

Minutes

Executive Meeting 7/03
Friday 28th November, 2003



Time/Venue: 2.30pm to 4.30pm.
Green Inc. Churchill

Attendees : Barry Hart (Chair), Duncan Malcolm (Gippsland Coastal Board), Tony Edgar (DSE), Neville Penrose (DPI), Geoff Hocking (WGCMA), , John Lovering (Gippsland Research Coordination Group), Graeme Dear (EGCMA)

Apologies : Mick Harding (Gippsland Cultural Heritage Unit), Richard Hancock (GLGN), John Mitchell (Gippsland Water)

1. Business arising from last Executive meeting, 25th September 2003

1.1 Reference Group meeting 30th October

The reference group meeting held on 30th October to discuss the Green Paper was highly successful. The success demonstrated a maturing of the Reference Group. Members of the Executive were very pleased with the atmosphere and behaviour of Reference Group members, enabling a rigorous and open discussion on an issue of vital importance for the Gippsland region. The meeting was an excellent example of how Forum members can come together and agree on some issues across the region at the same time as having respect for differences of opinion.

An important part of success was the contextual setting for the meeting. Having an issue to discuss was crucial to focus the meeting's attention and energy.

The final GINRF Green Paper submission was well received by Executive members resulting from a good response to the draft document by Reference Group members.

Action: Carol Jeffs to distribute final GINRF Green Paper submission to Reference Group members with a note of thanks to those who responded to the draft document.

2. Correspondence

In: WGCMA – draft West Gippsland Native Vegetation Plan

The draft WGCMA Native Vegetation Plan has been circulated to various stakeholders, including Carol Jeffs as GINRF Executive Officer. Agreed that the Forum should not act on and respond to correspondence as a separate organisation but should inform members and facilitate any necessary discussion for effective regional planning and implementation.

All general inward correspondence should be listed in the Executive meeting agenda for the information of Executive members, who can request access to documents if individual organisations have not separately received them.

More direct correspondence seeking the Forum's assistance with or support for regional planning processes will be addressed as they arise.

3. Executive Officer's Report

3.1 Commonwealth Study Tour feedback/summary:

Carol Jeffs gave some impressions of her brief interactions with the Commonwealth Study Tour. Requested that the summary from the Gippsland part of the study tour be made available to the Executive.

Action: Richard Hancock to forward a summary of the Commonwealth Study Tour in Gippsland to Carol Jeffs for distribution to the Executive.

4. Planning for Forum Conference 6th February 2003

Support for conference planning that has happened to date. Refer to EO Report and separate Conference 04 planning document.

Carol Jeffs explained that Land Victoria had planned to hold a Newtech Conference in Sale during March 2004. Newtech is a technical spatial information conference held in regional areas with a trade show component. Due to the proximity of the two planned conferences, Land Victoria decided to postpone its Gippsland conference until 2005. Bruce Thompson from Land Victoria has agreed to be a guest speaker at the GINRF conference.

Agreed that it is the role of the 2004 Forum conference is to put information for natural resource management in the broader context rather than be a technical discussion. Project MERGe provides a good base for this type of discussion. Issues appropriate for this theme are: regional integration, how people interface

with the information and the sharing of data. A discussion around the public ownership and access to data would also be appropriate, following the experience of the National Land and Water Audit and Creating Gippsland's Future.

Decided that the conference should be free of cost to Forum members (and other delegates this year). There is \$5000 allocated in the GINRF budget for this event. The GINRF Executive agrees to fund any additional expenses over this budgeted amount. In future, a Forum membership fee will include invitation to the annual Forum conference.

Action: Carol Jeffs to continue conference organisation with Barry Hart and Neville Penrose to assist.

5. Planning for Natural Resources Report Card 2004

The **Report Card launch event** has two potential purposes:

- community celebration of World Environment Day in the Gippsland Region
- official launch of the Report Card content and findings for 2004, directed at Forum members and responsible authorities.

Decided that the Forum can host two separate events to serve the two purposes:

- An invitation-only evening launch with high profile guest speaker, attendance by politicians and wide media coverage. (perhaps the Thursday evening before WED on Saturday 5th June, Metung Pub? Need to check parliamentary sitting dates to avoid clashes)
- Co-ordinated activities for the week of World Environment Day, focusing on school visits by Landcare, Waterwatch and other members. Put together a regional package to support member organisations who conduct school visits. Report card to be used as a framework for students to learn about catchment health in Gippsland.

Process for report card development for 2004 Report Card to be similar to 2003. Small working group to steer development process consisting of Graeme Dear (EGCMA), Geoff Hocking (WGCMA), Barry Hart, Carol Jeffs and consultant. Barry Hart is to sign off on the final content of the Report Card as the independent chair.

Content of the Report Card to be similar to 2003 with further development of indicators and assessment methodology. In line with the feedback from the 2003 Report Card, it is proposed that some new assets be introduced with the details of less changeable assets to be reduced in the presentation.

Some suggestions include:

- 90 mile beach and marine park (coastal/ocean area)
- Marine national parks in general
- Bataluk cultural trail
- Fire affected area
- Latrobe River

Action: Carol Jeffs to continue report card planning with the assistance of Graeme Dear, Geoff Hocking and Barry Hart

6. GINRF Budget, Strategic Plan and review of 2003

Budget approved to be implemented within West Gippsland CMA's governance framework.

The Executive formally recognises the West Gippsland CMA as the administrative and financial host of GINRF and agrees to full financial delegation in accordance with the approved budget.

Long term funding strategy. A number of different models discussed including different combinations of state/commonwealth and regional funding. The regional funding may be tiered according to membership status, or all members could contribute a similar amount. The GRCG regional funding model is now available for GINRF to use due to the decision to bring the two groups together.

Action: Geoff Hocking and Carol Jeffs to produce a discussion paper on some alternative long term funding models for the next meeting

7. National Carbon Accounting System and Regional Information System

Discussion and action covered by item 4: Conference Planning

8. GRCG

Professor John Lovering reported that the general meeting of GRCG (held morning of 28/11) had decided that GRCG will change structure to become a research advisory panel of GINRF (or other Gippsland Regional Organisations), operating in a similar way to a subcommittee. The West Gippsland CMA will host GRCG and the executive support for GRCG and GINRF will be combined (as previously recommended). Existing financial partners of GRCG will be individually approached to inform them of the meeting outcome and requesting direction for their portion of GRCG's finances. (the default will be for the money

to be managed by WGCMA in GRCG's interests until such time as the funds are exhausted, after which time GRCG will be funded along with GINRF).

The timing of the two meetings makes it difficult to fully endorse the decision due to insufficient time to update GRCG discussion notes. The Executive accepts the decision of the GRCG general meeting in principle and looks forward to seeing the detail for ratification at the next meeting.

Congratulations were extended to Professor Lovering for the achievements of GRCG to date. The Executive endorsed Professor Lovering's continued involvement with the new, more focussed, GRCG and the closer working relationship with GINRF.

Action: John Lovering (with assistance of Carol Jeffs) to administer the GRCG decision and forward the detailed document for ratification at the next Executive meeting

9. Web site

Web site is very close to delivery with a few minor bugs still to be ironed out

10. Other Business

In response to some negative messages that persist around the region, a proactive approach is proposed to encourage positive thinking, action and pass these messages on to Government.

Propose that the Forum and its members take responsibility for acknowledging and advocating the good things that are happening in the region as part of daily business. Some examples of this might be good news/well done type emails and letters that are CCed to the appropriate decision makers. (Secretaries of DSE and DPI for example)

The Forum could assist more directly by Barry Hart writing a monthly letter to Lyndsay Neilson? with a series of dot points about positive activities that are happening in Gippsland.

It would also be timely for Barry Hart to write an email to Reference Group members to congratulate them on the Green Paper meeting on 30th October, CCed to Lyndsay Neilson.

Action: All Executive members to consider how to adapt current communication methods to include more positive messages – report back at next meeting

Action: Barry Hart and Carol Jeffs to design monthly letter format, timing and distribution and send first one in December

Action: Barry Hart to send an email to all Reference Group members regarding Green Paper meeting, cced to Lyndsay Neilson.

11. Meeting Dates – Executive and Reference Group

Executive – meeting frequency every 6 weeks (8 meetings per year) to be held on a Thursday but not 2nd Thursday of the month.

Suggested Executive meeting dates for 2004, time 9.30am – 12.00pm at Traralgon unless otherwise arranged:

1/04	5 th February 04 - 2.00pm Churchill
2/04	18 th March 04
3/04	29 th April 04
4/04	3 rd June 04
5/04	15 th July 04
6/04	26 th August 04
7/04	7 th October 04
8/04	18 th November 04

Suggested Reference Group meeting dates for 2004:

Friday 6th February GINRF Conference – Churchill
Thursday 13th May
Thursday 5th August
Thursday 28th October

Report Card Release – tentatively Thursday 3rd June (evening?)

All dates are outside school holiday periods.

Reference Group discussion topics:

Visioning exercise as per one of GINRF goals to develop 30 year plan/vision. Barry Hart would like to discuss the possibility of using scenario planning methodology for this purpose. The West Gippsland CMA portfolio group for sustainable development is in the process of developing a Sustainable Development Strategy for Gippsland and would like to explore options for the involvement of GINRF in the strategy development process. It is likely that the

two can be combined at the May Reference Group meeting. Planning for the May reference group meeting to be discussed at next Executive meeting in the context of the GINRF strategic plan.

Other topics that are possible considerations are RCS/MSS interactions, (August meeting), MER Framework (October meeting).

Action summary

1	Distribute final GINRF Green Paper submission to Reference Group members with a note of thanks to those who responded to the draft document.	Carol Jeffs
2	Forward a summary of the Commonwealth Study Tour in Gippsland to Carol Jeffs for distribution to the Executive	Richard Hancock
3	Continue conference organisation	Carol Jeffs, Barry Hart and Neville Penrose
4	Continue 2004 Report Card planning	Carol Jeffs, Graeme Dear, Geoff Hocking and Barry Hart
5	Produce a discussion paper on some alternative long term funding models for the next meeting	Geoff Hocking and Carol Jeffs
6	Administer the GRCG decision and forward the detailed document for ratification at the next GINRF Executive meeting	John Lovering, Carol Jeffs)
7	Adapt Executive member organisation communication methods to include more positive messages – report back at next meeting	All
8	Design monthly letter format, timing and distribution and send first one in December	Barry Hart, Carol Jeffs
9	to send an email to all Reference Group members regarding Green Paper meeting, cced to Lyndsay Neilson	Barry Hart, Carol Jeffs