

Gippsland Integrated Natural Resource Management Executive

Minutes

10 am to 12 noon Fri 28 February 2003.

Attendees : Barry Hart (chair), John Mitchell Gippsland Water, Alan Freitag DSE, Tony Edgar DPI, Duncan Malcolm Gippsland Coastal Board, John Lovering Gippsland Research Coordination Group (phone link), Kevin Roberts Latrobe City

Apologies : Graeme Dear EGCMA, Geoff Hocking WGCMA, Mick Harding Gippsland Cultural Heritage Unit

1. Actions arising from 6 November 2003.

1.1	Comments on SP to Frankie	All	Done - Version 5 tabled
1.2	Circulate SP to Ref Group 13 Nov	Frankie	Done
1.3	Exec Officer PD to be signed off by Tony and advertised ASAP	Frankie & Tony	Done
1.4	Circulate draft Report Card	Barry & Frankie	Done but few comments

Discussion:

- Strategic Plan
 - needs new Department names inserted.
 - Reattach the table at the back of the SP with tasks and timelines.
 - Agenda SP for next Exec meeting with feedback from the Reference Group meeting.
- Report Card –
 - Possibly use information presented by Eva? as a guide.
 - Working party to be formed to develop report card.
 - To be ready by World Environment Day, 5 June 2003.
 - Raise at Reference Group to decide shape and purpose of report card including the intended audience.
 - Preference for a focus on stewardship rather than replicating existing reports.
 - Explore implications of report card including the inference of accountability.
 - GRCG to be involved to ensure that some rigor backs up indicators used.
- Process for report card development:
 - Discussion at Reference Group meeting
 - Barry & Carol draw together information in a discussion paper
 - Major item for next Exec meeting
 - Agenda on next GRCG meeting, 18 March 2003 – refer to John Lovering
- Ministerial Briefing prepared by Carol for IWA/AWA conference to be copied to all executive for information.

2. Executive Officer

- Carol Jeffs welcomed as Executive Officer for Gippsland INRM. Note that Carol is working 3 days per week under a secondment arrangement from Monash University and will be working 2 days per week with Monash in the short term.
- Frankie MacLennan to be thanked both formally by letter and informally at the Reference Group meeting for her service to the Forum as interim EO.

3. Planning for Reference Group meeting 6 March 2003

- Nic Hunter has been engaged to facilitate the group again. Nic is planning an open space, participatory day, focussed on advancing the INRM goals, identifying key next steps, prioritising and identifying champions.
- Reference Group meetings to be held approximately quarterly.
- Discussion about agenda for Reference Group meeting expressed concern at the lack of firm agenda items and proposed four agenda items to be set in the following priority order:
 - Post Fire recovery – including 15 minute report from Neville Penrose
 - Strategic Goals
 - Regional Catchment Strategies
 - Report Card
- Clash of dates recognised by John Mitchell with the IWA/AWA Water industry conference on 6 March. Request that water authorities be followed up to ensure that alternates can attend Reference Group meetings in the absence of Urban Water Authority CEOs.
- Need a clear understanding of the state of play of the West and East Gippsland RCS and arrange a future reference group meeting to work in with the RCS consultation timeline.

4. Gippsland Research Co-ordination Group and INRM – John Lovering (phone link for first 40 minutes of meeting).

John Lovering raised issues about the role of GRCG and outlined current difficulties faced including limited or no resources or secretariat support. GRCG is a loose grouping of various stakeholders with no long term plan for its continuation or viability. The possibility of GRCG becoming the research co-ordination arm of INRM (and therefore funded by INRM) was raised by John to be discussed by the executive after the completion of John's phone link.

Some discussion ensued about the role of GRCG and indeed the role of INRM. Some of the points raised:

Benefits:

- Value in maintaining GRCG both as input to INRM and as benefit to Gippsland region as a whole.
- Co-ordinated approach to funding organisations at Federal, State and Departmental levels (eg Gippsland Lakes)
- Identify research gaps and priorities on research needs.
- Enormous research opportunities, particularly in the applied research area (power industry for eg)
- Possibly could be a research sub-committee of INRM
- Role of group was not to run research, as such, but to prioritise and identify groups to complete the research according to priorities.
- INRM activities, such as report card and funding applications, should be underpinned by reputable scientific advice. (that a committee such as GRCG could provide).

Limitations to date:

- No thoughts about how GRCG would be resourced

- No money to dish out (to researchers in the region)
- GRCG doesn't commission work (we don't know what needs to be done)
- Been very focussed on Gippsland Lakes, could broaden spectre of GRCG
- GRCG started in a different time to now to meet a different need – so no focus now

Some possible topics for GRCG to explore:

- Smart political and scientific response to fires. (eg water quality/water yield/carbon released/biodiversity recovery)
- Refer to Wentworth Group on research regarding fire recovery (Dennis Saunders and John Patterson)
- There is a meeting with the two CRCs (Catchment Hydrology and Freshwater Ecology) on March 13 to discuss Fires-Water Quality/Quantity.
- Funding through the ARC Linkage Grant system. One of the national research priorities for this year is sustainable natural environments. GRCG could organise consortia of local money to match federal funding on projects identified as priorities for Gippsland.

Links to role of INRM:

- What role does INRM play in the management of information post fires?
- Two aspects identified – immediate recovery which is being well progressed by all parties involved, and longer term/strategic recovery which possibly needs work that INRM could contribute to.
- The INRM Reference group could be used as a place to develop post fire strategies for co-ordinated recovery and/or research. (eg 15 minute report from DPI and 1 hour on discussion)
- RCSs should/could incorporate post fire co-ordination.
- Brumby ministerial taskforce has been charged with developing a quick response to recovery from fires – DHS is the secretariat for this taskforce. (see Neville Penrose DPI and Val Calister DHS for details). It would be good to speak with this taskforce to have the role of INRM recognised in the fire recovery process.
- There is a GRCG meeting on the 18th March. Carol Jeffs will be in attendance, as will GRCG members John Mitchell and Duncan Malcom.

5. Communication Strategy

A draft strategy was tabled by Carol Jeffs, for comment by the next meeting.

Carol identified the need for a presence/identity for INRM in the form of a logo or design that can be used across the various stationery and electronic media needs. A web page is vital to the success of INRM with a suitable web page being a key communication tool.

Other communication tools suggested include a road map of organisations, strategies and actions in the region, and possible use of the Gippsland portal.

It was also identified that communication in an upward direction is important. A briefing needs to be sent to Chloe Munroe and Lindsay Nielson to update them on INRM activities and to notify them of the Sustainable Regions funding application.

6. Other Business

Press – decided that that some middle ground be struck between very active press coverage of INRM and a low profile. A structured press release system should be developed to ensure

effective communication with all members of press and (for example) local members of parliament.

Stronger regions funding application has been submitted. No feedback on application to date, although all indications prior to the submission have been positive.

Some key issues should be raised for INRM to address, for example: nutrient runoff, water quantity/environmental flows, sustainable balance of land use, fire damage to catchments/ecosystems, GIS and other information systems. INRM reference group could discuss such specific issues in addition to further developing INRM goals.

Professor Michael Batty (who is an expert in GIS and Spatial Modelling) will possibly be visiting regional sites from 1st September until 30 October. To indicate interest and secure a place in his diary, a reply email needs to be sent to the message that Alan Freitag

Local government involvement in INRM was discussed. Some perspective was provided by Kevin Roberts of Latrobe City from his involvement with GLGN. Concern by councils about who is driving INRM, given that local councils are democratically elected organisations. There is some scepticism amongst GLGN members and a perception that councils are following in this endeavour rather than leading. The executive discussed various approaches to involve the councils more in INRM, including offering another place on the executive and increased networking to break down perception barriers. A genuine desire was expressed by all to work together for the INRM cause.

7. Forum, Reference Group and Executive group meeting dates and locations

Executive meeting dates set as follows:

Tuesday 9.30 – 11.30 on

April 8
May 13
June 24
August 12

Rotate meetings between locations, a location schedule to be set out by Barry and Carol.

Next Reference Group meeting to be on Thursday June 5th, to coincide with world environment day.

A Forum date? September? (inserted by Carol)

Summary of Actions

1	Edit SP	CJ
2	Report Card – discussion paper	CJ & BTH
3	Copy ministerial briefing to exec – information only	CJ
4	Thankyou letter for Frankie MacLennan	CJ & BTH
5	RCS update	CJ/BTH with Geoff Hocking and Graeme Dear
6	Speak with Brumby taskforce and/or Secretaries of DPI/DSE about role of INRM in fire recovery	BTH
7	Comment on Communications Strategy	All

8	Logo mock-up for next exec meeting	CJ
9	Briefing note to DPI and DSE secretaries Chloe Munroe and Lindsay Neilson	CJ
10	Establish greater links/networks with local council representatives	All
11	Set Exec meeting locations	CJ & BTH