

STRATEGIC PLAN 2009 – 2012

THE NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION OF NEW SOUTH WALES



Our Vision

Healthy, productive and resilient landscapes.

Our Role

To provide credible, independent advice to the NSW Government on managing the state's natural resources in an integrated manner to maintain landscapes that are resilient, function effectively, and support environmental, economic, social and cultural values.

Our Goals

- Community, industry and governments recognise that healthy biophysical landscape processes underpin the wellbeing of our natural environment, society and economy.
- Policy, legislation, institutions, funding, planning and programs are aligned to achieve the state-wide targets for natural resource management through integrated solutions developed and implemented with regional communities.
- Community, industry and governments collaborate to achieve the state-wide targets in an integrated manner, aligning actions to implement regional, spatially expressed Catchment Action Plans.
- Integrated natural resource management is used as an effective policy response to adapt to climate change and climate variation.
- Natural resource management decisions are made on the basis of sound science and best-practice adaptive management.

Our Work

The NSW Government has created a regional model for natural resource management (NRM) to help ensure healthy rivers, productive soils, diverse native species and thriving communities throughout our state. Implementation

of this model is an ambitious and long-term reform agenda which requires integrated action by all communities, industry and governments.

In 2005, the NRC developed and recommended a Standard for Quality Natural Resource Management in NSW, and state-wide Targets for NRM. The Government adopted these, and the Targets now form Priority E4 of the State Plan. In 2008, we began an ongoing program of audits to assess whether Catchment Action Plans are being implemented effectively, in compliance with the Standard and targets.

Together, the Standard, Targets, and Audit support flexible and innovative regional decision-making, and build consistency, rigour and accountability for NRM. 2010 marks five years of implementation of the Standard and Targets. To drive continual improvement the NRC will undertake a mid term review of the Standard, Targets and Catchment Action Plans (CAPs) and the regional model.

We will contribute to achieving Priority E4 of the State Plan – “Better outcomes for native vegetation, biodiversity, land, rivers and coastal waterways” – by:

- advising the Government on the natural resource policy and management settings required to improve the resilience of landscapes
- advising the Government on how to improve performance towards the state-wide Targets and the effective implementation of CAPs.

We manage our work adaptively, using the Standard to deal with uncertainty in our knowledge of natural systems, and the complexity of interactions between biophysical landscape processes and the societies, economies and natural systems that depend on them. To best understand the nature of the issues we deal with, and develop credible and independent advice, we use transparent consultation and collaboration approaches, and access the best-available knowledge across a variety of fields.

Our Values

In the way that we operate and the work we produce:

We are independent - we provide objective and practical advice to Government after listening to all stakeholders, drawing on the best available knowledge and analysis, then making our own judgements.

We pursue quality - we perform our work to the highest standard, ensuring we are rigorous, efficient and focussed. We lead and collaborate with others in continually improving the quality of NRM processes and outcomes.

We are innovative - we think creatively to develop practical advice for our stakeholders within a dynamic institutional and natural environment.

We are committed - we believe in what we do and can be trusted to do what we say. We are motivated by our commitment to achieving better natural resource outcomes.

We have a vibrant workplace - we enjoy good humour and the company of our colleagues. We celebrate achievements and maintain a sense of perspective.

We work together as a high-performing team - we understand and respect one another's needs. We trust each other, share our expertise and are committed to the success of the team and its members.

Our Strategies 2009 – 2012

With growing pressures on our landscapes from climate change, population growth and drought, it is vital that we improve the integrated management of all natural resources so we can adapt to and mitigate the effects of those pressures. Water scarcity is emerging as one of the most pressing implications of climate change in NSW, and better integrated management of all natural resources is emerging as one of the most promising adaptive policy responses to ensure that our biophysical landscape processes continue to sustain and support our economy, society and natural environment. In the coming three years, the NRC will build on our past work to focus on better integrating water management within the regional NRM model to achieve resilient landscapes.

Through our work we will provide Government with independent advice on what is working in NRM, what needs fixing and how we are tracking against our stated policies and targets. As a result, the Government will be able to make informed decisions to improve NRM policies, plans and performance.

We have two overarching strategies which guide our work. The first strategy is broad, while the second is responsive to the needs of the Government.

1. Review the implementation of the Standard, Targets, CAPs and the regional model and advise the Government on improvements
 - Investigate and report on issues affecting the integration of NRM and help to develop solutions
 - Revise and promote the use of the NSW Standard for Quality NRM by all natural resource managers
 - Review the state-wide Targets
 - Lead and facilitate the review of whole of government Catchment Action Plans
 - Conduct audits of Catchment Action Plan implementation
 - Report on progress towards state-wide Targets
 - Identify and advise on research and information gaps.
2. Provide scientifically sound independent advice as requested by the Government on strategic or technical NRM issues.