

**Regionalizing Research**  
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**Preamble**

The Science Division is a service provider to CALM's primary output programs. Our purpose is to deliver sound, up-to-date science and information to underpin effective conservation and land management in WA. We do this by:

- Conducting priority applied research, surveys and monitoring
- Keeping abreast of the global conservation science literature
- Communicating scientific information
- Providing information, advice and training
- Collaborating

To do this effectively, we must engage with our key end-users and purchasers at various levels within CALM. At one level, this is done formally through the Strategic Planning and Forward Estimates and Service Provider Agreement process. We also need to improve the way in which we engage with other Divisions, particularly Regional Services, who are largely responsible for delivering on-ground nature conservation outcomes. Benefits of doing so include:

- Improved capacity of Regions to deliver priority conservation and land management outcomes
- Better use of scientific information in policy development and decision making to reduce operational risk
- Builds support for the Science Division and enhances the relevance of science to CALM
- Increased capacity to undertake priority applied research
- Improved knowledge base in Districts and Regions
- Improved understanding by scientists of Regional and operational needs
- Increased capacity for 'active' adaptive management
- Improved technology transfer and uptake of new ideas
- Improved intra-Departmental integration, synergies
- Improved inter-Departmental collaborations, e.g., with NRM groups who link with CALM through the Regions.

The extent of current engagement with Regional Services is variable and is largely a function of individual effort and initiative on both sides. This proposal moves towards a more formal process of engagement and seeks opportunities for a seamless integration of (many) of our activities with those of Regional Services to derive the benefits outlined above. It is timely to consider how we might achieve this – the Strategic Planning and Forward Estimates process will greatly influence our activities, we have re-structured to improve service delivery and Regional Services are developing a pool of skilled and motivated people in various roles (e.g. Nature Conservation Leaders, Regional Ecologists, Flora Conservation Officers etc.) with whom we can effectively engage.

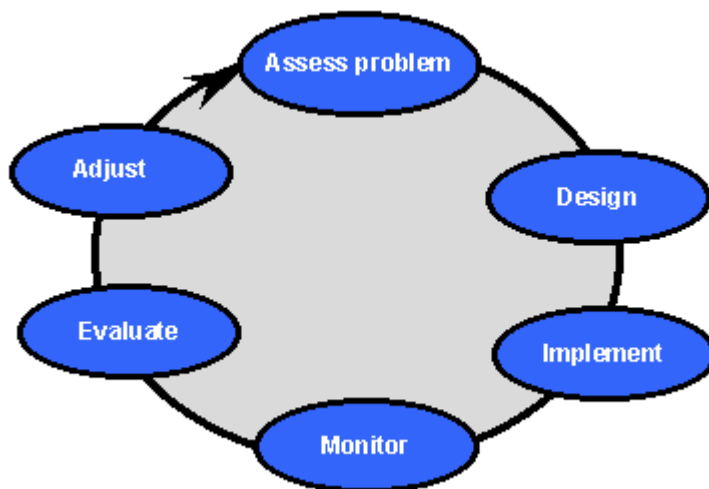
**Regionalizing Research: Regional Science Liaison Scheme**

Each member of the Science Management Team (Program Leaders) will “adopt a Region” (Attachment 1). The proposed role of the science liaison officer will be to:

- Develop a rapport with key Regional staff, including the Regional Manager
- Provide a first point of reference, consultant and expert adviser to the Region
- Develop an understanding of the works program and technical key issues / problems facing the Region
- Develop an awareness of, and empathy for, the aspirations of the Region and hence how Science Division can assist the Region do its job
- Up-date Regional staff on Science Division activities (and new findings) and proposed activities
- Identify research and information needs
- Seek opportunities to develop collaborative research/monitoring/survey programs with District staff
- Seek opportunities to introduce scientific rigour and improve genuine learning from doing
- Seek opportunities for ‘active’ adaptive management (see below) to progress understanding of ecosystem processes.

Adaptive Management;

*“Adaptive management is a systematic process for continually improving management policies and practices by learning from the outcomes of operational programs. Its most effective form—“active” adaptive management—employs management programs that are designed to experimentally compare selected policies or practices, by evaluating alternative hypotheses about the system being managed.”* (Ministry of Forests, British Columbia 2004)



Clearly, no research scientist has expertise in all aspects of conservation science. However, once aware of issues, we can direct Regional staff to appropriate people in the Division. The alignment of scientists and Regions in Attachment 1 is based on existing relationships that have been developed between individuals and the respective Regions.

- Regional science liaison officers will make every effort to attend Regional staff meetings, and other forums, or formally visit and meet with key Regional staff at least twice each year to discuss and progress the above issues.
- Arrange for workshops, seminars, field days.
- Facilitate technology transfer and uptake.
- Report to the Science Management Team.
- A travel budget will be made available for this role to be carried out. Assistance will be sought from Regions.

ATTACHMENT 1

Proposed Regional Science Liaison Officers

Norm Mckenzie.....Kimberley Region

Keith Morris.....Pilbara Region

Neville Marchant.....Midwest Region

Dave Coates .....Wheatbelt Region

Ian Abbott.....Swan Region

Margaret Byrne .....South West Region

Lachie McCaw.....Warren Region

Dave Coates.....South Coast Region

Neil Burrows.....Goldfields Region