



LAKE EYRE BASIN MINISTERIAL FORUM
Community Advisory Committee

MEETING No. 11 Longreach
Wednesday 2nd August, 2006

SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES

Parties to the LEB Agreement—potential to invite NSW to join the Agreement

Key Issues discussed

- The CAC's recommendation to the LEB Ministerial Forum that NSW again be invited to join the LEB Agreement.

Actions

- In the CAC's next advice to the Ministerial Forum, follow up the CAC's previous suggestion to invite NSW to join the LEB Agreement.

LEB Rivers Assessment

Key Issues discussed

- Project progress: two funded projects to commence at the end of August 2006:
 - Evaluation of Data management systems in the LEB
 - Documentation and evaluation of data logging networks in the LEB.

REGIONAL NRM in the LEB—Funding cycles

Key Issues discussed

- Delays in NHT investment funding delivery to regional NRM boards in the LEB following approval of investment priorities — 6 to 9 month delays experienced. Jeopardises project implementation and staff security.

Actions

- Ascertain whether the issue is common across the NRM boards in the Lake Eyre Basin, and if so, raise the matter with the LEB Ministerial Forum as having potentially significant implications for water and related natural resources in the LEB.

CANE TOADS—in the Lake Eyre Basin

Key Issues discussed

- Cane toads have moved south at least to:
 - 70km south of Longreach on the Thomson River;

- approx. half way between Barcaldine and the junction of the Barcoo and Alice Rivers; and
 - the upper Diamantina and Georgina catchments.
- Lack of further accurate information on current distribution of cane toads in the LEB.
 - Likelihood of a sudden and dramatic movement of cane toads down the Basin in a large flood, into the Cooper system and Coongie Lakes.
 - Low likelihood of finding a successful biological control agent.

Actions

- Discuss the potential future threat of cane toads in the LEB with the LEB Scientific Advisory Panel (SAP), and develop a joint CAC/SAP recommendation on cane toads for the LEB Ministerial Forum prior to the 2006 LEB Ministerial Forum meeting.
- Work with the SAP and the Regional NRM groups in the LEB to develop a project proposal for the 2006 LEB Ministerial Forum meeting, focusing on:
 - Determining cane toad distribution in the LEB
 - being better prepared for control of cane toads in the LEB.

CLIMATE CHANGE—and the LEB

Key Issues discussed

- Increasing confidence in predictions of less rain for most of Qld.
- Climate change modelling for the Desert Channels Qld region the only climate change work being done at a regional scale in Australia (there is a need for more regional modelling and research in Australia).
- High probability that the most variable river system in the world, the LEB, is likely to become more variable.

Actions

- CAC to provide advice to LEB Ministerial Forum that climate change is a significant issue of concern in the LEB, and will affect effect production, sustainability and ecological systems.

COOPER'S CREEK 'SLEEPER' WATER LICENCES

Key Issues discussed

- DNRMW review of likely impacts as a result of full activation of existing water entitlements on the Cooper system in the Currareva region:
 - Stringent pump size limits, passing flow conditions, and maximum annual volume of diversion are specified as conditions of existing unutilised licences.

- No off-stream storages can be incorporated in an irrigation project under existing entitlements.
- DNRMW assessment:
 - Licences are essentially for flood harvesting at high flows only.
 - Low likelihood of significant impact on the Cooper's Creek system from these licences.

Actions

- Provide the information from Qld DNRMW to the LEB Scientific Advisory Panel, and seek their response to the Department's predictions of the potential consequences of these licences being utilised/activated.

LEB STRATEGIES—Implementation

Key Issues discussed

- Implementation plan for 12 high priority LEB Strategies endorsed by the LEB Ministerial Forum in 2005.

Actions

- Two working groups to be formed as soon as possible, as in the draft Strategy Implementation Plan, to address and begin working on the following strategy priorities:
 1. Water resource planning: Scope the need for convergence and/or alignment of water resource legislation, policy and planning regimes in the LEB jurisdictions
 2. Develop and implement a communications strategy for the LEB.
- Each working group to involve key interested CAC members.
- Draft terms of reference for the working groups to be circulated and finalised.