

Everybody's land:

*A strategy for Aboriginal Partnerships in the
SA Arid Lands Natural Resources Management Region*



Government of South Australia

South Australian Arid Lands Natural
Resources Management Board

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The SA Arid Lands region encompasses the lands of numerous Traditional Owner groups.

The South Australian Arid Lands Natural Resources Management Board acknowledges and respects the traditional custodians whose ancestral lands are part of our Natural Resources Management region and we also pay our respects to their Elders past and present. We acknowledge and respect the deep spiritual attachment and the relationship that Aboriginal people have to country.

The SAAL NRM Board recognises the perspective of Traditional Owners that the land, waters and all living things are connected, are part of the cultural landscape, and have been continually managed by Traditional Owners.

The SAAL NRM Board seeks active partnerships across the landscape that enables Traditional Owners and Aboriginal people living in the region to maximise opportunity for maintaining connection with the land and to protect and maintain culture, cultural sites and natural resources of the lands and waters of the SA Arid Lands region.

The NRM Board as one of many natural resource management organisations in the region is committed to encouraging participation and partnerships with Aboriginal people and groups to effectively contribute to the wise use of our resources and a flourishing region. This will be achieved through involvement in natural resource planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation processes.

We look forward to working in partnership with Aboriginal communities within SA Arid Lands in the sustainable management of land into the future.

ARTWORK (front cover and page 3): Charmaine Wilson, *Bush Tucker*

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WHAT IS THE SA ARID LANDS NRM BOARD?

The SAAL NRM Board is one of eight regional NRM Boards in South Australia set up under the *NRM Act 2004*. The Board works in partnership with community, industry groups, government agencies and others to ensure an integrated and sustainable approach to the management, protection and restoration of the region's natural resources (eg soil, water, native plants and animals).

OUR PLAN FOR THE REGION

The SAAL Regional NRM Plan is pivotal to achieving better management of the region's natural assets as it outlines a 10 year Strategic Plan and provides direction for all partners who invest in the region. Collaboration is the key to its effective delivery, so the SAAL NRM Board works closely with community groups, industry, government agencies, and individuals.

1 NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT – A ROLE FOR ABORIGINAL PEOPLE

South Australia's Strategic Plan acknowledges that:

Aboriginal peoples have a unique and holistic relationship to South Australia's environment, air, land and waters. Their sense of place and belonging is linked to creation stories, travel, trade, ceremonies, family and places held sacred.

The South Australian Arid Lands (SAAL) Natural Resources Management (NRM) Region has always been home to diverse Aboriginal communities. The use of Aboriginal traditional knowledge and experience is critical to effective land and water management and Aboriginal people are important partners and participants in contemporary natural resource management.

While natural resource management goals across South Australia may vary, "overall the protection of cultural values of the land is the most important motivation for management" for Aboriginal people. Aboriginal people have a strong vision for sustainability of their lands and communities, which is consistent with the following vision for the SAAL NRM Region as set out in the SAAL Regional NRM Plan:

The South Australian Arid Lands NRM Region is a healthy functioning ecosystem with sustainable industries and vibrant communities.

The SAAL NRM Board want to connect better with Aboriginal groups in the region as it seeks to advance NRM outcomes but is not always the leader of Aboriginal participation and NRM in the region. We are only one of many. It is expected that this strategy document be used as a basis for developing partnerships with different Aboriginal organisations in the SAAL region and with the SAAL NRM Board. It should be treated as a living, evolving strategy as opportunities and priorities change.

This strategy is a directional document and does not negate any specific responsibilities or obligation any organisation or individual has in regards to natural resource management.



2 FOUNDATIONS FOR AN EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIP

Effective partnerships involve respect and trust between partners. Each party needs to be clear about what they will put into the partnership and what they will work toward together – a shared vision.

An effective partnership involves a process that includes ongoing engagement, consultation, negotiation, review and accountability. It is a collaborative, inclusive process that must be flexible enough to respond to peoples' needs and incorporate knowledge, experience and new information. It is a learning experience for all parties that requires a long-term commitment. An effective partnership also requires an investment of time and resources to support the achievement of agreed objectives and outcomes and to build individual and community capacity.

While each partner has the potential to contribute unique perspectives, skills and knowledge to achieving natural resource management goals, all partners and partnership strategies must be consistent with the SAAL Regional NRM Plan.

3 VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The VISION for the Aboriginal Partnerships in the SAAL Natural Resources Management Region, is for:

An effective partnership between Aboriginal groups and the SAAL NRM Board that supports Aboriginal participation and incorporates traditional knowledge and culture in natural resource management policies, plans and actions in the SAAL NRM Region.

The following GUIDING PRINCIPLES underpin commitment to effective partnerships between Aboriginal organisations and the SAAL NRM Board:

- Principle 1* Aboriginal people have rights and responsibilities for traditional lands and waters
- Principle 2* Aboriginal cultural diversity, knowledge and obligation to country is acknowledged, respected and incorporated into decision making
- Principle 3* Information and knowledge regarding natural resource management will be shared and communicated in a culturally appropriate way
- Principle 4* Adequate time will be allowed for genuine and meaningful participation
- Principle 5* Adequate support will be provided for Aboriginal people to participate
- Principle 6* Each partnership is based on fairness, equity and mutual respect
- Principle 7* Each partnership is a learning process for all parties, and involves a long-term commitment

4 KEY STRATEGIES AND OBJECTIVES

Aboriginal Partnership in the SAAL NRM Region aims to achieve the following strategies and objectives.

STRATEGY 1: BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

Ensure that Aboriginal people in the SAAL NRM Region are engaged and actively participating in natural resource management policies, plans and actions.

Identify and engage traditional owners and community leaders who are authorised to speak for country.

Improve awareness amongst Aboriginal people in the SAAL NRM Region about opportunities available and potential benefits of their participation in natural resource management.

Communicate knowledge and information in a culturally appropriate way, particularly where language is a barrier to effective communication.

STRATEGY 2: PARTNERSHIP AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Identify and support learning opportunities for Aboriginal people to gain the skills to effectively participate in natural resource management initiatives in the SAAL NRM Region.

Identify and address barriers to the effective participation of Aboriginal people in natural resource management in the SAAL NRM Region.

Increase the cultural awareness and experience of the SAAL NRM Board members, staff and committee members.

STRATEGY 3: DELIVERY AND RESOURCING

Involve Aboriginal groups in the development and prioritising of natural resource management policies, plans and actions.

Provide appropriate levels of support for partner organisations to deliver natural resource management policies.

Facilitate connectedness and communication on NRM topics between Aboriginal stakeholders in the SAAL NRM region.

Promote flexibility and inclusion in recruitment and selection processes.

STRATEGY 4: GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Establish governance arrangements that clearly define roles and responsibilities of each partner.

Provide formal, structured processes for ongoing review and, where necessary, revisions to the partnership arrangements.

Build leadership and governance capabilities as an enabler for Aboriginal participation in natural resource management.

5 MEASURES OF SUCCESS

Measures focusing on improved NRM outcomes are expressed in the SAAL Regional NRM Plan. Measures for this strategy are:

- Aboriginal representation on SAAL NRM Board, District Groups and Committees.
- SAAL NRM Board funds directed to Aboriginal projects.
- Participation rate of Aboriginal people in natural resource management policies, plans and actions.
- Number of Aboriginal people undergoing skills training in NRM.
- Number of Aboriginal people working in NRM related activities.
- SAAL NRM Board members and district NRM Groups and staff have undertaken cultural awareness training.
- Information is accessible and communications are understood by all partners.
- An annual review process to monitor performance and evaluate outcomes is developed and implemented.
- Funding priorities for increased Aboriginal participation in natural resource management initiatives have been incorporated into the revised SAAL Regional NRM Plan (2015).
- Aboriginal organisations feel they have increased opportunity and capacity to participate in NRM activities.
- Aboriginal people feel they have increased opportunity and interest in participating in NRM activities.
- Number of partnership Memorandum of Understanding's (MOU's) developed between Aboriginal organisations and the SAAL NRM Board.

6 REVIEW AND EVALUATION

Progress against this strategy's success measures will be reported on a regular basis, evaluated on an annual basis and will be due for review in 2016.

This will be done as an inclusive, transparent process between the SAAL NRM Board and Aboriginal partner organisations in the region.

A yearly action plan with specific targets will be developed.



CARING
FOR
OUR
COUNTRY



VISIT US

The Natural Resources Centre SA Arid Lands provides a one-stop service where you can access services and information on National Parks and the management of wildlife, land and water

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