



26<sup>th</sup> February 2009

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Eyre Peninsula NRM Board  
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Dear Ms Clarke,

**RE: COMMENTS ON EYRE PENINSULA NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT BOARD  
DRAFT REGIONAL NRM PLAN**

The South Australian Farmers Federation (SAFF) thanks the Eyre Peninsula NRM Board for the opportunity to provide comment on the Draft Regional NRM Plan. SAFF would like to acknowledge the Board on the significant amount of work in the development of the Plan, with the difficult circumstances that the Board has experienced over the last few years, in particular the drought.

SAFF is the peak farming organisation in South Australia with a proud history of representation and support for farmers dating back more than 100 years. SAFF represents land holders who actively manage the majority of South Australia's natural resources. Ultimately the core to the success of NRM planning in this state is very much dependant on engaging land managers to deliver the strategic outcomes. Because of this fundamental role, SAFF has taken a leadership role in the planning and development of natural resources management in South Australia. The Federation played a significant role in the development of the NRM Act 2004 and State NRM Plan.

SAFF considers the following areas of vital importance in the successful promotion of natural resources management to the farming community. Communication is crucial in getting information to the community so they are aware of what the Board does and how their levy funds are spent. Engagement of the Board with the community is essential so they feel they are involved in the natural resources management planning of their region and knowledge that their voices are being heard. The Board needs to be supportive of sustainable farming especially given the potential effects of climate change.

Please find attached SAFFs comments on the Draft NRM Plan. If you would like to discuss this matter further please do not hesitate to contact myself ((08) 8569 4001 or 0417 883 659) or Ms Sandra Keane, Natural Resources Officer at the Federation on (08) 8410 7233.

Sincerely

*Sandra Keane*

for Sharon Starick  
Chair, Natural Resources Committee



*Comments on*

Eyre Peninsula  
Natural Resources Management Board  
Draft  
Regional NRM Plan

by

**SOUTH AUSTRALIAN FARMERS FEDERATION  
(SAFF)  
NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

On

February 2009

CHAIR: Sharon Starick

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### General Comments:

SAFF would like to acknowledge the Board on the significant amount of work in the development of the Plan, particularly during the drought period.

SAFF acknowledges and congratulates the Board on the significant amount of work done to engage with the community including engaging with landholders and in particular the extensive work undertaken to engage with Farming systems Groups on the Eyre Peninsula. For future reference, the Board may want to reconsider some of the timing of the public meetings, especially those intended for the agricultural sector, eg. it is better for landholders to attend meetings in the evenings rather than in the mornings and afternoons.

It would have been useful to produce fact sheets informing the different sectors of the community on what the NRM Plan means for them. A fact sheet for the agricultural sector would inform the landholders that the Board is not just focused on biodiversity, but also on sustainable agriculture and helping them to be able to farm sustainably.

The Plan appears to be a well-written professional document.

### Specific Comments:

The Plan contains strong recognition of the NRM Act but limited when it comes to the State NRM Plan. It would be beneficial to include a clearer statement at the front of Volume 1 about how the regional priorities and actions contribute to the State NRM Plan objectives.

Agriculture, farming systems and land management are well covered within the document. SAFF would encourage the Board to continue to use the approach of encouragement (information and incentives) to get change and use the Act as a last resort as demonstrated within the framework for NRM change in 'Caring for our Resources' page 11. In the next iteration of the Plan, the Board may wish to consider the development of best practice guidelines for land management - KI NRM Plan is an example of this.

Climate Change and its effects on agriculture is an important topic for the future. Page 28 of 'Managing our Resources' recognises the need for adaptive and innovative farming systems, however this issue is not identified as a research need within the 'State of the Region' report.

Issues that could have been further enhanced within the Plan are:

- The impact of plantation forestry on the water balance and how this will be dealt with in the light of the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme, and with climate change, the great need for highly productive land to produce food given global concerns regarding food availability.

- The impact of native species out of balance, eg kangaroos and wombats could be expanded within the 'State of the Region' report and the 'Strategic Plan'. SAFF acknowledges that there is a strategy within the board business plan.
- The impact of pest plants and animals. The plan is not clear on how the lists of pest plants and animals within the 'State of the Region' report applies or informs the policies within 'Caring for our Resources' and the strategies within 'Managing our Resources'

The links between the MERI plan and the state level framework are not well articulated.

The NRM levy can at times be a contentious issue. SAFF understands the need to raise a levy and the need to increase the levy. SAFF appreciates that the Board plans to increase the levy over 3 years in line with the CPI.

SAFF would encourage the Board to consider stewardship payments in the delivery of some of its targets.

'Managing our Resources' acknowledges the importance of developing partnerships across regional boundaries, however activities and strategies do not identify other Boards as partners. SAFF would encourage the Board to develop cross regional policies, eg pest plants and animal policies with the SA Arid Lands NRM Board.

Page 4 of 'State of the Region' report – need to change the website address to: [www.climatechange.gov.au](http://www.climatechange.gov.au) (instead of [www.greenhouse.gov.au](http://www.greenhouse.gov.au))

Sustainable farming systems – The Board must ensure all landholders have knowledge of and have the opportunity to be involved with any projects that occur in the region.

LW5 – Urban development is a threat to high value primary production land as well as pest invasion and degradation.

F3 – Support, promote and acknowledge landholders as well.

Figure 1 of 'Caring for our Resources' – Both options from the box 'is the activity a WAA?' are 'No'.

Board program 8.1 – Reward the 'NRM Champions'.

Figure 5.9, 'State of Region' report – Land use mapping was undertaken by DWLBC in 2008. The DWLBC data is much more detailed and should be used instead of the generalised 'land use zone' data used in this map.

SAFF are open to discussion around potential partnership opportunities within the region regarding the implementation of the Plan.