



West Mount Barren.

PHOTO: South Coast NRM.

SOUTHERN PROSPECTS 2011-2016

Where To From Here?

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10.1 Collective responsibility

Effective management of the natural resources of the South Coast NRM Region will require action from the whole community, including land and water managers, the community, industry, local government, State Government and Australian Government.

10.2 Investment Plan: determining priorities

The development of an annually updated 5-year Investment Plan to accompany this strategy will rely on stakeholder input to ensure that interests are considered and prioritised fairly. The Investment Plan will include sufficient information to allow potential investors, including the State and Australian governments, to determine their contributions. The minimum requirements for the Investment Plan are:

- detail of the specific actions or projects proposed to be undertaken
- costings of the actions and proposed sources of investment
- details of the proposed monitoring and evaluation strategy for individual actions
- expected return on investments – in particular, a summary of what the proposed actions will deliver in relation to the targets outlined in the accredited Regional Strategy
- identification of the primary beneficiaries of the investment and proposed cost sharing arrangements (i.e. assessment of public versus private good)
- urgency, significance or critical nature of the action, and the consequences of not undertaking it
- relationship with existing government policies or programs
- risk factors and how these will be managed
- assumptions for chosen actions
- timelines, milestones and performance indicators for each action.

The factors considered in proposing priority levels for outcome related activities will be:

- does the outcome activity protect or restore a high value asset or underpin its protection or restoration?
- does the outcome activity reduce or remove a high threat or is it essential to underpin threat abatement?
- is the action technically feasible? i.e. Is there strong evidence or experience to support this action contributing to an improvement in the resource condition, as measured by the resource condition indicators?

Lake Warden recovery project wins WA Environment Award in 2010.



PHOTO: South Coast NRM.

Restoring Connections wins national Landcare Award in 2010.



PHOTO: Landcare Australia.



PHOTO: Vennessa Sijkes.

Effective management of natural resources requires action from the whole community.

- is there a risk that the action may have direct or indirect impacts on other aspirations, goals or outcomes? i.e. Is the action likely to have a net beneficial or detrimental impact?
- is there support from the community for the action? i.e. Are people likely to be committed to implementing the action?
- will the outcome activity address causes rather than the symptoms of threats to natural resources?

There are several processes that have been developed to help with planning, implementing and measuring success of NRM projects (e.g. Conservation Action Planning (CAP) and Investment framework for environmental resources (INFFER)). Steps involved in these processes (The Nature Conservancy, 2006) include:

1. identify the people involved in the project
2. define scope and main NRM targets
3. assess viability of NRM targets
4. identify critical threats
5. conduct situation analysis
6. develop strategies: objectives and actions
7. establish measures
8. develop work plans
9. implement
10. analyse, learn, adapt and share.

Value can be added to the prioritisation process if the following points are used in decision making for action. The action or project (Strang et al., 2010) should:

- provide a strong basis for a business case of future funding
- highlight that budget amount and longevity is a crucial determinant of the optimal management strategy
- provide confidence about using public money more cost-effectively through the choice of appropriate policy tools based on the public and private benefits they generate
- provide a robust, transparent basis to enable strategic direction setting, debate and discussion about the future of the assets in question
- build on existing knowledge, integrating biological, physical, social and economic factors with institutional and political risks, and costs to assess the cost-effectiveness of actions
- help to highlight and prioritise limitations in current knowledge to inform decision making

- provide consistency, ensuring that actions funded by the project will be sufficient to deliver the stated goal
- help to reduce bias in decision making by making the process fully transparent.

The investment planning process will be used to consult with stakeholders to determine and refine:

- priority areas
- appropriate actions
- priority species and communities
- specific desired outcomes
- timeframes.

10.3 Monitoring, evaluation, reporting and improvement (MERI)

South Coast NRM has prepared a draft MERI strategy (Cook, 2010) to establish a framework for monitoring and reporting on progress towards meeting targets and achieving outcomes set out in this strategy. The MERI framework will assist in the assessment of whether activities and programs are having an impact, are effective, appropriate and efficient. The MERI framework will also help in improvement of program design and delivery. Based on the adoption of recommended standard information collection protocols, it will also:

- enable the South Coast Community to integrate the monitoring activities being undertaken
- ensure that data generated is suitable for national and State reporting
- identify roles, responsibilities, tasks and timelines for delivery
- promote accountability
- effectively manage reporting.

There has been a concerted effort in Australia to promote the use of nationally agreed upon indicators measured using standard protocols such as those provided by the National Land and Water Resources Audit (Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts, 2007). Use of these indicators will help to promote consistency in data collection within and across regions and will facilitate reporting on progress towards outcomes at jurisdictional levels. In this way, data sets can support many activities and promote efficiencies.

Progress on meeting the goals and outcomes for the region's natural resources will be measured

through quantitative (and some qualitative) measures that have been proposed for specific assets. The qualitative and quantitative measures will assist the region to measure its progress in maintaining or improving its natural resources, and will also be included in State and national monitoring and evaluation frameworks to assist in measuring progress at those scales. Achievements from *Southern Prospects 2004-2009* (SCRIPT, 2004) have greatly increased our knowledge and allowed the identification of many appropriate measures. However, in some cases, there is still insufficient information available to be able to quantify some targets now, so a process and schedule for defining the targets is proposed.

Measures, monitoring, evaluation and improvement have been a problematic component in the past because while it is relatively easy to measure the outputs of a project, it is more difficult to relate the outputs to a change in the overall condition of an asset. The MERI strategy represents an opportunity to create clarity and set the direction to create and disseminate valuable information that does more than meet obligations to funding bodies.

10.4 Providing information

South Coast NRM is committed to providing information to the Community through an information storage and management system, which will comprise:

- South Coast Document Management System
- NRM based media
- South Coast electronic library (website based electronic documents)
- South Coast data directory (metadata library describing the nature and availability of asset condition data).

In addition, South Coast NRM will investigate forming a partnership with Landgate to incorporate South Coast spatial data on the web based Shared Land Information Platform (SLIP).

10.5 Reviewing *Southern Prospects 2011-2016*

Southern Prospects 2011 – 2016 is a dynamic document that can be fine tuned on an annual basis (or when required). A complete review of the strategy will be undertaken in 2015.



PHOTO: Green Jobs Corp.

Engaging youth in NRM is crucial to the future of our region.

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