

NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009



**Government
of South Australia**

Natural Resources
Management Council

Natural Resources Management Council

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ISSN 1833-0193

2009

DWLBC0859/09
09WLB09836

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

The Hon Jay Weatherill
Minister for the Environment and Conservation
Parliament House
North Terrace
ADELAIDE
South Australia 5000

23 November 2009

Dear Minister

I am presenting you with the incomplete annual report of the Natural Resources Management (NRM) Council for the period 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009. This report has been prepared in accordance with requirements of the *Natural Resources Management Act 2004* and the *Public Sector Management Act 1995* with the exception of financial requirements.

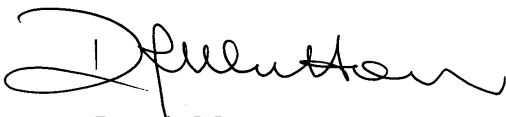
Please note that the full report is not available as the audits of financial statements of four of the regional Natural Resources Management Boards are yet to be finalised. Audited financial statements have not yet been provided from SA Murray Darling-Basin NRM Board, Alinytjara Wilurara NRM Board, and Northern & Yorke NRM Board.

The 2008-09 NRM Council Annual report will be provided to you in its entirety when the Auditor-General's department has completed audit requirements. At that time, the report will need to be tabled again.

This Annual Report includes the reports of each of the eight regional NRM Boards and they are accompanied by reports of their NRM groups.

Thank you for the strong support you have shown the NRM Council during this financial year.

Yours sincerely



Dennis Mutton
Presiding Member
Natural Resources Management Council

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PLANS AND OBJECTIVES

Natural resources management initiatives undertaken by the Natural Resources Management (NRM) Council are consistent with the strategic directions set out in South Australia's Strategic Plan – *Creating Opportunity*, and with the State NRM Plan.

THE STATE NRM PLAN

A key function of the NRM Council is to 'prepare, and to keep under review, the State NRM Plan, and to keep under review the extent to which regional NRM plans, policies and practices adopted or applied by NRM authorities are consistent with the State NRM Plan' (Section 17(1)(c)).

The State NRM Plan identifies a 50-year vision for natural resources management in South Australia. The State NRM Plan contains four goals:

1. Landscape scale management that maintains healthy natural systems and is adaptive to climate change.
2. Prosperous communities and industries using and managing natural resources within ecologically sustainable limits.
3. Communities, governments and industries with the capability, commitment and connections to manage natural resources in an integrated way.
4. Integrated management of biological threats to minimise risk to natural systems, communities and industry.

LINKS BETWEEN THE STATE NRM PLAN AND THE SA STRATEGIC PLAN

In developing the State NRM Plan the NRM Council has taken direction from the South Australian Strategic Plan.

The State NRM Plan will contribute to delivering all aspects of South Australia's Strategic Plan. In some cases, contributions to the objectives of the South Australia's Strategic Plan are indirect – for example, strategies under each of the four goals in the State NRM Plan provide for 'expanding opportunities' through education, training and Aboriginal employment. In other cases, the links are strong and explicit and these are shown in the table below, with ticks ✓ indicating the strength of these links.

State NRM Plan	South Australia's Strategic Plan					
Strategic Goals	Growing prosperity	Improving well-being	Attaining sustainability	Fostering creativity	Building communities	Expanding opportunity
<i>Goal 1</i> Landscape scale management that maintains healthy natural systems and is adaptive to climate change.	✓	✓✓	✓✓✓		✓	
<i>Goal 2</i> Prosperous communities and industries using and managing natural resources within ecologically sustainable limits.	✓✓		✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓
<i>Goal 3</i> Communities, governments and industries with the capability, commitment and connections to manage natural resources in an integrated way.		✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓
<i>Goal 4</i> Integrated management of biological threats to minimise risk to natural systems, communities and industry.	✓✓	✓	✓✓✓	✓	✓	

Further details of the key links of each goal to South Australia's Strategic Plan targets are contained within the State NRM Plan.

OPERATIONS AND INITIATIVES

NRM Council priorities

NRM Council conducted a strategic planning day on 5 December 2008, which resulted in the identification of strategic priorities for the 2009 calendar year. Further to our statutory responsibilities and ongoing priorities of volunteer and aboriginal engagement in natural resources management, NRM Council identified five priority areas that will be focused on for providing strategic advice in 2009. These are:

1. *Sustainable Landscapes*: Ensuring sustainability and productivity of landscapes
2. *The State NRM Plan*: Review, simplify, validate and promote
3. *Climate Change*: Mitigation of, and adaptation to climate change through promotion/investment in NRM by communities
4. *Communication/Engagement*: Enhance NRM Council's performance and effectiveness by strengthening engagement with stakeholders
5. *Water Security*: Availability of water (of appropriate quality) for human, production, environmental and cultural uses

Implementation of the State NRM Plan

The *Implementation of the State NRM Plan project* began in mid-2006 and has been a significant component of NRM Council's achievements which will be completed in October 2009. The project evaluates the operational performance of the State NRM Plan 2006 by reporting on the implementation of the 108 strategies within the Plan and to analyse these strategies for their effectiveness.

The project was divided into three key stages:

1. Preparation of an implementation strategy
2. Reporting on implementation
3. Preparation of a closure report on the implementation and effectiveness of the State NRM Plan to inform preparation of the next State NRM Plan

This project has been a valuable process for the NRM Council and our wider stakeholders analysing the performance of the plan and identifying a range of learning's from the project.

Caring for Country: Aboriginal NRM Forum

Caring for Country is integral to Aboriginal culture. One rarely speaks about traditional Aboriginal culture without some sort of reference to the land, sea and waters. Today, the land is not as healthy as it once was, with pest animals and plants, the pressure of human population growth, climate change and fragmentation of natural systems all impacting on the land, sea and waters.

In recognition of traditional land management and to explore this further the NRM Council hosted the *Caring for Country: Aboriginal NRM Forum* in Port Augusta on 25 and 26 September 2008, a significant event for natural resources management in South Australia. This forum gave Aboriginal people from across South Australia the opportunity to talk together, hear about successful Aboriginal projects that have helped care for their land and discuss a range of challenges that need addressing to assist Aboriginal communities to care for country.

The NRM Council convened the forum with leadership and guidance from the Aboriginal State-wide Advisory Committee (ASAC), a subcommittee of the Council. The forum was one of the year's highlights, viewing the opportunities of NRM as holistic and part of traditional Aboriginal culture. This can be strongly inherent and the management of natural resources has been transferred through traditional knowledge such as Ancestral stories for many generations.

Bridging the Gap between Planning and NRM in a Changing Climate

NRM Council recognised the opportunity to partner with the Premier's Climate Change Council (PCCC) to ensure that South Australia's natural resources sector and ecosystems are managed sustainably with optimum resilience and capacity to adapt to climate change, and influence ways to enhance mitigation strategies for the sector.

Members agreed that both Councils could work collaboratively on many climate change issues. The members identified six climate change priority areas of common interest for NRMC and PCCC collaboration. These areas are:

1. Assisting the Government in signing Sector Agreements
2. Adaptation to climate change
3. Education in its broadest sense
4. Research and development
5. Offsets

A list of criteria to initiate discussion for when PCCC and NRMC could act as a champion or project sponsor for statewide research proposals were also identified, as shown below:

1. Alignment with South Australian priorities
Important to compliment investment made in the State Strategic Plan, NRM Plan and SA Greenhouse Strategy.
2. Cross-cutting issues or integrated approaches for adaptation to climate change issues
3. Multiple outcomes
Research and Development that meets more than one state and/or regional priority
4. Size of impact
Projects that make a large contribution to a significant problem and are able to measure the outcomes achieved
5. Fostering new adaptation to climate change partnerships
Proposals that provoke partnerships, particularly between users and providers, will be of interest to the Councils.
6. Investment leverage
When the project has the potential to attract other significant financial and in-kind resources

7. Building on other initiatives

Where collaboration with another initiative will build capacity and capability

The NRM Council and PCCC initiated 'Bridging the Gap between Planning and Development and NRM in a Changing Climate' project. The aim of this project is to review and evaluate the draft 30-Year Plan for Greater Adelaide prepared by the Department of Planning and Local Government from the perspective of NRM and climate change to ensure that the appropriate input is provided in the Plan to achieve NRM and climate change objectives.

The review and evaluation process was then used as the basis for preparing a submission to the Minister of Department of Planning and Local Government, which was completed and submitted by the deadline of the end of September 2009. At further meetings with the Department of Planning and Local Government agreement was reached on some amendments to the draft 30-Year Plan for Greater Adelaide.

Climate Change Adaptation Framework

In partnership with the Premier's Climate Change Council (PCCC), the NRM Council commenced the development of an Adaptation Framework for South Australia. It is widely acknowledged that limits on emissions alone will not be enough to avoid all the impacts of climate change.

The Adaptation Framework aims to provide strategic high-level direction for adaptation to climate change in South Australia; it will guide State Government agencies, local government, non-government organisations, regional organisations and the private sector in developing adaptation responses that will increase resilience of South Australia's key sectors and regions.

Review of regional NRM Plans

Under the NRM Act the NRM Council is required to provide advice to the Minister for Environment and Conservation on the consistency of regional NRM plans and water allocation plans with the State NRM Plan. NRM Council established the NRM Council Assessment Subcommittee (CASc) to evaluate regional NRM plans and to provide recommendations for Council's consideration.

The membership of CASc as at 30 June 2009 was:

Member	Specialist Knowledge
Ms Vicki-Jo Russell (Chairperson)	Biodiversity; NRM Council member; former member of State Assessment Panel
Mrs Sharon Starick	Primary production and salinity; soil conservation, water management; NRM Council member; former member of State Assessment Panel
Ms Anita Crisp	Local government; soil conservation; water management
Mr Graham Webster	Primary production; beef/sheep grazing; local government
Mr Ken Stokes	Biodiversity; science; experience in regional NRM
Ms Rachel Melland	Pest plants
Mr Chris Ball	Marine, estuarine and coast protection

CASc meet four times during the financial year to develop and provide advice to the NRM Council on the consistency of four comprehensive regional NRM plans with the State NRM Plan. With CASc's advice, NRM Council provide submissions to each of the applicable regional NRM Boards during public consultation of their regional NRM Plans. Advice is also provided to the Minister for Environment and Conservation and Minister for the River Murray prior to the adoption of these plans.

CASc met on the following dates during the reporting period to review regional NRM Plans:

17 November 2008: Review of the Northern & Yorke regional NRM Plan

Submission provided to the Northern & Yorke NRM Board on 6 January 2009. Advice provided to the Minister for Environment and Conservation regarding adoption and Plan adopted on 5 May 2009

23 January 2009 Review of the SA Murray Darling-Basin regional NRM Plan

Submission provided to the South Australian Murray Darling-Basin NRM Board on 6 January 2009. Advice provided to the Minister for the River Murray regarding adoption and Plan adopted on 28 April 2009

4 February 2009 Review of the Kangaroo Island regional NRM Plan

Submission provided to the Kangaroo Island NRM Board on 6 January 2009. Advice provided to the Minister for Environment and Conservation regarding adoption and Plan adopted on 5 May 2009

10 February 2009 Review of the Eyre Peninsula regional NRM Plan

Submission provided to the Eyre Peninsula NRM Board on 6 January 2009. Advice provided to the Minister for Environment and Conservation regarding adoption and Plan adopted on 5 May 2009.

Aboriginal Engagement in NRM

The NRM Council continues to support the Aboriginal State-wide Advisory Committee (ASAC) that it established during 2004-05. ASAC met four times during 2008-09 to continue to advocate and give advice to NRM Council in relation to the engagement of Aboriginal communities in natural resources management.

ASAC met on the following dates during the reporting period:

- 28 July 2008
- 28 November 2008
- 26 March 2009
- 28 May 2009

The membership of ASAC at 30 June 2009 is shown below:

Member	Region
Ms Karina Lester	Chairperson
Mr Chris Dodd	Alinytjara Wilurara

Member	Region
Mr Gary Lewis	Alinytjara Wilurara
Mr Adrian Simpson	Eyre Peninsula
Mr Derek Walker	South Australian Murray Darling Basin
Mr Tim Hartman	South East
Ms Carolyn Ireland	South Australian Arid Lands
Mr Fraser Vickery	Kangaroo Island
Mr Klynton Wanganeen	Northern & Yorke
Ms Lynette Crocker	Adelaide & Mount Lofty Ranges
Mr John Chester	Aboriginal Lands Trust
Deputy Members	Region
Ms Leanne Liddle	South Australian Arid Lands
Mr Haydn Davey	Aboriginal Lands Trust

Over the course of the year ASAC undertook a number of initiatives including:

- Providing comment to NRM Council's Assessment Sub-committee on the Northern & Yorke, South Australian Murray Darling-Basin, Kangaroo Island and Eyre Peninsula regional NRM Plans
- Providing leadership and guidance to the NRM Council on the development and implementation of the *Caring for Country: Aboriginal NRM Forum*
- Providing advice to the NRM Council on Aboriginal representation on NRM related government committees
- Reviewing the Committee's current Terms of Reference and developing a Work Plan on the revised Terms of Reference
- Providing advice on strategies to improve Aboriginal engagement in NRM
- Identifying opportunities to integrate Aboriginal NRM priorities in to the review of the State NRM Plan
- Providing advice to NRM Council on the review of the *Aboriginal Lands Trust Act*
- Encouraging employment opportunities for Aboriginal people within the NRM process

Volunteers in Natural Resources Management

The NRM Council continues to support the NRM Volunteer Committee that it established in November 2006. The NRM Volunteer Committee met six times during 2008-09 to continue to advocate and give advice to NRM Council on statewide consistency in support for volunteers in natural resources management.

The NRM Volunteer Committee met on the following dates during the reporting period:

- 23 July 2008
- 2 September 2008
- 21 October 2008
- 9 December 2008
- 18 March 2009
- 29 April 2009

In partnership with NRM Boards, the committee developed the South Australian NRM Volunteer Recognition Framework. The framework is about acknowledging, celebrating and sharing the success of outstanding volunteer services to natural resources management. This was a key outcome from the committee's review of the 2007 Premier's NRM Awards, a NRM Council initiative which is held bi-annually in conjunction with the SA Landcare Awards.

The Committee strengthened stakeholder relationships, presenting to the Volunteer Partnerships Action Committee and having involvement with the National Landcare Awards in Canberra.

Committee members have been appointed for their specific knowledge, experience and skills in volunteer management including their ability to consider volunteering from a strategic, statewide perspective. The Committee continued to provide strategic advice to the NRM Council on volunteer engagement in NRM. The membership of the Volunteer Committee at 30 June 2008 was:

Members	Knowledge, Skills and Experience
Ms Cecelia Woolford (Chair)	Eyre Peninsula NRM Board member and former patron of the National Maritime Museum's volunteer program
Ms Hume Macdonald	Director, Landcare Australia Limited. Former: Chair of the South Australian Landcare Committee, Chairman of Brukunga Mines Remediation Board, Chair of Mount Lofty Ranges Greater Adelaide Interim NRM Board
Mr Mark Dennis	Farmer, Native Vegetation Council member, former Chair of Advisory Board of Agriculture, and former member of the SA Landcare Committee
Ms Allys Todd	Communications, Community Relations and Volunteer Manager for Greening Australia SA. Former volunteer for the Conservation Council of SA, the Wilderness Society, Royal Zoological Society of SA, Earth Sanctuaries, Trees for Life, and the Department for Environment and Heritage
Mr Kent Martin	Farmer, SA Farmers Federation (SAFF) Native Title Officer. Former: member of SA Landcare Committee, Chair of SAFF Horticultural Section and SAFF Natural Resources Committee, NRM Council, Centre for NRM Board member
Mr David Mitchell	Volunteer Ministerial Task Force and Advisory Group member, President of Trees For Life, President of Friends of Parks Inc, Chair of Minister's Adelaide Region Consultative Committee, and President of Friends of Cobbler Creek
Ms Frances Simes	Local government councillor, member of SA Murray-Darling Basin NRM Board, and member of Riverland West Local Action Planning Group committee
Mr Fraser Vickery	Kangaroo Island NRM Board member, Conservation Council of SA councillor, and President of Greening Australia SA
Ms Janet Pedler	Ecologist, Land Management and Biodiversity consultant/educator, Director Bushland Conservation Co Pty Ltd. Former: farmer, member of SA Landcare Committee and SA Waterwatch Steering Committee, and Coordinator of Onkaparinga Waterwatch Network

Members	Knowledge, Skills and Experience
Leanne Liddle	SA Aid Lands NRM Board Member, Deputy Member Aboriginal Statewide Advisory Committee, Parks and Wildlife Aboriginal Programs Coordinator in Department for Environment and Heritage, Australian Government Animal Welfare Strategy Member, and Law Society of SA Member

NRM Council submissions in relation to NRM Plans and Policies

During the 2008-09 reporting period NRM Council provided the following submissions in relation to NRM Plans and Policies:

NRM Plan / Policy	NRMC Input	Date
Caring for Country – Aboriginal NRM Forum	NRMC Council took the lead role to organise the Aboriginal NRM Forum held in Port Augusta, SA	September 2008
Prickly Acacia Policy	Endorsed by NRM Council out of session on 23 January 2009	January 2009
Water Allocation Plan (WAP) for the Far North Prescribed Wells Area	NRMC provided feedback to the Minister who adopted the WAP on 16 February 2009	February 2009
Science Technology and Innovation Strategy	NRMC provided feedback to DWLBC and the Strategy was launched on 23 February 2009	February 2009
Marine Park Boundaries	NRMC sent advice to Department for Environment and Heritage on 25 March 2009	March 2009
Water Allocation Plan (WAP) for the Padthaway Prescribed Wells Area	NRMC provided feedback to the Minister who adopted the WAP on 26 April 2009	March 2009
SA Murray-Darling Basin Regional NRM Plan	NRMC provided advice to the Minister regarding adoption of the Plan. The Minister adopted the Plan on 28 April 2009	March 2009
Kangaroo Island Regional NRM Plan	NRMC Council provided advice to the Minister regarding adoption of the Plan. The Minister adopted the Plan on 5 May 2009	March 2009
Eyre Peninsula Regional NRM Plan	NRMC Council provided advice to the Minister regarding adoption of the Plan. The Minister adopted the Plan on 5 May 2009	March 2009
SA Murray Darling Basin Regional NRM Plan	NRMC Council provided advice to the Minister regarding adoption of the Plan. The Minister adopted the Plan on 26 April 2009	March 2009

NRM Plan / Policy	NRMC Input	Date
Northern and Yorke Regional NRM Plan	NRMC Council provided advice to the Minister regarding adoption of the Plan. The Minister adopted the Plan on 5 May 2009	April 2009
Greater Adelaide Plan	NRMC Council and Premier's Climate Change Council engaged Urban and Regional Planning Solutions to assist in the reviewing and providing of comment on the Plan	April 2009
Water Allocation Plan (WAP) for the Clare Valley Prescribed Water Resources Area	NRMC Council provided feedback to the Minister who adopted the WAP on 4 May 2009	April 2009
Climate Change Adaptation Framework	NRMC Council engaged Rural Solutions to assist in the development of the Framework	April 2009
NRMC Council Work Plan 2009	Discussed and endorsed by NRMC on 6 April 2009	April 2009
Managing the Water Resource Impacts of Plantation Forests – a statewide policy framework	Released by the Minister with the NRMC Commercial Forests Amendment Bill on 18 June 2009	May 2009
Regional Landuse Framework	NRMC Council provided advice to Department of Planning and Local Government in May 2009	May 2009
State of the Environment Report	NRMC Council provided comment to Department for Environment and Heritage on 15 June 2009	May 2009
National Biodiversity Strategy	NRMC Council forwarded a response on 5 June 2009	May 2009
Water Allocation Plan (WAP) for the Barossa Prescribed Water Resources Area	NRMC Council provided feedback to the Minister who adopted the WAP on 18 June 2009	June 2009
Independent Review of the State NRM Plan	Final report composed by Barry Lincoln (InterPART and Associates) and released in June 2009	June 2009

Advice to the Minister on the administration and operation of the Act

NRMC Council recommended that the Minister consider regulatory amendments to the NRM Act so that plantation forestry's impact on water quantity can be more appropriately managed.

NRMC Council advised on the need for water policy consistency and early consultation with NRM Boards about issues that impact on their operations.

Education and capacity building

NRM Council maintains a website through the NRM gateway which also gives the public access to the regional NRM Boards websites and NRM agencies.

NRM Council produced *NRM Directions SA* a bi-monthly newsletter that reports on South Australia's progress towards integrated natural resources management.

NRM Council held a state-wide forum Caring for Country: Aboriginal NRM Forum.

Council operating structures and processes

Council have strengthened their approach to delivering on their business plan priorities through closer alignment with agency Chief Executives NRM Group and by endorsing a new role for Inter-Agency Directors members to "champion" each of the priority issues. Council also agreed to place relevant strategic regional NRM Board issues on its strategic agenda.

At the end of each calendar year the NRM Council holds a Strategic Planning Day to determine the strategic items to be discussed the following year. The strategic items are entered into a document "key strategic discussion themes and underpinning activities" (the forward agenda). The forward agenda is updated on a regular basis as new issues arise or timeframes change.

NRM Council Representation on Relevant NRM Bodies

In order to assist Council in meeting its objectives, members were nominated to a range of bodies, there-by establishing a communication network to have input into strategies and to provide two-way dialogue about relevant NRM issues.

Members on nominated bodies during the reporting period are:

NRM Body	NRM Council Representative
Planning and NRM Working Group	Wendy Bell
Communications Strategy Advisory Group	Wendy Bell
SA Biodiversity Draft Strategy Working Group	Vicki-Jo Russell
Engaging Community Capacity NRM Steering Group	Sharon Starick and Wendy Bell
State of the Environment Report Steering Committee	Vicki-Jo Russell
Kangaroo Management Reference Group	Sharon Starick (deputy member)
Science, Technology and Innovation Steering Committee	Dennis Mutton
Aboriginal Statewide Advisory Committee (ASAC)	Karina Lester (Chair)
Premiers Drought Taskforce	Dennis Mutton
NRM Research Alliance Board	Dennis Mutton
Review of the NRM Act 2004	Roger Wickes, Anthony Cheshire, and Sharon Starick
Marine Planning	Anthony Cheshire
NRM Council Assessment Subcommittee (CASc)	Vicki-Jo Russell and Sharon Starick
Climate Change Adaptation Reference Group	Vicki-Jo Russell

Presentations to NRM Council

Throughout the year NRM Council received presentations from NRM bodies and agency staff about natural resources management issues. These presentations included:

Presentation	Presenters	Agency
Lower Murray Landscape Futures project	Brett Bryan	CSIRO Land and Water
Monitoring and Evaluation Framework	Fraser Macleod	Department of Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation (DWLBC)
Biodiversity Conservation in SA (No Species Loss, NatureLinks, Marine Parks and Marine Planning)	Brenton Gear	Department for Environment and Heritage (DEH)
Science Technology and Innovation Strategy	Stephanie Williams	DWLBC
Agricultural Excellence Alliance	Jeanette Long, Mark Stanley and Mick Faulkner	Australian Government
Signposts for Australian Agriculture	Tom Aldred	Australian Government
Grape and Wine Industry and NRM	Kris Roberts	PIRSA
Plantation Forestry	Darryl Harvey	DWLBC
Water Policy consistency in NRM	David Geddes	South East NRM Board
SA Biosecurity Strategy	Mark Ramsey	DWLBC
Status of National Indicators for reporting on Australia's natural resource condition	Blair Wood	National, Land and Water Resources Audit.
Water Security Council	Professor Rob Lewis	Water Security Council
Nature Conservation Legislation Review	Stephen Forbes, Phil Conniff	DEH
30 Year Plan for Greater Adelaide	Jennifer Westacott and Lois Boswell	Department of Planning and Local Government
Review of the State NRM Plan	Jim Barratt	DWLBC
Water For Good	Robyn McLeod	Office for Water Security
Caring for Our Country Funding	Sally Troy	Australian Government

ROLE, LEGISLATION AND STRUCTURE

The NRM Council was established on 9 December 2004 under the auspices of the *Natural Resources Management Act 2004*. This report for the 2008-09 financial year fulfils the requirements of Section 38 of the NRM Act.

OBJECT OF THE *NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT ACT*

The objects of the Act include assisting in the achievement of ecologically sustainable development in the State by establishing an integrated scheme to promote the use and management of natural resources in a manner that—

- (a) recognises and protects the intrinsic values of natural resources; and
- (b) seeks to protect biological diversity and, insofar as is reasonably practicable, to support and encourage the restoration or rehabilitation of ecological systems and processes that have been lost or degraded; and
- (c) provides for the protection and management of catchments and the sustainable use of land and water resources and, insofar as is reasonably practicable, seeks to enhance and restore or rehabilitate land and water resources that have been degraded; and
- (d) seeks to support sustainable primary and other economic production systems with particular reference to the value of agriculture and mining activities to the economy of the State; and
- (e) provides for the prevention or control of impacts caused by pest species of animals and plants that may have an adverse effect on the environment, primary production or the community; and
- (f) promotes educational initiatives and provides support mechanisms to increase the capacity of people to be involved in the management of natural resources.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE ACT

The Minister for Environment and Conservation is responsible for the administration of the *Natural Resources Management Act 2004*. Pursuant to section 6 of the *Administrative Arrangements Act 1994*, certain functions and powers of the Minister for Environment and Conservation in relation to the South Australian Murray-Darling Basin Natural Resources Management Board have been conferred on the Minister for the River Murray.

FUNCTIONS OF THE NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Section 17 of the NRM Act 2004 sets out the functions of the NRM Council:

- (a) to provide advice to the Minister on the administration and operation of this Act; and
- (b) to audit, monitor and evaluate the state and condition of natural resources across the State, and to evaluate and report on—
 - (i) the performance of the NRM authorities established under this Act; and
 - (ii) the integration of natural resources management practices on account of this Act; and
- (c) to prepare, and to keep under review, the State NRM Plan, and to keep under review the extent to which—
 - (i) regional NRM plans; and
 - (ii) policies and practices adopted or applied by NRM authorities,

- are consistent with the State NRM Plan; and
- (d) to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of—
- (i) this Act; and
 - (ii) the State NRM Plan; and
 - (iii) other natural resources management policies initiated by the Government,
- and to provide reports to the Minister, and to other relevant persons and bodies, in relation to these matters; and
- (e) as far as reasonably practicable and appropriate—
- (i) to promote the implementation of integrated natural resources management practices and principles under other Acts; and
 - (ii) to contribute to the adoption of sound natural resources management policies under the Planning Strategy under the *Development Act 1993*; and
 - (iii) to ensure that natural resources management issues are considered when reports on the state of the environment are being prepared at State level; and
- (f) to assist in the coordination of natural resources management initiatives across 2 or more regions and to resolve any issues that may arise between regional NRM Boards; and
- (g) to convene forums on a State-wide basis to discuss natural resources management issues, and to promote public awareness of sound natural resources management practices; and
- (h) at the request of the Minister, or on its own initiative, to advise the Minister on any matter relevant to the condition of natural resources within the State, or on the management of those resources, to conduct any inquiry or audit, or to provide any other advice or report that may be appropriate in the circumstances; and
- (i) such other functions assigned to the council by the Minister or by or under this or any other Act.
- (2) If the Minister assigns a function to the NRM Council under subsection (1)(i) (other than a function that is not, in the opinion of the NRM Council, a significant extension to its current functions), the NRM Council must cause a statement of the fact of the assignment to be published in its next annual report.
- (3) In performing its functions, the NRM Council should seek to work collaboratively with—
- (a) other State agencies, agencies of the Commonwealth, and agencies of the other States and Territories, that have functions that are relevant to those of the council; and
 - (b) local government; and
 - (c) relevant industry, environment and community groups and organisations.

MEMBERSHIP

Section 13 of the NRM Act provides for the appointment of the NRM Council.

Each of the appointed members of the Council is a person who, in the opinion of the Minister, meets the standards stipulated by Section 13 of the NRM Act for the appointment of members. Members appointed are:

Dennis Mutton (Presiding Member)	Appointed 30.4.2008 to 29.4.2010
Sharon Starick	Appointed 30.4.2008 to 29.4.2011
Vicki-Jo Russell	Appointed 30.4.2008 to 29.4.2011
Karina Lester	Appointed 30.4.2008 to 29.4.2011
Rosalina Bouchee	Appointed 4.10.2007 to 29.4.2010
Wendy Bell	Appointed 15.11.2007 to 29.4.2010
Roger Wickes	Appointed 30.4.2008 to 29.4.2011
Anthony Cheshire	Appointed 30.4.2008 to 29.4.2011
Vacant	
Graham Gates (deputy to Rosalina Bouchee)	Appointed 30.4.2008 to 29.4.2010

During the reporting period the following members stepped down from Council:

Anna Seidel 30.4.2008 to 5.12.2008

Pursuant to Section 13(10) of the NRM Act the Minister may also authorise a person or persons to attend any meeting of the NRM Council in order to represent the interests of the Commonwealth, the State or local government. The Minister authorised the following persons to attend and participate in meetings of the NRM Council (as at 30 June 2009):

Mr Scott Ashby	Chief Executive, DWLBC
Mr Geoff Knight	Chief Executive, PIRSA
Mr Allan Holmes	Chief Executive, DEH
Ms Helen Fulcher	Chief Executive, EPA
Mr John Howard	Head of Water Quality and Environment, SA Water
Ms Sally Troy	General Manager, Australian Government NRM Team

MEETINGS: GENERAL AND SPECIAL

Nine general NRM Council meetings were held during the 2008-09 financial year.

Two special meetings were held during the reporting period in September 2008 (NRM Forum and December 2008 (strategic planning day).

Meetings of the NRM Council are usually held monthly, on the first Friday of each month, except January. The NRM Act states that the meetings of the NRM Council must be

accessible to the public. NRM Council must give public notice of its intention to hold a meeting, stating the time and place at which the meeting will be held.

Attendance by appointed members at meetings:

Member	Meetings attended	Comments	Reason for non attendance
Dennis Mutton	9	-	Leave, Business
Karina Lester	9	-	Family
Vicki-Jo Russell	8	-	Family
Sharon Starick	10	-	Leave
Rosalina Bouchee	9	-	Illness
Anna Seidel	2	-	Resigned December 2008
Wendy Bell	10	-	Leave
Anthony Cheshire	11		N/A
Roger Wickes	11		N/A
Graham Gates	7	Deputy to Rosalina Bouchee	N/A

RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER AGENCIES

The Department of Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation (DWLBC), the Department for Environment and Heritage, SA Water, Primary Industries and Resources SA, the Environment Protection Authority, the Department of Planning and Local Government and the Australian Government are all represented on NRM Council.

NRM Council has signed a Memorandum of Understanding which reflects the commitment of the Department of Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation (DWLBC), the Department for Environment and Heritage, the Environment Protection Authority, and Primary Industries and Resources South Australia to achieving the objects of the *Natural Resources Management Act 2004* (the NRM Act) through supporting the functions of the NRM Council.

The NRM Council have signed a “Delivering NRM Together” document which outlines the commitment of the NRM Council, NRM Boards and NRM agencies to work together to deliver natural resources management outcomes for South Australia.

NRM Council and the Regional NRM Boards have signed a Statement of Intent. The document is a statement of our collective intent to work together to achieve and deliver the objects of the NRM Act. Our common goal is the achievement of ecologically sustainable development in South Australia through an integrated approach to the use and management of the State’s natural resources.

GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

NRM Council has a number of policies that guide staff and members in their responsibilities including:

- Meeting procedures and member obligations
- NRM Council decision making framework

- Policy development
- Guidelines for presentations
- Guidelines for distribution of correspondence

STAFFING

The NRM Council utilises the services of the staff and facilities of the DWLBC. Reporting on this matter is contained in the Department's Annual Report 2008-09 under section 6A of the Public Sector Management Act.

Assigned staff during the reporting period:

Rachel Pfitzner	NRM Council Business Manager
David Hanna	Project Officer (ended 23 January 2009)
Cherie O'Neill	Executive Officer, NRM Volunteers (ended 23 January 2009)
Cherie O'Neill	Project Officer (began 26 January 2009)
Margret Howard	Administration Support (ended 1 August 2008)
Sara Bann	Administrative Support (began 27 October 2008)
Hannah Pitcher	Executive Assistant (began 1 December 2008)

STATEMENT OF FACT FOR SIGNIFICANT FUNCTIONS ASSIGNED TO NRM COUNCIL BY MINISTER

No function was assigned to the NRM Council under Section 17(2) in the reporting period.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ANNUAL REPORT

Section 20 of the NRM Act requires that the NRM Council must on or before 30 November in each year, provide to the Minister a report on its activities for the financial year ending on the preceding 30 June (and need not provide a report under section 6A of the *Public Sector Management Act 1995*).

The report must be accompanied by annual reports of regional NRM Boards and NRM groups and include any other report or information provided to the NRM Council for inclusion in its annual report.

The Minister must cause a copy of this report to be tabled in both Houses of Parliament within 12 sitting days after receiving the report.

In addition, the Chief Executive of DWLBC must ensure that a copy of this report is published on the Department's website within 5 business days after being laid before both Houses of Parliament.

However, if it is not possible for this report to be tabled by 31 December, the Minister must—

- ensure that a copy of the report is furnished to the Natural Resources Committee of the Parliament by that date; and
- until the report is tabled in both Houses of Parliament, furnish to any Member of Parliament, on request, a copy of the report.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Members of the NRM Council received the following remuneration as set by Cabinet:

- Presiding Member: \$258 per four-hour session. The Presiding Member also receives an annual allowance/retainer as part of the remuneration package.
- Member: \$206 per four-hour session.

NRM Council Assessment Subcommittee:

- Presiding Member: \$221 per four-hour session
- Member: \$177 per four-hour session

Aboriginal Statewide Advisory Committee:

- Presiding Member: \$221 per four-hour session
- Member: \$177 per four-hour session

Volunteer Committee:

- Presiding Member: \$221 per four-hour session
- Member: \$177 per four-hour session

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROGRAMS

The gender balance of the NRM Council was taken into serious consideration when members of the skills based council were appointed.

The NRM Council consisted of three males and five females at the end of the 2008-09 reporting period.

Members are aware of and abide by their obligations under the State *Equal Opportunity Act 1984* and the equal opportunity policies and programs of DWLBC. Reporting on this matter is contained in the DWLBC 2008-09 Annual Report.

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE OF THE NRM COUNCIL

The below Financial Statement of NRM Council includes the costs associated with the three sub-committees of NRM Council – Aboriginal Statewide Advisory Committee, NRM Council Assessment Subcommittee and NRM Volunteer Committee.

NRM COUNCIL - FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2008-09

EXPENDITURE CATEGORY	ITEM	\$ (GST excl)
Employment Costs:		
	Allowances Paid	9 968
	Superannuation	8 095
	Payroll Tax	5 510
	Sitting Fees	92 143
	Fringe Benefits Tax	0 469
	Total	116 185
Goods & Services:		
	Advertising General	9 045
	Courier/Freight Charges	0 254
	Postage	1 390
	Stationery	0 616
	Sundries	0 266
	Meeting/Conference expenses	17 278
	Entertainment (Non FBT)	0 048
	Desktop Telephones	0 028
	Printing/Publishing	5 672
	Minor Hardware - IT	0 150
	Total	34 747
Contractors:		
	Contractors Fees (Non-SA Gov)	6 320
	Total	6 320
Motor Vehicle Expenses:		
	Motor Vehicle Hire	0 113
	Taxi Fares	2 862
	Fuel Costs	0 101
	Mileage Expenses	30 694
	Parking Reimbursement	0 853
	Total	34 623
Travel & Accommodation:		
	Airfares - Local/Interstate	17 731
	Accommodation & Meals	3 786
	Total	21 517
Total Expenditure 2008 - 2009		213 392

FRAUD

It is declared that there were no instances of fraud detected in the activities undertaken by the NRM Council.

Financial services are provided to the NRM Council by DWLBC and reporting on strategies to detect instances of fraud are reported in the DWLBC 2008-09 Annual Report.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE (OHS&W)

There were no OHS&W incidents reported by the NRM Council in the reporting period.

As a user of DWLBC facilities and equipment, the NRM Council is aware of and abides by DWLBC's OHS&W policies. Reporting on this matter is contained in the DWLBC 2008-09 Annual Report.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT TRAINING EXPENDITURE

Training and Development	Total Cost	% of Total Salary Expenditure
Total training and development expenditure	\$1000	30%
Total leadership and management development expenditure	\$0	0%

ACCREDITED TRAINING PACKAGES

ACCREDITED TRAINING PACKAGES BY CLASSIFICATION

Classification	Number of Accredited Training Packages
None undertaken	N/A

CONSULTANTS

Throughout 2008-09, the Council engaged three consultants.

The consultants undertook the following work on behalf of the Council:

- In December 2008, Face the World consulting firm was engaged to facilitate NRM Council's planning day at a cost of \$5063 plus GST
- In April 2009, Urban and Regional Planning Solutions were engaged to formulate a submission to the Minister in response to the 30 Year Plan for Greater Adelaide at a cost of \$45 717 plus GST
- In March 2009, Rural Solutions were engaged to develop a climate change adaptation framework at a cost of \$32 083 plus GST

OVERSEAS TRAVEL

It is declared that no member of the council travelled overseas on the business of the NRM Council during the reporting period.

CONTRACTUAL ARRANGEMENTS

The NRM Council did not enter any contractual arrangements exceeding \$4 million in value during the reporting period.

ACCOUNT PAYMENT PERFORMANCE

DWLBC provides administrative resources for processing account payments for the NRM Council. Reporting on this matter is contained in the DWLBC 2008-09 Annual Report.

DISABILITY ACTION PLANS

Promoting Independence – Disability Action Plans for South Australia provides a framework of action for agencies to meet the requirements of the *Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and the *SA Equal Opportunity Act 1984*.

Members of the NRM Council are aware of and abide by their obligations under the *Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and the *State Equal Opportunity Act 1984*. Reporting on this matter is contained in the DWLBC 2008-09 Annual Report.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY ACTION PLAN REPORTS

The NRM Council uses the facilities and services of the staff of DWLBC. Reporting on this matter is contained in the DWLBC 2008-09 Annual Report.

URBAN DESIGN CHARTER

The government adopted the South Australian Urban Design Charter as whole-of-government urban policy. The Charter was publicly released in November 2004.

The Urban Design Charter aims to promote the benefits of good urban design, embed the principles into government processes and record the South Australian Government's commitment to good urban design.

The NRM Council uses the facilities and services of the staff of DWLBC. Reporting on this matter is contained in the DWLBC 2008-09 Annual Report.

ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT IN GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS

The NRM Council uses the facilities and services of the staff of DWLBC. Reporting on this matter is contained in the DWLBC 2008-09 Annual Report.

RECONCILIATION STATEMENT

As the NRM Council usually meets on Kurna land, the NRM Council begins each meeting with the following reconciliation statement:

“The NRM Council would like to acknowledge the land on which it meets is the traditional lands for the Kurna people and that it respects their spiritual relationship with their country. The NRM Council also acknowledges the Kurna people as the custodians of the greater Adelaide region and that their cultural and heritage beliefs are still as important to the living Kurna people today.”

In fulfilling its functions, the NRM Council is cognisant of the cultural and natural heritage of traditional owners and strives to achieve positive outcomes wherever these matters are concerned.

For meetings held in other parts of South Australia the following recognition is given:

“We acknowledge and respect the traditional custodians whose ancestral lands we are meeting upon here today. We acknowledge the deep feelings of attachment and relationship of Aboriginal peoples to Country. We also pay respects to the cultural authority of Aboriginal people visiting / attending from other areas of South Australia / Australia present here.”

If appropriate a traditional owner is invited to provide a welcome to country as occurred at the NRM Council state-wide forum *Caring for Country: Aboriginal NRM Forum*.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

As a DWLBC controlled entity, the NRM Council participates and abides by the arrangements outlined in the DWLBC Freedom of Information regime. Reporting on this matter is contained in the DWLBC 2008-09 Annual Report.

REGIONAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT STATEMENT

The NRM Council undertook no Regional Impact Assessment Statements in 2008-09.

GREENING OF GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS FRAMEWORK

The Greening of Government Operations Framework (GoGo) Framework was approved by Government in February 2006 to provide the implementation framework for South Australian Government agencies to progress greening programs.

GoGO Priority Area 1: energy management

GoGO Priority Area 3: waste management

GoGO Priority Area 5: travel and fleet management

Reporting on this matter is contained in the DWLBC 2008-09 Annual Report.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ANNUAL REPORT

Section 38 of the Natural Resources Management Act requires that the Minister must cause a report to be prepared annually setting out the following information:

- (1) A regional NRM Board must, on or before 31 October in every year, provide to the NRM Council a report on its activities for the financial year ending on the preceding 30 June (and need not provide a report under section 6A of the *Public Sector Management Act 1995*).
- (2) The report must—
 - (a) include an assessment of the extent to which the regional NRM Board has succeeded in implementing its regional NRM plan; and
 - (b) include the audited accounts and financial statements of the regional NRM Board; and
 - (c) be accompanied by the annual reports of the NRM groups within its region; and
 - (d) include other information required by or under this Act or the regulations.

Section 56 – Accounts and Audit of the Natural Resources Management Act requires that:

- (1) An NRM group must cause proper accounts to be kept of its financial affairs and must cause financial statements to be prepared in respect of each financial year.
- (2) The Auditor-General may at any time, and must in respect of each financial year, audit the accounts and financial statements required under subsection (1)

Section 57-Annual Reports of the Natural Resources Management Act requires that:

- (1) An NRM group must, on or before 31 October in every year, provide to the regional NRM Board or Boards that have responsibility for the NRM group a report on its activities for the financial year ending on the preceding 30 June (and need not provide a report under section 6A of the *Public Sector Management Act 1995*).
- (2) The report must-
 - (a) include a copy of the audited accounts and financial statements of the NRM group, and
 - (b) include other information required by or under the regulations.

In regards to Section 57 (2) (b) there are no regulations applying.

SPECIFIC REPORTS

Section 39 of the Natural Resources Management Act states that:

- (1) The Minister or the NRM Council may, by written notice to a regional NRM Board, require the Board to provide to the Minister or the NRM Council, within a period stated in the notice or at stated intervals, any report or reports relating to the performance, exercise or discharge of its functions, powers or responsibilities, as the Minister or the NRM Council (as the case may be) thinks fit.

- (2) If a requirement is imposed under subsection (1), the regional NRM Board must cause a statement of the fact of the imposition of the requirement to be published in its next annual report.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The NRM Council appreciates the support and encouragement it has received from the Ministers for Environment and Conservation and the Minister for the River Murray and staff from the Department of Water, Land & Biodiversity Conservation.

PUBLICATIONS

State Natural Resources Management Plan (2006)

Natural Resources Management in South Australia (2007)

A series of information brochures about the relationship of various sectors with the State NRM Plan:

- Aboriginal People
- Agriculture
- Conservation
- Local Government
- Horticulture
- Seafood Industries

Charting the Way Forward – Exploring the Challenge: Supporting and Engaging Natural Resources Management Volunteer (2008)