

# Engaging Local Government



A U S T R A L I A N  
L O C A L  
G O V E R N M E N T  
A S S O C I A T I O N

## What's Worked and Why A national perspective



# The Next 20 Minutes

- Outline of local government engagement to date
- Examples from NSW and QLD
- Engaging local government in future NRM programs



# Background

- Local Government not involved in initial discussions on regional NRM model
  - Not recognised as a critical partner
  - No vision for LG involvement
  - Facilitators provided
- Regions getting established
  - Capacity/willingness to engage LG
- Local government different priorities
  - Cost shifting concerns
  - Already undertaking NRM
  - Another level of government
  - In more than one NRM region
- Confusion over roles, responsibilities and representation



# Moving Forward

- Recognition of need for partnerships
- Local government already spending
  - \$1.9bn NRM
  - \$2.6bn environment protection
- Coordinate activities and resources
- Overcome problems
  - Many LGs, diversity, may not see NRM as core activity
  - Different timelines, access to right people
  - Differing priorities



# What is working

- NSW MoU arrangement
  - Greater collaboration and understanding of each other
- Advisory/Reference/Technical Committees
  - Increased communication, awareness and partnerships
- Local government Liaison officers
  - Co-ordinate LG activities, share info, networked across state



# What is Working cont...

- QLD Capacity Building Project
  - Understanding NRM is already core acty
  - Tools to incorporate NRM into every day council acty's
- Products to help RBs and LG
  - Guides, Biodiversity project, land use planning
- Reviewing strategies



# NSW – Case Studies

- Partnership Agreements (MoU)
- Hawkesbury Nepean CMA Local Government Program

Geoff Hudson

Local Government and Shires Association NSW



# QLD – Case Study

## Capacity Building Local Government in NRM

Malcolm Petrie

Local Government Association of Queensland



# Local Government Capacity Building

125 Local Governments, 15 Aboriginal Shires and 17 Islander Community Councils - Total package \$1.5 M over 4 years (commenced 2004 - concludes 2008)

## Project Products and Services

- Awareness: communication strategy e.g. NRM newsletters; annual NRM conference; LG case studies, elected member awareness workshops
- Information & knowledge: provision of information to assist Councils achieve best management practice e.g. guidelines and manuals
- Skills Training: training & workshops to meet Councils identified priority needs
- Facilitation and Support: State LG NRM reference group; 2 LGAQ NRM officers dedicated policy advice and support



# Local Government Capacity Building

## Activities to date:

- Engaged 125 Local Governments, 10 Aboriginal Shire Councils and 10 Island Community Councils to identify key NRM issues & current capacity to participate in regional NRM

## Council feedback identified the following:

- Developed guidelines for the integration of NRM into Council corporate plans (3 separate guides)
- Developing a guideline for the integration of NRM into planning schemes



# Local Government Capacity Building

## Activities to date:

- TBL Evaluation Software and user guide for NRM
- Best Practice NRM Manual for operational staff
  - Environmental legislation influencing Local Government
  - Water quality monitoring
  - Assess & manage environmental significant areas
  - Environmentally sustainable roadside management
- Introductory Erosion and Sediment Control Guideline
- SoE Reporting Pilot SE Queensland
- Annual Local Government Environment Conference



# Engaging Local Government in Future NRM Programs



# Basis for future programs

- Acknowledge and recognise work already undertaken by LG – build on it
- Remove political and practical barriers and impediments
- Encourage and support greater partnerships



# LG Commitment

- Local government is committed to achieving sustainable NRM outcomes.
- Local government is committed to regional approaches to natural resource management.
- Local government is committed to using its planning processes and powers to deliver local priorities and assist the achievement of regional outcomes.
- Local Government is committed to using its resources on the basis of NRM priorities and community expectation, recognising a need for long-term resource investment from multiple stakeholders.



# Future Programs

- Better integration of regional and local NRM priorities and planning processes
- Extend the existing NRM activities of LG
- Draw on LG expertise (eg: planning, biodiversity management)
- Coastal planning and development impacts
- Build capacity of LG to deliver NRM
  - through separate capacity building projects
  - by including capacity building in on-ground projects



# Align planning activities

- LGAQ Projects
- MAV
- WALGA Land Use Planning Project
- Eyre Peninsula



# Conclusion

- Many opportunities out there
- Still great need for capacity building
- Future NRM programs to have greater focus on LG, and many opportunities to form strong partnerships.
- Call your LG NRM facilitator



# Want to know more?

- A number of local government papers are on the web at

[www.alga.asn.au/environment](http://www.alga.asn.au/environment)

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