

## NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT BOARD COMMUNIQUE

21<sup>st</sup> NRM Board meeting on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> September (Darwin).

Key issues discussed at this meeting of the Board of Directors were:

1. Plans for dealing with the applications due on 26<sup>th</sup> September for the Regional Investment Strategy for 2007-2010 (RIS07-10). Discussion included details on the regional Technical Assessment Panels providing technical support to the Directors, and the meeting of the Directors themselves in October, to decide on the successful applications. Directors also discussed processes for dealing with any returned or unallocated funds (if any) from the Regional Investment Strategy for 2004-2007 (RIS04-07).
2. The bilateral negotiations between the Australian Government and the Northern Territory Government on the funding arrangements for the next round of Natural Heritage Trust (NHT3) funding. The NRMB considered a draft paper making the case that funding to the Northern Territory should be increased.
3. Results of the first steering committee meeting for rolling out the Board's Indigenous Ecological Knowledge (IEK) program. The Board was advised that the Central Land Council and NAILSMA have been appointed the successful host agencies for Program 1(b) Intergenerational Transfer of IEK; and that plans are well underway for seeking applications for Program 1(a) Pilot Projects of Integration of IEK into mainstream NRM activities; and for seeking expressions of interest for Program 2 Preparation of Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property Protocols for IEK Management.
4. The Board was advised that the (Australian Government/Northern Territory Government) Joint Steering Committee has approved the Board's proposal for a Decision Support System, which has three components:
  - supporting and improving the NRMB program management business cycle
  - spatial and non spatial information gathering and management for biophysical priority setting, and
  - capacity building for monitoring, evaluation, reporting and improvement (MREI).
5. Corporate Governance. The Board discussed the organisational arrangements for:
  - preparation of the 2006-7 Financial Report
  - preparation of the 2006-7 Financial Audit
  - preparation of the 2006-7 Annual Report
  - processes for the appointment by NRETA of NRMB Directors for when the two year term of the current Directors expires 7/11/07, and
  - holding of an Annual General Meeting.
6. A number of projects funded from the RIS04-07 which were seeking contract variations or were behind in their contractual obligations.
7. Several community engagement issues, in particular membership of the Lake Eyre Basin Intergovernmental Agreement Advisory Committee and the newly created Landcare Advisory Committee to the Landcare Australia Limited Board. The Directors also discussed the difficulty of sufficiently stretching the level of support being able to be provided by Regional Facilitators to potential applicants to the RIS07-10.

8. The drastic implications of removal of CDEP from indigenous communities which have been reliant on it to support their NRM activities. Directors were advised that rough calculations show that for RIS04-07 projects approximately \$3m worth of CDEP funds have leveraged nearly \$11m of NHT2 RIS04-07 funds spent on meeting NRM targets. The Directors resolved to write to the relevant Ministers about their concerns.
9. The Board received a very interesting presentation from the Tropical Savannas CRC on a web-based mapping project for biodiversity, weeds and feral information, which has been funded through the RIS04-07.

Sue van-Cuylenburg  
Chairman, NRMB (NT) Inc.