

Chairs Report

Rangelands NRM Co-ordinating Group Inc
Board Meeting Monday 1 November

A well attended Board meeting was held on Monday 1st November immediately following the AGM in Perth. At the AGM the constitution was changed to meet the requirements of State Agency Representatives to not be elected members of the Board thus allowing a broader representation from the general community. The latter will be a big step towards reengaging those areas of the Rangelands that have not been at the table for some time. The election of community representatives was postponed until the next meeting which will be an Extraordinary General Meeting so that the constitutional changes can be bedded down and understood by Reference groups and other groups prior to calling for nominations. The nominations will be well advertised and that special meeting should take place around March next year.

At the ordinary meeting the Board agreed to the name change of the Kimberly Reference groups to be East and West Kimberly and formed on the LCDC boundaries. The West Kimberly made up of Broome, West Kimberly and North Kimberly LCDCs and the East Kimberly, the East Kimberly LCDC. This better reflects the diverse interests of the two reference groups.

It was pleasing to note that the slow start to some of the CfoC projects, due mainly to climatic delays, has been overcome and the project reviews show most projects are now progressing well.

The new direction of the Board to pursue partnerships, particularly with Shire Councils and mining companies, is going well with quite a deal of interest in whole of catchment projects and carbon projects. There is the potential to create a new paradigm where land managers can, for the first time, manage their properties without rainfall dependency. This economy, which is not reliant on rainfall but good management, has great potential for the rangelands in particular.

To this end the Regional Leaders Group (which is made up of the 6 Regional NRM Chairs) will be putting up a Royalties 4 Regions project to the value of around \$40 million centred on the themes of Energy, Water and Carbon. More of this in the coming months but the first blush of the project will be presented to the NRM Ministerial Sub Committee this week. If the concept of the proposal gets the go ahead then a fully costed and scoped project will be submitted in April for consideration.

A very comprehensive report was given by John Silver on the various projects and the meeting of project milestones. We now have a very good handle on all projects funded and the recent review process has confirmed this. I congratulate all the team for their professional approach and in particular John and Brian.

The Board heard about good progress being made with projects in the three operational reference groups of the Pilbara, West and East Kimberly but areas of concern with meeting attendance due to distance was still problematic as was issues of adequate administrative support. The Board felt that with the change of the constitution a better delivery model could be developed.



The Board heard from the State and Commonwealth NRM offices with the State reporting a new round of community grants to a maximum of \$50k per grant would be announced soon. The Commonwealth reported that the next business plan would hopefully be out by February and this plan would guide the Rangelands expenditure of \$3.2million over the final 2 years of the CfoC program.

In terms of staff, John Silver has now set up in Broome at the Lotteries House building, Kununurra have relocated to a smaller building and Brian Warren is in the process of moving to Perth and an office at Oasis Lotteries House in Nedlands. Gaye Mackenzie will join Brian in the Perth office as Manager Strategic Partnerships. These moves reflect the new operational delivery of the organisation.

I look forward to new interest from areas not currently represented on the Board, and once criteria for representation is developed it will be circulated for public nominations and elections.

Bill Mitchell

Chair

