

**Conservation Council
of South Australia Inc**

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Kate Clarke
General Manager
PO Box 2916
PORT LINCOLN
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Dear Kate,

Feedback on Proposed Changes to Eyre Peninsula NRM Group Structures, Advisory Committees and Establishment of Formal Links with Local Government

As a Peak Body under the *Natural Resources Management Act 2004*, the Conservation Council of SA (CCSA) is pleased to make comment on these proposed changes.

CCSA commends the Eyre Peninsula NRM Board in aiming to maximise the involvement of community members and local government in the integrated management of the region's natural resources.

Below is the CCSA response to the two recommendations presented, however this is limited to the interpretation of the discussion paper. We feel we could have provided you with a more informed response if the discussion paper had provided the rationale for the restructure, that is, whether the purpose was driven more by reducing costs and minimising upper management or to increase community engagement. CCSA is interested to know the level of input there has been from the current NRM Group members and would appreciate hearing from you on this.

1. The EP NRM Board adoption of the new regional advisory structure.

CCSA:

- considers it appropriate for the Advisory Committees to provide a setting more conducive to community input and participation;
- suggests that the Advisory Committees be considered as the vehicle for community engagement and play a more active role in community engagement rather solely an advisory role (as suggested). In the first

instance this community engagement could be through NGOs and Project Officers, who provide support to the community, and secondly with the wider public (through appropriate gatherings etc.);

- considers it necessary to have membership which include knowledge, skills and experience in social sciences and community engagement to increase the Advisory Committees ability to 'advise the Board on the mechanisms of how to engage the community in NRM activities';
- suggests that for the Advisory Committees to increase community engagement focus that membership (or attendees) include Board staff who work with the community, such as Project Officers, who we believe have good local knowledge and understanding of the local communities. CCSA considers it appropriate that Project Officer/s attend the meetings in a participatory capacity;
- suggests that local council representatives be included on the Advisory Committees to ensure greater potential for integration across the region; and
- wonders whether other avenues are being considered for community input in addition to the proposed on-line community forums, such as community events and field trips? Further, who will manage these forums, how will the information be used and inform the engagement activities of the Advisory Committees and NRM board?

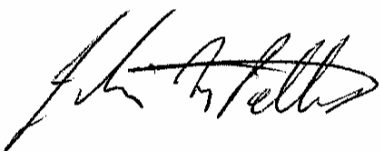
2. Formalising the Board's relationship with City of Port Lincoln and the City of Whyalla at the strategic level through MOU's and to further the EP NRM Board's formalisation of similar arrangements with other partners.

CCSA:

- commends the Eyre Peninsula Board for aiming to establish MOU's with the City of Port Lincoln and the City of Whyalla and supports this process with all Local Councils across the region.

Thanks again for opportunity to provide comment. CCSA applauds the EP NRM Board for taking the initiative to modify its regional structure to maximise community involvement in the management of natural resources. Through our NGO NRM Facilitator position we would be happy to provide further advice on community and eNGO engagement to the EP NRM Board.

Yours sincerely,



Julie Pettett
CEO