



LAKE EYRE BASIN MINISTERIAL FORUM
Community Advisory Committee

MEETING No. 10 Alice Springs

Tuesday 4th April, 2006

SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES

Potential for NSW to join the LEB Agreement

Key Issues discussed

- Previous approaches to NSW (early 2004) via the previous Minister for Natural Resources, Hon Craig Knowles MP.
- Recent discussions between Richard Kingsford and Hon Bob Debus MP, NSW Minister for Environment, suggesting that Bob Debus would welcome an invitation for NSW to join the LEB Agreement.

Actions

- LEB CAC to write to the LEB Ministerial Forum, recommending that the Ministerial Forum write to Hon Bob Debus, NSW Minister for Environment, to again invite NSW to join the Ministerial Forum and become a party to the Agreement.

Cooper Creek Sleeper Water Licences

Key Issues discussed

- Advice from DNRM&W on the current unused licences in the Cooper, issued around the time of the Currareva cotton debate (Currareva, Hammond Downs, Weeumba).
- Possible downstream implications of these licences were to be activated now.

Actions

- CAC to refer this issue to the SAP for their attention; ask the SAP if the information is currently available to predict the consequences if these licences are activated, and if not, what is needed to be able to predict the consequences.
- Nigel Kelly, DNRM&W will provide further information on the exact pumping thresholds specified as conditions in these licences.

Qld Wild Rivers Code

Key Issues discussed

- The draft Wild Rivers Code, and its potential application to arid rivers of the LEB.
- The ability of the current draft Code to suit circumstances in arid rivers (e.g. current arrangements for stock and domestic water use, and definitions of, distinctions between, and interactions between watercourses and extensive floodplains)

Actions

- Compile a short submission on the draft Wild Rivers Code, recommending that, in recognition of the special circumstances of arid rivers, there be opportunity and scope to review and adjust the code if required to ensure it is applicable to the circumstances and issues in arid river systems, such as those of the Lake Eyre Basin.

NT Nuclear Waste Dump plans and the LEB**Key Issues discussed**

- The position of the NT Government and NT community and lobby groups in the matter
- The highly emotive nature of the issue, and the difficulty of finding clear information.
- Current progress (consultant has been appointed to assess all potential sites).

Actions

- Arid Lands Environment Centre (John Brisbin) to write to the CAC with their concerns, and include a collation of all information currently available.
- CAC to write to the MF raising the following points:
 - The need for clear information on the proposal
 - A radioactive waste dump could be the thin end of a wedge that sees nuclear issues become more prominent in central Australia
 - Lack of consultation with community on site locations
 - Potential danger of movement of radioactive material through the basin
 - There are currently no other current sites in the LEB in Qld or SA (or the NT) for storage of radioactive waste.

CAC Advice to the Ministerial Forum**Actions**

- CAC to provide future advice to the LEB MF twice each year, in July/August and in February/March, unless otherwise necessary for urgent or critical matters, or unless the Ministerial Forum wishes to seek the CAC's advice on specific matters of concern.

LEB Tertiary scholarship**Key Issues discussed**

- Some consultation with contacts in tertiary institutions
- Keen support for the idea from John Hill, the outgoing SA Minister for Environment and Conservation; to be taken up with new SA Minister (Gail Gago).

Actions

- SA CAC members to meet Hon Gail Gago MP, the new SA Minister for Environment and Conservation, and include LEB tertiary scholarship in the discussion.
- Proposal to be finalised before the next CAC meeting (July/August)