

**NATURE CONSERVATION OUTPUT**  
**PLANNING MEETING**

Summary of workshop  
outcomes & presentation  
papers

**CLUB CAPRICORN RESORT**  
**YANCHEP**

**4-5 DECEMBER 2001**

## AGENDA

### NATURE CONSERVATION OUTPUT PLANNING MEETING

4 - 5 DECEMBER 2001

CLUB CAPRICORN RESORT, YANCHEP

Tuesday 4 December

| Time          | Item   | Presenter   | Comments  |
|---------------|--|---|---|
| 8.30 - 9.00   | Arrival - Coffee/Tea   |   |   |
|               | <b>Introductory session</b><br><b>Chair: Andrew Burbidge</b>   |   |   |
| 9.00 - 9.20   | Welcome, House-keeping, introductions  | Andrew Burbidge   | 20 minutes  |
| 9.20 - 10.00  | 1. Acting Executive Director's presentation on the opportunities and challenges for the new Department of Conservation.  | Keiran McNamara   | 20 minute presentation with 20 minutes questions                      |
| 10.00- 10.30  | 2. Acting Director of Nature Conservation's presentation. Delivery of the Nature Conservation Output: What's happened in the past year, where we are heading ? | Gordon Wyre   | 15 min presentation with 15 minutes questions                         |
| 10.30 - 11.00 | Morning tea  |   |   |
| 11.00-11.30   | 3. Future Framework for Service Provision Agreements: Some ideas and challenges.   | Andrew Burbidge   | 20 min presentation with 10 minutes questions                         |
| 11.30-12.30   | 4. Regional reports: Major achievements over the past year and future challenges   | Gordon Graham, Peter Kendrick, Anthony Desmond, Brad Barton, Bruce Bone, Alan Danks | 10 min presentations  |
| 12.30 - 1.30  | Lunch  |   |   |
| 1.30-2.00     | 5. Regional Reports: Major achievements over the past year and future challenges   | David Mitchell, Kim Williams, Rod Simmons   | 10 min presentations  |
|               | <b>Workshop Session I</b><br><b>Chair: Ken Atkins</b>  |   |   |
| 2.00-2.40     | 6. Identification and prioritizing of Nature Conservation Output priorities for the next 5 years priorities  | All participants  | Break into workshop groups (3-4) for issue identification/exploration |
| 2.40-3.00     | 7. Discussion of issues  | All participants  |   |
| 3.15-3.30     | Afternoon Tea  |   |   |
| 3.30-4.00     | 8. Discussion of issues  | All participants  |   |
| 4.30-5.30     | 9. Science Division presentation: Towards greater integration of science with management   | Neil Burrows/Keith Morris   |   |
| 6.30-7.30     | Dinner   |   |   |
| 7.30 - 9.00   | Discussions  |   |   |

Wednesday 5 December

| Time          | Item  | Presenter        | Comments  |
|---------------|---|------------------|---|
| 0700-0830     | Breakfast   |                  |   |
|               | <b>Chair: John Blyth</b>  |                  |   |
| 8.30-9.10     | 10. Regional Services presentation: SPAs from a service provider's perspective  | John Skillen     | 20 mins presentation, 20 mins discussion                |
| 9.10-9.30     | 11 Regional NRM delivery/National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality/NHT Phase 2: Overview and roles/challenges for the Department                              | Keith Claymore   | 10 minute presentation with 10 min questions/discussion |
|               | <i>Workshop session II</i>  |                  |   |
| 9.30-10.30    | What detail is required for SPAs, what should be in a SPA, how do we determine performance indicators, level of reporting, how do we do it better and more effectively? | All participants | 40 mins in small groups                                 |
| 10.15 - 10.45 | Morning tea   |                  |   |
| 10.45-11.15   | <i>Workshop session II - continued</i><br>Report back on workshop II  | All participants | 15 min each group                                       |
|               | <b>Chair: Dave Mell</b>   |                  |   |
| 11.15-12.30   | <i>Workshop Session III</i>   | All participants | Break into groups                                       |
| 11.15-11.45   | SPAs Planning: Mechanics of relationships, roles and responsibilities   |                  |   |
| 11.45-12.30   | 11. Groups Report back  | Group leaders    | 15 mins each group                                      |
| 12.30-1.30 PM | LUNCH   |                  |   |
| 1.30-2.30     | 13. <b>Wrap up:</b> Summary of meeting outcomes and issues arising from meeting. Where to from here?  | Gordon Wyre      |   |
| 2.30          | 14. CLOSE   |                  |   |

## LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>DIVISIONAL OFFICERS</b>              |  |
| Keiran McNamara                         | Acting Executive Director                                    |
| Gordon Wyre                             | Acting Director of Nature Conservation                       |
| Roger Armstrong                         | Wildlife Branch  |
| Ken Atkins                              | Acting Manager Wildlife Manager                              |
| Andrew Burbidge                         | Deputy Director Biodiversity Conservation                    |
| Chris Simpson                           | Marine Branch  |
| Rob Thomas                              | Wildlife Branch  |
| John Blyth                              | WATSCU   |
| Jay Gomboso                             | Nature Conservation  |
| Dave Mell                               | Wildlife Branch  |
| Charlie Nicholson                       | Wildlife Branch  |
| Norm Caporn                             | Wildlife Branch  |
| Stephen White                           | Wildlife Branch  |
| Peter Mawson                            | Wildlife Branch  |
| Keith Claymore                          | Wildlife Branch  |
| Keith Morris                            | Science Division   |
| Neil Burrows                            | Science Division   |
| <b>KIMBERLEY</b>                        |  |
| Gordon Graham                           | Regional Leader Nature Conservation                          |
| Tim Willing                             | Conservation Officer   |
| <b>PILBARA</b>                          |  |
| Peter Kendrick                          | Regional Leader Nature Conservation                          |
| Roland Mau                              | Marine Conservation Officer                                  |
| <b>MIDWEST</b>                          |  |
| Alice Reaveley (proxy for Keith Hockey) | DM, Moora District   |
| Anthony Desmond                         | Regional Leader Nature Conservation                          |
| <b>GOLDFIELDS</b>                       |  |
| Brad Barton                             | Regional Nature Conservation Leader                          |
| Mark Cowan                              | Regional Ecologist   |
| <b>SOUTH COAST</b>                      |  |
| Mal Grant                               | Environmental Officer  |
| Alan Danks                              | Nature Conservation Leader                                   |
| <b>WARREN</b>                           |  |
| Rod Simmons                             | A/Nature Conservation Leader                                 |
| Ian Wilson                              | Conservation Officer, Donnelly District                      |
| Greg Freebury                           | A/District Nat Con Officer, Franklin District                |
| Roger Hearn                             | A/Regional Ecologist   |
| <b>SW</b>                               |  |
| Kim Williams, SW Region                 | Regional Leader, Nature Conservation                         |
| Frank Colyer                            | District Leader, Nature Conservation,<br>Wellington District |
| Rob Brazell                             | Forest Ranger, Wellington District                           |
| Greg Voigt                              | Operations Officer, Blackwood District                       |
| <b>WHEATBELT</b>                        |  |
| Bruce Bone                              | District Manager Katanning                                   |
| Ken Wallace                             | Regional Manager Wheatbelt                                   |
| Greg Durell                             | Districts Operations Officer                                 |
| <b>SWAN</b>                             |  |
| David Mitchell                          | Regional Nat Con Leader, Swan                                |
| John Carter                             | Perth Hills District Nat Con Leader                          |

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| Lyndon Mutter | Swan Coastal District, District Nature Conservation Leader |
| Paul Brown    | Swan Region Planner  |

## NATURE CONSERVATION PLANNING WORKSHOP

### SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES

#### WORKSHOP I: IDENTIFICATION AND PRIORITIZATION OF NATURE CONSERVATION OUTPUT PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT 5 YEARS

The following issues and priorities have been amalgamated from lists provided by the four discussion groups of Workshop I, and classified as a high or medium funding priority against the five key result areas under the Nature Conservation Output Strategic Plan. Within these categories, priorities have *not* been listed in order of importance.

It should be noted that while there was discussion within each sub-group to determine whether issues were of high or medium importance, there was no discussion or prioritizing of issues by the whole Workshop group. Hence, the suggested funding priorities listed below reflect the level of importance perceived by each of the four groups and should not be regarded as a fully comprehensive and complete list endorsed by all Workshop I participants.

#### KEY RESULT AREA: BIODIVERSITY INVENTORY AND CONSERVATION ASSESSMENT

| ACTIVITY  |
|---|
| <b><i>HIGH FUNDING PRIORITY</i></b>   |
| Undertake threat assessment of marine biodiversity  |
| Create marine research capacity under Science Division  |
| Establish a system of marine reference sites for monitoring   |
| Undertake systematic review of current information and knowledge and identification of gaps   |
| Continue sub-bioregional biodiversity audits  |
| Collect data for Swan Coastal Plain vegetation communities, particularly for areas of high development demand/pressure  |
| Undertake wetland inventory (identification of values and threats) – to meet Ramsar obligations – particularly in areas where development pressures are high, e.g. Swan Coastal Plain |
| Select targeted landscapes / fragmented landscapes (identify major threats and direct resources to greatest need);  |
| Investigate Stygofauna – particularly where resource development projects are being delayed   |
| <b><i>MEDIUM FUNDING PRIORITY</i></b>   |
| Assessment of inshore coastal reefs in Kimberley  |
| Undertake marine biodiversity inventory   |
| Establish bench mark for terrestrial surveys  |
| Increase knowledge of invertebrates   |
| Better integration of resource assessment with management   |
| IBRA expansion – capitalize on work already completed   |

|  |
|--|
| Continuation of bioinventory – arid lands, priority for where development is pending (High), elsewhere (medium) (quantify/identification of values; identification of threats for flora and fauna) |
| Mid-West and Gascoyne-Murchison Strategy – information required on recent acquisitions   |
| Kimberley survey and re-survey (of mammals)  |
| Priority flora – list of 1,000 need evaluation/survey  |
| Threatened ecological communities in wheatbelt need definition/redefined due to high number and level of fragmentation   |
| Pilbara regional survey - low level of bioregional knowledge, high land impacts, especially to stygofauna.   |
| Goldfields bioregional survey (previous work in some areas, but gaps). Localized high industrial/mining impacts, stygofauna issues.  |
| Extension of Salinity Action Plan biological survey into management action/advice  |

**KEY RESULT AREA: TERRESTRIAL AND MARINE CONSERVATION RESERVE SYSTEM -**

|  |
|--|
| <b>ACTIVITY</b>  |
| <b>HIGH FUNDING PRIORITY</b>   |
| Comprehensive, adequate and representation reserve system– identification of highest acquisition needs/ Gap analysis |
| Resource protection – general management   |
| Fire management  |
| Implement existing Government priorities (inc. Ningaloo)   |
| Native title – traditional use (indigenous)  |
| Kimberley stygofauna and karst system  |
| Fragmented landscapes /remnant native vegetation in wheatbelt and coastal plains                                     |
| Salvage of key threatened (2-5 years) vegetation on swan coastal plain   |
| Prioritize management activities - identify threats and prioritize action  |
| Collate best management practice: advice, training, research   |
| Other methods of protection  |
| Risk/threat analysis – across landscapes, tenure - id threats, prioritize, action                                    |
| Integrated indigenous land management - respond to government policy in key areas and elsewhere                      |
| Investigate a CAR reserve system in the Aboriginal management framework  |
| Translate Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation of Australia audit into a management tool                            |
| <b>MEDIUM FUNDING PRIORITY</b>   |
| Develop interim guidelines for reserves, including management priorities/risk assessment priority (1-2 years)        |
| Focus on riparian lands (WA wide)  |
| Implementation of Gascoyne-Murchison Strategy  |
| 2015 Review of pastoral leases – identify areas that will complement a CAR reserve system for rangelands             |

|   |
|---|
| Wilson report – implementation and recommendations  |
| Expand a Gascoyne-Murchison Strategy type process to the Pilbara / Goldfields / Kimberley |
| Re-invigorate the process of vesting UCL in reserves – especially south coast             |

### GENERAL ISSUES

- Establish a central fund for land purchase
- Adequate resources to effectively manage key result area

### KEY RESULT AREA: OFF-RESERVE BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE

|   |
|---|
| <b>ACTIVITY</b>   |
| <b>HIGH PRIORITY FOR FUNDING</b>  |
| Assessment of existing mechanisms/programs and prioritize to maximize resource use  |
| Aboriginal interaction - political (high) and nature conservation (medium)  |
| Natural Resource Management – make Department’s involvement more effective and determine overall goals  |
| Develop financial incentives for off-reserve management over 2-5 years  |
| Strategic approach to nomination of recovery catchments   |
| Wetlands – Implement national & international obligations   |
| Natural resource management groups – biodiversity strategies (increase resources) – funding opportunities, organizational threats/retain relevance; |
| Identify and target landscapes/significant fragmented native vegetation   |
| Involvement in regional NRM to champion biodiversity conservation   |
| Development of economically viable conservation (sympathetic industries) ongoing – salinity / landscape scale problem/solution                      |
| Identify key ‘areas ‘ for off-reserve resources   |
| Risk Assessment on marine wildlife and develop appropriate plans as required  |
| Increase uptake of Land for Wildlife and Conservation Covenants and other mechanisms  |
| Marine reserve community monitoring program (1-2 years)   |
| <b>MEDIUM PRIORITY FOR FUNDING</b>  |
| Integration of on and off reserve actions   |
| Sustainable use – develop business plans for appropriate biota  |
| Investigate suitable biota for sustainable use  |
| Better target Land for Wildlife and covenant program  |
| Review ‘off-reserve’ naming   |
| Ability to destock pastoral lands   |
| Promote off-reserve conservation to ‘land holders’ and the general community  |

**KEY RESULT AREA: RECOVERY OF THREATENED SPECIES AND ECOLOGICAL COMMUNITIES AND AMELIORATION OF THREATENING PROCESSES**

|  |
|--|
| <b>ACTIVITY</b>  |
| <b>HIGH PRIORITY FOR FUNDING</b>   |
| Rank and prioritize of recovery actions for resources  |
| Threatening processes – develop better understanding of threatening processes                |
| Targeted surveys for specific species  |
| Develop best practice  |
| Amalgamate similar species under one recovery plan   |
| Better information dissemination of threatened species for operational management (e.g. GIS) |
| Identification of threatening processes and development of threat abatement plans            |
| Operation procedures and manuals (1-2 years)   |
| Strategic/integrated approach to resource allocation to weeds /ferals                        |
| <b>MEDIUM PRIORITY FOR FUNDING</b>   |
| Integrate agency efforts with that of other landholders                                      |
| Managing priority lists  |
| Research for recovery actions  |
| Write up research reports  |
| Recovery catchments and landscapes development   |
| Establishment of artificial refuges  |
| Importation of fauna   |

**GENERAL ISSUES**

- Adequate resources and allocation
- Becoming independent of external funding
- Developing objectives for nature conservation

**KEY RESULT AREA: PARTNERSHIPS, PUBLIC APPRECIATION, COMPLIANCE AND SUPPORT**

|  |
|--|
| <b>ACTIVITY</b>  |
| <b>HIGH PRIORITY FOR FUNDING</b>   |
| centralized database for prosecutions/enforcement  |
| Targeted programs to achieve nature conservation goals                                     |
| Information exchange, particularly internal  |
| Promotion of memoranda of understanding for management arrangements                        |
| Establish “friends of reefs” for existing parks  |
| Adequate resourcing for natural resource management and negotiation with indigenous groups |
| Re-establish positive link to community and promotion of agency                            |
| Biodiversity conservation legislation  |
| Development of a nature conservation strategy  |

|  |
|--|
| Aboriginal management and training   |
| <b>MEDIUM PRIORITY FOR FUNDING</b>   |
| strategic approach for corporate sponsorship and partnerships              |
| Establish links with industry  |
| Develop partnerships with corporate land managers                          |
| Internal integration with marine branch                                    |
| Definition of roles and responsibilities                                   |
| Marine community monitoring coordinator                                    |
| Partnerships with research institutions                                    |
| Educating community on their role in biodiversity conservation (ongoing)   |
| Establish links with federal agencies and pursue federal funding (ongoing) |
| Training for personnel (identify and address training needs )              |

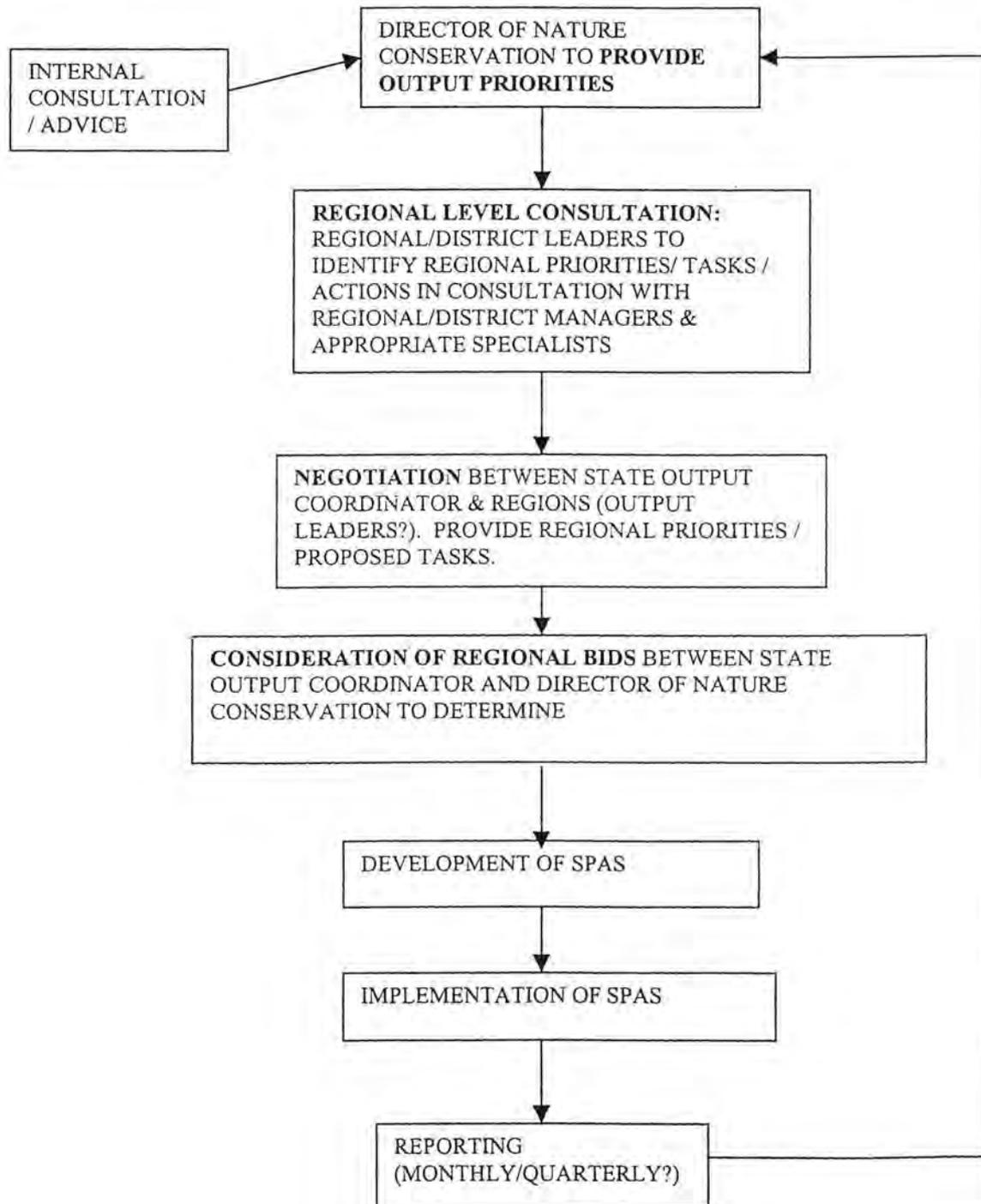
### **GENERAL ISSUES**

- Adequacy of resources
- Service-provision agreement preparation and delivery, e.g. compliance
- biodiversity conservation priority setting

## WORKSHOP II

Topic: What detail is required for SPAs, what should be in a SPA, how do we determine performance indicators, level of reporting, how do we do it better and more effectively?

Below represents a summary of the 4 working groups' suggested models to determine a SPA process with regional services. Further refinement to determine milestone timeframes will be required.





# PRESENTATIONS

Planning Conference Dec 2001

Gordon Wyre  
Acting Director of Nature  
Conservation, CALM

Nature Conservation Output  
Five  
Vision for 2001/02  
Plans for the future  
Summary

Input/Outcome (1 of 2)

M Nature Conservation Output

The development and implementation of programs for flora and fauna conservation, for threatened species and ecological communities and for commercially exploited species in accordance with the principles of ecological sustainability; the acquisition, conservation and protection of representative ecosystems; and encouraging public awareness, understanding and support for nature conservation services and policies".

Input/Outcome (2 of 2)

Output elements: The Big Five, Nov 2000  
Biodiversity inventory and conservation assessment;  
Terrestrial and marine conservation reserve system;  
Off-reserve biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of wildlife;  
Recovery of threatened species and ecological communities; and  
Partnerships, public appreciation, compliance and support.

The Nature Conservation Division and SPA's etc

Planning real achievements  
Measuring our success/failure  
Setting priorities and strategies  
Rationalisation a tool only to assist us and the community we are a part of.

Key Result Areas (1 of 5)

Biodiversity inventory and conservation assessment  
will achieve an understanding of our States natural biodiversity and biodiversity conservation status through:  
Conservation status evaluation (threatened or not?)  
Research into plant and animal taxonomy (what species)  
Restoring the Western Australian Herbarium  
Investigations and research related to the conservation of key species and ecological communities.

**Key Result Areas (2 of 5)**

**Terrestrial and marine conservation reserve system**

*will achieve a comprehensive, adequate and representative reserve system that conserves our natural biodiversity" through:*

- management plans and actions for biodiversity conservation, maintaining current reserves
- investigation and identification of areas to incorporate into R system
- incorporating high nature conservation value areas into reserves until a CAR reserve system is achieved
- pursuit of other means, such as management agreements areas that will complement the reserve system,
- research for bio-conservation management of reserves

**Key Result Areas (3 of 5)**

**Private Biodiversity Conservation & Sustainable Use**

*will achieve a network of private conservation reserves that conserve biodiversity and are complementary to the conservation reserve system" through:*

- private conservation enhancement and encouragement (Land Wildlife, Covenants, etc.
- identifying key private areas for conservation management
- putting into regional NRM proposals, plans and actions,
- promoting sustainable use of wildlife,
- management programs for major wildlife use operations.

**Key Result Areas (4 of 5)**

**Recovery of threatened species and ecological communities**

*will recover threatened species and ecological communities, while also preventing others becoming extinct as a result of human activity" through:*

- up to date lists of threatened flora, fauna and ecological communities
- recovery plans
- research into threatening processes
- reserve conservation management targeting salinity, introduced pests, diseases, weeds and inappropriate burning.
- large scale programs such as Western Shield and Western Herbarium.

**Key Result Areas (5 of 5)**

**Partnerships, public appreciation, compliance support**

*will work effectively with the wider community to conserve biodiversity conservation and a community that is knowledgeable about, interested in, supportive of, and engaged in, biodiversity conservation." through:*

- formal partnerships with the community, the Commonwealth, State/Territory agencies, local gov't etc.
- formal communications/liaison,
- guidance and advice and effective communication with the government on nature conservation matters.
- modern legislation for biodiversity conservation, a State Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and effective licensing and compliance operations.
- education/information and experience based activities to raise awareness and appreciation of bio-conservation.

**Service Provision**

**Contracts**

- define what will be done, by whom and using what resources.
- regional level
- Contract Services to be purchased
- are linked to the Departments Budget papers and Corporate Plan
- part of Accounts reviewed
- new 2001/02 SPA's .

**Budget Reductions for Nat Cons**

**Impact**

- \$7,977,000 in 2001/02
- \$4,430,500 in 2002/03 and beyond
- implemented cuts from 1 July 2001 at full 2002/03 level.
- central fund for sorting priorities in shortfalls after severances etc.

**Summary to 2001**

- Output across Output = \$2,430,500 7.4%
- Nature Conservation
  - % = \$380,000
- MScience
  - % = \$800,000
- Regional Services
  - 3.3% = \$1,057,000
- W/Corp Services/Corp Relations
  - pro rata

**Key Initiatives**

**Key Initiatives**

- Implement the State Salinity Strategy, including on one newly designated diversity recovery catchment
- Protect threatened animals, plants and ecological communities
- Develop a Biological Diversity Conservation Bill and a Western Australian Diversity Conservation Strategy
- Develop the terrestrial conservation reserve system
- Finalise pastoral leases acquired in the Gascoyne-Murchison rangelands
- Finalise the Jurien Bay Marine Park and continue the consultative process for proposed Montebello/Barnow Islands and Dampier Archipelago/Cape marine reserve proposals
- Develop conservation partnerships through the Land for Wildlife and voluntary conservation covenant schemes
- Finalise the implementation of the Wetlands Conservation Policy for Western Australia

**Program for 2001/02**

- Develop Government Forest Policy
- Injection of funds to forest regions
- Restructure of forest regions
- Introduction of Biodiversity Bill 2001 and strategy
- Requirements for increased funding for ~\$7mpa:
  - CAR design/acquisition and management
  - Off reserve conservation
  - TECs and Threat Species
  - Wetlands and Vegetation conservation
  - Ongoing community consultation

**Structure of NC Division**

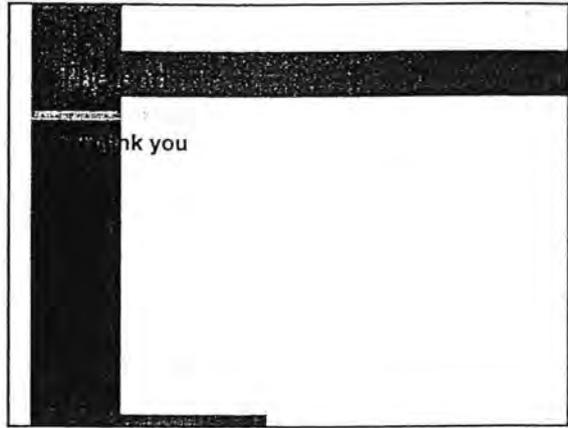
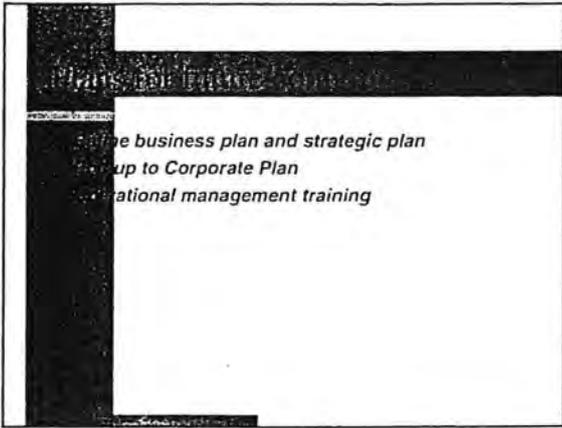
- Restructure to align with big 5
- Focus on CAR planning and central SPA
- Restructure Division
- Integrate SFM into Nature Conservation
- Finalise Machinery of Government review
- Finalise reviews of Fire 2001 and 2002

**Summary**

- Develop *Probus horribilus* or two
- Change is being forced upon us
- Challenge is to respond creatively
- Survive the inevitable criticisms
- Provide reduced services to community, while still achieving new outcomes

**Key Initiatives**

- Develop a shared understanding of what the Nature Conservation priorities for WA are.
- Clarify the outcomes that we can achieve over the next 1 to 2 years
- Align the budget to the priorities and outcomes



## FUTURE FRAMEWORK FOR SPAs: IDEAS AND CHALLENGES

Andrew Burbidge  
December, 2001



DEPARTMENT OF  
**Conservation**  
AND LAND MANAGEMENT



## SPA OBJECTIVES - PURCHASER

- Accountability: SPAs, together with expenditure reporting, identify how we should and do spend funds allocated for biodiversity conservation
- Direction: The purchaser (Output Director) is responsible for the Output budget and needs to direct how it is spent



## SPA OBJECTIVES - PROVIDERS

- Guidance: Providers know what they are meant to be doing
- Each individual in the organisation should know what their role is, how this meets corporate goals, why they are doing the tasks allocated to them and what it costs



## CAN IT WORK?

Yes, there are many models  
Probably works better in business  
than in government



## DOES IT WORK IN THIS DEPARTMENT? NO! (NOT YET)

- SPAs not signed before budget distributed
- No auditing/monitoring of performance of providers by purchaser
- Most staff unaware of SPA details and where they fit in
- No penalties for non-compliance



## Where are we at?

- We have defined sub-outputs and services and have changed the Chart of Accounts to reflect the defined services
- The Science Division SPA is the only one that provides detail at the project/task level



### WHY DOESN'T IT WORK?

- Insufficient commitment by CEO and CorpExec
- Insufficient resources allocated to develop and monitor SPAs
- Mostly bottom-up rather than top-down approach
- Staff responsible for negotiation/implementation, especially in Regional Services, may change roles



### WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

- Need resources allocated to prepare, negotiate and monitor SPA implementation
- Need to define more clearly what should and should not be in a SPA
- Need to apply timetables
- Need to apply penalties for non-compliance?



### WHAT SHOULD BE IN A SPA?

- Clear statements of work to be carried out and allocated budget
- Performance indicators should equate to tasks to be completed
- Degree of flexibility to allow for unforeseen demands



### TASKS FOR REGIONAL SERVICES

- A combination of 'routine' and 'specific'
- 'Routine' to include, eg. estate management, response to wildfires
- 'Specific' to include high priority defined jobs, eg. actions in recovery plans, completion of identified work for marine park planning, rare flora surveys, Western Shield monitoring



### ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION AND DEFINITION

- Allocating resources
- Balancing bottom-up and top-down priority setting
- Defining routine and specific tasks
- Managing the process without spending 'too much' time and money
- Roles and responsibilities at Division, Region and District level



## Nature Conservation - Kimberley Region

Conservation & Land  
Management

### Achievements

- Projects
  - Mandora Marsh - Land management assessment
    - Multi-discipline approach
    - Locating Australia's most inland mangroves
    - New species of fish
    - New species of *Solanum*
    - Interesting fauna collections
    - Future work initiated
    - Royal Society publication

### Achievements

- Cypress Pine
  - Landscape scale survey of fire sensitive species
  - Can be used as a fire management indicator
  - Future of *Callitris intratropica* is a concern under current fire regimes
  - Potential for a number of publications

### Achievements

- Planning
  - Preparation of a regional nature conservation output plan
    - Aiming to document activities
    - Substantial further development needed
    - Used in budgeting at work centre level
    - Further discussion on priority setting

### Achievements

- General
  - New additions to Directory of Important Wetlands in Australia
  - Parry Lagoons listed on Shorebird Site Network
  - Involved in development of joint management strategy with Aboriginal communities for marine turtles

### On-going

- Biodiversity Audit
  - Taken a considerable period of time
  - Potential for planning and incorporation in decision making processes

## On-going

- Staff Restructuring
  - ◆ Clear definition of roles of primary nature conservation staff
  - ◆ Finalisation of Wildlife Protection delivery
  - ◆ Spreading of nature conservation roles across staff structure

2/10/2011

1

## Challenges

- A better understanding of threatening processes
  - ◆ Fire, grazing and weeds
  - ◆ Need to start with existing estate
- Off park conservation
  - ◆ Participation with community and key groups in achieving conservation objectives.
- Documentation of traditional knowledge
  - ◆ This needs to be done as a matter of some urgency

2/10/2011

2

## Challenges

- Need for benchmarking
  - ◆ No systematic survey
  - ◆ Mitchell subregion has special values and trends not being studied
  - ◆ Initial documentation of resources of estate

2/10/2011

3

## Challenges

- Promotion and participation in a multidiscipline approach
  - ◆ CRC
  - ◆ Kimberley fire study
  - ◆ NGO's
  - ◆ Ord Bonaparte Project

2/10/2011

4

## Nature Conservation Output Achievements, Pilbara Region, 2001

**Use of remote sensing.** We are now able to use satellite-captured data routinely in major nature conservation applications, particularly fire management and ecosystem monitoring.

- Accurate mapping of fire scars using LandSat imagery has been developed recently (Li Shu). This is a major advance, for an area where millions of hectares can be burnt in a single season, and is essential in both planning prescribed burning, and in fighting wildfire.
- Ecosystem health in the Millstream wetlands has been monitored using DMSV (Digital Multi-Spectral Video) data for several years, but due to high costs, we have now switched to LandSat data

**Land acquisitions.** Recent acquisitions have included Cane River, Mount Minnie and Range, and Meentheena. All these are high quality strategic acquisitions. The more we learn about them, the more we value them.

**Biological survey.** We carry an intensive program of survey work, targeting mainly new estate. This relies heavily on external funding, volunteer groups and individuals, and groups like CVA and Green Corps, and Regional staff work closely with Science and Information staff.. Current projects include

- Near completion of survey of recently acquired estate. Meentheena almost complete, Cane River / Mount Minnie underway.
- Completion of survey of all Great Sandy Island Nature Reserve islands (35+ islands, over 3 years).
- Started pit trapping survey of islands of the Dampier Archipelago.

**Marine Turtle program.** The previous tagging effort is being maintained, with a heavy reliance on volunteers and industry, despite poor feedback from program management. The marine turtle program is to be reviewed soon. Starting a program of turtle beach surveillance this season.

**Karst management, North West Cape.** A local management group, comprising CALM, WA Museum, Water and Rivers Commission, Defence, Exmouth Shire and local speleologists meets two to four times per year. Formed primarily to oversee management of listed Threatened Ecological Communities on NW Cape (Cameron's Cave and Bundera Sinkhole). So far, the IMG goals have been met for a small part of the funding received, and we are looking to put in place more management and science at these sites.

### Management of Millstream wetlands.

- Weeds. Major advances in management of a major weed infestation (exotic palms) in the Millstream wetlands, through funding obtained through Wetland Protection Program. Initial estimates indicated a 20 year program was needed.
- TWG. Technical Working Group is an inter-agency management group (CALM, W&RC and Water Corp) involved with day to day management of the Millstream area and resources. This group meets monthly, with great success so far.

**Management planning for Marine Parks;** Dampier Archipelago and Montebellos / Barrow Island MP's. Major task for Karratha's Island Reserves Officer. The Montebellos plan is nearly complete, Dampier Archipelago is less so, due to the more complex set of issues and stakeholders.

### Islands.

- Removal of rats and cats from Montebellos, and establishment of populations of Rufous Hare-wallaby (*Lagorchestes hirsutus*) and Shark Bay Mouse (*Pseudomys fieldi*).
- Improved and formalised quarantine procedures for island nature reserves hosting petroleum industry infrastructure.
- Finally begun a formal monitoring program of the mammal fauna of Barrow Island. Hope to see this expanded to include reptiles.

**IBRA Biodiversity Audits.** A very valuable process for the Region, forcing us to synthesise a great deal of knowledge and information, much held in the heads and hearts of local officers. The time involved was enormous, involving far too many evenings and weekends.

## Major Challenges in Nature Conservation, Pilbara Region, 2002

**Aboriginal relations.** Dealing with Aboriginal groups, especially under Native Title arrangements, is extremely time consuming and can be very frustrating. Currently, the Pilbara is dealing with Abl people over three areas, and only two of those in any depth. If all areas of estate were being handled in a way similar to Millsstream (currently under management planning), we would have only just enough staff to deal with that issue alone, and nothing else. The time and effort required cannot be over-stated. Dedicated full time positions are essential if this matter develops any further.

**Industrial development.** The Pilbara is hosting a large number of major resource developments projects. Dealing with the environmental protection issues rising from these developments is a major issue. These include

- Infrastructure corridors – every developer wants its own infrastructure, including roads, rail, power, water etc etc. This places direct pressure on conservation lands, including both our major national parks. More significantly, areas like the Burrup Peninsula simply do not have room. Despite this, Government has pursued a first-in, best dressed policy.
- Stygofauna. The issue of stygofauna has proven difficult for industry. This is a 'growth area' in both concern and listed species (State and Commonwealth). We believe that nature conservation issues may be lost in any push for a political solution to stygofauna issues.

**Remote sensing.**

- Fire. We have the tools to begin understanding exactly what is happening with fire. We now need better quality data, to apply this meaningfully on a local level. We may have to fine tune broad-scale data to our own requirements. The challenge is to be able to apply this approach both prescriptively and predictably.
- Ecosystem health. We now need to try to link ground monitoring ('ground-truthing') with the outcomes generated by treatment of satellite data.

**2015 pastoral lease re-negotiation.** This is a matter which deserves the highest level of consideration. It is an opportunity to rationalise land-use boundaries on a grand scale, to re-vitalise pastoral leases, and to organise a comprehensive conservation estate simultaneously. This will need considerable political will. CALM's input to the process should be based on the best available information and science, and be more than just minor boundary rationalisations. This is a major opportunity for positive outcomes.

**Pilbara Regional Survey.** This may happen, one day. The Region is committed to putting in resources, if and when the program begins.

**Sea Turtle Program.** The sea turtle program will be reviewed in the near future, and future work performed under a more formal program. Regional staff have received very little guidance, and almost no feedback on the program so far. Industry participants are concerned that they have received almost nothing back for their input over many years. A meaningful program must contain meaningful outputs to participants.

**Funding and resources.** Staff in the remote regions appreciate the efforts made elsewhere in the Department in insulating us to some degree from the financial straights we find ourselves in. However, we need the resources to do our work. Our workload continues to expand, and resources keep shrinking.

- External funding. Maintaining external funding will be essential, but we need contingencies for when external funds fail. It may be a 'do nothing' option, but we need to consider the options.
- Land acquisitions. Although some new acquisitions gain funding for management, major areas of conservation estate (eg Rudall River) get zero management under present resourcing.
- Weeds and ferals. Managing weeds and feral animals is a major issue for us, because it takes real money to do so. We cannot cover our obligations by throwing salary money at it. Helicopters, shooter, herbicides all cost real money, and that just isn't available.

## Nature Conservation Output Achievements 2000-2001 Goldfields Region

### Background

- ◆ Goldfields Region comprises almost a third of WA.
- ◆ Over 8 million hectares of Conservation Estate.
- ◆ 10.8 FTE's
- ◆ Budget of around 1 million of which 70% of is NC.

Goldfields Region like most other regions has undergone significant change this year.

It was a major re-building year for the region,

- ◆ restructuring of the region in line with Departmental changes
- ◆ replacement of Senior Staff (Regional Leader for Nature Conservation, Regional Ecologist, Regional Leader PVS),
- ◆ Re-establishing the permanent Regional Reserves Officer position.
- ◆ Implementation of Service Provider Agreements
- ◆ Moving office and establishing a 'shop front'.

### Major Achievements for the Goldfields Region by Sub-Outputs

#### 1. Inventory of States Natural Biodiversity.

This is one of the priorities for the Region

- ◆ Goongarrie Biological Survey – 2 surveys (Spring and Autumn)
- ◆ Preparation and commencement of biological survey at Lorna Glen
- ◆ IBRA sub-region biodiversity audit.
- ◆ Opportunistic surveys, e.g. wetlands after significant rainfall events. Eg. Boondaroo

#### 2. Terrestrial and Marine Conservation Reserve System

A high Regional priority (acquisition and management)

- ◆ Increasing comprehensive adequate and representative (CAR) reserve system an (additional 900,000 ha) over the past three years. This will continue.
  - ◆ GMS additions to conservation estate in the Goldfields. Including some in the Sandstone Shire (previously Midwest).
  - ◆ CALM Act section 16a Agreements
  - ◆ Goldfields Woodland National Park Conservation Park and Conservation Reserve. (33920).
- ◆ Reserve Management
  - ◆ All reserves have active management to varying degrees. Priorities;
  - ◆ Rowles Lagoon Management Plan finalisation and implementation. Establishment of a Management Advisory Group

- ◆ Wanjarri NR Management Plan implementation
- ◆ Goldfields Regional Plan implementation
- ◆ Fire – commenced Regional Fire Review (major threatening process).
- ◆ Aboriginal liaison and 'joint' management of draft Goldfields Regional Management Plan

### **3. Off-Reserve Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use**

- ◆ Central Ranges IPA
- ◆ Spinifex Land Agreement in the Great Victoria Desert
- ◆ Negotiations with Aboriginal Groups (ILC, GLSC) regarding conservation on land held by them.
- ◆ Mining companies (WMC, Anaconda, Portman)

### **4. Recovery of Threatened species and communities and amelioration of Threatening Processes**

#### *Flora*

- ◆ DRF data collation and field inspections
- ◆ Initial plans for the development of a Regional DRF Management Plan

#### *Fauna*

- ◆ Operation Warru Warburton
- ◆ Mulgara Project NECF
- ◆ Recovery Team meeting and actions
- ◆ NHT Bilby Conservation Project
- ◆ Cat Control Work – Gibson Desert NR and Wanjarri NR
- ◆ Contribution to regional Feral Predator Baiting Programs (primarily wild dogs) in pastoral areas with targeted activities on reserves. (eg. mallee fowl Goongarrie)

#### *Mining* – Region very proactive in this area.

- ◆ Management of exploration on Conservation Reserves
- ◆ Management of Active Mining on conservation Reserves
- ◆ Input into Mining Proposals and PER's.

### **5. Partnerships, Public Appreciation, Compliance and Support**

#### *Aboriginal Liaison*

- ◆ MOU signed with the Goldfields Land and Sea Council. Implementation under way.
- ◆ Central Ranges IPA
- ◆ Field trips through the Gibson Desert with Ngaanyatjarra people
- ◆ Meetings with Native Title Claimant Groups

#### *Mining Companies*

- ◆ MOU with WMC
- ◆ Developing agreement with Anaconda linked to Regional Biodiversity outcomes, which were included in the approval of the Mt Margaret PER.
- ◆ Discussions with Portman where conservation outcomes will be linked to PER

### *Other Groups*

- ◆ CMAE – Research orientated regional group links with Agwest basing all their arid land research and monitoring in this group.
- ◆ LCD's – most ineffectual with decline in pastoral industry
- ◆ Local Environmental Groups
- ◆ Volunteers

### **Challenges For Nature Conservation Output in the Goldfields region**

- 1. Managing increasing areas of conservation estate, meeting demands and expectations of the community, other stakeholders and the Department with minimal resources.**
  - ◆ Increasing use of partnerships/sponsorship (CMAE, mining companies, aboriginal groups, regional bodies, other agencies) Education institutions
  - ◆ Identifying and focusing on priorities.
  - ◆ Being able to say no.
  - ◆ Increasing resources, reallocation of resources. Is the balance right in the Department?
  - ◆ In the absence of DEP and Waters and Rivers at a Regional Level, we are often the Conservation/Environmental agency for the Goldfields on all issues. We are the local experts.
- 2. Fire - Changed fire regimes is one of the most significant threatening process on biodiversity in the desert regions.**
  - ◆ Complete Regional review
  - ◆ Seek appropriate resourcing and funding for fire management, research, planning and prescribed burning
  - ◆ Continue to develop understanding of fire ecology and impact on biodiversity.
  - ◆ Seek involvement of Aboriginal communities.
- 3. Across Ouput challenges – need to continue to work cooperatively with PVS to achieve regional works programs and achieve regional goals.**
  - ◆ Limited resources in the region and vast distances between reserves, all staff must be able to provide information, respond to issues while they are in the field.
  - ◆ Issues regarding management planning, aboriginal liaison while these come under PVS output, the major emphasis is on Nature Conservation Outcomes in the Goldfields Region.
  - ◆ Management of GMS purchased stations.
- 4. Conservation outside of Reservation.**
  - ◆ NRM – what does it mean for the rangelands.
  - ◆ Significant opportunities exist with mining companies and aboriginal groups.
  - ◆ Ecological Management Units. (EMU)
  - ◆ Section 16a Agreements

## 5. Aboriginal issues

- ◆ New direction from the Government and the Department. This direction may also cause some problems with relationships with other community groups.
- ◆ Joint management, MOU's – Increased expectations with many of the expectations above what our resources can deliver.
- ◆ With the new approach and Departmental recognition of Claimant groups comes increased expectation and demands for Traineeships and meaningful employment of Aboriginal people.

## 6. Biodiversity conservation assessment and monitoring

- ◆ Gaining a full appreciation of status of rare flora and fauna in the Goldfields Region.
- ◆ To eventually develop a comprehensive inventory of flora and fauna across all conservation reserves.
- ◆ Developing GIS modeling for fauna and flora distribution – long term goal and lots of work to do before this can eventuate.
- ◆ Improving regional and departmental data sets.
- ◆ Monitoring impact of management actions on biodiversity – are we doing the right things?
- ◆ Securing sufficient resources to instigating management activities that will mitigate threatening processes.

## 7. Liaison

- ◆ Selling the Departments message and involvement in the development of a CAR reserve system across the rangelands.
- ◆ Continue to develop strong community links.
- ◆ Further develop relationships with Aboriginal groups.

## 8. Mining

- ◆ Achieving Regional biodiversity outcomes through negotiations with mining companies (Anaconda, Portman, WMC)
- ◆ State Government Policy?
- ◆ Portman expansion proposals and impact on rare flora and the proposed extensions to Mt Manning Range Nature Reserve.

Nature Conservation Meeting  
Midwest Region Major Achievements 2000 - 2001

Initiation of Natural Diversity Recovery Catchment between Buntine- Marchagee.

- 180 000 ha
- over 100 landholders
- CSIRO Focal species project
- Employment of Recovery Catchment Officer, Initial set up stage including developing criteria for success, linking with other recovery catchments and data collection.

Pilot pig control program on Conservation Reserves in Geraldton area.

Traditionally small numbers of pigs confined to reserves and private property near the North West Coastal Highway and Kalbarri NP. Explosion in numbers and range - 100 trapped around group of NR to north of Geraldton, 100's poisoned at NR's approximately 80 km from coast. Possibility of introduction by hunters including transport to State Forest areas from the Midwest.

Jurien Bay Marine Park proposal progression to Indicative Management Plan.

Shark Bay Marine Park staffing completed.

Appointment of 2 marine officers and purchase of new boat to allow for effective operation in the Shark Bay Marine Park.

Western Shield entry into the Moora District

- Sponsorship via Tiwest
- Nambung, Badgingarra NP, Number of Nature Reserves, Defence Training area, Tiwest Conservation Park, UCL
- 140 474 ha

Western Shield reintroductions onto Kalbarri National Park - Woylies and Chuditch.

Project Eden reintroductions onto Peron Peninsula - Banded Hare-wallabies and Mala to join Woylies, Greater Bilbies and Mallee fowl.

Purchases of pastoral leases ongoing.

#### Major Issues

Budget issues - positions with no operational funding or in some cases salary.

Future funding of Flora Conservation officers in Moora and Geraldton.

Aboriginal hunting on conservation lands.

Role of Regional NRM groups and the resources required to deal with issues arising.

UCL in Moora District with *Banksia hookeriana* harvesting areas undergoing exploration and prescribed burning by FESA.

Role of District and Regional Staff in assessment of PER's etc, particularly in relation to mining exploration, requires clarification.

### **Wheatbelt Achievements 00-01**

- Development of a holistic approach to nature conservation
- Continued progress with target landscapes
- Progress with Recovery Catchments
- Purchases/rehabilitation under Crown Reserves Program
- Western Shield/threatened flora management

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### **Wheatbelt bummers 00-01**

- Drought and vegetation effects
- Threatened fauna decline
- Loss of staff and related issues
- The NRM blanc mange
- Inadequate management of damage caused by threatened and priority fauna

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### **Wheatbelt challenges 01-02**

- Recruit and hold staff
- Develop and implement viable technical solutions to NRM problems eg, salt harvesting, oil mallees, Search project
- Increase delivery into target landscapes
- Threatened species and communities projects on more strategic footing

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# SOUTH COAST REGION NATURE CONSERVATION PROGRAM 2000-2001

## HIGHLIGHTS

### THREATENED FAUNA RECOVERY

**Gilbert's Potoroo:** After a long wait another young Gilbert's Potoroo was conceived and both in captivity at Two Peoples Bay. This was very exciting news as it was the first birth in the captive colony for several years. Even more importantly it is a female and continues to do well.

A second colony of captive Gilbert's Potoroo is being formed at Perth Zoo. As well as providing the additional security of a second captive group, the Zoo will focus on assisted reproduction strategies to try to improve breeding of this difficult species in captivity. The Zoo recently completed their potoroo facility.

A Friends of Gilbert's Potoroo recently formed in Albany to provide additional support and community focus for the recovery program.

**Noisy Scrub-bird:** The establishment of a population of Noisy Scrub-birds near the type locality in the Darling Range continued during 2000-01. Ten males from the Two Peoples Bay area were released at two sites in July 2000. Another 112 birds from the Mt Many peaks area were released at three new sites within the Alcoa Australia mining area at Willowdale. Survival of singing males at the two previous sites has been very high.

A total count of the Albany Management Zone population of Noisy Scrub birds and Western Bristlebirds was carried out this year. As well as providing data on the population trends, the results of this work will enable the effects of the December 2000 wildfire on the populations of these threatened species to be quantified.

**Dibbler:** Trapping, fire management and fox baiting occurred at Peniup (proposed Nature Reserve) ahead of the translocation of Dibbler into this site in November. The Dibblers were bred in captivity at Perth Zoo from animals originally brought in from Fitzgerald River National Park.

In the Esperance District Birds Australia, CALM and volunteers conducted another survey for the Endangered Ground Parrot in Cape Arid National Park. No Ground Parrots were detected.

During the year a number of Cape Barren Geese were collected from Cull Island for a Captive Breeding Program.

### THREATENED FLORA

The Albany District contains 72 species of threatened flora spread across many parks and reserves as well as private property. As part of the Albany district Threatened Flora Program a total of 40 species were monitored in the District this year. In addition 30 Priority 1 and 2 species were surveyed. During these surveys 40 new populations or sub-populations, were located.

Two additional species in the Albany District have been recommended for ranking as Critically Endangered. Two others have been recommended for downgrading from Critically Endangered and four to be removed from the list.

A long-term project to monitor the Critically Endangered Stirling Range Montane Community commenced in January with the assistance of Colin Yates of CALM Science. This project aims to study the fire ecology of the community and the impact of repeated fires, investigate the reproductive biology of the community and the impact of the Critically Endangered within the community and the impact of herbivore (rabbit) grazing.

A Stirling Range Montane Heath Recovery Team was established this year as a separate entity from the Albany District Threatened Flora Recovery Team to oversee work implementing the IRP for this threatened Ecological Community.

Two new populations of DRF *Lambertia echinata* were found in Cape Le Grand National Park. A new population of *Daviesia microcarpa* was (DRF) found near Norseman.

### **FIRE MANAGEMENT**

The Albany District experienced two major wildfires during 2000-0. In both of these fires threatened species were at risk. During suppression actions South Coast Region and Albany District staff were able to provide considerable information about the presence of threatened species for the Planning Team. This was particularly useful for planning the operation of water bomber aircraft.

In the Stirling Range two separate wildfires in October 2000 – one lightning strike and one deliberately lit – burnt 30 000 ha. Despite the efforts of the water bombers, the fire in the eastern part of the Park affected populations of 6 Critically Endangered flora taxa and 19 DRF in total as well as impacting on much of the Stirling Range Montane Heath community. Several populations of the Endangered Moggridgea spider were also affected.

At Two Peoples Bay in December 2000 a fire caused by lightning burnt 6000 ha in Two Peoples Bay Nature Reserve and adjoining reserves. The fire removed habitat for approximately 150 Noisy Scrub-birds and similar numbers of Western Bristlebirds. Three DRF species were also affected. The fire came within a few hundred metres of the Gilbert's Potoroo captive breeding facility and the Visitor Centre. The low fuel buffer, which has been maintained for many years but never tested in a wildfire, was crucial in preventing the fire's spread to the Mt Gardner area, which contains the only wild population of Gilbert's Potoroo.

### **WESTERN SHIELD**

As in previous years Western Shield program in the South Coast Region resulted in baits distributed over 1 112 953 hectares (Esperance – 251 776 ha, Katanning 125 044 ha, Walpole 224 401 ha and Albany 511 732 ha).

Aerial baiting targets in the South Coast Region were reviewed this year. At this point in time all of the current baiting targets have been retained. A comprehensive review of ground baiting operations was initiated for the 13 ground-baited western shield targets in the Albany District. The review resulted in the production of detailed ground baiting prescriptions which have been forwarded to Environmental Protection Branch as a recommended standard.

### **WESTERN SHIELD FAUNA MONITORING**

The continuing recovery of native animals in the absence of foxes continues to be demonstrated at a number of monitoring sites in the Albany District. Significant captures during the spring program included 11 Dibblers at the Twertup site and another at Moir Track. Both sites are within the Fitzgerald River National Park. Other highlights of the monitoring program included the appearance of Chuditch and Heath Rats at Moir Track and of Quokka for the first time at the Mt James Track site in the Stirling Ranges.

## **LEEUEWIN ECO-VOYAGES**

Each year, in partnership with the STS Leeuwin, South Coast staff provide on-board interpretation and shore-based activities during 12 day Ecovoyages between Esperance and Albany. Areas visited include Middle, Doubtful and Cheyne Islands as well as a number of on-shore locations. This year the partnership won a British Airways "Tourism For Tomorrow" award from a field of international nominations.

## **ISLANDS**

The first stage of a Coasts and Clean Seas funded project on Seabird Threat Abatement on islands near Albany was completed in 2000. The results showed a significant decline in the number of nesting burrows in areas of introduced weeds especially Arum Lillies.

In Esperance the Bay of Isles Aboriginal Corporation commenced boxthorn eradication program on Cull Island utilizing a Coastcare Grant. A Lotteries Grant enabled the Esperance Bird Observers Group to carry out a bird survey of 15 selected islands in the Recherche Archipelago.

**Woody Island:** Regional Bushranger Cadet Camp held on the Island. The licensees have upgraded fire equipment (e.g. standpipes and an additional water tank) in the concession area, constructed new camp kitchen/barbecue area.

## **PHOSPHITE PROGRAM**

Three populations of Critically Endangered flora in the Stirling Range National Park were aerially sprayed with phosphite during March and April as part of the on-going program to protect threatened flora in this Park which contains a significant proportion of WA's floral diversity. An additional eight sites with CR flora outside the SRNP were also sprayed. The 35 ha Bell Track site in the Fitzgerald River National Park was also sprayed twice this year in an effort to prevent the spread of the infection within the park. Phosphite spraying also occurred in Cape Le Grand and Cape Arid

A phosphite trial was initiated in an attempt to determine the relative differences between spraying phosphite at various application rates, number of applications and season of spray. While the trial has recently been concluded the results are yet to be collated.

## **RESERVE MANAGEMENT**

As an aid to the management of around 60 nature reserves a draft Reserve Directory for Albany District Reserves has been produced using the CALM Operational Graphics. Final production is planned for August 2001.

Esperance Coastcare Group carried out a survey of natural and cultural resources in nature reserves between Quagi and Quallilup Lake.

In partnership with Bay of Isles Aboriginal Corporation a clean up of the Israelite Bay area was instigated again utilizing a Coastcare Grant.

Carried out post fire rehabilitation work in Stokes N.P, Helms T.R. and Nuytsland, Lake Shaster and Woody Lakes Nature Reserves.

## **WETLANDS**

Lake Gore Wetland System listed as a Ramsar "Wetland of International

Importance'.

A 403 ha farm adjoining Woody Lake Nature Reserve has been purchased by CALM using SAP funds.

### **Lake Warden Catchment Recovery Project**

Over the last year on ground works have been implemented throughout the Lake Warden catchment and on the Lake Warden wetlands. The on ground works are the result of the Catchment planning process undertaken during the 1999-2000 financial year.

Three Green Corps teams have worked on the project over the last twelve months. Two of the Green Corps teams were involved in the Catchment project as a 12 week main project and the third team as a four week minor project over summer. The summer minor project was also assisted by a Conservation Volunteer team.

We have conducted a number of workshops throughout the year ranging from wetland rehabilitation, sedges and rushes, direct seeding and canoe days on the lakes. One of the most interesting promotional opportunities for the project was during this summers Leeuwin Eco voyage from Esperance to Albany. Interest in the project and salinity expressed by the passengers and crew was overwhelming. All work shops received an excellent response

### **WEED CONTROL**

This year saw the beginning of the strategic approach to weed control in the Porongurup National Park. The threat which weed invasion poses to DRF *Apium prostratum subsp. phillipii* resulted in a readjustment of priorities.

Bridal Creeper and Love Grass spraying was carried out in Stokes National Park.

**NATURE CONSERVATION OUTPUT PLANNING MEETING.  
4 - 5 DECEMBER 2001.**

**SWAN REGION - MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2000/01.**

**TERRESTRIAL AND MARINE CONSERVATION RESERVE SYSTEM**

44% of region nature conservation budget.

**Existing reserves:**

|                      |     |            |                     |
|----------------------|-----|------------|---------------------|
| Nature Reserves:     | 129 | 50 589 ha  | (Median size 69 ha) |
| Conservation Estate: | 185 | 204 907 ha |                     |
| TOTAL ESTATE:        |     | 730 143 ha |                     |

**Reserve management:** Works done - 44% of budget.  
near urban reserves, high use and interest

**Fire management and control:** 30% of Reserve Mgt, 11% of Total budget.  
107 wildfires on conservation areas (size range 0.1 - 1200 ha).  
Additional 302 fires. Swan Region had 409 of the 695 fires for the State.

**Wetlands in Urban situations:** Nutrient, midge, mosquito and development issues.

**Revegetation:** major project at Kwinana, Gnangara Park, other reserves.

**Human use on marine reserves:** 7 day patrols, sanctuary zones, Managing commercial operations.

**Management Plans:** Carnac Island draft, final for Shoalwater Bay Islands.

**New CAR reserves:** Bush Forever/Bushplan: major strategic planning for Metropolitan Area. 3-fold increase in area of nature reserves. Machinery of Govt recommends Bushplan to be managed by Department.

**Purchase/acquisition of new areas.** (NHT and SAP funded)  
Including significant new areas: - populations of DRF (including CR), TEC, translocation site for Western Swamp Tortoise.

## RECOVERY OF THREATENED SPECIES AND COMMUNITIES AND AMELIORATION OF THREATENING PROCESSES

37% of region nature conservation budget, but only 25% of this (9.5% of total nature conservation budget) on species/community recovery actions.

| <b>Conservation status:</b> | <b>Threatened</b> | <b>Priority</b> |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Fauna:                      | 18                | 23              |
| Flora:                      | 54                | 235             |
| TECs:                       | 21                | ?               |

### **Flora Changes to listing (2001):**

- 3 new DRF, 2 species removed from DRF (to P4)
- 29 new Priority flora.
- 39 reduced Priority flora, including 24 deleted.

Significant finds including new large populations of 2 critical DRF.  
GIS - using DEFL data directly linked to Arcview.

### **Threatened Ecological Communities:**

- 10 Critical TECs. (34 occurrences, under 900ha total)
- 4 Endangered TECs, 7 Vulnerable TECs.

### **Recovery of threatened species and ecological communities**

Regional Flora plan nearly finished - will be on web and CDROM

Interim Recovery Plans written for Critical TECs, and flora. Priority recovery actions, otherwise reactive management.

Translocation of Black-flanked rock wallaby to Avon Valley NP.

### **Western Swamp Tortoise:**

Purchase of new reserve at Mogumber suitable for WST translocation.  
Major revegetation works on new section of Ellen Brook Nature Reserve for habitat, rat control program, deliberately lit wildfires, EPP.

### **Yanchep Tuart Root Mat Communities and Crystal Cave Amphipods:**

Dry climatic conditions - decline of cave streams. All root mat streams now dry in summer. Requiring supplemental watering and constructed pools.

### **Amelioration of threats:**

Western Shield, Weed management (Yanchep NP and John Forest NP release of bridal creeper biological control agents).

Drought: cave communities, tuarts, wandoo.

State Salinity Strategy - have (unfunded) Recovery Catchment.

#### **Development and other human activities:**

Significant amount and number of development application and similar assessments (300 - 400 pa). Most of these impact on conservation estate, or high conservation values (TECs, DRF etc).

The coastal plain is cleared to a similar extent as the wheatbelt, but clearing of remnant vegetation for urban development continues at significant rate - and is supported by agencies and community.

**Mining management:** reduction in funding to manage

#### **OFF-RESERVE CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE**

8% of region nature conservation budget.

##### **Natural resource management plans and strategies**

Significant amount and number of contacts/meetings etc.

##### **Ecologically sustainable utilisation of native wildlife species**

Wildflower industry = 45% of off-reserve activity large numbers of pickers, less resource this year. Reduction in management funding....

#### **PARTNERSHIPS, APPRECIATION, COMPLIANCE AND SUPPORT**

11% of region nature conservation budget.

##### **Effective external working relationships**

Significant amount and number of contacts/meetings etc.

##### **Public understanding, appreciation and support**

Schools program and education = 32% of "partnerships" sub-output.

#### **INVENTORY OF THE STATE'S NATURAL BIODIVERSITY**

0% of region nature conservation budget.

Mainly carried out by Science Division and other organisations.  
Region provided information, support, direction relevant to our needs.

### CORPORATE SERVICES

21% of region nature conservation budget.

Increases to GIS capability - eg DRF.

| Sub output.                 | % of total | % (roll-up admin) |
|-----------------------------|------------|-------------------|
| Reserve Mgt:                | 35         | 44                |
| Threatened stuff:           | 29         | 37                |
| Off-Reserve & Partnerships: | 15         | 19                |
| Corporate:                  | 21         |                   |

## SWAN REGION - FUTURE CHALLENGES IN 2001-2006.

### Inventory/Research:

Very little marine research.

Still much to learn about biodiversity - even near Perth.

### Estate Management:

Urban-periurban context of a lot of our estate (small resource hungry).

Many neighbours to our estate, high level of service expected.

New conservation estate, without resources to manage.

Responsibility for Bushplan.

Management plans written without the additional resources.

Need for more operationally focussed staff in NC division.

### Threatened stuff:

Large number of TECs, flora and fauna.

Effort focussed on Critically Endangered.

Other species/communities is reactive only.

Need to allocate increased resources to non-Criticals.

Region Threatened Flora officer not funded beyond 2000.

Clearing of remnant vegetation - large number of statutory planning issues

Long term aim to get WAPC and local authorities to manage.

Opportunity to promote biodiversity conservation.

Ferals - beyond Western Shield, is reactive for other species and areas.

Weeds - statutory requirements and if others are doing works

Mining - required by statutory requirements

Climate change/Drought impacts (caves, wetlands, tuarts),

### Off-reserve conservation management, and Partnerships:

Large population, 1.4 Million of WA population of 1.8M.

2/3 of politicians, 41 LGAs.

High numbers of public contact, correspondence, ministerials, local members and local authorities to service.

High expectation of level of public input, and of service.

Pressure and demands on the urban estate,

Not matched by the resources available.

Become very reactive

How to make/progress Biodiversity Conservation outcomes.

### Organisational issues:

Funding - insufficient.

Program leaders as managers verses doing the work.

Focus on budget outcomes - coming in under budget.

Determining priorities - saying NO.

Large % of NC funds are establishment etc.

Reactive nature of work (including wildfires in summer) limits strategic ability.

Limit to ability to actually influence works/budget (historical budgets, fire model etc).

Divisional restructure (SFM to become part of NC?) size and roles of output.

Service from division - need clear paths to seek advice.

The lack of training in the NC output

Need to plan and provide strategic training for NC staff

Career structure

## Warren Region

- Biodiversity Inventory and Conservation Assessment

### Achievements

- Establishment of post-fire invertebrate plots in Nuyts Wilderness
- Compilation of biological inventory in the eastern Nature Reserves

### Challenges

- To understand the Department's needs in this area.
- Assemble all known current knowledge in a user friendly environment for local usage.

- Conservation Reserve System

### Achievements

- Provided background information for the development of new reserves.
- Established post-fire monitoring plots for several priority listed species of flora.
- Monitored Rare and priority flora populations post-fire.
- Monitored impacts of prescribed burning in the tingle forest and reported findings to the Conservation Commission.
- Carried out post fire rehabilitation in the Nuyts Wilderness, including quokka habitat protection, increased fox baiting and feral cat control.
- Established numerous post fire monitoring plots within the Nuyts Wilderness and set up photo monitoring points.
- Carried out Western Bristlebird monitoring post fire in Nuyts Wilderness.
- Continued to provide advice to Fire Management Services, Parks and Visitor Services and Forest Products Commission with regards to prescribed burning, harvesting, site developments.
- Provided input for public consultation phase of burning program and being represented on working groups for sensitive burns.
- Postponed and/or modified prescribed burns and identified concerns with regards to Nature Conservation requirements.

### Challenges

- Drafting Interim Management Guidelines for all Reserves without Management Plans
- Implementation of Marine Reserves.
- Needs to be a link between the planning processes for marine and terrestrial reserve systems. ie Plans are currently developed independent of each other, however there is possibly a need to consider issues within each plan that have the potential to impact on the other. eg Recreational opportunities identified in a terrestrial reserve plan may have detrimental effects upon a marine reserve.
- Increased expectations for advice and direction with regards to prescribed burning and prescribed burning objectives when there is no specific direction from Nature Cons Output.
- Need to identify a process to report achievements.

- Off Reserve Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use

#### Achievements

- Provided advice to Corporate Executive with regards to flora harvesting and other potential issues within the proposed Walpole Wilderness area.
- Provided advice to Bushcare Officers with regards to flora and fauna.
- Licensing and liaison with private property owners with regards to native flora cultivation and damage permits for native animals.
- Assisted private property owners in a co-operative approach to rabbit control.
- Provided advice to private property owners with regards to *Phytophthora* management.
- Released Bridal Creeper Leaf Hoppers on Water and Rivers Commission Reserve.
- Carried out weed control on Shire land on a recoup basis.
- Carried out weed control on private property adjoining Department managed lands on a recoup basis.
- Carried out rare flora and *Phytophthora* surveys for external agencies.
- Continued to manage the flora industry and conducted research on species response to harvesting.

#### Challenges

- Lack of any standards or guidelines as to how surveys should be conducted for external agencies, what level of information should be supplied, how it should be supplied, what their responsibilities/requirements are, how much they should be charged and the inconsistencies between Districts and Regions with regards to this work.

- Threatened Species and Ecological Communities

#### Achievements

- Establishment of post-fire invertebrate plots in Nuyts Wilderness
- Compilation of biological inventory in the eastern Nature Reserves
- Accessed funding for purchase and construction of a fence for a severely pig damaged *Reedia spathacea* population and have begun construction.
- Continued to build a knowledge base on rare and priority listed flora locations and species response to disturbance.
- Maintained a feral pig control program in and adjacent to areas of high conservation value.
- Established flora plots in the "Showgrounds" grassland community to establish knowledge base and to assist in progressing possible listing as a threatened ecological community.
- Continued to expand upon District phosphite program.
- Installed effective access prevention to areas of DRA that are part of governments proposed 330 000ha Walpole Wilderness.
- Accessed funding for shadowless photography to enable initial broadscale *Phytophthora* interpretation of Threatened Community (Mt Lindesay)
  
- In conjunction with Dale Roberts and students from UWA, located 11 new populations of *Spicospina flammocaerulea* (Sunset Frog) and developed an effective working relationship.
- Completed re-introductions of fauna into selected sites across the Region and carried out post release monitoring.
- Prepared Tammar Wallaby and Woylie TP's for re-introduction into proposed new parks.
- Quantified the need for additional fox baiting to protect populations of Quokka, Western Bristlebird and other fauna as a result of major disturbance.
- Active involvement in Recovery Teams.
- Increased biological knowledge for at least 10 rare and priority flora.
- Assisted with the deletion of at least 3 species from the priority flora list.
- Preparation of District Rare Flora monitoring plan.

#### Challenges

- Developing consistency between Districts / Regions as to how rare and priority species are managed, with regards to applying to take and conditions associated with such, in operational activities.
- Policy Statements state that staff will receive training. Need to identify training needs and implement them.
- Many Nature Conservation Administration Instructions require updating.
- Rabbits are becoming an increasing problem and may be affecting certain rare or priority species. Horses, cattle and deer are also causing concerns.
- Finalise the Wildlife Management Program for Declared Rare and Poorly Known Flora of the Warren Region.
- Develop a Regional plan for fauna re-introductions, in association with other interest groups.

#### • Partnerships, Public Appreciation, Compliance and Support

##### Achievements

- As part of community, developed and implemented a Weed Strategy for the Manjimup and Denmark Shires, in partnership with other agencies.
- As part of local weed control programs, encouraged local schools to raise Bridal Creeper Leaf Hoppers and involved them in the release.
- Conducted school talks.
- Fauna monitoring with the community including Great Marsupial Night Stalk, owl and frog surveys.
- Conducted local community workshops
- Responded to general public inquiries on a regular basis.
- Partnership with Conservation Volunteers Australia with Green Corps and Green Reserve Teams.
- Membership of LCDC including Ribbons of Blue.
- Provided advice to adjoining landholders on Rare Flora and *Phytophthora* matters.
- As part of Western Shield fauna monitoring involve schools and universities. For example Bushranger Reserve management and fauna monitoring in Perup Nature Reserve and Valley of the Giants.
- Participated in co-operative pig control program.
- Completed in excess of 70 flora searches for external agencies.
- Raising the level of Nature Conservation knowledge within our workforce.

##### Challenges

- Raising nature conservation awareness in the general community.
- Increase incorporation of volunteers into nature conservation projects.

#### Other Challenges

- Assess training needs and provide identified training.
- Need common language.
- Establish internal lines of effective communication.
- Identification of community needs/knowledge.
- Establish links from the politics of conservation to the field.
- Inform peak conservation groups with actions on the ground.
- Managing year round pressures on the environment.
- Need to minimise disease impact on the environment.
- Need to increase our knowledge on conservation issues and management.

## Major Nature Conservation Achievements in SW Region in the past 12 months.

### Major Work Areas / Resource Commitments

- 1) Threatened Species Management
  - a) Recovery Plan and IRP implementation
    - Translocation Success
      - Ironstone species – *5 CR sp, 1200 plants*
      - Rulingia -
      - Geocrinia vitellina – *1 new pop ?*
    - Recovery Actions
      - Euc. phylacis – *canker response*
      - Weed control – *TEC's*
      - Regeneration Burning – *Orchids x2 (Cal.busselliana, D.confluens) Rulingia*
      - Protection Burning - *NSB*
  - b) Monitoring/Survey
    - New flora pop's – *5 new pops of 3 new CR sp.*
    - Definition of frog pop's – *Lineal monitoring*
  - c) Processes
    - Ringtail Management and EPBC Act
- 2) Land Purchases/Acquisitions
  - Location 83, Bsn wetland buffer strips
- 3) Estate Management
  - Tuart Forest Regeneration – *38ha planted, 150ha heaped*
  - Tuart Forest Arum Weed Control – *~400 ha*
  - Wetland Fringing Vegetation Regeneration – *trials commenced*
- 4) New Technology
  - DGPS Beacon receivers and PDA Dataloggers.

## Yr 2002 Challenges for NC in South West Region

- 1) Budget Reduction and Staff losses, Staff Attitudes
  - 11 from across the region, 3 P24 operational staff.
  - "Greening" of AWU and other staff.
- 2) Land Use Planning
  - SW Capes Parks Mgmt Plan, Tuart Forest Mgmt Plan, New Parks Planning processes. – More regional & district input foreseen.
  - Off reserve – increasing resource developments, subdivisions etc involving threatened species.
- 3) Public Liaison/Interaction
  - Land For Wildlife, Covenants, Sanctuaries on pp.  
(time consuming, not strategic)
- 4) Achieving Strategic NC Outcomes in the new parks.
- 5) Maintaining & enhancing corporate and local information systems.
- 6) Pig Control
  - state wide coordination, develop cost efficient control methods.
- 7) Acquiring pastoral and grazing leases for conservation in the region.
- 8) NRM based regional organisations.
  - achieving useful and effective outcomes for nature conservation. Level of departmental participation required.
- 9) Native Title Issues
  - re: vesting of Bsn Wetlands, concerns about the process and resources required.
- 10) Habitat loss – Ringtail Possum
  - maintaining viable population in an urban setting.



Department of Conservation and  
Land Management  
Government of Western Australia

## Science Division

*"Discovering the nature of WA"*

### Science Division Mission:

- To provide up-to-date and scientifically sound information to uphold effective conservation and land management in Western Australia.

### Broad Strategies

- Consult to determine priorities
- Secure resources to deliver services
- Assemble outcome-based teams
- Collaborate with managers
- Form partnerships
- Keep abreast of world developments
- Communicate, promote and market science

### Broad Strategies

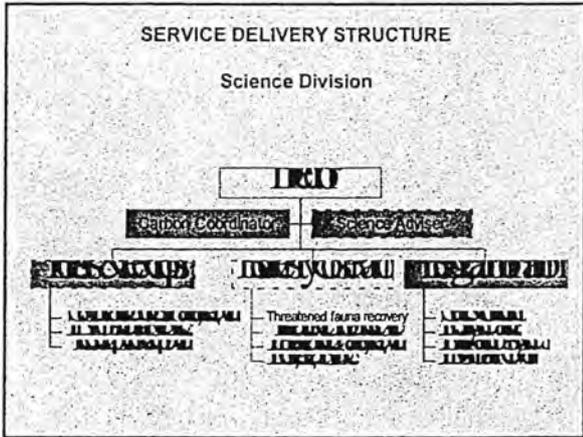
- Standards and quality control
- Balanced program
- Performance management
- Commit to staff well-being

### Setting Priorities

- Internal workshops
- Output programs
- External processes

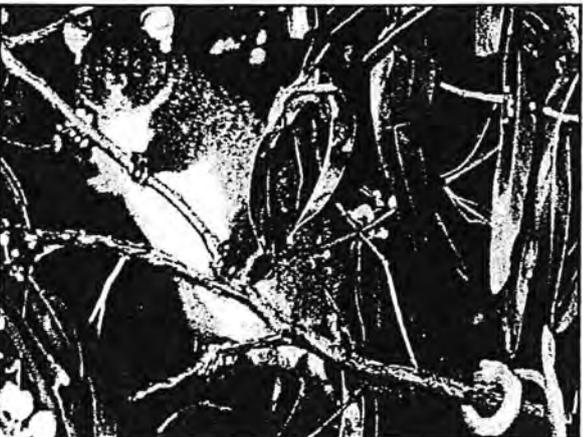
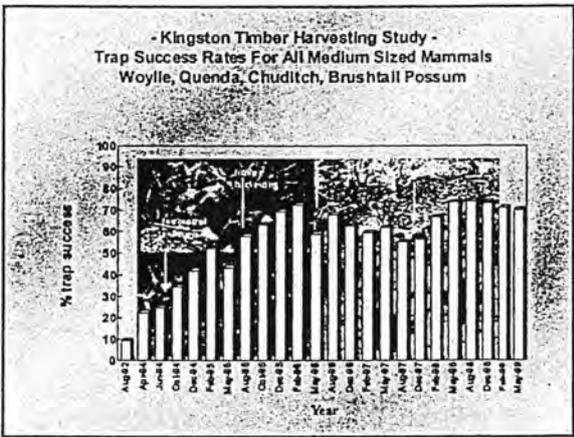
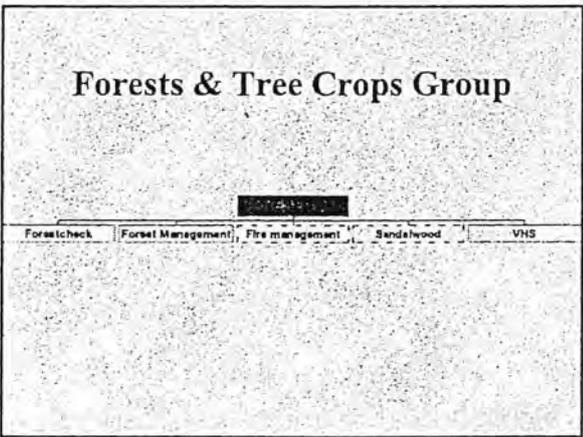
### Planning Processes

- Strategic Plan (2-5 yrs)
- Annual Business Plan
- Operations Plan
- Science Project Plans



### Resources Summary

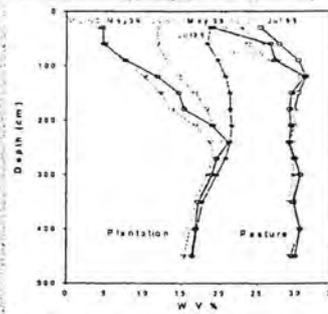
- 124 CF funded FTEs
- 25 externally funded FTEs
- \$10 million CF budget
- \$2 million external



## WOODY PERENNIALS FOR REVERSING SALINITY



## DO WOODY PERENNIALS WORK ?



Yes, the scale of planting is the critical issue

## Forests & Tree Crops Group

### Tree Crop Development

Oil Mallee    Search    Extensions

## OIL MALLEE

- Breeding and seed production
- Silviculture
- Harvest regime and yield
- Harvest and handling systems
- Processing
- Products

## Biodiversity Conservation Group

### Biodiversity Conservation

Predator control    Fauna re-introductions    Ecology    Monitoring



## Fauna reintroductions



## Biodiversity Conservation Group



### EXPERIMENTAL TRANSLOCATIONS OF CRITICALLY ENDANGERED FLORA

#### Objectives

- Translocation techniques for a range of site conditions
- Protocols for assessing and predicting translocation success
- Translocation database



### MILLENNIUM SEED BANK PROJECT 2001-2111

- Benefit Sharing Agreement signed April 2001 with Royal Botanic Gardens Kew
- CALM Threatened Flora Seed Centre to collect 1,000 Priority Flora including SAP species over 10 years
- Seed to be processed / stored in TFSC duplicate collections to be housed at Millennium Seed Bank, UK
- Threatened Flora Seed Centre to collect = 100 species/taxa per year
- Total funding over 10 years £439,300 = \$ 1,180,000. TFSC to receive = \$850,000

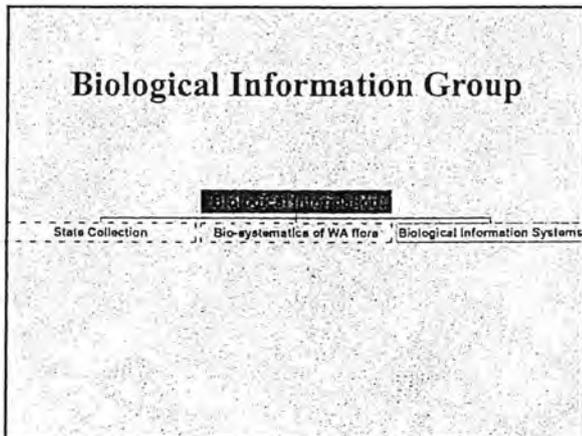
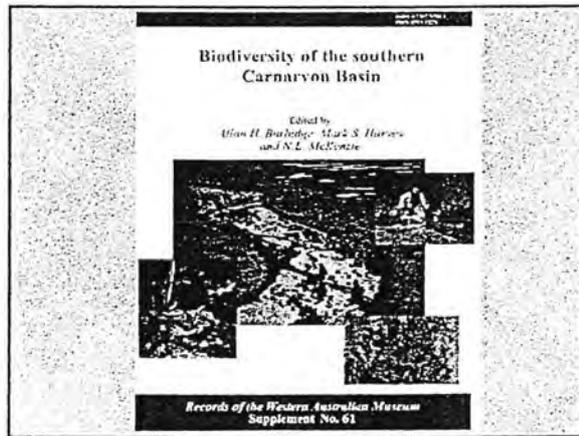
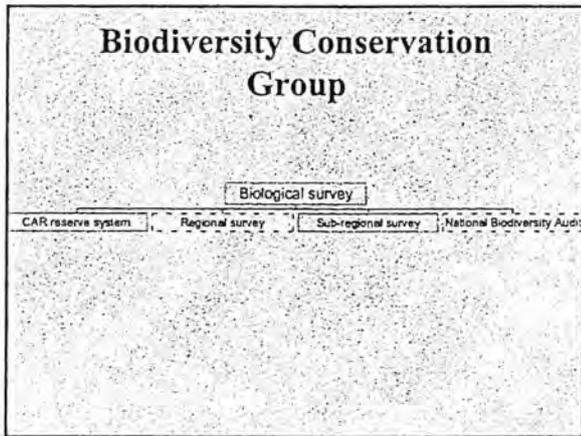
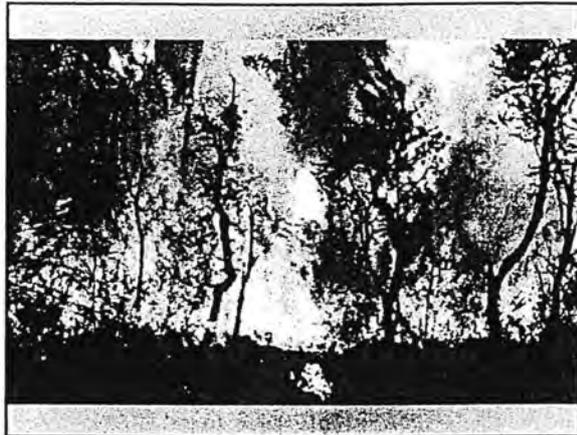
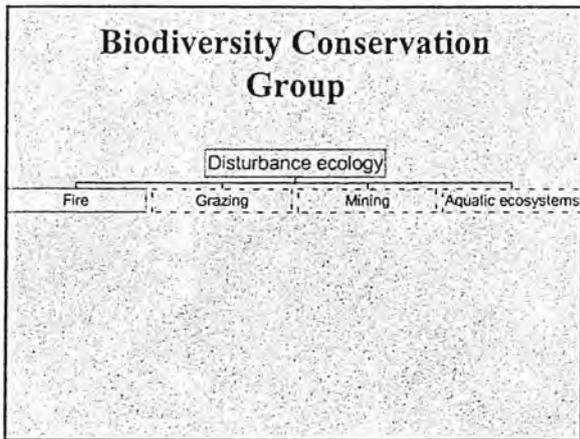


### LAND AND WATER AUSTRALIA GRANT 2001-2004

Assessment of native vegetation status and viability, and thresholds for significant change

#### Objectives

- Determine ecological and genetic factors that affect population viability in vegetation remnants in two contrasting biomes:
  - WA south-west heathlands and shrublands (Donglock area)
  - NSW grassy woodlands (southern tablelands)
- Model relationships between key factors affecting viability and remnant characteristics (size, disturbance, landscape position)
- Assess how life history affects the impact of remnant characteristics on population viability
- Develop management guidelines and general landscape design principles that will maximise the probability of population persistence.



### Biological Information Group

**Aim:**  
 To maintain & extend the State resource centre for taxonomic, conservation and economic information on the State's flora.

## The State Collection

- Collections of identified and curated material total 500 000 specimens of vascular plants, mosses and their allies, lichens, fungi and marine and fresh water algae

## Biodiversity Information Systems

- The herbarium has developed corporate databases to communicate the results of botanical science to a wide range of users involved in conservation

## CALM Corporate Databases

- authoritative names database
- plant descriptions for 13 000 species
- botanical library
- spatial data from specimen labels
- plant images
- biological attributes

- The Regional Herbaria Network

- WIN the Weed Information Network

- FloraBase: a statewide electronic plant information system integrating a range of databases into an easily accessible web site

## Future Directions

- Knowledge Management Systems
- Biological Survey
- Monitoring
- Landscape Ecology & Reconstruction
- Threatening Processes
- Rare & Endangered Species & Communities
- Partnerships & Collaborations

# KEY ASPECTS OF SERVICE PROVIDER AGREEMENTS BETWEEN THE DIRECTORS OF NATURE CONSERVATION DIVISION AND REGIONAL SERVICES DIVISION

Summary of talk by Regional Services Advisor (John Skillen).

## 1. Responsibilities within the Service Provider Agreement

A SPA between the Director Nature Conservation and Director Regional Services is made up of two parts. The first is the actual agreement between the two Directors. Included in this is the agreement for provision of funds in return for services and procedures for dealing with the failure to provide services.

The second is the spreadsheet for each region, which tables the list of tasks and the associated budgets for each Service being undertaken by the Region. It is this spreadsheet that needs to be developed by the members of the regional nature conservation team (especially the Informed Purchaser) in consultation with staff from the Nature Conservation Division (especially Nature Conservation Output Coordinator).

## 2. Development of a meaningful works programs in advance by

1. Supporting the link between the regionally based Informed Purchaser (usually the Regional Leader Nature Conservation) and the Nature Conservation Output Coordinator.
2. Supporting the link between staff within regional nature conservation teams.
3. Balancing "top down" and "bottom up" inputs.

## 3. Keeping Output Purchasers informed on the progress of delivery.

This is a key ongoing responsibility for staff in the regions. It allows change to be undertaken in a timely manner and demonstrates professionalism.

## 4. Defining the role of the Regional Informed Purchaser and the Nature Conservation Output Coordinator

### **Regional Informed Purchaser.**

Responsible to the Regional Manager and has an important role in

- (1) Working with the Nature Conservation Output Coordinator to develop regional works programs that conform to Output Director priorities and are within Regional capabilities.
- (2) Monitoring expenditure and the progress of works.
- (3) Keeping the Nature Conservation Output Coordinator and Regional Manager informed on progress of work and issues associated with completing the works program within the approved budget and timeframes.
- (4) Representing the Regional Manager's interests, especially on issues that arise within and between the Outputs.
- (5) Working with the regional nature conservation team to develop and implement the approved works programs
- (6) Assisting the Regional Manager and District Managers develop the annual budget.

### **Nature Conservation Output Coordinator.**

Responsible to the Director Nature Conservation and has an important role in

- (1) Working with each Regional Informed Purchaser to develop regional works programs that conform to Output Director priorities and are within Regional capabilities.
- (2) Monitoring expenditure and the progress of works in each Region.
- (3) Keeping the Output Purchaser Director informed on progress of work and issues associated with completing the works program within the approved budget and timeframes in each region.
- (4) Representing the Output Purchaser Director and Branch Manager interests, especially on issues that arise within the directorate, and within and between Regions.
- (5) Assisting the Director Nature Conservation and Regional Informed Purchasers develop the annual budget.

## REGIONAL NRM DELIVERY: OVERVIEW AND POTENTIAL IMPACTS

PREPARED BY KEITH CLAYMORE

NATURE CONSERVATION OUTPUT MEETING

4-5 DECEMBER 2001

CLUB CAPRICORN RESORT, YANCHEP

### BACKGROUND

1. A regional approach to natural resource management is being advocated by the Commonwealth and some State/Territory governments as providing the most appropriate scale to address many land degradation and environmental problems - for example, secondary salinisation of land and water.
2. In WA since 1994, there has been a rapid rise in the number and status of community-based regional groups and mechanisms that aim to coordinate planning and implementation of priority actions to address soil/agriculture, water and native vegetation issues (and to a lesser degree other biodiversity conservation responses) at a regional level. Over this period, 5 regional organisations in the SW of WA have been formed and are now recognised through formal decision-making fora, such as the State Salinity Council and the Natural Heritage Trust (see Figure 1 for boundaries). In addition, the Gascoyne-Murchison Strategy Group was formed in 1996 to coordinate a number of environmental and industry programs in the southern rangelands. A number of other regional/sub-regional groups also exist operating at various levels of effectiveness and representativeness.
3. Regionalisation (top-down), as well as regionalism (bottom-up), is being encouraged through investment from the Natural Heritage Trust, and some State agencies such as DEWCAP, who provide substantial funds to regional organisations and some sub-regional groups, for example Geocatch.
4. Regional structures are also viewed by many Commonwealth/State officials and community leaders as providing: A link between strategic planning and operational activities; assisting in empowering 'the community'; being more democratic; and assisting in overcoming conflicting land uses.
5. It is expected that a regionalisation-regionalism trend will continue, and increase significantly, over the next 4-7 years with the implementation of the National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality and the second phase of the Natural Heritage Trust. Both Commonwealth initiatives emphasise financial investment through regional arrangements to achieve national, State and regional environmental and conservation targets.

### NATIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR SALINITY AND WATER QUALITY (NAP)

6. The Prime Minister released the NAP on 10 October 2000, with in-principle support being given by State/Territory Governments at the Council of Australian Governments' meeting on 3 November 2000. The Plan identifies high priority and immediate actions to address salinity, particularly dryland salinity, and deteriorating of water quality in key catchments and regions across Australia (referred to as "priority regions").
7. \$700 M has been set aside from the Commonwealth to implement the Plan over 7 years, with \$700 M being sought in matching funds from the States/Territories. The Commonwealth's offer to WA is \$158 M over 7 years, on the proviso of equal matching new financial contributions.
8. The centrepiece of the Action Plan is delivery through community-based regional bodies that will develop and implement integrated catchment or regional natural resource management plans. It is proposed that Governments will support this regional approach through substantial "block" funding for strategic actions specified in catchment plans and through the provision of technical assistance, skills training, information and data.

9. An Intergovernmental Agreement (IA) sets out the overarching commitments and obligations of the Commonwealth and States and Territories to the Action Plan. Precise boundaries will be determined through bilateral agreements between the Commonwealth and State/Territory governments.
10. The IA has yet to be signed by WA due to a number of issues, including funding and the extent of priority regions. Bilateral Agreement will specify in more detail the arrangements between the Commonwealth and individual States/Territories on how the Action Plan will be implemented.
11. Bilateral agreements will cover:
  - institutional arrangements;
  - milestones;
  - accreditation criteria;
  - process for accreditation of plans;
  - provisions for multilateral arrangements with regional organisations; and
  - partnership arrangements for block funding, investment amounts, agreed Outcome, performance measures, milestones, accountability and reporting.
12. A National Framework for Standards and Targets has been developed to implement the requirements of the National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality and the Intergovernmental Agreement. Biodiversity
13. The Framework includes provision for national guidelines and protocols for regional target setting, monitoring and reporting. It will also assist regional communities to set biophysical and management targets, which will contribute towards the national goals of the Action Plan. Initial priorities for the Framework has concentrated on surface water quality and flows, and dryland salinity. However, the Framework will be expanded to include standards and targets for "stream and terrestrial biodiversity" at national, State and regional levels.
14. It is intended that an interim framework be in place by April 2001. The framework will then be revised following consultation and trialing in some of the priority regions for the Action Plan, with a final system to be approved by the new NRM Ministerial Council by December 2001.
15. A National Framework for Monitoring and Evaluation is also currently in progress. National frameworks for NRM standards and targets, and monitoring and evaluation are capable of being extended to the Natural Heritage Trust.
16. Capacity building is a major element of the National Action Plan. It is considered that Regional communities-based bodies will need to have the skills and capacity to develop and implement integrated catchment/ regional management plans that are to include robust and relevant targets, and innovative strategies to stimulate best management practices. The regional community-based bodies will also need to engage all key NRM stakeholders in developing the regional plans. For this to be effective, bodies will need to have ready access to data and information on the resource condition, as well as technical support and necessary skills and resources.

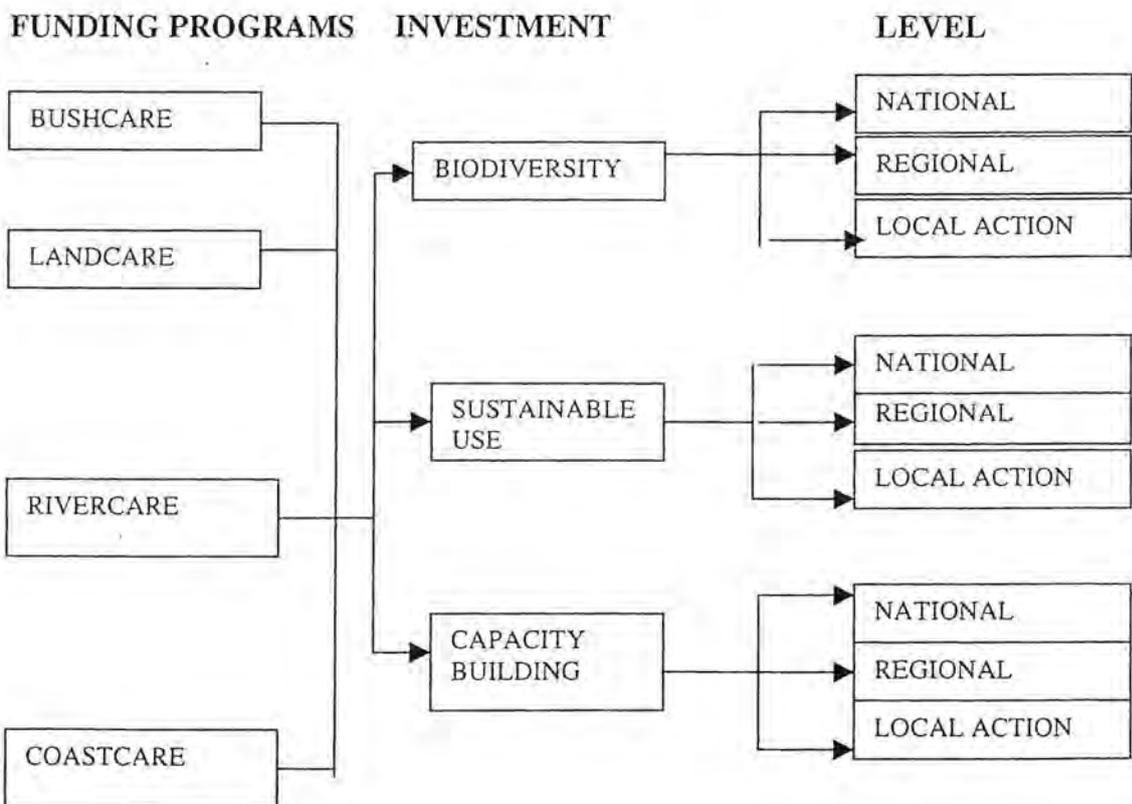
#### NATURAL HERITAGE TRUST (NHT)

- 15 Since the establishment of the NHT in 1997, Western Australia has received around \$110 M. The majority of funds, about 60-65%, have originated from the Landcare and Bushcare programs. A large proportion of funds has been used for regional capacity building, including strategy development, resource assessment and provision of support and technical networks, such as executive officers and facilitators/coordinators.
- 16 Over this period, CALM has received approximately 23% of the WA NHT funds. This represents about 16% of the Nature Conservation Output between 1997-2001. The below Table shows NHT funding received against major Trust programs.

| NHT PROGRAM                | \$ M             |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| Wetlands                   | 0.32             |
| Endangered Species Program | 4.07             |
| Farm Forestry              | 4.25             |
| Bushcare                   | 8.1              |
| National Reserves System   | 11.16            |
| <b>TOTAL</b>               | <b>\$27.90 M</b> |

Around 25% of positions in the Nature Conservation Division are funded by the NHT.

- 17 Implementation of the Trust Phase 2 will be guided by the various partnership agreements between the Commonwealth and States/Territories. New institutional arrangements for the extension of the Trust will be integrated closely with the National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality. The Commonwealth's proposed model and programs for the revised Trust are outlined below.
- 18 Phase 2 will be delivered through 4 programs that will invest across three broad priority investment streams aimed at national, regional and local action projects. The program allocations or investment proportions have yet to be determined.



- 19 Delivery of future Trust objectives and priorities in non-NAP regions and where regional structures are lacking is recognized as a major issue, for example investment arrangements for the rangelands and coastal/marine areas. However, it is envisaged that many of the areas without regional structures will establish community-based groups in order to attract Commonwealth funds.

- 20 A comprehensive multi-level monitoring and evaluation framework for natural resource management will form part of the Phase 2 arrangements, and will cover both the extensions of the Trust and the Action Plan. The development of this framework is to undertaken over the next nine months.
- 21 The Commonwealth has signaled that national funding priorities for the next 5 years should be finalized by early 2002, with longer term priorities and targets being finalized through the State-Commonwealth bilateral and regional trilateral agreements over the next 10 months.
- 22 Cost sharing arrangements, roles of the Commonwealth, States/Territories and local government, and revised priorities will be determined in the various agreements, along with cost-sharing arrangements. Currently, the Commonwealth has proposed a 1:1 arrangement with the States for national projects and an equal joint sharing arrangement at a regional level.
- 23 In order to assist in bridging the gap between NHT Phase 1 and the development of Phase 2, the Commonwealth has proposed a 2002-2003 One-Stop-Shop (OSS) grants program aimed at attracting local level (or local action) projects from community groups. Around \$267 M has been identified for the up-coming 2002-2003 NHT year. A proportion of these funds have already been committed to specific activities, such as weed and introduced pest control. The amount of funds available through the proposed OSS, or activities, has yet to be decided. However, it is proposed that available funds would be at a much-reduced level compared to previous NHT OSS rounds.
- 24 In addition to local action projects, the Commonwealth has indicated the establishment of Foundation Funding, similar to the NAP, for regional organisations. This funding will also be aimed at regional capacity building: establishment of regional groups, development/completion of regional/catchment strategies, evaluation of existing plans, information gap-filling, community consultation, resource assessment and support officers.
- 25 It is unclear how the Commonwealth is proposing to deal with the current 'specialist' programs, such as ESP or NRSP, in the coming 2002-2003 OSS round or through the 4 proposed NHT 2 programs.

#### SCOPE/IMPLICATIONS OF REGIONAL STRATEGIES

- 26 To date, regional/catchment plans have in most cases provided generic strategies and actions to address soil/water/vegetation issues. Spatial priorities have largely been lacking, along with measurable targets and performance indicators. Biodiversity conservation issues covered usually include broad strategies to protect remnant native vegetation. Recovery of threatened species/ecological communities, reserve system planning and management are generally omitted.
- 27 Development of strategies has largely rested on input from State agency officers. In some instances, consultants have been used to prepare strategies/plans. Nevertheless, there has been considerable time and effort from Departmental officers in both working groups support regional groups and as representatives.
- 28 With an increasing focus and investment to address NRM issues at a regional level, and the possibility of an expansion of regional structures to cover coastal/marine and rangeland areas, there is a likelihood of the necessity for greater participation across regions and districts of Departmental officers.
- 29 In addition, the 'tightening-up' of strategies to include measurable targets, milestones and performance indicators will necessitate a greater level of reporting. In addition, there may be a greater call for appropriate information and data at an appropriate scale, and analysis.

## Summary on NHT 2 from the Government Election Statement on the Environment

The entire document can be found at:

<http://www.liberal.org.au/policy/policyachieve.HTM>

<http://www.liberal.org.au/policy/environment.pdf>

### Natural Heritage Trust Extension

\$1 billion over five years

#### Objectives

New trust investments will focus support on three connected objectives

**Biodiversity Conservation** - the conservation of Australia's biodiversity through the protection and restoration of terrestrial, freshwater, estuarine and marine ecosystems and habitat for native plants and animals;

**Sustainable Agriculture** - the sustainable use and management of Australia's land, water and marine resources to maintain and improve the productivity and profitability of resource based industries; and

**Capacity Building** - support for individuals, land-holders, industry and communities with skills, knowledge, information and institutional frameworks to promote these outcomes.

#### Regional Focus

The trust will have a clear emphasis on regional outcomes.

The trust will support the development of a new, integrated structure which will provide more funding directly to regional and catchment organisations.

The Commonwealth will:

- require regional bodies to be responsible for setting investment priorities and their implementation;
- require each of the regional strategies to set targets based on agreed national standards; and
- accredit these regional strategies before providing funding, to ensure they satisfy national standards.

#### Simplified Programs

Simplify the trust's existing 23 programs to four:

- **Landcare:** reversing land degradation and promoting sustainable agriculture;
- **Bushcare:** conserving and restoring habitat for our unique native flora and fauna which underpin the health of our landscapes;
- **Rivercare:** improving water quality and environmental flows in our river systems and wetlands; and
- **Coastcare:** protecting our coastal catchments, ecosystems and the marine environment.

**Nature Conservation Output**  
**Planning Conference**

**Summary**

**Gordon Wyre**  
**Acting Director of Nature Conservation, CALM**

**What did we hope to achieve?**  
**What did we discuss?**  
**Key outcomes**  
**What will happen next?**  
**Future conferences**

**What did we discuss?**

**Develop a shared understanding of what the Nature Conservation priorities for WA are.**  
**Identify the outcomes that we can achieve over the next 1 to 2 years**  
**Relate the budget to the priorities and outcomes**

**What did we discuss?**

**Opportunities and challenges from ED perspectives**  
**Priority of Nature Conservation**  
**State Framework for SPAs**  
**Regional overviews of achievements and challenges**  
**Workshop I: Output priorities across big 5ive linkings across State on importance and risks/urgency**  
**Policy integration, Regional SPAs and NHT NAP**  
**Workshop II: Detail and reporting of SPAs**  
**Workshop III: SPA relationships, roles and responsibilities**

**Key Outcomes**

**We have a better shared understanding of what the Nature Conservation priorities for WA include and how we can achieve them.**  
**We have identified some of the challenges we face and how Regional SPAs can help us face these.**  
**We haven't identified the outcomes that we can achieve over the next 1 to 2 years, but have better ideas what these will involve and what constraints we have and why.**  
**We have put some flesh on the skeleton of output planning for nature conservation over the next 2 to 5ive years.**

**What will happen next?**

**Consolidation and consolidation of conference talks and workshops into conference report**  
**Incorporation of key outcomes into next round of budget and budget planning process at central and regional levels**  
**Finalisation of Output coordination at central and regional levels dependent on resources/restructure outcomes**  
**Finalising liaison and planning for next year's SPAs (set for Nov/Dec 2002)**  
**Incorporation of ideas/priorities into Biodiversity Strategy**

*a follow-up conference with a training  
discipline/topic.  
Nov/Dec 2002?  
of conference theme/guest speaker?*

*Planning Team  
with Claymore, Andrew Burbidge and Gordon Wyre  
Participants  
professional, positive and mostly dedicated  
the*

*Thank you*