



LAKE EYRE BASIN MINISTERIAL FORUM
Community Advisory Committee
MEETING No. 3 Alice Springs
Friday 11th June, 2004
SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES

MINISTERIAL FORUM MEETING

- The Ministers welcomed all the CAC members into the Ministerial Forum meeting as observers.
- The Honourable Dr Peter Toyne MLA, Northern Territory Minister for Central Australia, and all Ministers of the LEB Ministerial Forum, signed a schedule to the Lake Eyre Basin Agreement approving the participation of the Northern Territory Government in the Agreement.
- The Ministers agreed on the following:
 - that the Lake Eyre Basin Rivers Assessment methodology draft report would be peer reviewed, followed by a pilot monitoring project and the compilation of a business case for full implementation of the methodology
 - that draft policies and strategies for implementation of the LEB Agreement should be made available for community consultation and review
 - that a Lake Eyre Basin hydrology atlas should be compiled from existing data, funded under the Lake Eyre Basin Agreement (\$80,000)
 - that three priority water gauging stations should be reinstated in the basin to measure streamflows, funded under the Lake Eyre Basin Agreement (\$100,000)
- The Ministers also endorsed the guiding principles for Indigenous involvement proposed by the CAC, along with the further development of an approach to ensure appropriate Indigenous participation in the Agreement.

RIVERS ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY PROJECT

- The Chair of the CAC will formally approach the Chair of the SAP, to recommend that a group or subcommittee of CAC and SAP members be established (to also include representatives from the four government jurisdictions), to discuss all facets

of the future of the LEB rivers assessment, including particularly community and communications issues, and associated implementation challenges such as cost implications.

- The CAC and SAP, in consultation with government officers of the four jurisdictions, will produce a joint statement (double-sided A4 page) for basin stakeholders in the next few weeks on the status of the rivers assessment project, reminding people of what the project is, and foreshadowing the future development of the project. This joint statement will also seek feedback and ideas from stakeholders on what other matters the rivers assessment should address.

HYDROLOGY ATLAS PROPOSAL

- The CAC supported the proposal by the SAP (endorsed by the Ministerial Forum) to compile an atlas of existing hydrology data for the Lake Eyre Basin as a foundation for future consideration of monitoring needs.

CROSS-BORDER MONITORING AND WATER RESOURCE PLANNING

- CAC and key government officers, in coordination with the SAP, will develop a project proposal for a review of monitoring activities and requirements in all jurisdictions, including NHT, state governments, and industry data. The objective of the work will be to assess how we can get better value for the total investment in monitoring, by coordinating effort among all players. This will be closely related to the knowledge strategy endorsed by the SAP, and to the work of the group or subcommittee established by the CAC and SAP for the Rivers Assessment Methodology project.

GEORGINA-DIAMANTINA DRAFTWATER RESOURCE PLAN

- Tom Vanderbyl, Queensland DNRME, presented a response to concerns raised in the joint CAC/SAP submission on the draft plan. The concerns the CAC and SAP raised were recognised, have largely been given serious attention, and are likely to result in changes either to the GD plan itself, or to the development of the ROP, or to other water resource planning in future.
- Issues discussed included:
 - the possibility of cumulative, small, incremental increases in allocations leading in the long term to an over-allocated catchment, particularly in a system dominated by low, zero or intermittent flows
 - appropriate community consultation for the Resource Operations Plan, and the time that will be required for this; DNRME confirmed that timing for the ROP is flexible, and a longer period may be required for community involvement than originally anticipated.

- the practicability of allocating any water at all from a system that is either extremely vulnerable to extractions during low flows, or largely unaffected by extractions during high flows.

CAC INPUT TO SAP PAPERS AND DOCUMENTS

Formal exchange of documents

- Clearer procedures to be in place to streamline the exchange of input and ideas between the CAC and SAP on joint papers or documents, particularly papers requiring input from the CAC between meetings.

Vegetation Management—SAP paper

- CAC to provide feedback to the SAP that the Vegetation Clearing paper, and others like it, should include consideration of practical land management and socioeconomic implications of various management options, to increase the usefulness of such papers as guides for policy direction.

Importance of socioeconomic considerations

- CAC to write a paper that describes the importance of including socioeconomic issues in all consideration of knowledge gaps, knowledge management, research needs and knowledge priorities.

DRAFT STRATEGIES UNDER THE LEB AGREEMENT

- The draft strategies under the Lake Eyre Basin Agreement, developed by Officers of the Australian, Queensland, South Australian and Northern Territory governments, to be distributed to the CAC out of session. The CAC to provide guidance on how the community should be consulted on these drafts, as a basis for refining the draft strategies.

INDIGENOUS INVOLVEMENT

- The Ministerial Forum approved a budget of \$50,000 for 2004/2005 for involving Indigenous people in the Lake Eyre Basin Agreement.
- The CAC agreed to pursue Indigenous involvement in its business by recommending to the Ministerial Forum that:
 - the CAC convene an Indigenous Forum for the basin, bringing together Indigenous consultation processes currently occurring in Desert Channels Queensland, Northern South Australia, and the Northern Territory. This forum to occur in Alice Springs around the same time as the biennial Lake Eyre Basin Conference, at the cost of roughly \$70,000, and to be either annual or biennial thereafter.

- That the CAC Facilitator and Indigenous members travel to Indigenous communities in the basin with relevant regional group reps and others involved in Indigenous consultation, to talk to community Indigenous organisations and peak bodies about Lake Eyre Basin issues.
- That the CAC arrange an Indigenous cultural induction session for all CAC members.

QUEENSLAND WILD RIVERS INITIATIVE

- The CAC will request that the Hon Stephen Robertson, Qld Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy, arrange for the CAC to be briefed at its next meeting by his Department, on the Queensland Government's Wild Rivers initiative.

NEXT CAC MEETING

- The next CAC meeting will be in Longreach, from midday Tuesday 14th September 2004 to COB Wednesday 15th September 2004.