted the National Electric Ant Eradication Program was on track to achieve its goal of eradication and agreed to future funding.

## **NRMMC 13**

### **Regional Chairs Forum**

Council received a comprehensive presentation from the NRM Regional Chairs Forum, which met on Thursday 17 April. The forum is an annual event comprising chairs of natural resource management regional organisations who meet to discuss common experiences in regional NRM delivery. The 2008 meeting focused on the importance of a smooth transition to Caring for our Country and its delivery at a regional level. Council discussed with the forum a number of issues relating to regional delivery and future directions, including access to funds for national priorities, employment by regional bodies, delivery capacity and momentum in NRM projects.

### **McKell Medal**

Council presented the 18<sup>th</sup> (2007) McKell Medal to Wolford and Marie Parsons from Port Vincent, South Australia. Mr and Mrs Parsons were awarded the medal for their work on dryland salinity and the rehabilitation of marginal lands. On their property, 'The Springs', they have controlled the spread of salinity, transformed the appearance of their farm and provided habitat for native flora and fauna by planting 300,000 trees and shrubs and constructing 45 kilometres of fencing over many years. They were selected particularly for their practical approach to land management and support for hands-on farm management, education and research, which has seen 'The Springs' regularly host visits from schools and university students, researchers, extension specialists and farmer groups.

### **Future Directions for Managing Water Issues**

Council welcomed progress being achieved through the COAG water reform process, including the work program and the Memorandum of Understanding on the Murray Darling Basin

### **Bureau of Meteorology Report on New Role in Water Information**

Council received a detailed presentation from the Bureau of Meteorology on implementing its new responsibilities in regard to water information standards, water accounts and water forecasts.

### **Water Metering**

Council agreed, in principle, to support the Metrological Assurance Framework and the issuance of a discussion paper on the *National Framework for Non-urban Water Meter Standards*.

### **Water Accounting**

Council approved a workplan for 2008 and 2009 for the National Water Accounting Development Project, to develop national water accounting standards.

### **Performance Indicators**

Council adopted a new set of Performance Indicators to be used for the 2010-11 review of the National Water Initiative (NWI). This review will assess the extent to which the NWI contributes to the national interest and the impacts of implementing the NWI on regional, rural and urban communities.

### **Guidelines for Water Recycling – Phase 2**

Council endorsed the National Water Quality Management Strategy (NWQMS) Australian Guidelines for Water Recycling, Augmentation of Drinking Water Supplies, which provides guidance on managing the health and environmental risks associated with the use of recycled water in drinking water supplies. The guidelines build on the risk management framework outlined in the Australian Guidelines for Water Recycling: Managing Health and Environmental Risks, released in 2006. The new guidelines will be considered for endorsement by the National Health and Medical Research Council on 24 April 2008.

Ministers supported the release of the draft NWQMS Australian Guidelines for Water Recycling, Managing Health and Environmental Risks on Managed Aquifer Recharge, and Stormwater Harvesting and Reuse for public consultation. The period of consultation will be from April to June 2008. The relevant documents are available from the EPHC web site [www.ephc.gov.au](http://www.ephc.gov.au).

### **Revision of the National Water Quality Management Strategy *Australian Drinking Water Guidelines***

Council agreed to support the revision of a benchmark document under the National Water Quality Management Strategy, the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines. The current guidelines date from 2002 and their revision will further strengthen the quality of the definitive guidance to be used by the Australian water industry.

### **Future NRM Directions**

Council welcomed the Commonwealth's new Caring for our Country arrangements and noted that it offered many new opportunities for improving the management of Australia's natural resources. Ministers highlighted the importance of ensuring a smooth transition to the new arrangements, including maintaining the momentum of regional body activities. It was noted that transition year funding for regional groups will be finalised shortly to enable funding to be available from July 2008.

Council also noted the importance of all jurisdictions maintaining at least their current level of effort in tackling the threats to the health and sustainability of our ecosystems.

### **Natural Resource Policies and Programs – Work-in-Progress**

Council was informed of the work-in-progress by the Natural Resources Policies and Programs Committee to date and approved the introduction of a new priority work area for Council – *Knowledge and Information Management*.

### **Strategic Direction for the National Reserve System**

Council noted the central role of the National Reserve System (NRS) in protecting Australia's biodiversity in the face of climate change, and welcomed the additional resources that the Commonwealth has allocated over the next five years to building the NRS. Ministers agreed to strengthen their partnership in building a comprehensive, adequate and representative NRS, including new approaches for protected areas on private and Indigenous lands to help minimise the loss of native species. Council also agreed, given recent studies on climate change and the NRS, to review and update the NRS Directions Statement that was released by NRMMC in 2005.

### **Marine and Coastal – Work-in-Progress**

Council was informed of the work-in-progress by the Marine and Coastal Committee to date. Council noted that the Marine and Coastal Committee is in the process of reformatting its strategic directions.

### **Marine Biodiversity Decline – *A National Approach to Addressing Marine Biodiversity Decline Report***

Council endorsed a report that sets out a national approach to addressing marine biodiversity decline. The report identifies gaps in knowledge of Australia's marine biodiversity, provides examples of decline in Australia's marine biodiversity, and identifies five broad-scale threats to Australia's marine biodiversity. The five broad-scale threats to Australia's marine biodiversity are climate change, resource use, land-based impacts, marine biosecurity, and marine pollution. The response set out in the report aims to improve the effectiveness of program delivery, measure success, improve the knowledge base and respond to key threats.

### **Progress in Implementing the National Representative System of Marine Protected Areas**

Council endorsed a report from jurisdictions on progress in implementing the National Representative System of Marine Protected Areas. The report highlights the major advances Australian governments have taken in developing a national representative system of marine protected areas, with over 240,000 km<sup>2</sup> of new marine parks and reserves declared in the past five years. There are currently twenty seven marine protected areas in Commonwealth waters and around two hundred in state and territory inshore waters.

### **Review of the National Framework for the Management and Monitoring of Australia's Native Vegetation**

The Council confirmed the importance of the *National Framework for the Management and Monitoring of Australia's Native Vegetation* (Native Vegetation Framework) for achieving a reversal in the long-term decline in the extent of Australia's native vegetation and an improvement in the condition of existing native vegetation. It was also agreed that the Natural Resource Management Standing Committee finalise the review of the Native Vegetation Framework, taking account of the concurrent review of the *National Strategy for the Conservation of Australia's Biological Biodiversity*, and report to Council in 2009.

### **Crime in Fisheries – National Study into the Australian Fishing Industry and Improved Fisheries Legislation**

Council noted the importance of raising the profile of crime in fisheries and agreed to raise a series of proposals with Attorneys General and Justice Ministers to implement a national response to illegal fishing and strengthen measures to deal with cross border trafficking in fish.

In recent years illegal foreign fishing has attracted public attention as a border security matter and it is now time to see that there are also robust measures in place for domestic fisheries to protect marine resources and access rights.

*Note that a separate communiqué was issued by the Primary Industries Ministerial Council relating to issues considered by that Council alone.*