
FNQ NRM Ltd Directors' Meeting
Friday 12th August 2005
Cairns, 8.30am – 5.00pm
Ratified Minutes

Attendance

Directors – Cr Mike Berwick (Chair), Prof Peter Valentine (Director, World Heritage), Bill Shannon (Director, Industry), Chris Gloor (Director, Coastal and Marine), Ken Atkinson (Director, South West), Caroline Coppo (Director, Catchment and Community), Ray Byrnes (Director, Local Government), Peter Stanton (Director, Conservation).

Staff – Allan Dale (EO), Rachel Wicks (Manager Community Engagement), Rowena Grace (Natural Resources Coordinator – Biodiversity), Rebecca Clear (Manager Programs and Partnerships), Fiona George (Contract and Project Management), John Reghenzani (Natural Resources Coordinator – Herbert), Jane Page (Natural Resources Coordinator – Barron), Jessica Klok (Land Management Facilitator).

Guests - Frederieke Kroon (Senior Scientist, CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems), Margie Milgate (Natural Resources Network Coordinator, Growcom), Peter Gilbey (Regional Manager, Water Services, DNR&M), Dermot Smyth, Lex Cogle (Principal Scientist, DNR&M), Louise Hatley (DNR&M), Georgie Pitt (DNR&M), John Armour (DNR&M), Damien Burrows (ACTFR).

1. Welcome and Apologies

Troy Wyles-Whelan (Director Indigenous), Elsie Go-Sam (Indigenous Support Member).

2. Previous Minutes

2.1 Draft Minutes 3rd June 2005

- **7.10** – Editing reference to be removed.

Resolution: That the minutes are adopted as presented. Moved Ken Atkinson and seconded Caroline Coppo.

Action: That a rolling action sheet be prepared and presented for each meeting to track resolutions.

Action: Allan and Mike to develop a new agenda format structured around decision-making and information sessions.

3. Business Arising

3.1 Chair's Update

3.1.1 Regional Groups' Collective Update

Mike Berwick provided an update on the Regional Groups' Collective. Key topics included:

- Acknowledging the work of the Collective in developing the response to the Green Paper.
- Informed Directors regarding the ill health of Barbara Wilden and her subsequent resignation.

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- Informed Directors of the resignation of Michelle Wallace (RGC EO). Future arrangements for the position will be discussed at the next meeting.
 - Advised that voting will take place at the next meeting for a new position on the executive after which the executive will elect a new chair.
 - Advised that the new national working group will discuss the formation of national partnerships with a range of participants at its next meeting.
 - Advised the Board of the meeting held with the Honourable Desley Boyle, Minister for Environment, Local Government, Planning and Women and Member for Cairns (also attended by Ray Byrnes and Peter Valentine) at which Minister Boyle was approached to become a champion to seek increased and ongoing support from the State for the NRM arrangements. While the Board was asked to outline this request in a letter, it is considered to be more appropriate coming from the RGC.
 - Advised that the Regional Body representative on the Marine Tropical Research Centre Board was Bob Fraser, EO Burdekin Dry Tropics Board, with Richard Ireland as Chair.
 - Draft TOR has been developed for the National Collective. The first key initiative will be to form national partnerships for the next NRM forum.

3.1.2 Local Government NRM and Environment Conference June 2005

The Local Government NRM and Environment Conference Communiqué was tabled for information purposes. The report includes the key points raised at the NRM Forum during the NRM & Environment Conference on 29 June 2005 in Gladstone. The NRM & Environment Conference requests the points outlined be presented as an LGAQ Executive-sponsored resolution at the LGAQ Annual Conference in August.

4. Correspondence June – August 9th 2005

The Board noted the correspondence report for June–August 2005.

5. Financial Committee Report

5.1 May and June 2005

The Board considered and approved the Financial Report for the period May-June 2005. Bill Shannon outlined the Company's modified internal financial management arrangements.

Directors agreed that a quarterly report against individual project budgets in email format would be beneficial and that a full set of financial report papers should be available at Board meetings on a quarterly basis.

6. Executive Officer's Report

6.1 Update re: Formation of FNQ NRM Ltd, CSIRO and JCU Partnership Entity for Integrated Landscapes Management

Allan Dale provided the Board with an update on negotiations relating to the formation of the Integrated Landscapes Program. He advised that the leadership component of the overall joint venture, including identified resources, are secured and key positions supporting the arrangements are in place – including the appointment of Dr Fredereike Kroon as the WQIP Leader; CRC's Program 7 recommitted with a revised Country-based Planning agenda; the Sustainable Coastal Agriculture Systems (SCAS) appointments; and the appointment of Dave Green to the Community Water Quality position within DNRM. The next priority is to secure CSIRO's commitment to the local area planning agenda around biodiversity hotspots.

Allan advised that the next step in the process is to formally develop the partnership agreement for the Board's consideration.

6.2 Update re: Carbon Trading Opportunities Under the Greenhouse Gas Abatement Program (GGAP)

Allan Dale provided an update on the potential longer-term transfer of the GGAP project from Douglas Shire Council (DSC) to FNQ NRM Ltd. He advised that the first step was for the Board to take a low risk role in assisting DSC to ensure that there are solid outcomes achieved from the first phase. A revised formal tender document was being prepared by John Ritchie and this will be distributed to the Board for its information.

6.3 Brad Dorrington Memorial

To progress the establishment of a memorial to Brad Dorrington, Directors were asked to consider the less complicated approach of creating a riparian corridor in a high priority area in Brad's honour. Rachel Wicks advised that this approach is also consistent with the business priorities and objectives of both FNQ NRM Ltd and JRCMA, and would provide a permanent and lasting memorial to Brad while remaining consistent with the Board's identified investment in biodiversity improvement. This would also allow the outputs to be reported against and incorporated into FNQ NRM Ltd's performance reporting.

The Board agreed that this was a more appropriate concept.

Resolution: The Board endorsed the proposal to advance discussions with JRCMA regarding the establishment of a memorial corridor in Brad Dorrington's name.

Other Items of Discussion:

Barron River Integrated Catchment Management Association (BRICMA) – Cairns Port Authority Partnership

Jane Page advised the Board of the successful BRICMA project to revegetate the main thread of the Barron River (165km, of which 140km is considered degraded). The project will be formally announced at the end of August or early September. Tim Anderson of BRICMA/NRA, the key driver behind the project, is continuing negotiations with a range of other potential partners for additional resources.

Resolution: The Board resolved that a letter be sent congratulating BRICMA and Tim Anderson regarding the project.

Local Government NRM Workshop

Allan Dale advised that the follow up workshop to the 'Enhancing the role of Local Government in cooperative regional natural resource management' research project being conducted by the Cooperative Research Centre for Coastal Zone, Estuary and Waterway Management and Griffith University (School of Environmental Planning), was scheduled for Monday 15th August. He advised that the second workshop, aimed at Mayors, Executive Officers and planning staff, also provided a forum to reach agreement on progressing three key partnership areas, pest management, sustainable urban development and support for council nurseries, as well as identify additional linkages and regional alliances on issues such as water use efficiency or coastal development.

National Landcare Program

Allan Dale advised the Board of the success of the NLP Water Quality Incentives Scheme administered by Jessica Klok, FNQ NRM Ltd Land Management Facilitator. He advised that FNQ NRM Ltd was successful in obtaining additional funding to extend the project, which secures the Land Management Facilitator position until July 2008.

Allan also advised that the Northern Gulf Regional Body is seeking a partnership with FNQ NRM Ltd to service the upper Mitchell area (Mareeba/Dimbulah irrigation area). The focus of this partnership would be the delivery of an incentives scheme around farming systems through linkages to Jessica's project.

Jessica also updated the Board on the recent visit by Nationals Senator Ron Boswell, which saw Senator Boswell visit several sites in the Johnstone Catchment. Following the success of this visit, Senator Boswell has offered to provide a letter of support for FNQ NRM Ltd's \$385,000 Community Support Grants application to increase the adoption of sustainable production practices.

Cape York Water Quality Policy Framework Tender

Allan Dale advised that Cape York have secured resources to begin developing a WQIP framework and are seeking the support FNQ NRM Ltd to undertake the work through a formal arrangement. He proposed sub-contracting Rachel Eberhard to undertake the work as the project has the potential to deliver a wide range of partnership benefits.

7. General Business

7.1 Presentation by Margie Milgate, Natural Resources Network Coordinator, Growcom

Directors received an informative presentation from Growcom's Natural Resources Network Coordinator, Margie Milgate. The presentation aimed to introduce the structure, role, objectives and direction of Growcom and the fruit and vegetable industries in relation to NRM.

The Board thanked Margie for her time and expressed its desire to continue to form stronger links with Growcom and to be kept informed of activities and developments in the sector.

7.2 Update on the Coastal Catchment Initiative Workplan Implementation Dr Fredereike Kroon, Senior Scientist, CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems

The Board received a presentation from Dr Fredereike Kroon on the progress of developing water quality improvements plans for the Tully and Barron Catchments. Current priorities included finalising the workplan and recruiting the water quality coordinator to be based in Tully.

7.3 Report re: Country Based Planning Workshop, Cardwell, 15/16th July and Traditional Owner Advisory Group Update

Dermot Smyth provided the Board with an overview of the Country-based planning workshop and outlined the key resolutions that resulted from the two-day workshop. The workshop was the first step in gathering input from the region's Traditional Owners to determine appropriate processes for considering and funding projects under the RIS Country-based Planning project.

Following two days of discussion, there was unanimous support for the overall aims of the project and a clear intention to develop Plans for Country as well as undertake other projects consistent with the Aboriginal Plan and the Regional NRM Plan. Participants also nominated the TOAC as the body that would recommend funding applications to the Board for endorsement.

As part of the presentation, Dermot tabled a report fully detailing the resolutions developed at the workshop.

7.4 Report re: Pilot Regional Governance Audit Case Study

Rebecca Clear updated the Board regarding the Company's recent participation in the Australian Government's pilot review of regional bodies' governance arrangements. The review, carried out by Bruce McMurtrie and Greg Fraser of Walter-Turnbull accountants and consultants, considered all aspects of the Company's operations and involved interviews with most staff.

Rebecca provided an overview of the process and key findings, including identifying areas for improvement. Overall, the audit identified that the Board was found to be actively involved in the

governance of the organisation through active involvement in board meetings and a range of other organisational activities and is supported by an experienced CEO and senior management team. The team found that while financial management and reporting processes are still in the process of being documented they are nevertheless strong and effective and have had a strong oversight from a member of the board who is a chartered accountant. In addition, governance practice was found to be at better practice in relation to some areas of the Board's operations and in the engagement and management of stakeholders.

Concerns were raised regarding some of the recommendations, particularly those recommendations relating to increased Board endorsement and monitoring of lower level activities. The Board felt this would require increased meeting incidence which would also have implications for core funding.

The Board were asked to provide feedback on the draft report to allow completion and development of a strategy to implement the recommendations.

Action: Rebecca Clear to circulate the draft report to the Board for comment.

Strategic Gap Analysis

Rebecca Clear briefed the Board on the outcomes of the two-day Strategic Gap Analysis meeting aimed at determining regional and statewide priorities for strategic reserve funds. The Board was advised that \$4.8 million of the strategic reserve had been held over for emergency response, leaving some \$7 million for allocation following project assessment and JSC consideration.

Projects that were generally supported by the six northern regional bodies included:

- Fire management regimes – (including eastern coastlines)
- Pest and Weed emergency fund
- Threatened species – specifically cassowary, turtle, dugong and salfish
- Information management/GIS
- Wetlands in non-GBR regions
- WQ industry partnerships
- Climate and community – particularly community resilience and coastal habitats and species
- Fine scale vegetation mapping
- Land and sea management
- Traditional knowledge recording
- Acid sulphate soils

Directors expressed some concern regarding a tendency for funding agencies to focus on iconic species. Allan Dale added that the cassowary corridor investment is important in relation to the Wet Tropics RIS as this was an unmet commitment in the budgets.

Action: Rebecca Clear to circulate the workshop report for Board comment.

7.5 Draft National Landcare Program Project Proposals

Jessica Klock provided an update on the NLP Water Quality Incentives Scheme. The main objectives of this project were to identify the key best management practices across the different industries in the Wet Tropics that have the greatest potential to minimise diffuse pollution exported to the Great Barrier Reef lagoon. This included low-cost/low tech silt traps, off stream watering points, conversion of machinery for more sustainable production systems such as zero till, fencing of high priority habitat and strategic weed control. Other examples include nutrient management and pesticide reduction. There were a total of 173 applications for funding under the Scheme. Some 57 applications were funded via a total allocation of \$282,608.

Jessica advised that a new application has been submitted to NLP to secure \$350,000 for a three-year incentives project and briefed the Board on the five continuing NLP projects.

The Board congratulated Jessica on the success of the program and thanked her for her contributions.

7.6 Far North Queensland Water Supply Planning Strategy

Peter Gilbey, Regional Manager, Water Services, DNR&M briefed the Board in relation to the development of the new Water Supply Planning Strategy. He advised that the TOR had been developed and the review would include consideration of a population cap based on water availability. He also indicated that resulting strategies would be trigger-based rather than timeline specific.

Peter advised that the Wet Tropics water resource plan would address water planning for the next ten years from the Daintree to Herbert. Data collation will commence from mid this year with the intention of commencing preparation of the plan by mid 2007.

Peter stressed that the Board would retain a strong level of engagement in the project and be represented on the steering committee. Peter would also circulate the TOR as there may also be some scope to provide comment.

7.7 Herbert Catchment Interim Coordination Arrangements and Review

John Reghenzani addressed the Board in relation to his appointment on a temporary basis (for a period of 10 weeks) to assist with catchment coordination in the Herbert Catchment. John outlined the key projects he would be progressing, which includes supporting the upper Herbert Catchment to resolve issues related to degraded mine site rehabilitation. In addition to project support, John will conduct a consultative review of existing NRM arrangements in the catchment and from this develop a strategy to support the catchment's longer-term development. The Board will be provided with an overview of the working arrangements and proposed workplan objectives.

7.8 FNQ NRM Ltd July 2005 Performance Report

Fiona George briefed the Board on the July 2005 Performance Report. She advised that measures were being implemented to streamline the performance reporting process, including bringing the contractual details into line with performance reporting requirements.

The Board thanked Fiona for her contribution in preparing the report.

Action: Fiona George to circulate to the Board for approval prior to publishing for the AGM.

7.9 Integrated Management of Tilapia and Other Pest Fishes in North East Queensland – Proposed Directions

Damien Burrows, ACTFR, briefed the Board on the successful \$910,000 Regional Competitive Component tilapia management project. Ken Atkinson was nominated and accepted a position on the steering committee for the project, with Peter Stanton agreeing to stay closely involved.

The Board agreed that there would be potential leveraging for the K-12 project. Jane Page indicated that Neville Simpson would be keen to be involved in the educational aspects of the project.

7.10 Update Water Quality Modelling in the Wet Tropics – Dr Lex Cogle, Principal Scientist, DNRM, Louise Hatley, Georgie Pitt and John Armour.

Lex Cogle and team provided the Board with an overview report on short term catchment modelling for the Wet Tropics. The report included ranking catchments according to sediment & nutrient contribution to GBR (i.e. 'most to the coast' for investment); ranking sub-catchments to identify 'hot spots' of sediment & nutrient contribution – hillslope and bank erosion; and examining impacts of hotspot variables that can be managed within the sub-catchments (restricted to cover for hillslope erosion and riparian vegetation for bank erosion).

Following discussion, the Board agreed that the final report should:

- Provide clarity of the model assumptions
- Provide a statement of tabular and spatial outcomes
- Include a clear statement of emerging priorities for investment
- Include a statement of needs for the further development of the model.

Two phases in further progress of the work were identified:

Phase 1 – Implementation

- Influence of model output would be used to refine the application of NLP devolved grants priorities. This process would also provide additional ground-truthing opportunities.
- Influence of outputs on NWI Package development and develop a proposal to progress the regional model.
- In two years, following further model development, the Board would support industry to determine new MATs and compare the need for landuse change versus the need for end of valley targets.

Phase 2 - Model Refinement

- The Board supported broad Strategic Reserve Investment in continued development of the model over the next two years.

7.11 FNQ NRM Ltd Annual General Meeting – Bill Shannon

Bill Shannon raised a number of matters in relation to the Company's upcoming Annual General Meeting for Directors' consideration. These included timing of the meeting, processes for running the meeting (including voting if required), venue and key note speakers. It was noted that November is the last month in which the AGM can be held. A November meeting would provide additional lead-time to assist in preparing the financial reports, producing the Annual Report and meet the 28 day notification requirement.

Several suggestions were made in relation to a key note speaker including Greg Vaughn, head of WWF, and Noel Pearson. Directors were asked to forward suggestions for key note speakers as soon as possible. It was noted that the next meeting in October would be the last opportunity to finalise AGM details, including approving the annual report.

7.12 Board Policies – Remuneration and Advisory Committee Support

Rachel Wicks tabled a draft revised policy in relation to remuneration for the Board's Advisory Committees for consideration. This policy will be circulated as an out of session item for endorsement at the following meeting.

Other Business: Fourth Magdeburg Environmental Forum – Germany

Chris Gloor sought Board approval to attend the "Fourth Magdeburg Environmental Forum," to be held in Magdeburg, Germany, on November 16 -17th, 2005. The event is organized by the United Nations Environment Programme with support from Daimler-Chrysler (formerly Daimler-Benz).

Following discussion the Board approved attendance, with the precursor being full development of the membership and supporting membership packages. Effort must also be made to secure corporate sponsorship for airfares. It was also agreed that the RGC be approached with the offer to represent it at the conference to assist in raising the international profile of NRM.

Budget Surplus

Bill Shannon advised that there was some \$60,000 remaining as a surplus from the transfer of funds from the NRM Board (Wet Tropics) Inc to FNQ NRM Ltd. The Board discussed in principle support for:

- \$5k for K-12 pilot program in a school
- \$5k for corporate image
- \$5k international profile
- \$5k for developing a carbon/tourism concept – related to energy consumption.

Resolution: The Board resolved in principle support to use the discretionary funds as outlined above. Moved Bill Shannon and seconded Ken Atkinson.

Chris Gloor advised he will communicate to Ailsa Payne of EQ that the Board remains supportive of the K-12 program and the program itself remains on track.

8. Next Meeting

Monday 10th October 5.30-7.30pm and Tuesday 11th October 2005 – Ingham

Meeting closed 5.30pm