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## **Capitalising on opportunities: incorporating natural resource management into local government planning**

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CRC for Coastal Zone  
Estuary & Waterway Management





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December 2005



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## Project background

The establishment of a regional community-based framework for natural resource management (NRM) planning and program delivery throughout Australia provides both challenges and opportunities for achieving sustainable outcomes for NRM at regional and local levels.

These emerging initiatives have the potential to move existing state and local agencies to a higher order of regional community engagement. However, the initiatives will have to evolve within the existing statutory and institutional frameworks for environmental and natural resource planning and management. This suggests a different and evolving role for local government within the new regional arrangements. It also suggests that there are key links between NRM and existing planning processes and practices that must be addressed.

This project was a collaborative research project between the Environmental Planning group (Griffith University) of the Cooperative Research Centre for Coastal Zone, Estuary and Waterway Management (Coastal CRC) and a number of regional NRM bodies. It was undertaken as an action research program and used a longitudinal study with selected NRM regional bodies as collaborating research partners. It focused on environmental planning for NRM with the intent of enhancing the role of local government in cooperative regional NRM.

The project's regional NRM case study partners (CSPs) are:

- South East Queensland Western Catchments Group Incorporated (SEQWCG)<sup>1</sup> – Ipswich, Queensland;
- Far North Queensland Natural Resource Management Limited (FNQ NRM Ltd) – Innisfail, North Queensland; and
- Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority (GH CMA) – Hamilton, Victoria.

When this research project was commenced at the beginning of 2005, these NRM bodies were already established and operating in a manner that could facilitate the introduction of the implementation aspects of their regional NRM plans into an action research program. The accompanying figure shows the location of the three CSPs in eastern Australia.

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<sup>1</sup> During the course of undertaking this study, SEQ WCG was amalgamated with the NRM SEQ to form SEQ Catchments, thus creating one accredited regional NRM body for the SEQ region. This project has retained reference to SEQ WCG, however, as it was the original CSP who took part in the action research. Nevertheless, it is understood that the project's recommendations are relevant to the new SEQ Catchments group.



Figure 1: Location of case study partners

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 General

During the past two to three years, the Commonwealth Government's National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality, its second round National Heritage Trust, the associated Intergovernmental Agreement between the Commonwealth and all state and territory governments, and subsequent bilateral agreements with individual state and territory governments, have generated a spate of planning activity by newly established natural resource management (NRM) regional bodies across Australia. This has resulted in a range of regional NRM plans being produced by these bodies. To varying degrees, this has been a collaborative planning process involving a wide range of stakeholders that in some cases has included local government.

The overarching context of this research project involves the examination of these voluntary collaborative regional arrangements for NRM and environment planning. It is specifically focused on the implementation aspects of the collaborative regional NRM plans and the expectations and opportunities for local government participation in these arrangements. The results of this research project are contained in a series of seven reports, of which this report is one.

This report examines the changing role and responsibilities of local government with respect to their involvement in NRM in response to the regional NRM plans for their region. It defines the key links between natural resource management and existing planning processes and practices of local government operating at the local and regional scales.

In particular, the report examines opportunities to incorporate NRM matters, including NRM science, into statutory and non-statutory planning processes of local government. It concludes by providing guidance on how to achieve these outcomes. This guidance is presented a series of 'roadmaps' outlining the pathways that NRM matters can follow from the regional bodies' NRM plan into the various planning outputs of local government in each case study region.

The focus of this report is the principal planning processes of local government and how these may be enhanced through the incorporation of NRM aspects. Subsequent reports will also explore how these processes can be further improved through the incorporation of an adaptive management framework and specific enhancement initiatives for local government.

## 1.2 Methodology and approach

A detailed description of the overall methodology for the project is provided in research report number 7, *Enhancing the role of local government in cooperative regional natural resource management: Summary project report*. Conducted as an action research program, it involved a longitudinal study of the implementation of the regional NRM plans for three selected case studies.

For the specific component of the research that is the subject of this report, the methodological approach has entailed:

- identifying the expectations that regional NRM bodies and local government had for local government involvement in NRM at the commencement of the implementation of regional NRM plans;
- examining the collaborative processes involving local government as they commenced the implementation of their assigned responsibilities associated with the regional NRM plan for their respective regions;
- benchmarking the current collaborative planning and management arrangements in the case study areas;
- identifying the barriers and constraints that inhibit collaborative NRM activity involving local government; and
- identifying opportunities to facilitate and improve NRM uptake by local government through their statutory and non-statutory processes and practices.

Identifying the expectations of regional NRM bodies and local government involved a series of workshops conducted in each of the case study partners' (CSPs) regions. It was reasoned that the involvement of the principal stakeholders (namely the board members and staff of the regional NRM bodies and the elected members and officers of the local authorities in these regions) would provide realistic and relevant guidance to the research findings. It is also argued that by directing the research to these specific connections to the potential users of the research outcomes, this should ensure relevance of the research outputs and a higher probability of uptake of the research outcomes.

The first series involved the board members and staff of each regional NRM body and focused on the following objectives:

- to understand the NRM board's appreciation for the implementation phase of their NRM plan;

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- to identify the key challenges that the workshop participants see in implementing their regional NRM plan;
- to highlight and prioritise the key aspects for enhancement initiatives to assist in the implementation process; and
- to identify the principal roles for local government in the implementation phase of regional NRM plans.

The results from the first round of workshops have been reported in Low Choy and Maccheroni (2005a) and are summarised in subsequent sections. The second series of workshops was conducted with representatives from the local authorities from each of the CSP regions and sought to satisfy the following objectives:

- to understand local government's appreciation of their principal roles and responsibilities in the implementation of their regional body's NRM plan;
- to understand local government's experience from the implementation phase of their regional body's NRM plan;
- to identify the key challenges that local governments experience when implementing the local government NRM aspects of their regional body's NRM plan; and
- to highlight priority enhancement initiatives to assist local government to fulfil their role in the implementation of their regional body's NRM plan.

The results from this series of workshops have been reported in Low Choy and Maccheroni (2005b) and are summarised in subsequent sections. These workshop results were supplemented by a review of the respective regional NRM plans and their supporting documentation to identify the expectations of, and commitments for, local government involvement in the implementation of regional NRM plans.

The CSPs exist in three different regional planning regimes in two different state statutory local planning systems. Hence a detailed review of the relevant planning legislation in each system was completed to explore opportunities for NRM uptake in the various plans prepared under these planning systems.

This review was also complimented by a literature review to explore the diversity of barriers, constraints and opportunities for NRM uptake into local government planning processes and practices.

### 1.3 Report organisation

Section 2 explores the existing and changing nature of local government in Australia generally and in the states containing the CSPs—Queensland and Victoria. This includes a review of local government’s roles, responsibilities and functions and their major attributes that may hinder or facilitate the uptake of NRM responsibilities into their normal statutory and non-statutory planning activities. This overarching review of local government provides a context for the specific inquiry into the different expectations for local government NRM responsibilities that were held by the regional NRM bodies and by local government. This is reported in Section 3.

The fourth section examines potential opportunities for local government to improve its uptake of NRM through its basic planning functions. This involves an examination of the specific state legislation which gives rise to state, regional and local planning activities in various statutory and non-statutory planning processes of local government.

The workshop findings, supported by a review of the respective regional NRM plans and supporting documentation, are then summed up in Section 5 in terms of challenges and opportunities to incorporate NRM into local Government Planning. This section also explores recommendations for acknowledging and introducing a series of local government enhancement requirements.

The last reporting section (Section 6) brings the preceding discussion and research outcomes together and scopes some strategic options to advance the improved NRM uptake by local government. It includes a series of ‘roadmaps’ that suggest pathways for the transfer of NRM matters from the regional NRM plans into the specific statutory and non-statutory planning instruments of local government. Section 7 provides a short conclusion to this report.

## 2 The nature of local government in Australia

*“... local governments are the key units for environmental care .... (with) .... responsibilities including land use planning, development control, water supply, waste water treatment, waste disposal, health care, public transport and education.”*  
(IUCN/UNEP/WWF, *Caring for the earth*, 1991:60)

### 2.1 Local government in Australia

Australia is served by three distinct levels of government—national, state and local. It is not uncommon for there to be a degree of confusion over the division of roles, functions and responsibilities between these levels of government. Local government is characterised by a distinct set of attributes, many of which set that level apart from the other levels of government and enable local authorities to fulfil various roles and functions.

#### 2.1.1 *Local government attributes*

The local authority is the ‘lowest’ level of organisation for governance, administration and statutory planning in Australia. While Australian local governments are diverse, they have a number of common attributes including:

- It is the level of government closest to the people, its decision-makers presumably have personal knowledge and contact with the circumstances surrounding their decision—local knowledge comes close to the decision-making process (Stewart, 1983: 16; Bowman & Hampton, 1983: 4).
- Each local authority has an elected council at its apex (communal variant of an elected parliament) (Halligan & Wettenhall, 1990: 25).
- Each council is supported by an administration of appointed officials, (communal variant of a public service at state and national levels) (Halligan & Wettenhall, 1990: 25).
- The elected members and appointed officials are linked by a committee system (as opposed to ministers in the case of higher order governments) (Halligan & Wettenhall, 1990: 25).
- Unlike their state and national counterparts, all elected members are involved in the detailed workings of the organisation through their participation in the committee system which is an integral component of the formal decision-making process of council (e.g. councillors must sit on at least one committee) (Stewart, 1983: 16).

- The main formal decision-making process of the council is basically an open system for public and press alike (Stewart, 1983: 18).
- Due to its size, scale and proximity to the community, it offers superior opportunities for citizens to participate in the political democratic process (Bowman & Hampton, 1983: 9).
- It is one of the three basic units of public administration (others being the department and the semi-independent or statutory authority) (Halligan & Wettenhall, 1990: 19).
- While it cannot be defined uniquely by function, it can be identified by its geographical boundaries (Stewart, 1983: 16).
- It is a multipurpose organisation serving a variety of functions. It can assign priorities within its local sphere across a range of pertinent local and competing issues (Bowman & Hampton, 1983: 4).
- It is a multi-contact organisation. Its elected members and officers interact directly with the local population. By contrast, the work of higher order agencies is isolated from the wider public (Stewart, 1983: 17).
- They have a measure of autonomy and a capacity to provide their own resources through taxation and in this regard they are a public authority (Bowman & Hampton, 1983: 3; Stewart, 1983: 17).
- Accountability is provided through the electoral process (Stewart, 1983: 17).

### *2.1.2 Generic roles and functions*

The basic reasons behind the establishment of local government in Australia in the early 1830s remain fundamentally relevant to their existence today and include:

- to be an informed and responsible decision-maker in the interests of developing the community and its resources;
- to be an effective provider and coordinator of public services at the local level;
- to be a catalyst for, and a resourceful initiator and coordinator of, local effort; and
- to represent their community to other governments and the wider society (ACIR, 1984: 5).

There is a longstanding and continuing debate over the principal role and functions of local government in this country (Jones, 1981, 1993; Stewart, 1983; Bowman & Hampton, 1983; ACIR, 1984; ALGA & ICL Australia Pty Ltd, 1989; Tucker, 1995; Dollery & Marshall, 1997; Wild River, 2003). There appears to be general agreement that most economically important local government functions embrace the 'services to property' group, including roads, drainage, waste management, sewerage and water supply, footpaths and flood mitigation works. However, most Australian local governments also have a large range of minor functions; in fact, they deliver "the most minor range of functions of any Western country" (Jones, 1993: 34).

There is general agreement that local governments are generally involved in:

- public works and services such as roads and bridge construction;
- community services such as street lighting, public toilets, car parks and campsites;
- community development;
- public order and safety such as fire prevention, animal protection and beach patrol;
- health services such as immunisation and infectious disease control;
- welfare services including meals-on-wheels, child-care and emergency care centres;
- housing and community amenities for people and special needs;
- recreation and cultural facilities including swimming pools, parks, reserves, cultural heritage sites and pathways; and
- trading systems and other involvement in fuel, energy, transport and communications [Power *et al.*, 1981; McNeill, 1997 quoted in Wild River (2003: 340–341)].

Reynolds has observed that while local government in Australia has historically been concerned with bread-and-butter tasks, the community now wants local government to look at services that contribute to the quality of life (Reynolds, 1989). This includes attention to environmental issues that contribute to our quality of life, which in turn, influences the liveability of local and regional places.

Local government is not recognised in the Australian Constitution and is the creation of state parliaments. Consequently, various pieces of state legislation provide the legislative and state constitutional foundations for local government (Tucker, 1995). The functions that they perform are limited by their respective

state legislation. Those relevant to the case of the two states containing the CSPs for this project (Queensland and Victoria) are set out below.

### *2.1.3 Challenges facing local government*

Wild River (2003: 341) notes that the contemporary challenges that confront local government (LG) are similar to those that other institutions also face and include:

- chronic resource shortages (particularly relevant to smaller local authorities);
- limited opportunities to improve their income stream (rate capping, unpopularity of rate increases with their constituents);
- inadequate statutory powers;
- lack of technical expertise or knowledge about problems; and
- lack of time to adequately address problems.

Citing an Australian local government Association publication, Wild River (2003: 341) concludes "... in many cases the continual increase in LG roles and responsibilities is placing considerable strain on LGs".

### *2.1.4 Changing face of local government*

A number of authors have described the accelerating pace of recent and unprecedented change in Australian local government during the last decade which has completely transformed it and which shows no signs of abating (Tucker, 1995; Dollery & Marshall, 1997; Wild River, 2003). While Marshall (in Dollery & Marshall 1997) acknowledges that the full repercussions of these changes have yet to be fully experienced, he refers to various reform programs that have significantly altered the structure and form of councils. He also acknowledges the broad competency powers that now provide local government with greater degrees of autonomy to manage their own affairs. The role of local councillors are now more closely defined where they are "expected to consult extensively with their constituents, demonstrate new levels of ethical behaviour in their conduct, and exhibit vision in their leadership of the community" (Dollery & Marshall, 1997: 2).

The 1992 Intergovernmental Agreement on the Environment (IGAE) assigns responsibility to local government for the development and implementation of locally relevant and applicable environmental policy within its jurisdiction in cooperation with other levels of government and the local community. It also acknowledges that local government has an interest in the development and implementation of regional, statewide and national policies, programs and

mechanisms that affect more than one local government (Commonwealth of Australia, 1992).

During the 1990s, most State legislation relating to local government roles, functions and responsibilities was substantially upgraded. Similarly, the statutory planning functions conferred by specific planning legislation have also changed as relevant State planning legislation has undergone some major overhauls in recent times.

For example, during the late 1990s the Victorian Government rationalised local government and following the production of ten regional catchment strategies (RCS) established ten catchment management authorities (CMAs) across the state<sup>2</sup>. These initiatives were championed as moves to “achieve consistency and coordination between the councils and the CMAs in their approach to tackling Victoria’s natural resource issues” (Tehan, Maclellan & McNamara, 1997). The CMAs took over the responsibilities of the former Waterway Management Authorities under the *Water Act 1989*. These responsibilities include the coordination and management of floodplains, rural drainage including regional drainage schemes, water quality, crown frontages and heritage rivers outside national parks. The CMAs also advise government on funding priorities for catchment management.

By contrast, local government’s environmental management responsibilities are not prescribed under a single piece of legislation and it becomes a very complicated exercise to piece together the very fragmented sources for local government responsibilities in this area. Wild River (2003: 348) considers that environmental management is “potentially the core of LG environmental business in the long-term”. Her review of the literature reveals a wide range of inherent environmental management roles for local government, including:

- biodiversity and native ecosystem conservation;
- parks and open space;
- weed and feral animal control, fire, flood and other disaster risks;
- transport and service corridors;
- energy and water supply;
- environmental and visual amenity;
- physical and natural resources;

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<sup>2</sup> With the advent of the Commonwealth Government’s National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality and its second round National Heritage Trust, the Victorian CMAs were accepted as that state’s regional NRM bodies. Subsequent revised versions of the RCSs were then accredited by the Commonwealth Government and endorsed by the Victorian State Government as the regional NRM plan for the regional catchments in that state.

- avenues for community involvement; and
- environmental legislation and policy.

It should also be noted that local government can undertake these environmental management roles as either a regulator or an operator.

On a cautionary note, Dovers (2001: 24) reminds us that while “local government has untapped potential, especially when municipalities work together through various mechanisms .... (*and while*) institutional arrangements that cross government jurisdictions are at present popular, necessary and problematic .... (*and that*) local areas, regions and catchments are in some ways more ecologically logical scales than imposed political boundaries .... (*he warns that*) arrangements at these scales usually lack political, legal and administrative ‘reality’ and can be weak and easily forgotten.”

### *2.1.5 Benefits of local government*

In summary, the benefits that a local government system provides, include:

- a level of government closest to the community;
- a proven organisational structure and networks;
- an established infrastructure and capability;
- established accountability processes;
- existing capacity and ability to improve capacity;
- an agent for higher levels of government;
- opportunities to achieve through statutory (and proven non-statutory) planning and management processes; and
- a capability of operating at the regional level (as collective groupings).

These benefits and the previously recognised attributes should be utilised to maximise the facilitation of improved NRM uptake into local government planning activities.

*“... local authorities are important in shaping environmental infrastructure, planning and policies because their governance is ‘closest to the people’ ... (they) ... have a vital role to play in achieving the objectives of Agenda 21 .... (and) .... consultation, cooperation and coordination among local authorities should be established or enhanced.”*  
(Grubb et al., 1993: 139)

### 2.2.1 *Purpose, powers, roles and functions*

In the Queensland context, the *Local government Act (Qld) 1993 (LGA(Q) 93)* as amended, defines the specific duties and functions of local government. In exercising its jurisdiction, the roles of local government include:

- (a) a law-making role for local laws; and
- (b) an executive role for:
  - (i) adoption and implementation of policy; and
  - (ii) administration of local government; and
  - (iii) enforcement of its local laws.

(Part 1, Division 2, Section 20, *LGA(Q) 93*)

These roles are to be achieved in accordance with the objects of the Act which includes:

- (a) providing a legal framework for an effective, efficient and *LGA(Q)93* accountable system of local government;
- (b) recognising a jurisdiction of local government sufficient to allow a local government to take autonomous responsibility for the good rule and government of its area with a minimum of intervention by the state;
- (c) providing for community participation in the local government system;
- (d) defining the role of participants in the local government system; and
- (e) establishing an independent process for ongoing review of certain important local government issues.

(Part 2, Section 2, *LGA(Q) 93*)

In summary, the Act makes no specific reference to NRM responsibilities for local government. However, it can be inferred from the description of the roles of local government outlined in the legislation.

### 2.2.2 *Local laws*

Part 2, Division 2 of the *LGA(Q)93* sets out the provisions for local government to prepare and adopt local laws. A local law is a law adopted by a council that reflects community needs and ensures the good rule and government of its area. Through local laws, local governments can establish, permit or licence regimes for activities they want to regulate, to create offences for unacceptable behaviour and to allow for the issue of compliance or abatement notices.

There are four types of local laws, namely:

**Model local laws:** They are proposed by the Minister for Local Government and Planning to cover issues that are common to many local governments;

**Interim local laws:** These laws are adopted for a limited period (usually six months) while the local government conducts public consultation before introducing a law permanently. Interim local laws are typically introduced to address those cases of immediate public health and safety risks or where there is a concern that action may be taken during the public consultation period which would defeat the purpose of introducing the law;

**Subordinate local laws:** They provide the detailed information required for the operation of a local law. For example, a local law may allow a local government to specify the types of animals (e.g. dogs) required to be registered within its area; and

**Other local laws.**

## 2.3 Local government in Victoria

### 2.3.1 Purpose, powers, roles and functions

In the Victorian context, local government is established and operates under the state legislation: *Local Government Act (Vic) 1989* as amended (*LGA(V) 89*). The stated objects of this Act are to “to establish a legislative scheme that supports the system of local government in accordance with Part 11A of the Constitution Act 1975”. Part 1A of the *LGA(V) 89* sets out the local government charter which stipulates the purpose, powers, roles and functions of local government in that state.

The **purpose** of local government is defined as:

The provision of a system under which councils perform the functions and exercise the powers conferred by or under this Act and any other Act for the peace, order and good government of their municipal districts.

(Part 1A, Section 3A, *LGA(V) 89*)

The **powers** conferred on councils through this Act include:

- (1) Subject to any limitations or restrictions imposed by or under this Act or any other Act, a council has the power to do all things necessary or

convenient to be done in connection with the achievement of its objectives and the performance of its functions.

- (2) The generality of this section is not limited by the conferring of specific powers by or under this or any other Act.

(Part 1A, Section 3F, *LGA(V) 89*)

The Act defines the **roles** of a council as:

- (1) A council is elected to provide leadership for the good governance of the municipal district and the local community.
- (2) The role of a council includes:
  - (a) acting as a representative government by taking into account the diverse needs of the local community in decision-making;
  - (b) providing leadership by establishing strategic objectives and monitoring their achievement;
  - (c) maintaining the viability of the council by ensuring that resources are managed in a responsible and accountable manner;
  - (d) advocating the interests of the local community to other communities and governments;
  - (e) acting as a responsible partner in government by taking into account the needs of other communities;
  - (f) fostering community cohesion and encouraging active participation in civic life.

(Part 1A, Section 3D, *LGA(V) 89*)

In terms of the **functions** of a council, the Act states:

- (1) The functions of a council include:
  - (a) advocating and promoting proposals which are in the best interests of the local community;
  - (b) planning for and providing services and facilities for the local community;
  - (c) providing and maintaining community infrastructure in the municipal district;
  - (d) undertaking strategic and land-use planning for the municipal district;

- (e) raising revenue to enable the council to perform its functions;
  - (f) making and enforcing local laws;
  - (g) exercising, performing and discharging the duties, functions and powers of councils under this Act and other Acts;
  - (h) any other function relating to the peace, order and good government of the municipal district.
- (2) For the purpose of achieving its objectives, a council may perform its functions inside and outside its municipal district.

(Part 1A, Section 3E, *LGA(V) 89*)

In summary, the *LGA(V)89* makes no specific reference to NRM responsibilities for local government. However, it can be inferred from the description of the roles and functions of local government outlined in the legislation.

### 2.3.2 *Local laws*

Under Part 5, Section 111 of the *LGA(V)89*, local government has the power to make and enforce local laws. With respect to local laws:

- (1) A council may make local laws for or with respect to any act, matter or thing in respect of which the council has a function or power under this or any other Act;
- (2) A local law must not be inconsistent with any Act or regulation;
- (3) A local law is inoperative to the extent that it is inconsistent with any Act or regulation; and
- (4) If a planning scheme is in force in the municipal district of a council, the council must not make a local law which duplicates or is inconsistent with the planning scheme.

## 2.4 Summary

In neither the Queensland nor the Victorian Local Government Acts are there specific references to NRM responsibilities for local government. However, these responsibilities can be inferred from the descriptions of the roles and functions of local government in both Acts. This is particularly the case where local governments have assigned or delegated responsibility for statutory planning. It is on this basis that future opportunities to incorporate NRM aspects into local government planning have been furthered explored.

## 3 Expectations for incorporating NRM into local government planning

### 3.1 Regional NRM expectations

It has previously been noted that the relatively recent establishment of regional NRM bodies under the Commonwealth Government's National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality and its second round National Heritage Trust have resulted in a range of regional NRM plans being produced by these bodies for their respective regions. To varying degrees, this has been a collaborative planning process involving a wide range of stakeholders that in some cases has included local government. These regional NRM plans articulate expectations that the various stakeholders, including local government, will collaborate in a voluntary partnership to implement these NRM plans.

#### 3.1.1 *South East Queensland Western Catchments Group*

The South East Queensland Western Catchments Group Incorporated (SEQ WCG) released their regional NRM plan in late 2004. Titled *Healthy land – Our future* (HLOF), its stated purpose is to “draw(s) together for the first time strategies, actions, knowledge and resources of multiple groups to achieve integrated management of natural resources across the whole of the Western Catchment” (SEQ WCG, 2004: 1).

HLOF recognises seven key natural resource assets and priority actions covering:

- surface water;
- groundwater;
- aquatic ecosystems;
- terrestrial biodiversity;
- land resources;
- landscape amenity and appreciation; and
- atmosphere (SEQ WCG, 2004).

The SEQ WCG region with respect to its associated local governments and their geographic areas of responsibility is illustrated in Figure A1 (see Appendix 1). SEQ WCG is comprised of the following local authorities, fully and partly in the NRM region, and contained within three catchments within its area of interest, including:

**Local authorities:** Boonah Shire; Brisbane City; Caboolture Shire; Caloundra City; Cambooya Shire; Crows Nest Shire; Esk Shire; Gatton

Shire; Ipswich City; Kilcoy Shire; Laidley Shire, and Nanango Shire.

**Catchments:** Stanley & Upper Brisbane Catchment; Lockyer Catchment and Bremer & Mid Brisbane Catchment.

The board of SEQ WCG that included the mayor of each local authority in the region oversaw the development of HLOF. Local government was also involved in the consultation processes during the development of the NRM plan for their region. The stated intent of SEQ WCG is that “there is a strong expectation that planning schemes of local governments in the region will be amended to reflect targets and priorities within *Healthy land – Our future* that are relevant to land use planning ...” (SEQ WCG, 2004: 11). However, HLOF is silent on the specific details of how NRM matters will be incorporated into statutory planning schemes and other areas of planning activity of local government.

HLOF identifies a range of asset targets and priority actions for each of the seven key natural resource assets of its region. Those that are proposed to be taken up by local government are outlined in Table A2.1 (see Appendix 2).

HLOF also identifies a number of management action targets and management actions that seek to address a number of threats considered to inhibit the achievement of the HLOF’s targets. The enabling program targets and actions seek to address the following threats:

- lack of coordinated approach;
- lack of integrated planning and policy;
- lack of integrated data systems; and
- lack of integrated regional monitoring.

The enabling program targets and actions relevant to local government are set out in Table A2.2 (see Appendix 2).

### **3.1.2 Far North Queensland Natural Resource Management Ltd**

The Far North Queensland Natural Resource Management Ltd (FNQ NRM) released their regional NRM plan in April 2005. Titled *Sustaining the wet tropics* (SWT), its stated purpose is to “develop actions, mechanisms and partnerships to manage natural resources and their associated cultural values sustainability in the Wet Tropics region” (FNQ NRM, 2005).

SWT recognises a number of primary natural resource, cultural and community assets including biodiversity, climate, land resources, water resources, caring for

country (Aboriginal cultural and natural resources) and community (FNQ NRM, 2005). The Plan identifies eight high priority programs for its regional investment strategy, including:

- reversing the decline in native vegetation and threatened species;
- maintaining healthy waterways and wetlands;
- controlling weeds and animal pests;
- using soils and water sustainability and productively;
- linking natural resource management to land development and the urban environment;
- improving the functionality of coastal and marine environments;
- meeting Aboriginal aspirations for natural and cultural resource management; and
- enhancing community awareness and engagement in NRM (FNQ NRM, 2005).

The FNQ NRM region with respect to its associated local governments and their geographic areas of responsibility is illustrated in Figure A2 (see Appendix 1). FNQ NRM is comprised of the following local authorities, fully and partly in the NRM region, and contained within eight catchments within its area of interest, including:

**Local authorities:** Atherton Shire; Cairns City; Cardwell Shire; Dalrymple Shire; Douglas Shire; Eacham Shire; Herberton Shire; Hinchinbrook Shire; Johnstone Shire; Mareeba Shire; Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Council and Yarrabah Aboriginal Council;.

**Catchments:** Barron Catchment; Russell Catchment; Mulgrave Catchment; Johnstone Catchment; Tully–Murray Catchment; Herbert Catchment; Trinity Inlet and Mossman–Daintree Catchment.

FNQ NRM Ltd has a nine-member board which includes two local government mayors from the local authorities in its region. One of the mayors is the chair of the board while the other is the director responsible for liaising with local government. The stated intent of FNQ NRM is that its NRM outcomes “will be implemented in cooperation with local government by incorporating objectives through their planning and works programs and assisting with obtaining NRM targets relating to a range of environmental and natural resource matters” (FNQ NRM, 2005: 144). Specific opportunities identified include:

- incorporating NRM objectives into local government planning schemes, policies, works programs and other planning and management mechanisms;
- assisting local government to manage local infrastructure services (including water supply, waste treatment, roads and recreation areas); and
- supporting local conservation initiatives.

However SWT is silent on the specific details of how NRM matters will be incorporated into statutory planning schemes and other areas of planning activity of local government.

SWT identifies a range of assigned implementation responsibilities in terms of management action targets that address a series of resource condition targets. Those that are proposed to be taken up by local government are outlined in Table A3.1 (see Appendix 3).

### *3.1.3 Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority*

The Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority (GH CMA) released their regional NRM plan in 2003. The *Glenelg Hopkins regional catchment strategy 2003–2007* (RCS) has the stated purpose of setting out how the catchment is to be managed as “the primary integrating planning framework for land, water and biodiversity in (the) CMA region” and is “an overarching strategic document under which are nested various action plans and strategies” (GH CMA, undated [a]).

The RCS recognises six key regional natural resource challenges including:

- regional sustainability;
- biodiversity;
- waterway health and water quality;
- soil decline and salinity;
- pest plants and animals; and
- coastal areas (GH CMA, undated [a]).

The GH CMA region with respect to its associated local governments and their geographic areas of responsibility is illustrated in Figure A3 (see Appendix 1). GH CMA is comprised of the following local authorities, fully and partly in the NRM region, and contained within three principal catchments within its area of interest, including:

**Local authorities:** Ararat Rural City; Ballarat City; Corangamite Shire; Horsham Shire; Glenelg Shire; Moyne Shire; Northern Grampians Shire; Pyrenees Shire; Southern Grampians Shire; Warrnambool City; and West Wimmera Shire.

**Catchments:** Glenelg River Basin; Hopkins River Basin, and Portland Coast Drainage Basin.

The GH CMA board and its implementation committees do not include any local government representatives. The RCS, however, does identify and acknowledge local government as an important partner in the implementation of the strategy.

The importance of local government to the achievement of the RCS's outcomes is acknowledged when it states: "Councils and CMAs share responsibility for natural resource management. The legislated powers, resources and networks of councils make them key partners in achieving many of the desired outcomes of this strategy" (GH CMA, undated [a]: 100). The RCS does identify some specific initiatives that the GH CMA can undertake to improve its partnership arrangements with local government and to deliver improved NRM through the activities of local government. However the precise details of these initiatives, such as incorporating NRM matters into statutory planning schemes and other areas of planning activity of local government, are still to be established.

The RCS action plan identifies a range of assigned implementation responsibilities in terms of regional management action targets that address a series of resource condition targets. Those that are proposed to be taken up by local government as the lead agency are outlined in Table A4.1 (see Appendix 4). Those where local government has been assigned a support role are outlined in Table A4.2 (see Appendix 4).

### *3.1.4 Major themes for local government involvement*

Across all three case studies there is general acknowledgement of the crucial role that local government does and can play in the successful achievement of various desired outcomes of the regional NRM strategies. In fact there are high expectations that much can be achieved through the existing processes of local government, particularly their statutory planning processes.

It was agreed that there is an essential requirement to incorporate NRM matters into the mandatory corporate planning processes of local government. Likewise, it was universally acknowledged that there are good opportunities to do so in local government's statutory planning processes and their operational plans that drive

the day-to-day activities of councils. Recognition of opportunities in the statutory planning area also extended to the associated development control process.

However, in all three case studies, there was a distinct absence of precise details as to how NRM was to be incorporated into local government planning and other functions. In fact it would appear that this may be the case universally and it was (or is now) accepted that subsequent work would be required to address these deficiencies. This research project typifies this requirement to fill in the gaps in this process involving local government (see also LGAQ, 2005).

While it has been acknowledged that statutory planning can address future intentions and circumstances, it is also noted that it has limited or no influence on past decisions and existing problems. Addressing these challenges goes to the heart of local government's daily operations and on-ground works. The evidence suggests that there is strong support for undertaking a range of initiatives aimed at pursuing improved local government involvement in NRM. The major themes for local government involvement in regional NRM have been universally identified as including:

- pest management (plants and animals);
- biodiversity including the protection of regionally significant (terrestrial and aquatic) ecosystems; and
- waterways health and water quality.

Other major NRM themes identified for local government management leadership by the majority of case studies included:

- soil decline and salinity;
- climate (particularly greenhouse, climate change and air quality);
- agricultural systems (including the protection of good quality land); and
- urban systems (particularly waste disposal, urban stormwater and effluent treatment).

A number of the themes identified by only one case study represent the priority challenges relevant only to that particular region. They are crucial issues in their regional context and include for example:

- outdoor recreation in the SEQ WCG region, as part of the fastest growing metropolitan region in Australia;
- air quality in the SEQ WCG region (associated with the previous rationale);

## Capitalising on opportunities: Incorporating NRM into local government planning

- the water quality objectives of the Moreton Bay and Catchments Partnership in SEQ;
- the World Heritage values in the FNQ NRM region which is positioned between the World Heritage properties of the Great Barrier Reef and the Wet Tropics; and
- protection of regionally significant (coastal, estuarine and marine) ecosystems in the FNQ NRM region (associated with the previous rationale).

These findings are consistent with the outcomes from the first series of workshops that were conducted in each CSP region, involving the board members and staff of the regional NRM body (Low Choy & Maccheroni, 2005a).<sup>3</sup>

There has also been universal recognition by the CSPs that in order for local government to take up their assigned lead agency and support roles as proposed by the regional NRM plans, they will require a range of assistance. While the precise nature of this assistance has yet to be established on an individual region-by-region and council-by-council basis, there is general agreement across the case studies that this could take the form of:

- guidance to local government with their individual NRM plans or Sustainability Plans (Victorian).
- improving local government capacity to address NRM issues through their daily business and operational plans; and
- building upon and strengthening local government's existing networks and community engagement (to now include NRM).

These issues are addressed in further detail below in Section 5. Specific recommendations are also contained in associated reports to this series.

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<sup>3</sup> The first workshop series conducted in each CSP region involved the board and staff of the regional body. They were conducted from February through to April 2005. See Low Choy & Maccheroni (2005a) for a full documentation of the workshop outcomes.

## 3.2 Local government expectations

The second series of local government workshops conducted in each CSP region provided insight into their local authorities' expectations for incorporating and addressing NRM in their normal activities and business<sup>4</sup> (Environmental Planning Project Team, 2005a, b, c).

In essence, these workshops provided an insight into local government's appreciation and understanding of their principal roles and responsibilities in the implementation of their regional body's NRM plan. While local government involvement with the various regional NRM plans varied considerably, an attempt was also made to ascertain what processes and functions local government thought could be utilised to support the implementation of the NRM plan (Low Choy & Maccheroni, 2005b).

### *3.2.1 Principal roles and responsibilities of local government*

The following roles and responsibilities were identified as opportunities for local government to implement their assigned responsibilities under their respective regional NRM plans and strategies:

#### ***Planning***

- strategic planning and coordination with other stakeholders and agencies;
- raising the profile of the corporate (council) plans and ensuring the inclusion of NRM;
- land-use planning that ensures the NRM plan is aligned and focused on relevant NRM issues within the region;
- monitoring and evaluation associated with the delivery of on-ground tasks assigned by the regional NRM plan.

#### ***Operational management***

- being a role model by setting best practice standards in the delivery and implementation of NRM initiatives.

#### ***Improving internal capacity***

- promoting awareness and providing NRM education internally to elected members and council staff.

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<sup>4</sup> The second workshop series conducted in each CSP region involved local government personnel (elected members and staff). They were conducted from May through to August 2005. See Low Choy & Maccheroni (2005b) for a full documentation of the workshop outcomes.

***Networking with other local governments and regional bodies***

- working with regional organisations of councils (ROCs) to set objectives for the ROCs to assist local government to implement NRM priorities;
- representing community interest in regional NRM planning;
- developing a strong relationship with the regional NRM body to ensure that local government is part of the NRM decision-making process and participates in the review of the NRM plans and the delivery of favourable regional outcomes for NRM;
- developing partnerships with other LGs in NRM activities e.g. council nurseries;
- promoting a regional perspective especially where funded programs should extend beyond local government boundaries to regional catchments.

***Community engagement***

- disseminating information and providing education on NRM and associated issues;
- identifying NRM funding resources for community groups and providing assistance and guidance with grant applications; and
- establishing collaborative community consultation and engagement programs for the delivery of NRM.

***3.2.2 Local government processes and functions***

The processes and functions that local government considered could be utilised to support the implementation of the NRM regional plans included:

***Planning***

- the existing (modified) local government planning system and associated framework;
- the corporate planning process (provides the mechanism for the integration of NRM into local government's core business);
- enhanced strategic, statutory and operational planning functions and planning tools and instruments (e.g. planning schemes and environmental management plans).

***Operational management***

- the existing (enhanced) reporting systems to include NRM projects and initiatives;
- local government's role as a public landowner and manager and their involvement in committees of management.

***Community engagement***

- the existing links to established community groups for the delivery of NRM;
- the community consultation processes—this could be further enhanced by project exemplars to show successful on-ground project works; and
- existing council communication processes enhanced to provide NRM operational standards, guidelines, checklists and fact sheets.

These findings are consistent with those from similar research in other regions (see LGAQ, 2005; McDonald *et al.*, 2005).

## 4 Potential local government planning opportunities

### 4.1 The corporate planning process

#### 4.1.1 Queensland

LGA(Q)93 requires all local authorities to prepare a corporate plan (CP). This plan is the overarching document that sets a council's direction and guides a local authority in its operations that are designed to achieve the council's and their community's vision. In essence, a council's budget priorities for a four-year period are set out in this document. Together with the financial plan, it seeks to deliver the resources required to support the annual operational plans of the council.

As the principal guiding document for all local government services and business, it is imperative for NRM initiatives to be acknowledged in the CP in order for it to be recognised as a core business of council and funded accordingly. In summary, the requirements for the CP as set out in the Act include:

- must be adopted by resolution of the council;
- must be adopted before the first financial year covered by the plan to allow preparation and adoption of budget for the financial year consistent with the plan;
- may be amended by resolution at any time;
- must comply with LG financial standards;
- must be open for inspection for 30 days before LG adopts the plan;
- all of LG exercise of jurisdiction must be consistent with the plan;
- the plan must cover a specified period of four years; and
- all LG budgets must be developed consistently with the plan.  
(LGA(Q)93).

The principal sections of the corporate plan that should acknowledge NRM matters and provide a statement of council's intent in this regard include:

- Statement of strategic direction
- Council vision
- Guiding principles/goals
- Key areas – objectives and strategies
- Performance indicators.

Guidance on the incorporation of NRM matters into Queensland local government corporate, strategic and operational plans is provided by the recently released

guide from the local government Association of Queensland (LGAQ, 2005). This guide provides a useful function in raising awareness of NRM matters as they relate to the business of local government. It demonstrates a logical sequence of considerations for reviewing NRM issues in the context of a local authority's corporate, strategic and operational plans.

However, its generic nature has not allowed it to present any direct and specific connection between the regional NRM plans and local government corporate, strategic and operational plans. It provide little guidance on how a local authority can interpret the specific regional NRM plan and each regional NRM body will still be required to negotiate with each individual local authority in its region for it to accept specific NRM responsibilities under the regional NRM plan. To this end, this project and its research outcomes compliment the LGAQ guide (LGAQ 2005).

#### 4.1.2 Victoria

In the Victorian situation, corporate plans were an original requirement of the *Local Government Act 1989 (LGA(V)89)*. Later, the *Local Government (Democratic Reform) Act 2003* amended the original Act and changed the title of 'corporate plan' to 'council plan'<sup>5</sup>.

The council (corporate) plans and the strategic resource plan (financial plan) are four-year (or more) plans which set the vision and goals for a council. These longer-term plans are converted into annual 'action statements'. These are the annual business plans and the annual budgets which outline the actions to be taken to achieve the CP, and detail how they are going to be financed (MAV, 2004).

The aim of these council plans is to demonstrate the strategic direction and priorities of a council. They must include:

- the strategic objectives of the council;
- strategies for achieving the objectives for at least the next four years;
- strategic indicators for monitoring the achievement of the objectives;
- a strategic resource plan (containing matters specified in Section 126 of the *LGA(V)89*); and
- any other matters which are prescribed by the regulations (*LGA(V)89*).

The Municipal Association of Victoria (2004) argues that CPs must have clear and identifiable outcomes and contain performance indicators that are simple and

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<sup>5</sup> For the purposes of this report, the abbreviation CP will be used to refer to both the 'corporate plan' and the retitled 'council plan'.

easily understood and which clearly specify what is required to achieve stated goals. The CPs should have council and community ownership and be monitored regularly through council's review of its performance reports.

Like their Queensland counterpart, the council plans provide a direct potential link between NRM intentions and the activities of local government. Inclusion of NRM matters in the council plans can ensure that priorities and resources are set aside for the incorporation of NRM into the core business of councils.

## 4.2 State planning interests

### 4.2.1 *Queensland*

State interests are expressed in state planning policies (SPPs). As statutory instruments, these SPPs are binding on local government who must account for them in their statutory planning schemes. The SPPs relevant to NRM include:

#### ***SPP 1/92 Development and the conservation of agricultural land***

It sets out broad principles for the protection of good quality agricultural land from inappropriate developments.

#### ***State Coastal Management Plan***

Under the *Coastal Protection and Management Act 1995* the State Coastal Management Plan and subsequent regional coastal management plans have the status of SPPs for the purpose of making and amending planning schemes and assessing and deciding development applications.

#### ***SPP 2/02: Planning and managing development involving acid sulfate soils***

This SPP aims to ensure that development involving acid sulfate soils is planned and managed to avoid the release of potentially harmful contaminants into the environment.

#### ***SPP 1/03: Mitigating the adverse impacts of flood, bushfire and landslide***

This SPP aims to minimise the potential adverse impacts of flood, bushfire and landslide on people, property, economic activity and the environment.

The new *SEQ Regional Plan 2005–2026* has been deemed an SPP under the *Statutory Instruments Act 1992* (see Section 4.3.1 for further discussion).

SPPs are supported by guidelines that provide advice on interpreting and implementing the respective policies.

#### 4.2.2 Victoria

The *Planning and Environment Act 1987 (Vic)* [PEA(V)87] sets out a set of standardised provisions for all local government planning in the state—the Victoria Planning Provisions (VPPs). Importantly, one of the principal objectives of this act is to protect natural and man-made resources. These VPPs provide direction to all local government planning schemes through a State Planning Policy Framework (SPPF). The link between the VPPs and local government statutory planning is further explored in Section 4.4.2.

The framework comprises general principles for land use and development in Victoria and specific policies dealing with settlement, environment, housing, economic development, infrastructure and particular uses and development. Local government planning schemes must include the mandatory provisions such as the state planning policies contained in the SPPF. The SPPF also comprises a set of 25 state government-determined *zones*. Local government can vary the zones to a degree through the use of overlays and schedules. However these overlays are also predetermined by the state government (DSE, 2003). It is also interesting to note that the SPPF does make mention of the conservation and wise use of natural resources (DSE, 2003).

The SPPF may include provisions that are relevant to a council's municipal strategic statements (MSS) and to its local planning policies (LPPs)—see Section 4.4.2. These provisions include the relevant state standard zones and overlays to be applied in the scheme. Some of these zones and overlays include local provisions as schedules to the zone or overlay.

A planning scheme is constructed by taking the VPP as a basic template. Into this is inserted the local vision and policy framework (the MSS and LPPs). The zones and overlays needed to implement these are then selected and appropriate local provisions known as schedules are written to support the zones and overlays (The State of Victoria, 2005).

### 4.3 The regional planning process

#### 4.3.1 Queensland

The South East Queensland (SEQ) Regional Plan is the statutory regional planning strategy that directs growth and development in the SEQ region. It was prepared under Part 5A of the *Integrated Planning Act 1997 (IPA97)* as amended by the *Integrated Planning and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2004 (IPOLAA 2004)*. The plan is a statutory instrument under the *Statutory Instruments Act*

1992 and is also a planning instrument under the *IPA97*. The SEQ Regional Plan is designated an SPP and it is the pre-eminent plan for SEQ and takes precedence over all other planning instruments (Queensland Government and SEQROC, 2005). The plan directs the incorporation of all regional policies and regional sustainability indicators into local government planning schemes and processes. Consequently, all SEQ local government planning schemes are required to be amended to reflect the provisions of the plan.

The SEQ Regional Plan refers to NRM in Section 4 and its position on NRM is contained in desired regional outcome 4 (DRO 4) which states: "Regional natural resources and rural production areas are protected, enhanced and used sustainably" (Queensland Government and SEQROC, 2005: 42). This DRO contains policies that seek to "integrate Commonwealth, state and local government natural resource programs, policies and planning processes" and attempt to "align regional natural resource management, planning, investment, monitoring and reporting with the regional plan" (Queensland Government and SEQROC, 2005: 43). It acknowledges the following NRM bodies in its region: SEQWCG, NRM SEQ (now amalgamated into SEQ Catchments) and the Burnett Mary Regional NRM Group.

Outside of the SEQ region, regional planning is a voluntary cooperative undertaking that is based on various regional organisations of councils. This situation applies to the FNQ case study region. After a hiatus of two to three years of inactive regional planning outside of the SEQ region, the regional planning process in FNQ was reactivated in early 2005. The connections between future regional plans for FNQ and the regional NRM plan for this region have yet to be determined.

#### *4.3.2 Victoria*

In Victoria, there is no formal regional planning process along the lines of the Queensland model. The *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994 (CaLP Act 94)* provides the legislative basis for regional-scale catchment planning and management in Victoria. This Act underpins NRM in the state through its catchment management authorities (CMAs) and the Victorian Catchment Management Council (VCMC). This is delivered through each CMA's regional catchment strategy and allocation of the financial investment deemed required.

The purpose of the Act is:

- to set up the framework for the integrated management and protection of catchments;
- to encourage community participation in the management of land and water resources;
- to set up a system of controls on noxious weeds and pest animals; and
- to repeal and amend various Acts concerning catchment and land management.

*CaLP Act 94* (Part 2) addresses the catchment and land protection advisory system and outlines the role of the VCMC. This council is required to promote investigation into, and research on, any matter relating to catchment management or land protection. Appointed in 1997, the VCMC facilitates integrated and coordinated management through the Victorian Catchment Management Framework (VCMF). This framework includes:

- ten catchment management authorities covering ten regions;
- the requirements for sustainable use and management of land and water resources at the catchment level;
- the provision of a system established for managing catchments; and
- the requirement for community consultation, engagement; and participation (64% of Victoria's landscape is under private ownership).

The VCMF has been developed to achieve:

- community involvement in and commitment to natural resource management;
- ecologically sustainable development of natural resource-based industries;
- maintenance and improvement in the quality of water and condition of rivers;
- prevention and reversal of land degradation;
- conservation and protection of the diversity and extent of natural ecosystems; and
- minimisation of the economic and environmental impacts of pest plants and animals.

(The State of Victoria and the VCMC, 2003).

## 4.4 The statutory planning process

It is generally acknowledged that the field of land use (statutory) planning is the most important of local government's regulatory functions, particularly in Queensland where for all intents and purposes it is the sole planning body (Tucker, 1995; Bowman & Hampton, 1983). Jones (1993: 36) also holds this view, claiming that while "local government does have considerable power over land use ... (it) always has to watch over its shoulder for state or federal intervention".

### 4.4.1 Queensland

The statutory town planning functions in Queensland are defined in the *Integrated Planning Act 1997 (IPA97)* as amended. Under this Act ecological sustainability, consistent with the intent of the National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development, is to be sought by:

- (a) coordinating and integrating planning at the local, regional and state levels;
- (b) managing the process by which development occurs; and
- (c) managing the effects of development on the environment including managing the use of premises." (*IPA97*, ss. 1.2.1).

The principal statutory and non-statutory planning instruments recognised under *IPA97* are illustrated in Figure 2. This figure also distinguishes between those instruments that are mandatory and those that are optional under the legislation.

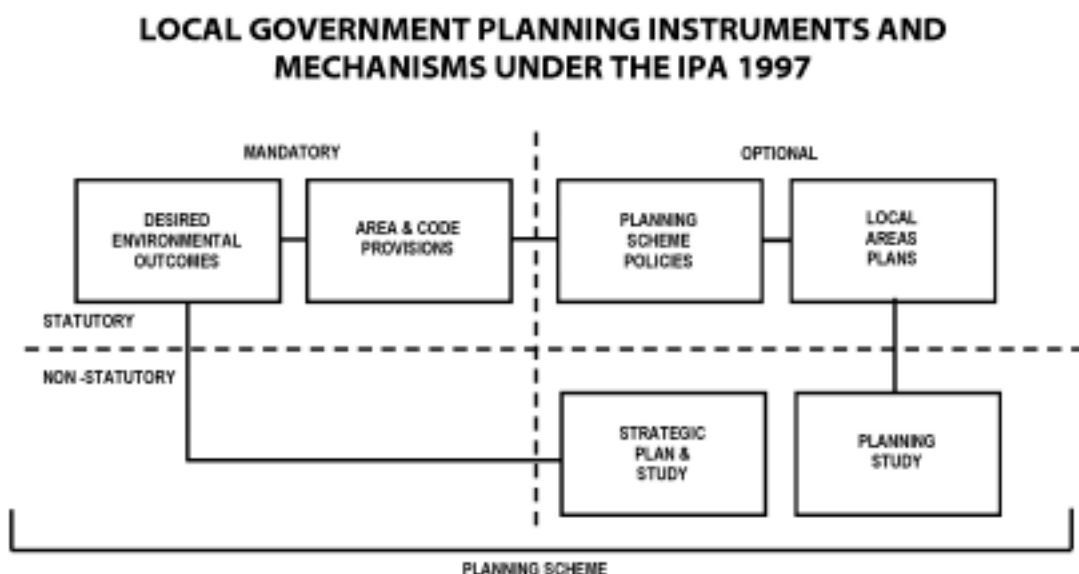


Figure 2: Queensland local government planning under *IPA97*

*IPA97* commenced operation on 30 March 1998 and established a framework for the integration of planning and development assessment with the intention of ensuring that development and the effects of development are ecologically sustainable. The Act defines ecological sustainability as a balance that integrates protection of ecological processes through the three tiers of government, economic development; and the cultural, economic, physical and social wellbeing of the community.

Planning schemes prepared under *IPA97* must satisfy several key elements, namely:

- i. coordinate and integrate core matters, including any state or regional dimensions;
- ii. identify the desired environmental outcomes for the planning scheme area; and
- iii. include measures that facilitate the achievement of the desired environmental outcomes.

A planning scheme may also include:

- i. performance indicators to assess the achievement of the desired environmental outcomes; and
- ii. a benchmark development sequence (if the local government is prescribed under a regulation).

There are three **core matters** that must be addressed in a planning scheme:

- i. Land use and development—the use of, or restrictions on, the use of land by humans;
- ii. Infrastructure—land, facilities, services and works (includes what is needed and when it is needed); and
- iii. Valuable features—resources or areas of ecological significance; areas contributing significantly to amenity; areas or places of cultural heritage significance; and resources or areas of economic value.

Other important features of IPA planning schemes include:

- **Desired environmental outcomes** (DEOs) define the end result that local authorities want to achieve for an area. DEOs provide the foundation of the scheme from which all other elements are derived.
- **Measures** indicate the way development should be undertaken in order to achieve the DEO. There are likely to be two common types of

measures in planning schemes—measures that identify categories of development and codes.

- **Codes** are a measure to facilitate the achievement of the DEO. They are a new form of planning tool in Queensland local government planning. Codes may have more than one of the following features:
  - they may be locality-based;
  - they may apply to particular types of development;
  - they may apply to all types of development; and/or
  - they may include triggers to determine when development requires code or impact assessment.
- **Performance indicators** are used to assess the achievement of the DEOs. Each local government must review its planning scheme every eight years. Performance indicators are used to assess the performance of the planning scheme.
- **Benchmark development sequence** (a non-compulsory component of IPA planning schemes). It is intended to facilitate the orderly sequence of development and consider equity in allocation of costs associated with the provision of infrastructure.
- **Infrastructure charges plan** identifies development infrastructure items making up a network of development infrastructure items. It states the desired standard of service for the network having regard to user benefits and environmental effects of the network and evaluates alternative ways of funding the items.

Development assessment is incorporated into IPA through the Integrated Development Assessment System (IDAS) which integrates the assessment of state and local government interests and requirements. It attempts to provide a 'one-stop shop' for development assessment. In summary, the IDAS stages include:

- application by proponent for development approval;
- information requests and assessment by the relevant referral agencies;
- notification to the public and adjoining owners about the development application and their right to make a submission;
- decision-making about the development application; and
- appeals to the Planning and Environment Court by applicants and submitters.

Under *IPA97*, no category of development is prohibited as the approach relies on the philosophy of performance. The measures that identify categories of development indicate if the development is self-assessable or assessable.

Since *IPA97* came into effect in 1998, all local governments in the state were required to develop new planning schemes consistent with the new legislative requirements. While some local authorities have done so, most are still in the process of finalising their schemes. Appendix 5 shows the current status of *IPA* scheme preparation for all local authorities in the Queensland CSP regions.

#### 4.4.2 *Victoria*

Previous reference has been made to the Victorian planning provisions (VPPs) which provide direction to all local government planning schemes through a State Planning Policy Framework (see Section 4.2.2). It was noted that the VPP provides the basic template for local government to prepare a planning scheme into which they can then insert their local vision and policy framework (the MSS and LPPs) (The State of Victoria, 2005).

The Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) provides a broad outline and vision regarding existing and future land use within a municipality (DSE, 2005). All councils must prepare an MSS and these are subject to regular state government review. The MSS must further any planning objectives of the state government that are relevant to the municipal district.

An MSS must contain:

- the strategic planning, land-use and development objectives of the planning authority;
- the strategies for achieving the objectives;
- a general explanation of the relationship between those objectives and strategies and the controls on use and development of the land in the planning scheme; and
- any other provisions or matters directed by the Minister.

Councils must review their MSS at least once every three years or at times directed by the Minister. This review can be facilitated by ongoing performance monitoring of the planning scheme as outlined in the VPP Practice Note dealing with the format of MSSs. The performance monitoring section of the MSS should clearly state what the council intends to monitor and focus on:

- the extent to which the Local Planning Policy Framework (LPPF) has been successful in:
  - articulating and communicating planning objectives, strategies and policies for the municipality; and
  - guiding land-use and development decisions to achieve the outcomes specified in the scheme.
- the extent to which the council procedures and decisions have been successful in implementing the scheme.

The LPPF of an individual local authority sets a local and regional strategic policy context for a municipality. It comprises the MSS and specific local policies. Local planning policies focus on specific areas or issues and are tools used to implement the objectives and strategies of the MSS (DSE 1999 & 2000).

The LPPF establishes local government planning schemes which must include separate specifications of:

- i. state standard provisions (selected from the SPPF); and
- ii. local provisions.

Planning schemes must include an MSS) and may contain locally relevant:

- i. set of policies and specific objectives;
- ii. strategic plans;
- iii. policy statements; and
- iv. codes or guidelines related to the use or development of land.

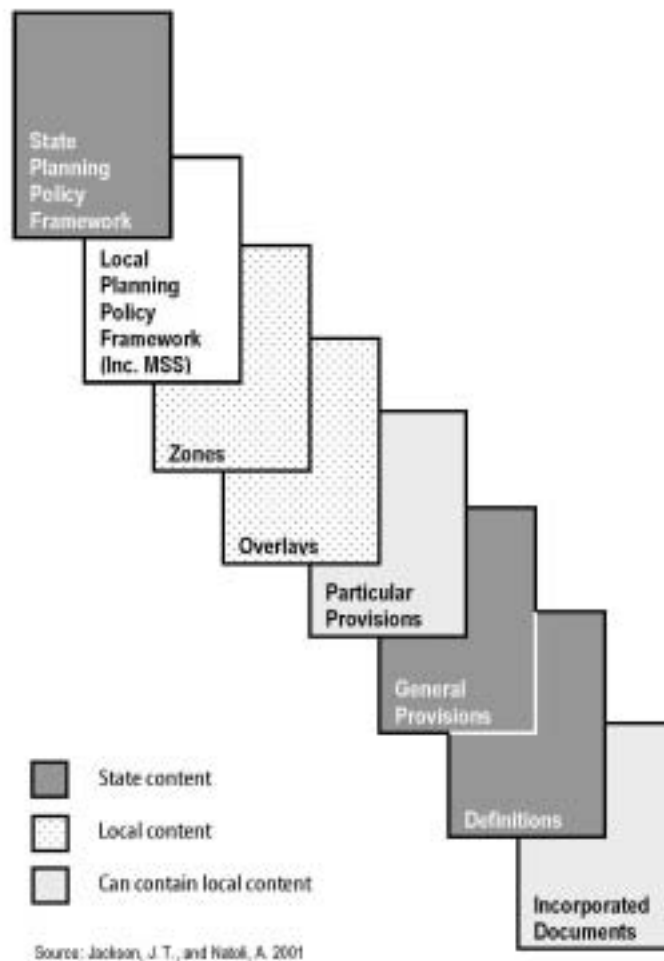
Planning schemes contain two forms of information, namely:

- i. a set of planning scheme maps that show the zones and overlays that apply to the scheme area; and
- ii. written information or ordinances that set out the requirements of the policies, zones and overlays.

Further potential provisions are set out in Section 6(2) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987 (Vic)* as amended. Notably, planning schemes can incorporate, apply or adopt any document which relates to the use, development or protection of land. 'Land' in the Act is defined as including:

- i. buildings and other structures permanently fixed to land;
- ii. land covered with water; and
- iii. any estate, interest, easement, servitude, privilege or right in or over land.

The relationship between elements of the SPPF and LPPF is illustrated in Figure 3.



**Figure 3: Elements of municipal planning schemes under the VPP**

#### 4.5 Other planning processes

This study focuses on the more conventional forms of planning activity that are typically undertaken by local government. These are statutory and non-statutory outputs that include corporate (council) plans, strategic plans, statutory planning schemes and operational plans.

Operational plans can cover a range of NRM issues including: natural hazards (fire, flood); pest management (plants and animals); waterways health and water quality; floodplain and drainage management; catchment management; biodiversity (protection of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems); roadside management (including stock routes); native vegetation retention and many other themes of environmental management. Other areas of operational planning have

been extended to include environmental strategies such as environmental health reports and rehabilitation plans (e.g. for waterways restoration).

Recently, other forms of planning have been utilised by local government. Local Agenda 21 (LA21) and integrated catchment management (ICM) planning represent contemporary examples of the development of resource management and parallel environmental planning systems that have been established outside of traditional planning and the existing statutory planning systems.

Low Choy (2002) has noted that LA21 and ICM initiatives represent responses to many perceptions, past experiences and disappointments with traditional planning and local government generally. These perceived and real past deficiencies include:

- a lack of suitable philosophical perspective to address emergent environmental management issues;
- a lack of community involvement in the planning process and decision-making processes;
- a lack of grass roots (community/local government) ownership;
- dissatisfaction with the inflexibility of the regulatory approach that has characterised statutory forms of local government planning;
- an emphasis on the urban environment at the expense of the rural issues;
- a parochial and inwards focus by local government; and
- a lack of confidence (or trust) in local government management and decision-making processes.

Conacher and Conacher (2000: 317) acknowledge that Landcare and catchment management initiatives have "developed crucial links between rural and urban planning in recent years .... (*by addressing*) some of the serious gaps which existed previously in approaches to natural resources management". However, they also note that Landcare and catchment management "remains essentially *de facto* planning methodologies", with a major deficiency being the absence of statutory backing and formal structural arrangements.

In more recent times, a number of 'new' forms of plans have started to emerge in local government. While they appear under 'new' titles such as local environmental plans, green plans, sustainability blueprints/strategies/plans, it is yet to be established whether they are the outputs from new planning processes or just the rebranding of older forms of planning.

## 5 Incorporating NRM into local government planning

### 5.1 Opportunities

The series of local government workshops conducted in each case study partner's region has provided insight into their local government's perspectives of the opportunities for, and the constraints to, improved NRM uptake into their normal activities and business (Environmental Planning Project Team, 2005a, b, c).

The workshops revealed very little opposition to a regional perspective for environmental and natural resource management. There was general acceptance of NRM as an existing and emergent issue that required a whole-of-community approach where local government should play a major part. It was also generally accepted that the regional body had a role in promoting, coordinating and facilitating NRM matters within their respective regions. In fact there was strong support for the regional NRM body to take a more active role in these functions as well as acting as a broker for the essential resources required. There were also some suggestions that the regional body should take a more active role in directing NRM initiatives within the region, although it is still unclear if local government would be prepared to surrender any of its existing power and authority to facilitate this initiative.

There was widespread recognition that local government was the creation of their respective state governments and that as a consequence, there were statutory specifications and limitations on what local government was responsible for. This extended to local government's statutory planning responsibilities and discussions highlighted the opportunities to incorporate NRM into these areas.

The research report noted that participants readily identified the importance of incorporating NRM matters into a range of existing local government planning functions including corporate (council) plans, strategic plans, statutory planning schemes and operational plans. It was argued that such initiatives could ensure the improved integration of NRM initiatives into the core business of local government. The potential benefits of using existing local government networks and established relationships with the community and other stakeholders were also noted and should not be underestimated (Low Choy & Maccheroni, 2005b).

Local government's long history of successful involvement in various NRM activities such as weed and animal pest management was highlighted. It was argued that these activities along with other landcare activities could provide essential process tools that could be expanded and built upon to create a wider

NRM focus for local government. If these initiatives could be enhanced through collaborative partnerships with the regional NRM body, these partnership arrangements will assist local government with the implementation of the desired regional objectives and management action targets as identified in the regional NRM plans of each CSP (see Appendices 2, 3 and 4).

## 5.2 Challenges

Local government in the CSP regions identified a number of barriers hindering their capacity to incorporate the NRM responsibilities set out for them within their respective regional NRM plans. These barriers are set out in Table 1.

**Table 1: Barriers identified by CSP local government participants**

Barriers identified	Identified <sup>[B1]</sup> by all 3 CSPs
<b><i>Main barriers for local government</i></b>	
Lack of clear definition of LG roles and responsibility and how these relate to those of the regional NRM body	
Insufficient human and financial resources (constrained financial resources and finite rate base)	✓
The cost of administering compliance (no capacity to increase regulation and enforcement of NRM activities)	
Lack of capacity in smaller councils	
Internal council structure constraining dissemination of NRM information	
No internal process to assess, track and evaluate NRM within councils	
Lack of NRM information, technical expertise and associated 'process tools' in LG	✓
Lack of LG coordination of the regional NRM actions and priorities (not included in council plans)	
LG planning schemes pay little attention to regional NRM issues (no statutory requirement for NRM to be included in schemes)	
Staffing limitations – no dedicated NRM officers and lack of continuity through staff turnover	✓
Limited capacity (expertise, time and resources) for community engagement, assistance for landowners and project coordination	✓
Dealing with statutory responsibilities which are also NRM issues (e.g. pest management, stormwater)	
Regional boundaries do not align with LG boundaries – some councils deal with a number of NRM bodies	
<b><i>Barriers related to regional NRM body and NRM strategy</i></b>	
Regional body's lack of planning expertise and understanding of strategic planning, LG systems and responsibilities	
Unclear LG responsibilities and targets in regional NRM strategy (not sufficiently specific and measurable)	
Lack of LG ownership of regional NRM strategies and targets (no involvement in the decision-making process)	
Lack of clear communication channels (levels and points of contact) between councils and regional body	

<b>Barriers identified</b>	<b>Identified<sup>[B1]</sup> by all 3 CSPs</b>
Lack of partnerships between regional body and LG	
<b><i>Barriers between local governments</i></b>	
Lack of continuity in the maintenance regimes across adjoining LG authorities (e.g. vegetation management)	
Technical systems supporting planning and policy development are not compatible across local authorities	
Lack of regional coordination of issues (e.g. rural zones)	
<b><i>Other barriers for local governments</i></b>	
Lack of coordination between LG, state agencies and regional body (re: decision-making and information sharing)	
Overlap between state government programs and NRM objectives – differing priorities of LG, regional body, state and federal governments	✓
Lack of lead time for councils to tap into funding	
Existing short-term funding cycles and lack of long term funding from state and federal governments	
The devolution of responsibility by higher levels of government with no support	
Dealing with land identified for NRM activities in private ownership	
<b><i>Barriers related to the community</i></b>	
Local community's lack of understanding of the NRM issues	
Lack of awareness and public perception about the role of LG	✓
Public opposition to the use of rates revenue to fund extra works for NRM activities	
Conflicting aspirations between LG and community (no shared understanding of common goals)	
Community/volunteer fatigue	

The most significant barriers that were identified related to local government's internal structure, principally in terms of its limited human resources and available technical NRM expertise. The lack of dedicated NRM staff within local government seriously hampers them from being proactive on NRM matters. The implications of these limitations affect a wide range of local government activities extending from internal activities to external communications with the community. However, the precise shortfalls and deficiencies in these areas are unknown and should be addressed as a matter of urgency.

At the heart of these barriers is local government's constrained financial resources and finite rate base that is particularly acute for the smaller local authorities. There is a strong expectation that external sources will be necessary to address these resource shortfalls.

Other major barriers related to local government's relationship with the regional body and with other councils. The principal barrier in this regard was identified as poor communication and the lack of a coordination network between local government itself and with the regional body.

While it was recognised that local government had very well established networks with its local community, there was some concern and confusion regarding who had responsibility for promoting, communicating and educating the local community on NRM matters. This emerged as an important issue as there was a widespread perception that the community did not understand the role of local government, especially in the NRM arena, and did not comprehend NRM matters generally.

There was widespread criticism for the continued and significant delegation of responsibilities down to local government without the necessary resources accompanying the delegations. This led some participants to question the whole NRM initiative and whether local government could in fact financially support these new responsibilities under their current financial regimes. Further criticism was expressed for the lack of long-term certainty in state and federal government funding arrangements that too often presented local government with different sets of priorities.

These findings are consistent with those from similar research in other regions (see LGAQ, 2005; McDonald *et al.*, 2005). They also confirm the range of attributes, challenges and special functions characterising Australian local government that were outlined in Section 2.1.

While the above analysis has focused on drawing out the similarities between local governments, some major differences between local governments in the CSP regions also became evident. Many of the additional barriers identified in the case of the GH CMA region can be attributed to the different state government arrangements for regional and local government planning and environmental management that exist between Victoria and Queensland. This could form the basis for further study. An additional factor that possibly influenced these results is the longer length of time that the GH CMA Regional Catchment Strategy has been implemented (commenced 2003), compared to the other CSPs who only commenced implementation during early 2005. Interestingly, the GH CMA approach to the preparation of their regional NRM plan also had the least local government involvement of the three case studies.

### 5.3 Local government enhancement requirements

The local government workshops conducted in each CSP region also provided insight into their local authorities' views on enhancement requirements that could lead to improved incorporation of NRM matters (Environmental Planning Project Team, 2005a, b, c). These enhancement improvements ranged across local government processes, activities and business.

Table 2 reflects the perspectives of the local authorities in the CSPs regions in terms of a series of important enhancement initiatives that they believe are essential for their improved uptake of the NRM responsibilities identified in their respective regional NRM strategies.

It was agreed that local government enhancement to address the implementation of their assigned NRM initiatives would only be successful if additional resources were accessed and made available to local government. The resources identified were in the form of financial and human resources. It was unanimously concluded that enhanced local government capacity to facilitate and manage NRM across its core business activities required appropriate funding to support the recruitment and employment of specialised NRM staff with the ability to strategise as well as carry out effective implementation of NRM initiatives and community liaison. Resources are also required to improve NRM expertise and data available within local government circles that in turn could facilitate improved communications between local government and the community.

However, in order for local government to integrate and implement NRM, their existing capacity and frameworks will require enhancement. This should extend to the recognition of previous successful local government environment and NRM achievements and build upon that success for future NRM initiatives. This will require improved partnership arrangement between local government and their respective regional NRM bodies and a stronger commitment from the federal and state governments to support local government's formal involvement and role in NRM initiatives. This support should include the provision of technical expertise and advice and access to essential NRM data.

It was also suggested that the regional planning organisation (e.g. the regional organisation of councils or equivalent) could play a role in assisting to set NRM targets and in the integration and coordination of implementation actions.

**Table 2: Enhancement requirements identified by CSP local government participants**

Enhancement requirements identified	Identified by all 3 CSPs
<b><i>Additional resources required by local government</i></b>	
Funding for strategic planning activities	
Financial resources for NRM implementation (LG NRM staff and coordination of regional NRM strategies)	✓
NRM staff resources (LG liaison officer, extension officer, pest management coordinator, grant officer)	✓
Communication resources (focus on communication between the LG and regional NRM body)	
<b><i>Enhancement initiatives</i></b>	
Establish LG advisory group to advise regional NRM body	✓
Provision of technical NRM technical advice for LG	✓
Establishment of NRM technical advisory group for LG	
Greater interchange of staff between councils and regional NRM body (e.g. two-way staff secondments)	✓
Increased role for ROC (setting NRM targets, integrating and coordinating implementation actions)	✓
Active engagement of regional body (lead role) in integration of NRM into council plans, planning schemes and other planning tools)	
Establishing NRM traineeships (including Indigenous traineeships)	
Provision of processes and tools (e.g. procedures, checklists) to assist the LG liaison officer, LG and landowners	
Assistance and advice on funding sources available to LG to support their NRM responsibilities	
Improved data management and coordination systems between LG and state agencies (including access to data)	
Improved LG communication network within the NRM region	
Develop community partnerships to increase NRM awareness and understanding (e.g. establish NRM community education and information centre)	✓
Support community groups to implement NRM strategies and facilitate networking between them	
Establish cooperative partnerships for LG nurseries and LG pest management	
A shift in responsibility for community engagement from LG to the regional bodies	
Introduce an NRM/ green/ environmental levy	
Documentation and dissemination of successful case studies	

All the enhancement initiatives identified require the development of improved and closer cooperation between local government and their regional NRM bodies. Enhancement initiatives identified ranged from the establishment of high-order policy forums between local government and the board of the regional body to working groups to improve NRM implementation at the officer level. They also included forums to improve the flow and transfer of NRM technical advice as well

as staff secondments between local government and the regional body. All round, it was felt that the regional body could provide more assistance to local government in their accessing and applying for funds.

Overarching all these proposed enhancement initiatives is the urgent need to clarify the roles and responsibilities of local government in NRM. Once clarified, these local government NRM roles and responsibilities should be promoted to all other levels of government and to the community. There was a strong feeling that getting this message out to the community would go a long way towards achieving a better long-term outcome and partnership with an NRM-aware and dedicated community. While existing local government community networks should play a large role in this initiative, it was suggested that serious consideration should be given to a formal process of community engagement through, for example, the establishment of an NRM community education and information centre as a focal point of contact and dissemination within the community.

Again, these observations and conclusions display a strong correlation with those from similar research in other regions (see LGAQ, 2005; McDonald *et al.*, 2005).

These findings suggest very strongly that this whole array of local government initiatives should be developed as an integrated set of initiatives in the form of an engagement strategy. This strategy is fully developed in the next research report of this series (see Low Choy & Maccheroni, 2005c).

## 6 Strategic options for 'a way ahead'

### 6.1 Roadmaps for incorporating NRM into planning

'Roadmaps' have been derived for each CSP region to illustrate a range of opportunities for the incorporation of NRM matters into the traditional forms of planning activity that are undertaken by local government. They contain proposals that are consistent with the priorities and initiatives that emerged from the CSP workshops and the evidence gained from the research described previously.

These roadmaps represent strategic frameworks for the incorporation of NRM aspects into the normal planning activities of local government. They illustrate:

- the overarching framework under which local government planning must take place and in which NRM issues can be related to those planning endeavours;
- potential pathways through which NRM can be directed or guided to its incorporation into local government plans; and
- the associated planning activity which may impinge on or influence local government planning activity.

As the planning systems are different in each of the CSP regions, a separate roadmap has been developed for each region. In effect, each case study region represents a different class of opportunities for incorporating NRM, namely:

**Class 1:** cases where local government is totally subjected to the statutory requirements of a formal regional plan<sup>6</sup>;

**Class 2:** cases where local government is subjected to voluntary requirements of a formal regional plan; and

**Class 3:** cases where local government is subjected to the direct statutory requirements of the state government in the absence of a formal regional plan.

As all local authorities fall into one of these three classes, together these roadmaps have applicability across the complete range of local governments in Australia.

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<sup>6</sup> The regional plan refers to a state government-derived or a joint state and local government-derived regional plan for growth management or regional development, as opposed to the regional NRM plan.

### *6.1.1 South-east Queensland (Class 1)*

The SEQ planning landscape is dominated by the new statutory provisions recently conferred on regional and local planning and particularly affecting local government in this region. These new regional planning arrangements are illustrated in Figure 4 (previously discussed in Sections 4.2.1 and 4.3.1).

The SEQ WCG NRM plan (i.e. HLOF) has been inserted into these arrangements and this illustrates the opportunities for transferring NRM into the traditional planning instruments and tools that are currently in use in this region. Because the NRM plan has no statutory standing, it can only provide guidance for the transfer of NRM matters into these other areas of planning. Interestingly, the new statutory SEQ Regional Plan now provides an alternative pathway, via a direct route, for NRM matters to flow into local government IPA schemes. This arises as a consequence of the mandatory requirement for all local government statutory plans to account for the provisions of the SEQ Regional Plan (see Section 4.3.1). However, this can only occur if the new SEQ Regional Plan picks up the necessary NRM provisions and at present there is no direction for that to occur.

Alternatively, as Figure 4 illustrates, a more direct approach is possible if NRM was established as a state interest and expressed as an SPP. As previously discussed, local governments are required to address all state interests in their statutory planning schemes (see Section 4.2.1).

The new regional planning arrangements for SEQ have introduced a new planning instrument, the Local Growth Management Strategies (LGMS). During the next two years, all local authorities are required to produce LGMS for their designated areas in the urban footprint. However, it is unclear at this point if this new requirement can facilitate further NRM uptake into local government planning.

The SEQ roadmap also highlights the crucial role that the corporate plan should play in these local government arrangements. The corporate plan theoretically overarches all activities of a local authority and should provide the necessary direction to other planning activities, principally the statutory IPA scheme and all operational plans.

Figure 4 recognises that a direct link can be established between the SEQ WCG NRM plan and the IPA planning scheme. However, as this would be a non-direct link, it may need to be encouraged by the application of a broad awareness and education process supported by a range of incentives.

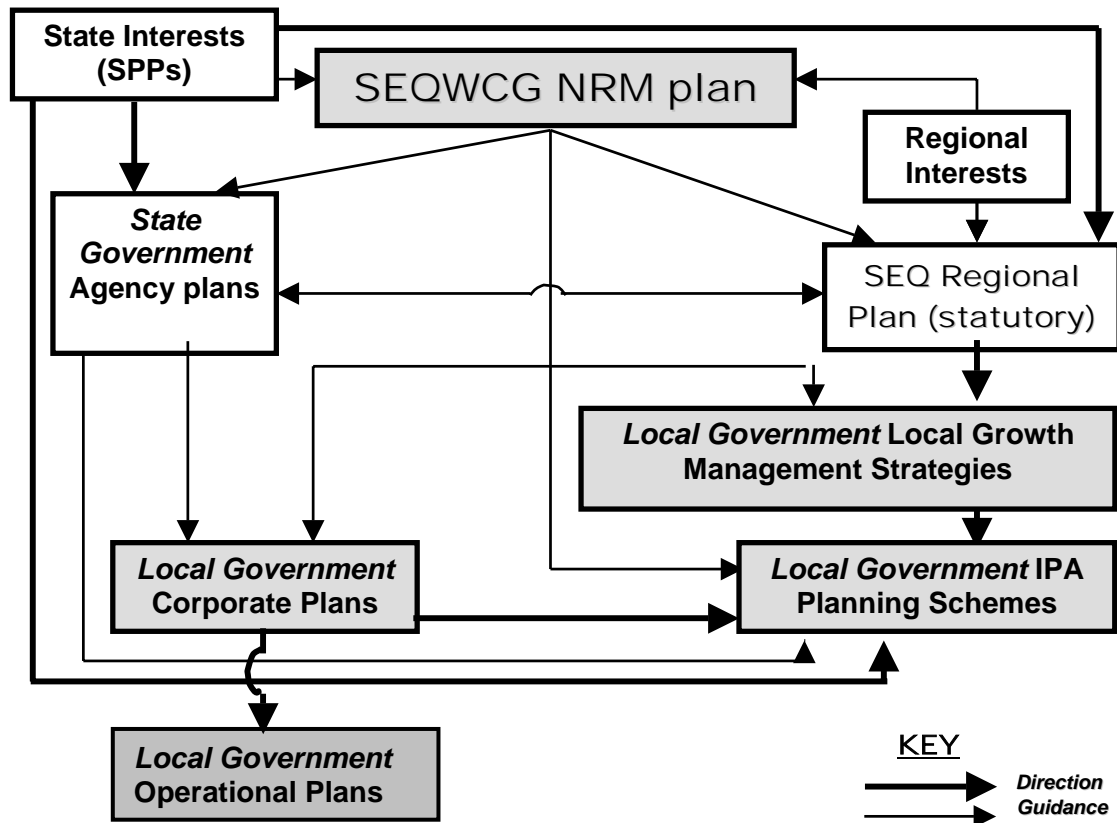


Figure 4: Roadmap showing potential routes for transfer of NRM matters in SEQ WCG region into local government planning (Class 1)

Specific opportunities to incorporate NRM into local government planning instruments exist in terms of a range of planning tools that constitute an IPA scheme (previously discussed in Section 4.4.1)<sup>7</sup>. They include:

- **Strategic frameworks:** acknowledging core matters such as valuable NRM features;
- **Desired environment outcomes (DEOs):** both broad general statements on the environment or resources that can embrace NRM as well as specific NRM DEOs;
- **Codes:** particularly environmental and physical constraint codes presenting NRM details as an overlay; and
- **Performance indicators:** optional measures of achievement of NRM DEOs that local government can employ as best management practice.

<sup>7</sup> This initiative is the subject of a separate study being undertaken by Queensland's DLGPSR, titled: 'Integrating effective NRM planning into local government planning schemes' (project CBO2) (DLGPSR, 2006).

The IDAS process can also be employed, especially if NRM matters have been adequately incorporated into tools that can effectively act as triggers for the application of constraint codes or overlays in the development assessment phase.

Other opportunities are also offered through the addressing of NRM in Local Laws, especially in cases such as vegetation protection that include the application of a permit system. To a lesser extent, planning scheme policies may also be useful for addressing NRM although they are now treated as guidelines and not regulatory tools.

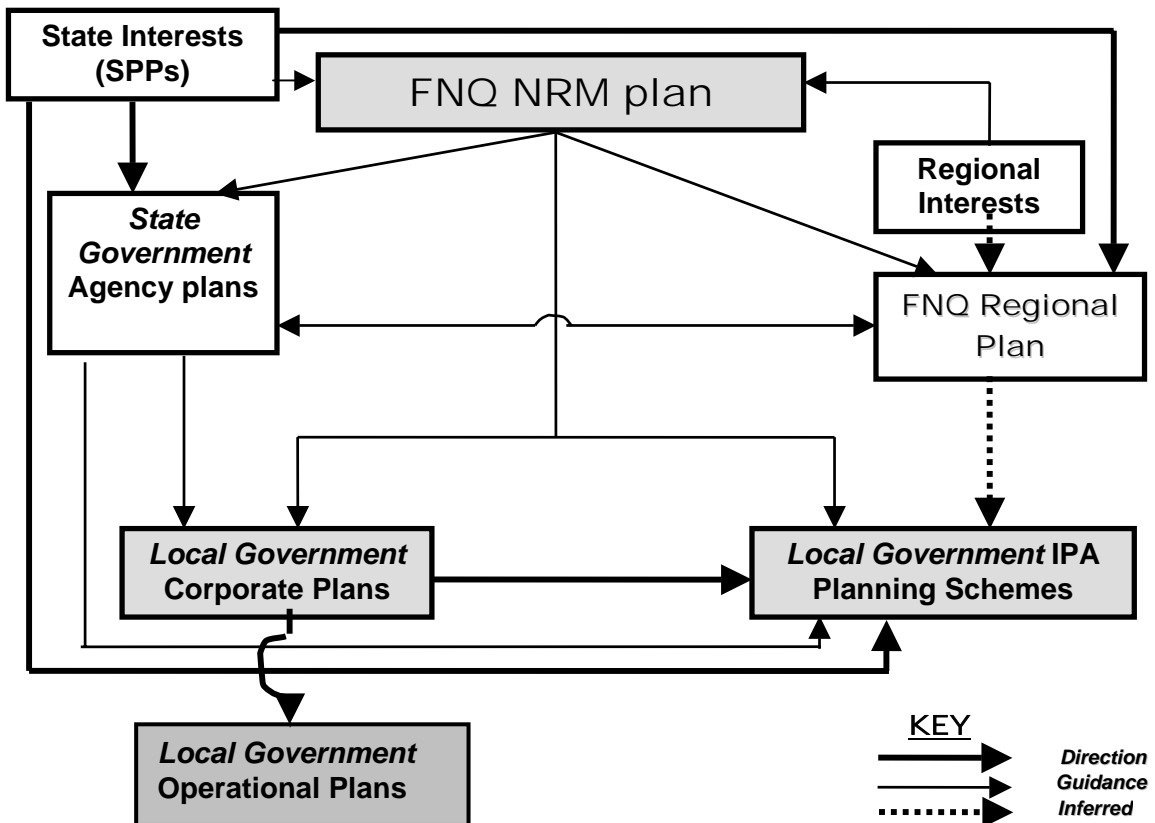
These statutory tools can also be complemented by a range of non-statutory planning tools. At the local government level, these can include incentives, voluntary agreements and covenants, land swaps, rate rebates, planning concessions or relaxations and negotiated solutions in the development assessment process.

Previous reference has been made to the current local government planning activity related to the preparation of new IPA-compliant schemes (see Section 4.4.1). As Appendix 5 indicates, all local authorities are well on the way to completing their IPA schemes, with half now completed and commenced and most of the remainder beyond the public exhibition stage. These circumstances limit the immediate uptake of NRM into statutory plans as these new IPA schemes will not be due for review and upgrade now for some seven years. Local authorities can, however, embark upon an upgrade of a section of their IPA scheme at any time and in this manner it would be possible to address NRM issues.

### *6.1.2 Far north Queensland (Class 2)*

The FNQ region operates under a distinctly different regional planning arrangement from that of the SEQ region. It is basically a collaborative planning exercise among local authorities and selected state agencies. The new FNQ Regional Plan will be the product of a voluntary collaborative planning undertaking that has only recently commenced. Under the current arrangement it will not have statutory standing as in the case of the SEQ Regional Plan.

The recent reinvigoration of the collaborative regional planning initiative in FNQ does provide an opportunity to address NRM issues in future regional plans for that region. As Figure 5 illustrates, this outcome can have the effect of providing guidance to the subsequent local-level statutory planning endeavours of individual local authorities in this region.



**Figure 5: Roadmap showing potential routes for transfer of NRM matters in FNQ NRM region into local government planning (Class 2)**

The potential to incorporate NRM aspects into local government planning in the FNQ region replicates the SEQ WCG case (Class 1) with one major exception. That exception relates to the absence of the statutory status of the Regional Plan and hence the reliance of voluntary compliance with any NRM provisions it may eventually contain. Figure 5 does recognise, however, that a case has been made to establish any future regional plan completed under *IPA97* as a statutory plan. If this were to occur then the same situation that has previously been described for SEQ WCG (Class 1) would apply. In the meantime, the current arrangements provide an alternative model (Class 2).

In all other respects, this roadmap and its linkages between the various elements of the regional planning landscape are similar to the (Class 1) SEQ region. This is particularly the case with the corporate plan and hence the previous comments made in this regard also apply to the Class 2 model.

Again, the interesting possibility of a more direct approach through the establishment of NRM matters as a state interest and expressed as an SPP is highlighted as an option available to the State Government.

The specific opportunities to incorporate NRM aspects into local government planning instruments such as IPA schemes and their associated range of planning tools is exactly the same as the SEQ WCG (Class 1) model (see Section 6.1.1).

### 6.1.3 Glenelg Hopkins (Class 3)

The previous discussion on the statutory state, regional and local planning systems in Victoria have outlined the opportunities to influence the existing traditional statutory planning with NRM considerations (see Sections 4.2.2, 4.3.2 and 4.4.2). These opportunities have been mapped out as the roadmap depicted in Figure 6.

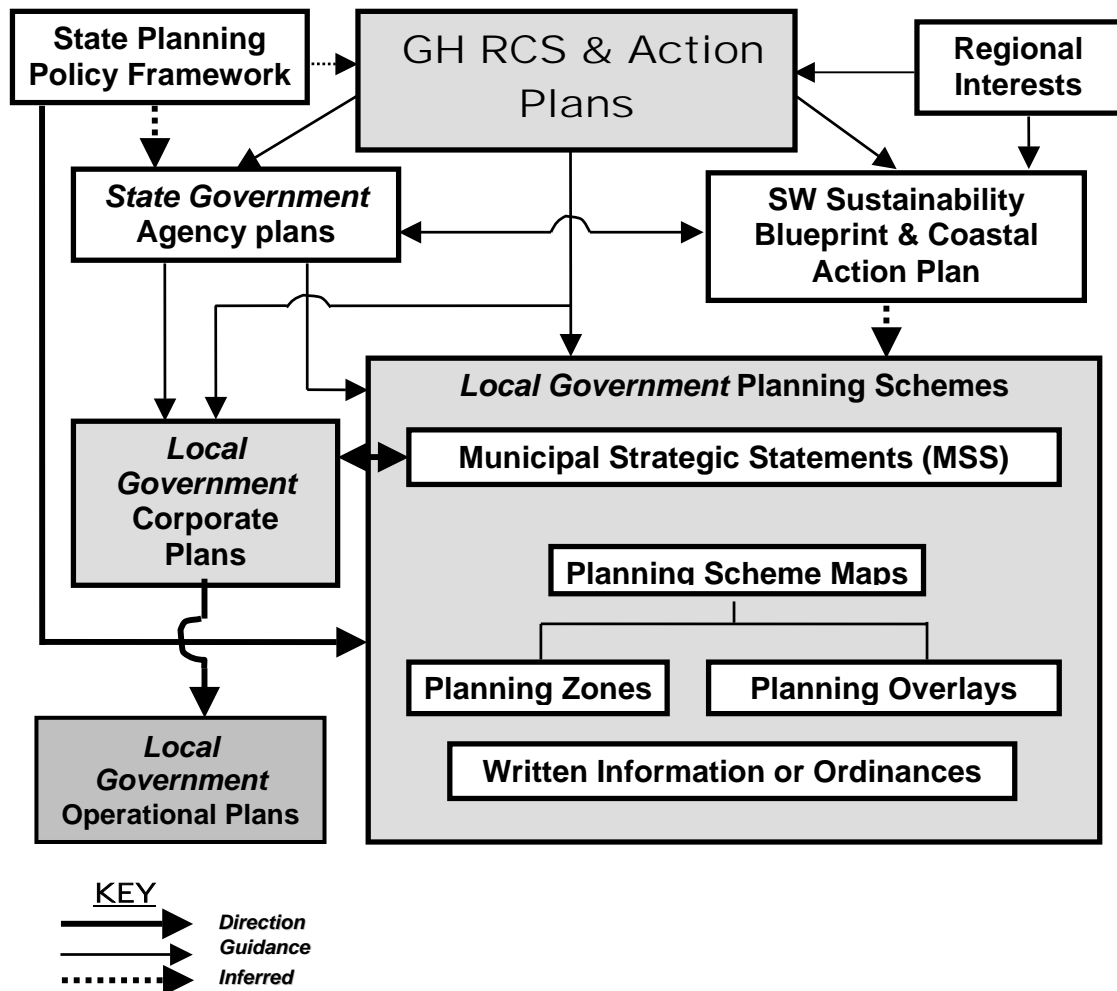


Figure 6: Roadmap showing potential routes for transfer of NRM matters in GH CMA region into local government planning (Class 3)

The potential influence of local government statutory planning activity through direction from the SPPF is obvious in this roadmap. As with SPPs in the Queensland cases, the utilisation of the SPPF to highlight NRM represents a serious option for the state government if it wished to directly influence the uptake of NRM matters in local government plans.

Again this model highlights the important influence that the council (corporate) plan can have on subsequent levels of local planning, particularly the operational plans of councils.

Similar to the FNQ case, the regional planning arrangements in Victoria are in a state of change and evolution. To this extent, the relationship between the new SW Sustainability Blueprint and the Coastal Action Plan has yet to be established. The current GH CMA arrangements shown in Figure 6 provide an intermediate set of planning arrangement situated between the two Queensland cases and hence a third model can be recognised.

Potential opportunities for the incorporation of NRM matters into statutory local government planning within the GH CMA (Class 3) region exist in terms of:

- provisions in the corporate (council) plan;
- a strategic objective and associated strategy in the MSS; and
- as a planning overlay.

Similar to the Queensland situation, these initiatives could be taken at the time when individual planning schemes are reviewed for mandatory upgrade or as a major amendment during the course of the current plans.

## 6.2 Towards enhanced local government engagement

All three NRM regional planning arrangements depicted in the roadmaps of Figures 4, 5 and 6 basically demonstrate a top-down, largely limited consultative model. Additionally, all three regional NRM plans of the CSPs have assigned a range of expected responsibilities for NRM to local government in their region (see Appendices 2, 3 and 4).

While there is a general expectation that collaboratively derived plans will be automatically implemented as proposed, recent research has suggested that this is not necessarily the case and that, in fact, there needs to be a series of renegotiations among the partners during the implementation phase to redefine their roles and commitments. Low Choy (2005: 7) has highlighted a 're-evaluation and renegotiation step' as a relatively unrecognised component of the

implementation phase. It is here that “various stakeholders will evaluate their achievements and re-evaluate their interest in continuing with further collaboration” Low Choy (2005: 9). All three CSPs have in fact commenced this renegotiation step with local government in their regions. Strong evidence supporting these renegotiations also emerged from the second round of workshops that involved local government participants. However, it will need to be completed as a formal process with the full participation of local government

All CSPs have fully appreciated the need to engage local government in the implementation of their respective NRM plans in order to secure their ongoing commitment to improved NRM. Each CSP has a different set of relationships with the local governments in their region. Additionally, as it has been noted in Section 6.1, each CSP is different in terms of the prevailing regional planning system that is in place in their region. The three different classes of regions give rise to the need to consider a range of support tools and mechanisms to facilitate improved NRM uptake by local government in each of these different regions.

Figure 7 highlights the extent of regional planning mandates as exemplified by the three case study regions.

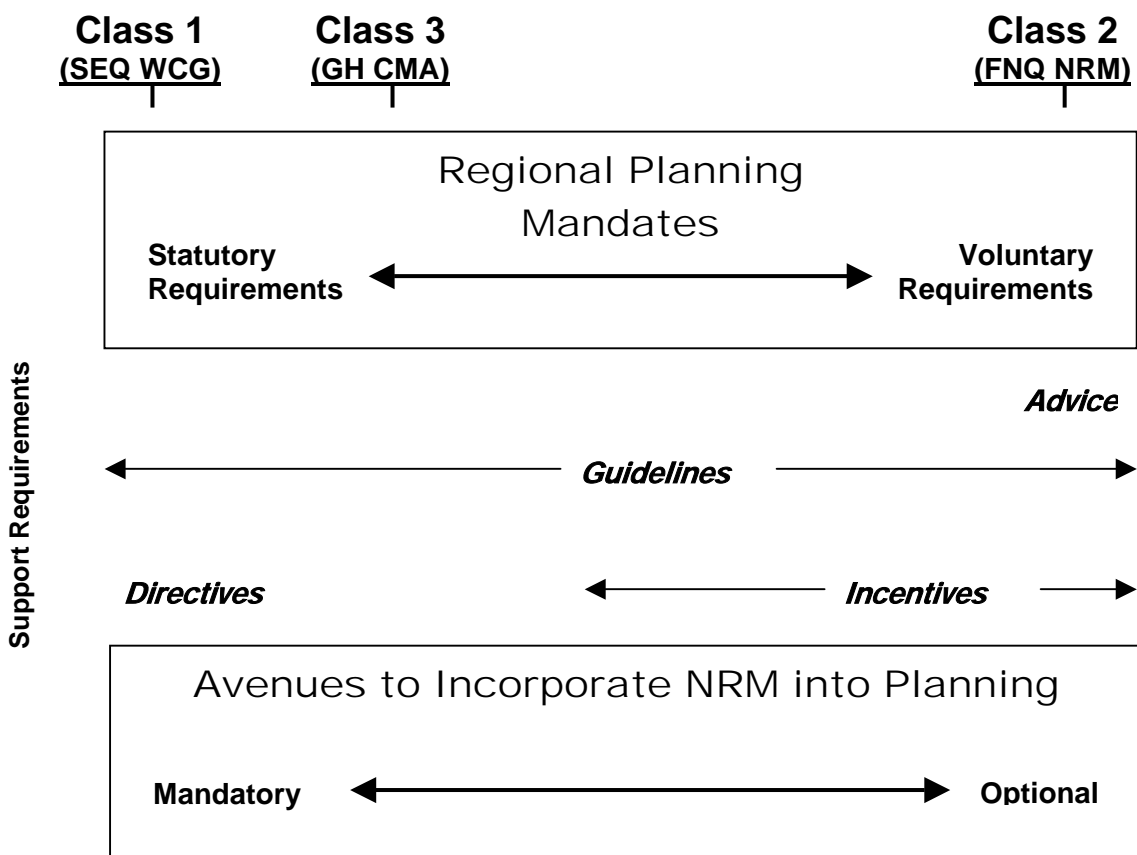


Figure 7: Facilitating the incorporation of NRM into local government planning

These mandates range from full statutory requirements under state legislation (e.g. the SEQ region, Class 1), to the voluntary collaborative arrangement (e.g. the FNQ region, Class 2). Between these extremes it is possible to have degrees of state government statutory control over local government planning (e.g. the GH CMA region, Class 3). Consequently, the corresponding responses to incorporate NRM matters into local government planning that are possible under this range of regional planning regimes will vary from mandatory to optional avenues (see Figure 7). The diagram illustrates a number of examples of opportunities to facilitate the incorporation of NRM into local government planning using various support requirements. They range from directives and guidelines that support the mandatory circumstance through to advice, incentives and guidelines for the voluntary collaborative situations. The development and dissemination of these support requirements should be facilitated by the respective regional NRM bodies and supported by local government.

The range of circumstances highlighted in Figure 7 suggests that each CSP should tailor-make a unique approach to address the need and opportunities to engage their local governments in the process of implementation of their NRM plans. It should also respond to the intent of their respective NRM regional plan that contains a first approximation of local government responsibilities for NRM in their region. Additionally, there is clear evidence emerging that local government engagement should be the subject of a high priority initiative and that it should be set out in a discrete documented agreement. This approach will have to be completed within the context of emergent guides such as the recently released local government Association of Queensland guide on the incorporation of NRM matters into local government corporate, strategic and operational plans (LGAQ, 2005).

The findings from the research and the workshops demonstrate that each CSP should develop a specific local government engagement strategy for the implementation of their individual NRM plan. It should clearly articulate a convincing case for local government collaborative involvement in the ongoing implementation of the regional NRM plans. It should also spell out:

- the division of responsibilities for NRM initiatives and management between the three levels of government, the regional NRM body, various community groups and other stakeholders that may become involved from time to time (e.g. research organisations);
- the sources of funding and other resources available to each stakeholder and in this case to local government;

#### Capitalising on opportunities: Incorporating NRM into local government planning

- the expected financial responsibilities of local government with respect to the NRM plan and its implementation; and
- a process through which local government can incorporate NRM matters into their corporate and statutory plans and policies.

The potential contents of the proposed local government engagement strategy could include:

- Principles for local government engagement in the implementation of the regional NRM plans;
- Shared principles for NRM implementation;
- Rationale for local government involvement in NRM;
- Barriers to local government involvement in NRM;
- Local government enhancement considerations;
- Incentives for improved participation;
- Renegotiations considerations between the regional body and local government;
- Recognition of appropriate local government processes and activities;
- Potential future roles for the regional body and its relationship with local government;
- Opportunities for partnerships with community groups and industry;
- Local government-facilitated networks and alliances; and
- Recommendations.

The local government engagement strategy should be focused on the statutory and non-statutory planning functions. However, as many of the other functions of local government are closely associated with their planning activities, the strategy should be extended to incorporate an integrated range of these other initiatives as well.

Further details of the proposed local government engagement strategy are developed in an associated report for this research project (see Low Choy & Maccheroni, 2005c).

### 6.3 Strategic recommendations

This report has considered a number of major issues related to the collaborative partnerships between regional NRM bodies and local government. This has extended to reviewing the emerging NRM roles and responsibilities of local government under the new regional NRM arrangements. The study to this point has identified a range of strategic guidance aimed at improving the uptake of NRM by local government in their normal planning and management activities. In summary, the strategic recommendations include:

- The Queensland State Government should acknowledge NRM as a state interest and consider the establishment of an SPP for NRM under the *Statutory Instruments Act 1992*.
- Regional NRM bodies should immediately enter into renegotiations with individual local authorities in their regions and collaboratively develop a formal agreement on their NRM partnership. It should address the barriers and capitalise on the opportunities to improve NRM uptake in local government. This agreement should be set out in the form of the proposed local government engagement strategy.
- The local government engagement strategy should be directed towards maximum uptake of NRM matters into continuing iterations of statutory and non-statutory plans.
- The regional NRM bodies and state government should immediately establish internal and external NRM capacity-building programs for local government.
- A priority project should be commissioned to identify the potential benefits of using existing local government networks and established relationships with their community and other stakeholders in order to pursue the regional NRM agenda.

Specific recommendations related to local government capacity-building and enhancement directed towards improved uptake of NRM in their planning and management activities are developed and reported on in an associated report in this series (see Low Choy & Maccheroni, 2005c). That report also provides further details on the proposed local government engagement strategy.

## 7 Conclusions

The research that supports this report has been guided by the case study partners' input and the outcomes from the series of workshops conducted in their respective regions. These workshops have involved a wide range of principal stakeholders ranging from board members and staff of the regional NRM bodies through to elected members and officers of the local authorities in those regions. Their involvement in these workshops has provided realistic and forceful advice and guidance to the subsequent research findings. Acknowledging these direct and specific connections to the potential users of the research's outcomes should ensure relevance of the research outputs and the achievement of the overall research objectives.

This research has also demonstrated that NRM regions and arrangements are different, especially in the case of the relationship between the regional body and the local authorities in their region. Nevertheless, the research findings logically suggest that it would be prudent for each regional NRM body to collaboratively develop a formal engagement strategy with local government to secure their long-term commitment to the implementation of NRM in their area of responsibility.

Renegotiations are a normal part of the ongoing implementation phase and this should provide the regional bodies with an excellent opportunity to develop a stronger collaborative partnership with local government. These emerging collaborative arrangements should ensure that the NRM outcomes of regional NRM plans that are relevant to local government are achieved in the long term.

The proposals and other recommendations that have emerged from this project's research should position the regional bodies so that they will be: **Capitalising on opportunities: incorporating natural resource management into local government planning.**

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## Legislation

### **Queensland Government:**

*Local Government (Planning and Environment) Act 1990*, as amended  
*Local Government Act 1993* as amended (LGA (Q)93)  
*Integrated Planning Act 1997* as amended (IPA97)  
*Integrated Planning and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2004 (IPOLAA 04)*

### **Victorian Government:**

*Planning and Environment Act 1987* as amended  
*Local government Act 1989* as amended (LGA(V)89).  
*Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994* as amended (CaLP Act 94)  
*Local government (Democratic Reform) Act 2003* as amended

## Abbreviations and acronyms

CaLP	<i>Catchment and Land Protection Act (1994) (Vic.)</i>
CMA	Catchment Management Authority (Vic.)
CP	Corporate (council) plan
Coastal CRC	Cooperative Research Centre for Coastal Zone, Estuary and Waterway Management
CSPs	Case study partners
DEO	Desired environmental outcome
DLGPSR	(Queensland) Department of Local Government, Planning, Sport and Recreation
DRO	Desired regional outcome
DSE	Department of Sustainability and Environment
FNQ NRM Ltd	Far North Queensland Natural Resource Management Limited
GH CMA	Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority
HLOF	<i>Healthy land – Our future</i>
ICM	Integrated catchment management
IDAS	Integrated development assessment system
IGAE	Intergovernmental Agreement on the Environment
IPA	<i>Integrated Planning Act 1997 (Qld)</i>
IPOLAA	<i>Integrated Planning and Other Legislation Amendment Act (2004) (Qld)</i>
LA21	Local Agenda 21
LG	Local government
LGAQ	Local Government Association of Queensland
LGA(Q)	<i>Local Government Act 1993 (Qld)</i>
LGA(V)	<i>Local Government Act 1989 (Vic.)</i>
LGMS	Local growth management strategies
LPPs	Local planning policies
MAV	Municipal Association of Victoria
MSS	Municipal strategic statement
NRM	Natural resource management
RCS	<i>Glenelg Hopkins regional catchment strategy</i>
ROC	Regional Organisation of Councils
SEQ	South-east Queensland
SEQROC	South East Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils
SEQWCG	South East Queensland Western Catchments Group
SPP	State planning policy
SPPF	State planning policy framework
SWT	<i>Sustaining the wet tropics</i>
VCMC	Victorian Catchment Management Council
VCMF	Victorian Catchment Management Framework
VPPs	Victorian planning provisions

## Appendices

Appendix 1: Maps of CSP regions showing respective local government areas



Figure A1: SEQ WCG region



Figure A2: FNQ NRM region

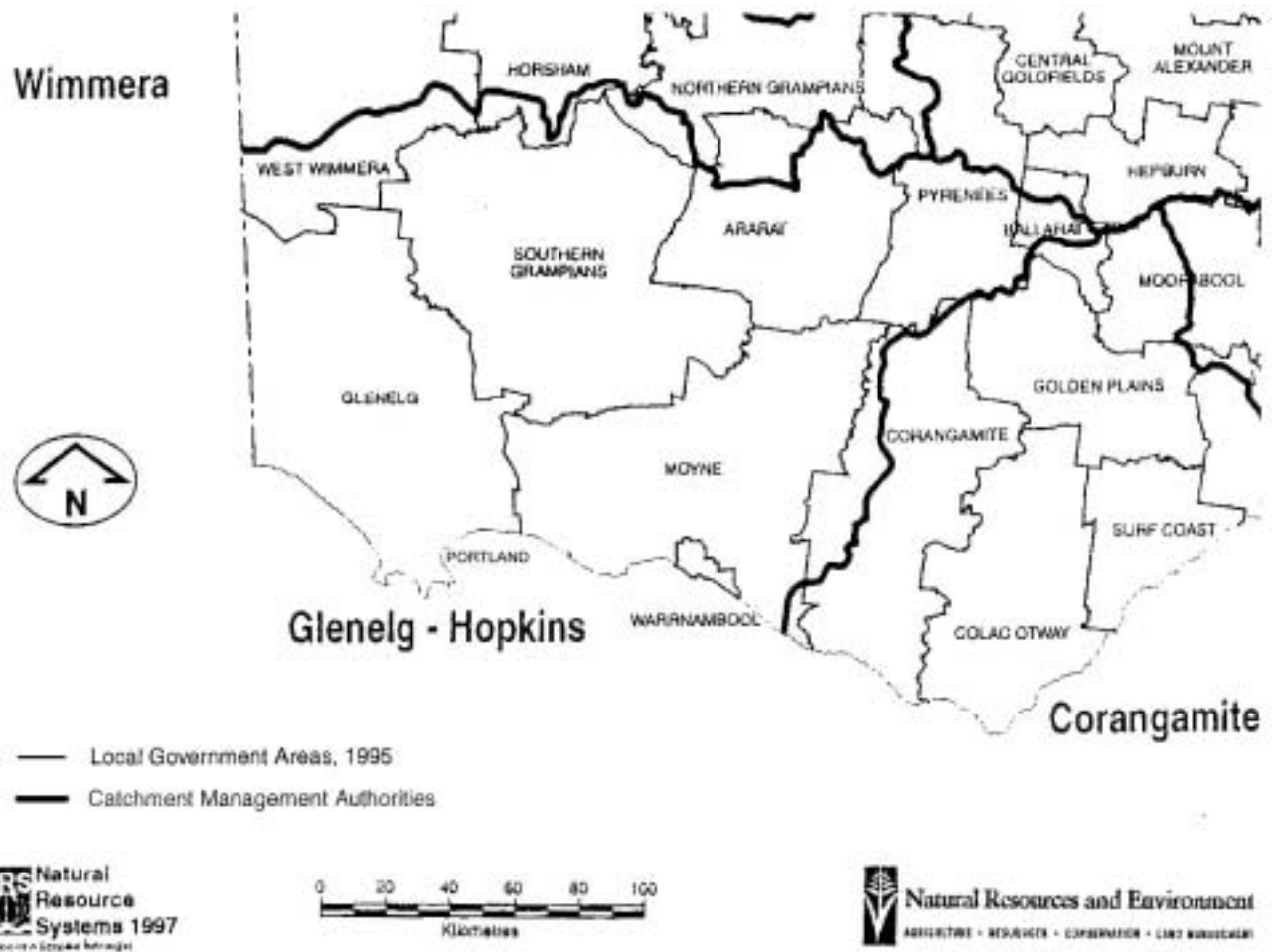


Figure A3: Glenelg Hopkins CMA region

## Appendix 2: Proposed local government involvement with SEQ WCG *Healthy land – Our future*

**Table A2.1: Natural resource asset targets and actions (HLOF – C1)**

Aspirational target	Resource condition target	Management action target	Management action	Matter for target	KPI	Linkage
TB-AT2	TB-RCT5	TB-MAT8: No net increase in distribution of the 2008 extent of identified priority weed species	<p>TB8.1: Map the extent of identified priority terrestrial biodiversity weed species</p> <p>TB8.2: Identify priority, weed-free locations and proactively manage with landholders (private, state and local government) to prevent weed infestation</p>	3,9,10,13	1.2.1 1.2.2 1.2.3	AEMAT8 LRMAT14
LA-AT2	LA-RCT2	LA-MAT3: By 2008, a regional outdoor recreational landscape network for planning and implementation developed including: all relevant agencies that are landscape users (i.e. MR, NRMW, EPA, Health, Families, LGPSR, Corrections, Education, Australian Government, ATSIC); links to regional and local government plans	<p>LA3.1: Regional scenic amenity strategy completed</p> <p>LA3.2: Develop a plan for a range of settings and activities that reflects demand, and that provides for an appropriate mix of activities, access and experiences</p>	11, 13	1.24.1 1.25.2 1.25.3 1.25.4	
AT-AT2	AT-RCT2	AT-MAT3: Reduce particulate emissions to less than 50µg/m <sup>3</sup> per day by 2010	AT3.4: Support local government to develop a consistent approach to incineration of waste.	11,13	1.26.5	
AT-AT2	AT-RCT4	AT-MAT5: 30 percent increase in the uptake of energy efficient practices by domestic consumers	AT5.3: Support local governments to develop and implement local action plans aimed at reducing greenhouse emissions	11,13	1.26.4	

**Table A2.2: Enabling program targets and actions (HLOF – C2)**

Management action target	Management action
<b>Threat: Lack of coordinated approach</b>	
EP MAT9: Implementation of regional programs is coordinated by 2008	EP9.2: Maintain regional pest management working group (based on local government area pest management planning framework) to coordinate implementation of pest management across the region. EP9.3: Ensure regional coordination of Land for Wildlife program is efficient and appropriate to local government areas in the Western Catchments region
<b>Threat: Lack of integrated planning and policy</b>	
EP MAT10: Consistent approaches undertaken by local governments to access biodiversity values, water quality objectives and high risk lands by 2001	EP10.1: Identify and prepare overlays for planning schemes to recognise environmental values and water quality objectives, including protection of high risk lands (e.g. highly erodible land) from inappropriate development
EP MAT11: 60% of planning schemes incorporate relevant issues and actions from <i>Healthy land – Our future</i> and other regional strategies by 2008	EP11.1: Facilitate the integration of relevant issues and actions from <i>Healthy land – Our future</i> into local government planning schemes and development assessment, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protection of regionally significant ecosystems</li> <li>• Protection of good quality agricultural land</li> <li>• Water sensitive design</li> <li>• Urban stormwater management</li> <li>• On-site effluent treatment</li> <li>• Pest management</li> <li>• Air quality initiatives</li> </ul> EP11.2: Ensure local governments are aware of their responsibilities under relevant State legislation; for example the Nature Conservation Act for management for rare and threatened species EP11.3: Support local governments to contribute to actions identified in relevant regional strategies, for example SEQ Regional Nature Conservation Strategy, SEQ Regional Water Quality Management Strategy, and SEQ Regional Air Quality Strategy. EP11.4: Achieve consistency and coordination among local government area pest management plans across the Western Catchments region and the regional NRM plan
EP-MAT12: Natural resource management strategies (incorporating responsibilities under state legislation and regional strategies) developed by 80 percent of local governments by 2010.	EP12.1: Assist local governments to develop natural resource management strategies at the shire level
<b>Threat: Lack of integrated data systems</b>	
EP-MAT14: Ensure the use of consistent datasets/technical information across the region	EP14.3: Ensure all local government planning schemes in the region access and use the regional Biodiversity Planning Assessment information (mapped and text) as a base layer to inform and influence planning scheme development in terms of biodiversity values and impacts
<b>Threat: Lack of integrated regional monitoring</b>	
EPMAT17: Ensure that an effective monitoring system is in place for all natural assets by 2006	EP17.4: Integrate water quality (groundwater, surface water) monitoring programs (Waterwatch, local government, industry) for regional aquifers, waterways, dams and storages

**Source:** SEQ Western Catchments Group Inc., 2004, *Healthy land – Our future*

### Appendix 3: Assigned local government implementation responsibilities – FNQ NRM

**Table A3.1: Assigned local government implementation responsibilities – FNQ NRM**

Resource condition target (RCT)	Management action target (MAT)
B1. No net loss of the area of native vegetation across the region by 2008	B1.1 From 2004 the No Net Loss Principle applied to all developments in respect to native vegetation.
	B1.2 Increase community involvement in monitoring and reporting by 2005.
B2. Quality and extent of Regional Ecosystems currently with an 'endangered' or 'of concern' conservation status under the <i>Vegetation Management Act 1999</i> is maintained or improved by 2014	B2.2 Review current legislation and recommended practice that allows degradation of endangered and of concern REs by 2008.
	B2.3 Manage, primarily for conservation, most existing remnants of endangered and of concern REs outside nature reserves by 2014.
B3. Increase in the area, condition and integrity (i.e. net gain) of areas of 'regional biodiversity significance' by 2014	B3.1 Increase in extent of areas managed primarily for conservation within 'regional management priorities' by 2014.
	B3.4 Enhance and reinstate areas of cultural significance by traditional owners according traditional law and customs by 2014.
B4. No new deliberate introductions of ecologically invasive species that threaten terrestrial ecosystems after 2006	B4.1 Establish protocols that stop the introduction of ecologically invasive species by 2005.
B5. Eradication of Category 1 pests under the <i>FNQROC Regional Pest Management Plan</i> and strategic eradication or containment of other ecologically invasive species that threaten terrestrial ecosystems by 2014	B5.1 Implement recommended priority actions from <i>FNQROC Regional Pest Management Plan</i> by 2006.
	B5.2 Control of weeds, pests and diseases contributing to an improving trend in the condition of terrestrial ecosystems, especially 'regional management priorities' by 2014.
	B5.3 Reduce the negative impact of weeds and pests on Aboriginal cultural values and assets; and recognises in policy, planning and management the cultural value of weeds and pests by 2009.
B7. All wetlands of particular biodiversity significance protected from active clearance (direct and by grazing) and managed for conservation purposes by 2014	B7.1 Protect and manage for conservation all wetlands mapped as having national and state significance by 2010.
	B7.2 Protect and manage for conservation purposes additional wetlands of regional significance by 2008.
B8. Quality and extent of riparian ecosystems maintained and improved by 2014	B8.1 Apply the No Net Loss Principle to all developments with respect to riparian vegetation, from 2004.
	B8.2 Protect and manage for conservation purposes existing riparian vegetation on all significant waterways by 2008.
B9. Quality and extent of inland aquatic ecosystems maintained or improved by 2014	B9.5 Increase community involvement in monitoring and reporting by 2006.
B10. No new deliberate introductions of ecologically invasive species that threaten inland aquatic ecosystems after 2006	B10.1 Establish protocols that stop the introduction of aquatic invasive species by 2005.
B12. Progressive improvement in condition of coastal, estuarine and marine ecosystems by 2014	B12.1 Document the quality and extent of estuarine, coastal and marine ecosystems by 2008.
	B12.2 Establish programs to address threats to fisheries habitats by 2008.
	B12.3 Improve connectivity between freshwater and marine environments by 2010.
	B12.4 Involve the community in monitoring the extent and condition of coastal and marine ecosystems by 2006.
B13. Reduce the impacts of commercial shipping and ports infrastructure on estuarine and marine ecosystems by 2014	B13.1 Minimise the loss of coastal ecosystems through expansion of port through better management of existing port areas by 2010.
	B13.2 Increase community involvement in monitoring and reporting introduced marine species by 2008.
B14. No further decline in coastal resources associated with land development by 2014	B14.1 Apply the No Net Loss Principle to all coastal and marine developments in respect to native vegetation from 2004.

Resource condition target (RCT)	Management action target (MAT)
	B14.2 Assist local government to have the capacity to improve the environmental outcomes for coastal developments by 2007.
	B14.4 Improve the understanding of coastal and marine biodiversity issues within the broader community (including schools) by 2010.
B16. Critical habitat of threatened species protected and managed to allow recovery and long term viability by 2014	B16.2 Protect and manage for conservation purposes critical habitat for threatened species by 2008.
B17. Improved protection for significant marine species and the habitats that support them by 2014	B17.1 Implement ecosystem based management of significant coastal and marine species, incorporating changes in habitat and climate by 2010.
B18. All ecological communities listed as 'critically endangered' under the EPBC Act protected and managed for conservation purposes by 2008	B18.1 Increase the area of Mabi forest communities protected and managed for conservation purposes by 2008.
B19. No decline in the conservation status of any native species or regional ecosystem by 2014.	B19.1 Make available to the community ground-truthed information on status of significant species and ecosystems by 2006.
	B19.2 Local government planning schemes recognise and protect habitats of significant species and significant ecosystems by next IPA review.
	B19.3 Resource and implement recovery plans to protect regionally significant species and ecosystems by 2009.
	B19.4 Increase the capacity of regional communities to manage for biodiversity conservation outcomes by 2009.
B20. The World Heritage values of the Great Barrier Reef and wet tropics maintained by 2014	B20.1 Implement recommended priority actions from Wet Tropics Conservation Strategy by 2014.
	B20.3 Recommendations of the Reef Water Quality Protection Plan implemented by 2010.
C1. Greenhouse emissions and air pollution levels are reduced to, or below, 1990 levels by 2012	C1.1 Improve the understanding of baseline air quality data by 2005.
	C1.4 Source twice the current amount of green energy in the region by 2012.
C2. Natural resources managed for potential impacts of climate change by 2012.	C2.1 Quantify impacts of potential climate change by 2008.
	C2.2 Commence strategies to deal with adaptation issues to inevitable climate change by 2012.
	C2.3 Revise policies in all sectors impacted by climate change by 2007.
L1. Maintain the sustainable productive capacity of land resources and reduce the loss of soil in wet tropics catchments by 2015.	L1.11 Local governments regulate new, significant drainage works by 2008.
L2. All good quality agricultural land will be retained for productive agricultural use commensurate with the broader regional economic, environmental and social priorities of the region by 2014.	L2.2 All local governments will develop and implement plans for appropriate rural residential and lifestyle development while protecting GQAL by 2010.
L6. 100% control of outbreaks of new agricultural pest plants and animals from 2004 and impact of agricultural pests contained by 2009 and reduced by 2014.	L6.2 Coordinated weed control in all shires using shire pest management plans and involving all stakeholders is implemented with targeted information available for property managers including best practice weed management covering machinery and stock crate movement by 2005.
L9. The availability of all existing extractive resources is maintained commensurate with the broader economic, environmental, and social priorities of the region from 2004.	L9.1 From 2004 the principles of the Draft State Planning Policy for Protection of Extractive Resources are adopted.
L10. Urban Lands – No solid waste disposal site is causing detrimental impacts by 2015.	L10.1 For all existing and new landfill sites, local government develop integrated management plans to meet legislative and management requirements, including post-closure management by 2010.
	L10.2 Reduction by 25% in the per capita volume of solid waste to landfill by 2015.

**Source:** FNQ NRM *Sustaining the wet tropics* (Dec 2004)

## Appendix 4: Assigned local government roles – from GH RCS action plan

**Table A4.1: Assigned local government *lead roles* from GH RCS action plan**

Regional management action target (RMAT)	RCS section	Aspiration target	Timeframe	Other lead organisations	Support organisation
<b>Biodiversity</b>					
<b>RMAT 26</b> Achieve native vegetation resource condition targets through implementing key actions from the Glenelg Hopkins CMA Native Vegetation Plan. Key actions listed under this plan include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement native vegetation controls</li> <li>• Develop environmental overlays</li> <li>• Community education</li> <li>• Grassland and wetland protection</li> <li>• Incentive development</li> <li>• Research</li> <li>• Planning for parks, reserves and corridors.</li> </ul>	5.2.2	A2	2007	Glenelg Hopkins CMA, DPI/DSE	Regional stakeholders
<b>RMAT 28</b> Achieve native vegetation resource condition targets through supporting the development and implementation of roadside vegetation plans.	5.2.2	A2	2007	VicRoads	DPI/DSE, Glenelg Hopkins CMA
<b>Waterways health and water quality</b>					
<b>RMAT 45</b> Achieve nutrient level resource condition targets through implementing urban stormwater plans.	5.3.4	A2, A3	2007		DPI/DSE, Glenelg Hopkins CMA, EPA
<b>Soil decline and salinity</b>					
<b>RMAT 58</b> Meet soil and salinity aspirational targets through continuing to identify and manage soil erosion sites.	5.4.2	A4	Ongoing	Glenelg Hopkins CMA, DPI/DSE, Landholders	
<b>RMAT 63</b> Continue identification of regional coastal acid sulfate soils and implement management program.	5.4.2	A4	2007	DPI/DSE, Glenelg Hopkins CMA	Industry
<b>Pest plants and animals</b>					
<b>RMAT 81</b> Build and sustain partnerships and a cooperative approach to encourage the implementation, evaluation and review the Warrnambool, Moyne and Glenelg coastal action plans. Coordinate and focus resources to support the implementation of actions identified in these plans.	5.6.2	A6	2007 and ongoing	Western Coastal Board	DPI/DSE, Glenelg Hopkins CMA, Landholders

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Regional management action target (RMAT)	RCS section	Aspiration target	Timeframe	Other lead organisations	Support organisation
<b>Strategic planning</b>					
<b>RMAT 90</b> Meet aspirational targets through integrating the RCS and action plans with municipal strategic statements.	6.1.3	All	2004	Glenelg Hopkins CMA,	
<b>RMAT 91</b> Meet aspirational targets through supporting councils to develop appropriate planning overlays.	6.1.3	All	2006	Glenelg Hopkins CMA, DPI/DSE	
<b>RMAT 92</b> Meet aspirational targets through supporting councils to develop and implement environmental strategies.	6.1.3	All	2007	Glenelg Hopkins CMA, DPI/DSE	
<b>Partnerships</b>					
<b>RMAT 100</b> Build regional capacity through development of partnerships and support mechanisms for other environmental groups.	6.2.2	All	2007	Glenelg Hopkins CMA, DPI/DSE, Industry	
<b>RMAT 101</b> Build regional capacity through further development of local government partnership arrangements.	6.2.3	All	2007	Glenelg Hopkins CMA, DPI/DSE	
<b>On-ground works</b>					
<b>RMAT 108</b> Meet aspirational targets through instituting a program to raise landholder awareness of degrading processes and remediation options.	6.3.3	All	2007	Glenelg Hopkins CMA, DPI/DSE, Landholders	
<b>RMAT 111</b> Ensure licensing frameworks which govern on-ground works meet best practice.	6.3.4	All	2007	Glenelg Hopkins CMA, DPI/DSE	
<b>Community engagement and capacity building</b>					
<b>RMAT 114</b> Raise community awareness of issues and options, compliance requirements and actions required to achieve a healthier catchment.	6.4.1	All	2007	Glenelg Hopkins CMA, DPI/DSE, EPA	Industry, Other regional stakeholders
<b>RMAT 118</b> Increase community awareness by making Health of the Catchment Report and local government environmental reporting available to the community in a variety of formats.	6.4.3	All	2007 and ongoing	Glenelg Hopkins CMA	
<b>RMAT 121</b> Continue existing information communication processes.	6.4.3	All	2007	Glenelg Hopkins CMA, DPI/DSE, EPA, Other regional stakeholders	

**Table A4.2: Assigned local government *support roles* from GH RCS action plan**

Regional management action target (RMAT)	RCS section	Aspiration target	Timeframe	Lead organisations	Other support organisations
<b>Regional sustainability</b>					
<b>RMAT 6</b> Provide support for EMS adoption through investigating the feasibility of rating incentives for participating producers.	5.1.2	All	2007	DPI/DSE, Glenelg Hopkins CMA	
<b>RMAT 16</b> Deliver a range of environmental services through facilitating and expanding regional implementation of the West RFA Sawlog Farming Project.	5.1.4	A1	Ongoing	DPI/DSE	Glenelg Hopkins CMA, Landholders
<b>RMAT 18</b> Continue development and communication of land capability information to guide land-use change decisions.	5.1.4	A1, A2, A4	2007	Glenelg Hopkins CMA, DPI/DSE	Industry, Landholders
<b>Biodiversity</b>					
<b>RMAT 22</b> Move toward achievement of biodiversity aspirational target by building regional capacity through training and education programs to increase awareness of regional biodiversity assets, values and threats.	5.2.1	A2	Ongoing	Glenelg Hopkins CMA, DPI/DSE	Education sector, Environmental groups
<b>RMAT 25</b> Achieve native vegetation resource condition targets through building partnerships with private landholders to preserve rare EVCs.	5.2.1	A2	Ongoing	Glenelg Hopkins CMA, DPI/DSE, Landholders	Parks Vic
<b>RMAT 29</b> Achieve native vegetation resource condition targets through the development of conservation covenants to protect areas of high value remnant vegetation.	5.2.2	A2	Ongoing	Trust for Nature	DPI/DSE, Glenelg Hopkins CMA, Landholders
<b>RMAT 31</b> Protect internationally significant wetlands through implementation of the Western District Lakes Ramsar Site Strategic Management Plan.	5.2.2	A2	2007	DPI/DSE, Glenelg Hopkins CMA	Landholders
<b>RMAT 39</b> Build capacity and knowledge of industry and local government to plan and protect biodiversity, particularly threatened species and critical habitat.	5.2.3	A2	Ongoing	Glenelg Hopkins CMA, DPI/DSE	Industry
<b>Waterways health and water quality</b>					
<b>RMAT 47</b> Improve regional drainage outcomes through implementing key actions from the Glenelg Hopkins CMA Rural Drainage Strategy.	5.3.5	A3	2007 and ongoing	Glenelg Hopkins CMA	DPI/DSE, Landholder
<b>RMAT 48</b> Improve floodplain outcomes through implementing key actions from the Glenelg Hopkins CMA regional floodplain management strategy.	5.3.5	A3	2007 and ongoing	Glenelg Hopkins CMA	DPI/DSE, Landholder
<b>Soil decline and salinity</b>					

Capitalising on opportunities: Incorporating NRM into local government planning

<b>Regional management action target (RMAT)</b>	<b>RCS section</b>	<b>Aspiration target</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Lead organisations</b>	<b>Other support organisations</b>
<b>RMAT 57</b> Build regional capacity to manage soil issues through heightening awareness and increasing use of land degradation analysis.	5.4.2	A4	ongoing	Glenelg Hopkins CMA, DPI/DSE	
<b>Pest plants and animals</b>					
<b>RMAT 76</b> Meet rabbit resource condition targets through implementing the Glenelg Hopkins CMA rabbit action plan. Key actions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and update extension materials</li> <li>• Provide technical advice and extension activities</li> <li>• Develop guidelines</li> <li>• Benchmark attitudes</li> <li>• Implement compliance program</li> <li>• Review priorities.</li> </ul>	5.5.3	A2, A5	2005	Glenelg Hopkins CMA, DPI/DSE	Landholders
<b>RMAT 80</b> Meet aspirational target for coastal areas through facilitating regional implementation of the Victorian Coastal Strategy.	5.6.1	A6	2007 and ongoing	Western Coastal Board	Glenelg Hopkins CMA, DPI/DSE and other regional stakeholders
<b>RMAT 84</b> Facilitate ongoing regional implementation and project development in line with the Coast Action Coastcare program.	5.6.2	A6	Ongoing	Western Coastal Board, DPI/DSE, Glenelg Hopkins CMA	Other regional stakeholders
<b>Strategic planning</b>					
<b>RMAT 87</b> Raise awareness among organisations and the community of planning support capacities.	6.1.1	All	2005	Glenelg Hopkins CMA, DPI/DSE	Other regional stakeholders
<b>RMAT 88</b> Develop a comprehensive asset register. Determine 'Triple Bottom Line' value of assets on a sub-catchment basis, particularly the value of ecosystem services, and relay these to the community.	6.1.2	All	2006	Glenelg Hopkins CMA	DPI/DSE, Regional Stakeholders
<b>On-ground works</b>					
<b>RMAT 106</b> Build regional capacity through instituting a program to increase volunteer participation rates.	6.3.2	All	2007	Glenelg Hopkins CMA	DPI/DSE, Industry, Other regional stakeholders
<b>RMAT 109</b> Raise community and landholder awareness of incentive programs.	6.3.3	All	2007	Glenelg Hopkins CMA	NRTE
<b>Community engagement and capacity building</b>					
<b>RMAT 112</b> Ensure community engagement processes reflect different issues, knowledge bases and levels of awareness across catchment communities.	6.4.1	All	2007	Glenelg Hopkins CMA	DPI/DSE

**Source:** Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority (GH CMA), undated [a]: *Glenelg Hopkins regional catchment strategy 2003–2007*.

## Appendix 5: IPA planning schemes assessment

### IPA PLANNING SCHEMES ASSESSMENT OF LOCAL COUNCILS WITHIN THE CASE STUDY PARTNERS REGIONS

Local Authority	Stage										Next Stage	
	0	1	2	3	4 a	4 b	5	6 a	6 b	7		
<a href="#">Atherton</a>											X	IPA Scheme commenced 24 June 2002
<a href="#">Cairns</a>											X	Council adopted the IPA scheme on 27 January 2005 with the scheme to take effect/commence on 1 March 2005.
<a href="#">Cardwell</a>											X	IPA planning scheme commenced on 23 May 2005
<a href="#">Douglas</a>									X			26 August 2005 or 16 September 2005
<a href="#">Eacham</a>							X					Scheme is expected to be lodged with the Department for second State Interest review in late September.
<a href="#">Herberton</a>											X	Planning scheme commenced on 1 August 2005.
<a href="#">Johnstone</a>											X	The planning scheme commenced on 20 June 2005.
<a href="#">Mareeba</a>											X	IPA planning scheme commenced 10 January 2005.
<a href="#">Hinčinbrook</a>									X			Proposed scheme with the Minister for adoption. Ongoing discussions continue with the EPA.
<a href="#">Boonah</a>								X				Draft Boonah Shire Planning Scheme currently under review. Anticipated Whole of Government comments from the Second State Interest Review will be provided to Council by September 2005.
<a href="#">Brisbane</a>											X	IPA Scheme in force. Various packages of amendments to the current IPA planning scheme in progress at different stages.
<a href="#">Esk</a>							X					Lodgement of scheme for second State interest check - expected early September 2005.
<a href="#">Gatton</a>							X					The submission of the draft IPA planning scheme for second state interest review is anticipated by the end of the year.
<a href="#">Ipswich</a>											X	Scheme commenced 5 April 2004.
<a href="#">Laidley</a>											X	IPA Scheme in force. Gazetted 28 March 2003.
<a href="#">Caboolture</a>								X				Dependent upon receipt of further State agency comments.
<a href="#">Caloundra</a>											X	Scheme in force on 29 September 2004.
<a href="#">Kilcoy</a>									X			Depending on receipt of State agency comments.
<a href="#">Nanango</a>							X					Planning scheme came off public display on 28 January 2005. Anticipated it will be submitted for second State interest check in August 2005.
<a href="#">Cambooya</a>											X	Signed off by Minister on 23 Sept. Commenced on 29 October 2004.

<u>Crows Nest</u>							X			Expect lodgement for second State interest check in November 2005.
<u>Rosalie</u>							X			First State interest check comments with Council for their consideration.
<u>Toowoomba</u>									X	Adopted 11 April 2003.

**LEGEND**

- Stage 0 - No Action Required
- Stage 1 - Statement of Proposals Under Preparation
- Stage 2 - Statement of Proposals On Display
- Stage 3 - Proposed Planning Scheme Preparation
- Stage 4a - First State Interest Check with Department
- Stage 4b - First State Interest Check with Council
- Stage 5 - Planning Scheme Display and Submission Review
- Stage 6a - Second State Interest Check with Department
- Stage 6b - Second State Interest Check with Council
- Stage 7 - Transitional Scheme replaced by IPA Scheme

Source: Qld Government Local Govt & Planning - IPA Website  
<http://www.lgp.qld.gov.au/applications/planMakingProgress/default.aspx>  
 Accessed: 19 October 2006