

# Situation Analysis – Northern Tasmanian Natural Resource Management Association

**Background** Drawing from the initial Practice Change Project workshop and various publications, the following is a situation analysis of the Northern Tasmanian NRM Association. It includes the key NRM issues, organisational structure, the resource condition targets and management action targets that have been identified. The purpose of the situation analysis is to provide an overview of the North Tasmanian catchment for circulation among the ten regions involved in the project. This will enable the participating regions to better understand each others situations.

## **The Region**

**Geography** The Northern Tasmania NRM Region covers 25,200 km<sup>2</sup> (approximately 2.5 million hectares) of the State and extends to the three nautical mile (5.5 km) limit from the coast. The Region's boundaries align with those of Northern Tasmania Development, the regional development organisation owned by the eight Northern Tasmanian Councils, namely: Break O' Day; Dorset; George Town; Launceston; West Tamar; Meander Valley; Northern Midlands; and Flinders (covering the Eastern Bass Strait islands).

**Demographics** The Region's population of approximately 134,000 (28% of the State) is concentrated around the Tamar Basin and Launceston, with a number of smaller towns servicing a dispersed rural and coastal community.

<b>Land tenure</b>	Commonwealth land	0.3%
	Conservation area	3.6%
	Crown land	3.7%
	Forest reserve	4.1%
	Game reserve	0.5%
	Hydro-Electric Corporation land	0.2%
	National park	7%
	Nature reserve	0.7%
	Nature recreation area	0.3%
	Public reserves	0.4%
	Private property	52.3%
	Regional reserve	1.8%
	State forest	22.3%
	State reserve	0.7%
Other authority land	1.9%	

<b>Land use</b>	Forestry	39.91%
	Grazing	54.44%
	Irrigated Cropping	5.63%
	Cropping	0.02%

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## **NRM issues**

- Insufficient knowledge
- Lack of support in combination with increasing demands to improve NRM
- Lack of natural resource management investment in the region
- Habitat loss and modification
- Management of threatened populations, species and ecological communities
- Pest plants and animals and diseases
- Water Quality
- Sustainable Use of Water Resources
- Decline in condition of Wetlands
- Decline in condition of Rivers
- Increasing Salinity
- Decline in Soil Condition
- Protection of Geo-heritage Values
- Loss of Landscape Values
- Air Quality
- Climate Change and Greenhouse Effects
- Community burnout
- Low levels of understanding
- Resourcing limitations
- Ineffective policy and legislative frameworks, planning and coordination
- Lack of monitoring and evaluation

## ***The Regional NRM Organisation***

### **History**

Put simply, the Northern Tasmanian Natural Resource Management Association (NRM North) is a regional organisation that draws together our collective aspirations and actions for the natural assets of this area. It was officially incorporated on March 26, 2003 with its 81 membership seats filled by a diverse group of people from industry, local government, conservation groups, public and private land managers and others who have an interest or expertise in managing the region's natural resources. The make-up of the association was decided after a series of public forums initiated by local government.

### **Organisational arrangements**

There is a 15-member Management Committee which is endorsed by the State government. The Management Committee sets the strategic direction of the organisation and monitors the organisation's performance on behalf of association members and stakeholders within and beyond the region's boundary. There is a team of professionals who support this committee and work with the community of Northern Tasmania to support them in the management of the region's natural resources.

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NRM North personnel include:

**Catherine Murdock** – Executive Officer

**James McKee** – Operations Manager

**Howard Colvin** – Communications Coordinator

**Stu King** – Land Management Coordinator

**Alister Mackinnon** – Industry Liaison Coordinator

**Darlene Mansell** – Aboriginal Facilitator

**Andrew Baldwin** – NRM Facilitator (Tamar)

**Jay Wilson** – NRM Facilitator (Dorset)

**Stuart Brownlea** – NRM Facilitator (Meander Valley)

**Kate Thorn** – NRM Facilitator (Break O’Day)

**Marta Vergara Godoy** – NRM Facilitator (Northern Midlands)

**Robyn Cox** – NRM Facilitator (Flinders)

**Denise Colvin** – Administration Officer

**Jane Jones** – Administration Officer

## Key functions

NRM North is responsible to:

- Identify the priorities for natural resource management for the Northern region
- Prepare a draft regional strategy for the Northern region
- Facilitate the implementation of the regional strategy
- Promote the natural resource management principles
- Facilitate the integration of natural resource management and planning activities for the region
- Seek, manage and allocate funds according to the regional strategy
- Coordinate the Northern region’s participation in national and State programs relating to NRM
- Monitor and evaluate the implementation of the Northern regional strategy
- Develop and implement processes to ensure appropriate education and training in natural resource management

## Budget

### Income (2005/06)

NHT funding - \$2,999,005

NAP funding - \$835,500

Landcare funding - \$86,646

State funding - \$237,800

Other funding - \$73,525

**Total - \$4,232,476**

### Expenses (2005/06)

Flora and Fauna at the Landscape Level - \$767,000

Rivers and Water for life - \$867,625

Productive landscapes - \$1,327,000

Healthy Coasts and Seas - \$713,972



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Community Partnership - \$760,628  
 Total - \$4,436,225

## The NRM Planning Process

### History

In 2002, the Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment (DPIWE) commissioned a Situation Paper to establish the status of planning in the Region. Steps to establish NRM North began in 2002 and culminated in the declaration of the NRM North Committee of Management by the Minister for Primary Industries, Water and Environment in early 2003.

### NRM plan

The final document was approved for submission for accreditation to the Joint Tasmanian/Australian Government Steering Committee at meetings of the Strategy Working Group NRM North Committee and NRM North association in 2005.

## Resource condition targets

Asset	Resource Condition Targets (RCTs)
Biodiversity	<p><b>RCT B1</b> The areal extent and distribution of present and priority native vegetation types by Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation for Australia (IBRA) sub region will be maintained above 1996 levels, and specified native vegetation condition classes will be maintained above 2006 levels.</p> <p><b>RCT B2</b> The range, area, number of locations, condition and conservation status of significant native species (including listed threatened species) and their habitats, will be maintained at or above 2006 benchmarks.</p> <p><b>RCT B3</b> The extent and condition of each significant ecological community (including threatened ecological communities) will be maintained at or above 2006 levels.</p> <p><b>RCT B4</b> The extent and impact of regionally significant invasive vertebrate, invertebrate and vegetative pests and diseases will be below 2005 levels.</p>
Water	<p><b>RCT W1</b> The Region will achieve a permanent reduction in peak concentrations and total loads of nutrients, sediment and salinity at key stream monitoring sites compared to 2006 levels, unless required as part of ecosystem maintenance and health.</p> <p><b>RCT W2</b> All water will be managed consistent with the sustainable yield of water resources and the National Principles for the Provision of Water for Ecosystems (specified indicators and measures will be set by 2006).</p> <p><b>RCT W3</b> The condition of key streams will be improved by 30% over 2007 benchmark levels.</p> <p><b>RCT W4</b> The areal extent and condition of individual, regionally significant wetlands will be maintained or improved above the 2006 baseline levels.</p>
Land	<p><b>RCT L1</b> The soil condition for specified soil/land use combinations will be maintained at or above 2005 benchmarks.</p> <p><b>RCT L2</b> There will be no new occurrences of actual acid sulfate soils reported beyond known occurrences as at 2005.</p> <p><b>RCT L3</b> The rate of increase in (i) groundwater height and salinity concentration and (ii) the area of salt affected land in high priority</p>

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	<p>ground water flow systems (GFS)/catchments reduced compared with trends in 2015.</p> <p><b>RCT L4</b> The condition of key sites of geoconservation significance will be maintained or improved when compared to 2006 levels.</p> <p><b>RCT L5</b> The condition of key areas of landscape value will be maintained or improved when compared to 2006 levels.</p>
Estuaries, Coasts and Marine	<p><b>RCT M1</b> The areal extent, distribution, abundance and condition of key coastal, estuarine and marine species, communities and their habitats will be maintained at, or improved above 2006 benchmark levels (includes both target and threatened species).</p> <p><b>RCT M2</b> Estuarine and marine water quality at key estuary and inshore monitoring sites will be at or better than 2010 benchmark levels (as measured by nutrient, TSS and TDS levels), unless other levels are required for ecosystem maintenance and health.</p> <p><b>RCT M3</b> The net increase in the extent, abundance and impact of current significant vertebrate, invertebrate and vegetative pests and diseases will be below 2006 benchmarks, and the rate of increase of new invasive pests and diseases will be reduced to below the 2006 rate.</p>
Atmosphere	<p><b>RCT A1</b> The Region will meet the Air NEPM goal of no more than 5 days per year when the daily average PM10 (particles with a diameter of 10 micrometres or smaller) concentration exceeds 50 micrograms per cubic metre. By 2015, for there to be no more than 5 days per year when the daily average PM10 concentration exceeds 40 micrograms per cubic metre.</p> <p><b>RCT A2</b> The Region will have achieved no more than one exceedence per year of the Air NEPM standard for carbon monoxide and by 2015 the Region will have achieved a maximum 8 hour average carbon monoxide concentration of 8ppm.</p> <p><b>RCT A3</b> Greenhouse gas emissions in the Region will be no more than 8% above 1990 levels.</p> <p><b>RCT A4</b> The Region will have reduced the amount of green waste burned in the Region by 100%, excluding planned burning operations.</p> <p><b>RCT A5</b> The area of carbon sinks within the Region will be at least 10% greater than 2008 levels.</p>
Cultural Heritage	<p>RCTs and MATs for cultural heritage in the Region will be determined in the first 12 months following accreditation.</p>
Building Sustainable Communities	<p>Building Sustainable Communities does not use RCTs, but instead uses Aspirational Targets, Goals, MATs and MAs.</p> <p>The community of Northern Tasmania understands NRM issues and appreciates environmental values and their role in achieving the goals of the strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Northern community is actively engaged in, and taking care of the Region's natural resources;</li> <li>• Natural resource managers, including landholders and community groups, are equipped with the skills needed to be effective NRM managers; and</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriate institutional arrangements, structures and policies are in place to enable effective community engagement in NRM.</li> </ul>
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### Management action targets

Asset	Management Action Targets (MATs)
Biodiversity	<p><b>MAT B1</b> Planning and policy frameworks are in place to mitigate fragmentation of high priority native vegetation and improve management of biodiversity and priority habitat areas in the Region.</p> <p><b>MAT B2</b> Eighty percent of regional vegetation is being managed in a manner consistent with regionally agreed codes of practice. 2009</p> <p><b>MAT B3</b> There is no net decrease in areal extent of riparian native vegetation in all catchments.</p> <p><b>MATB4</b> Thirty percent of high priority riparian native vegetation in the Region at risk of degradation is permanently protected and managed. 2009.</p> <p><b>MAT B5</b> Outcomes of the Vegetation Condition Benchmarks for N.R.M. Project are available to land managers, and key sites are being monitored to refine methodology.</p> <p><b>MAT B6</b> A comprehensive sub regional NRM. Strategy is developed and being implemented that gives adequate recognition to the Northern Midlands portion of the national biodiversity hotspot.</p> <p><b>MAT B7</b> Planning and policy frameworks are in place to mitigate loss of threatened populations, species and ecological communities.</p> <p><b>MAT B8</b> Sixty per cent of threatened populations and ecological communities are subject to regionally agreed management agreements and practices.</p> <p><b>MAT B9</b> Forty per cent of threatened vegetation communities on private land are covered by management agreements.</p> <p><b>MAT B10</b> Forty per cent of habitat for threatened and regionally significant species on private land is protected under management agreements.</p> <p><b>MAT B11</b> A comprehensive set of indicators of biodiversity and habitat health are identified and monitoring mechanisms are in place to measure them.</p> <p><b>MAT B12</b> Planning and policy frameworks are in place to support the integrated management of potential and existing pest plants, animals and diseases.</p> <p><b>MAT B13</b> Control programs to manage nuisance introduced fauna (eg feral cats, rabbits, pigs, and foxes) are being implemented either regionally or in priority locations.</p> <p><b>MAT B14</b> The extent of weed infestations on private land is contained and reduced by levels to be determined compared to 2006 levels.</p> <p><b>MAT B15</b> Seventy percent of the recommended actions in the Regional Weed Management Strategy (or superceding document) have been undertaken.</p>
Water	<p><b>MAT W1</b> 50% of the Region has catchment specific water quality targets and monitoring in place consistent with ANZECC water quality guidelines.</p> <p><b>MAT W2</b> All point and diffuse sources of pollution in priority catchments are identified, with control targets developed, and management actions commenced.</p>

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	<p><b>MAT W3</b> 50% of industry organisations in the Region are involved in partnership with water resource managers.</p> <p><b>MAT W4</b> 50% of the catchments in the Region have integrated best practice Water Management Plans completed and operating, as provided for under the Water Management Act 1999.</p> <p><b>MAT W5</b> All RAMSAR wetlands are being managed with the support of a written management plan.</p> <p><b>MAT W6</b> 60% of land managers responsible for wetland areas are utilising science based information systems put in place under this strategy to improve understanding, awareness and skills to facilitate sustainable management of wetlands.</p>
Land	<p><b>MAT L1</b> Planning and policy frameworks are in place at regional and municipal levels to manage the impact of salinity on critical assets (land, water, biodiversity and infrastructure) in the Region.</p> <p><b>MAT L2</b> 30% of land managers in key areas are adopting practical salinity assessment and monitoring techniques, and implementing best management land and water management options to reduce salinity.</p> <p><b>MAT L3</b> All regional councils have planning and policy frameworks in place that recognise the value and support management priority landscapes in the Region.</p> <p><b>MAT L4</b> Planning and policy frameworks are in place to mitigate decline in land condition.</p> <p><b>MAT L5</b> 50% of land is being managed in a manner consistent with regionally agreed codes of practice.</p> <p><b>MAT L6</b> 50% of significant geoconservation sites have management plans or arrangements in place for their conservation.</p> <p><b>MAT L7</b> A comprehensive baseline monitoring network is established for monitoring key Groundwater Flow Systems, key land reference sites and the condition of critical assets at risk of salinity.</p> <p><b>MAT L8</b> 50% of agricultural land managers have participated in a property planning course.</p> <p><b>MAT L9</b> 50% of land managers are implementing best management practices to minimise degradation to geoheritage.</p> <p><b>MAT L10</b> A comprehensive baseline monitoring network is established for monitoring key soil-land use combinations and the condition of critical assets at risk of soil condition decline and thresholds identified for all relevant indicators of soil condition.</p>
Estuaries, Coasts and Marine	<p><b>MAT M1</b> Water quality of rivers and stormwater inputs into key estuaries is improved as measured by nutrients (water column and sediment), turbidity and known point and diffuse source pollutants when compared to 2006 levels.</p> <p><b>MAT M2</b> All littoral and inshore marine habitat types in each IBRA bioregion are mapped.</p> <p><b>MAT M3</b> Baseline extent and condition data for significant marine and coastal species and habitat are identified.</p> <p><b>MAT M4</b> Resources and tools are available to support the management of coastal, marine and estuarine areas.</p> <p><b>MAT M5</b> Planning and policy frameworks are in place to facilitate integrated management, including on-going monitoring, of new and</p>

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	<p>existing marine pest species.</p> <p><b>MAT M6</b> All marine, coastal and estuarine areas are being managed in a manner consistent with regionally agreed codes of practice.</p>
Atmosphere	<p><b>MAT A1</b> A scientifically informed and publicly accessible information system is in place to improve understanding, awareness and skills to facilitate management of ambient air-quality.</p> <p><b>MAT A2</b> A legislative, planning and policy framework is effectively operating to improve regional ambient air quality.</p> <p><b>MAT A3</b> Key recommendations from the Launceston urban transport study are being taken into consideration during traffic and strategic development planning.</p> <p><b>MAT A4</b> Achieve nationally agreed greenhouse gas targets.</p> <p><b>MAT A5</b> Woodheater numbers in the urban areas of Launceston (including Hadspen and Legana) are reduced to about 3000.</p> <p><b>MAT A6</b> Three-yearly reports are produced to provide adequate information about the State of the Air in the Tamar Valley and throughout the Region.</p> <p><b>MAT A7</b> Fifty percent of urban houses have an energy efficiency rating of at least four stars.</p> <p><b>MAT A8</b> No woodheater with an emission factor greater than 1.5g/kg output is being installed in the Launceston urban area.</p> <p><b>MAT A9</b> All industrial sources of pollution have been audited, baseline emission levels established and industry assessed by sector against national best practice.</p> <p><b>MAT A10</b> Regulations to ban backyard burning within urban areas of the Region are introduced.</p>
Building Sustainable Communities	<p><b>MAT C1</b> Sixty percent of people in the Region understand the meaning of Natural Resource Management.</p> <p><b>MAT C2</b> Sixty percent of people in the Region accept NRM best practice as an integral part of their daily lives.</p> <p><b>MAT C3</b> All business sectors (private industry, GBE's and Local Government) in the Region are actively participating in regional investment initiatives.</p> <p><b>MAT C4</b> All Northern Municipalities have effective and viable mechanisms in place to guide local level NRM. decision-making and activities.</p> <p><b>MAT C5</b> Fifty percent of land managers are utilising science based information systems put in place under this Strategy to improve understanding, awareness and skills to achieve improved natural resource management.</p>

### Philosophy and thinking

It is regarded as early days for NRM North as a regional body.

NRM North's key focus areas are:

- NRM as a whole;
- Building an NRM ethic and awareness, encouraging people to love where they live: "*working with you to care for our island home*"; and
- Valuing assets and understanding threats.



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They do this by:

- Creating an environment where their partners (in particular the NRM groups that employ the regional facilitators) can facilitate change within their sectors – NRM North don't aim to be the key drivers alone to make change happen.
- Playing a brokering role (partly because they have a relatively small budget).
- Utilising sub-regional NRM facilitators who foster change through their one-on-one activities – their roles differ across sub-regions.
- Considering practice change as a part of core business, however the 'jury is out' as to what level of practice change is required.
- Education through schooling is being targeted to build longer term ownership and thinking about NRM.
- Targeting a critical mass of people involved in each key sub-region.
- Working to gain trust:
  - NRM North are 'getting there' with being trusted.
  - Time is needed to allow stakeholders to engage back with NRM North.

NRM North recognises that:

- there is wide diversity of industry in the region;
- farming has changed significantly in the past 15 years or so with landholders now having a far greater awareness and perception of NRM;
- practice change is strongly linked with economics;
- quality assurance systems have come into use in several agricultural systems;
- the region is well served by agricultural service industries, eg Integrated Pest Management, erosion control;
- Landcare was strong in the region;
- Social networks are very strong, they differ in each sub-region and do influence practice change;
- They need to broaden the thinking about practice change - it is not only farmers who need to change to improve NRM. Perhaps the biggest need for NRM practice change in the region is by local government (from planning through to on-ground actions) and public land managers; and
- 65% of the region is under native vegetation, largely on public land managed by state agencies.

It is important to the NRM North team that they are a Non Government Organisation (NGO), and have an ethic of 'working for the community'. They have a strong focus on the customers (the natural resource managers).

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## People, energy and skills

- NRM North identify that people who are initiating change must be well respected and trusted, therefore anyone they employ at NRM North must understand the sector (eg farming) and be grounded in reality.
- Working with partners helps to reduce the risk associated with staff turnover.
- 'Winning over' adversaries can change these people to advocates for NRM North.
- People who are passionate about NRM and the regional model will likely be burnt out and move on to something else if there is another funding 'glitch'.
- Bringing people from regional NRM bodies in other states has resulted in a team with good skills and experiences. They have a good understanding and experience in M&E, on-ground actions and enabling change. There may be some need to develop shared understanding.

## *Expectations of involvement in project*

### Expectations

NRM North is expecting the project to assist with the business of regional NRM – the internal management of the fostering change processes and roles. This includes understanding why they are doing things the way they do.

NRM North use systems thinking so always adaptively managing with questions like:

- is what we are doing effecting change?
- is it adding value?
- at the operational planning level – are we doing it efficiently?

In linking practice change to how a regional NRM body operates – practically, how does this inform how we do business?

### Tools

- **Operational planning tool** - A tool to help workshop and develop an operational plan that clarifies the different roles and activities for achieving an outcome, recognising there are multiple issues in multiple areas. This may be able to draw up from the program logic developed for each program. Initially focus on NRM North as an organisation, then naturally would identify partners and roles.
- **Partnerships** - how to most effectively engage with partners eg timing.
- **Systems thinking** - A tool to help ingrain systems thinking in everyday activities.
- Change models would also be useful.



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### Working together

- Training in consultation is not needed as most staff have these skills.
- Some guidance and tools in thinking about change, how to be proactive and address gaps may be helpful.
- Communication and planning across the team is an important focus area, important to discuss needs and roles within the team.
- Increase the team's understanding of the influence of different activities – eg one-on-one or group.
- PMP would be a good topic for a case study as this is being tested as a delivery and planning model. For this the 4 key categories for stakeholders may be: involved, likely to be involved, not likely to be involved, ARM (the delivery service partner). This case study may be able to identify perceptions about sub-regional facilitators, the process, NRM North as a whole, the PMP program, why people engaged, and opportunities for the program and identify what change it has stimulated.
- A focus would be on: what do we do and how do we best do this together (roles, fit etc) – this could then feed into pilot testing an operational planning tool.