
Enhancing Indigenous Participation in CMA-led NRM Activities

Advice to the VCMC
from CMA staff with
responsibilities for
Indigenous
engagement

Report of June 2009 Workshop
Outcomes

*Views contained in this report are those of the participants in the Workshop and not necessarily those of the organisations represented.

**KISMET
FORWARD**

July 2009



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Workshop facilitated for Victorian Catchment Management Council
and Australian Government (Land and Coasts Division)

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1. INTRODUCTION

In 2009 the Victorian Catchment Management Council (VCMC) requested feedback from the Australian Government Caring for Our Country facilitator – Indigenous land Management regarding the status and effectiveness of regional level documents (e.g. protocols, principles etc) for engaging Indigenous Australians in NRM activities.

This matter was discussed by the CMA Indigenous Facilitator Network at the March 2009 meeting where the network recommended that funding be sought to hold a workshop for the purposes of responding to the above request.

The objective of the workshop was to provide a forum for CMA-based Indigenous facilitators, their managers and/or staff with responsibilities for community engagement to use their collective skills and experiences to identify barriers and solutions to Indigenous engagement and participation in CMA-led NRM activities.

This report details the outputs of the workshop; the agenda and list of participants are provided in appendices 1 and 2.

Prior to the workshop each CMA was provided with an opportunity to provide feedback regarding status and effectiveness of protocol-type documents. This information is summarised in Section 11.

2. WHAT DOES INDIGENOUS PARTICIPATION IN CMA-MANAGED NRM ACTIVITIES MEAN?

Workshop participants described *Indigenous Participation in CMA-led NRM activities* as referring to active involvement in a range of activities, from on-ground projects at the local level (such as cultural heritage assessments, site rehabilitation, protection and enhancement works etc) through to regional policies and strategies (such as Regional Catchment Strategies). For the latter, participation ideally includes involvement in the *development* of the strategy, in addition to consultation on drafts and implementation plans.

This can be achieved through the development of relationships and capacity with Indigenous groups that leads to the mutual understanding of NRM priorities. The impending review of regional catchment strategies was identified as a great opportunity to work towards achieving this.

3. WHAT CAN BE ACHIEVED

The workshop participants foresee a future where Indigenous communities:

- are treated like farmers/other stakeholders: knowledge is shared, their contribution is actively sought, appreciated and built into planning processes as a matter of course;
- are involved in a consistent manner across the State, and this approach respects and builds on the diversity of skills, knowledge and capacity of individual groups;
- are represented in CMA governance and staffing structures.

Importantly, this future also includes the broader community valuing cultural heritage in the same manner that natural heritage is valued.

4. THE CURRENT SITUATION

4.1 Assessment by CMAs

Prior to the workshop, the CMAs were asked to identify current approaches aimed at encouraging Indigenous participation; Appendix 4 contains a full account of responses received.

In summary, it is evident from the responses that:

- Some CMAs have formalised their goals and protocols for engaging with Indigenous communities through a variety of methods; Memoranda of Understanding, Management Action Targets (in their Regional Catchment Strategy), procedural documents, advisory groups being the most common.
- Other CMAs have adopted less formal conventions such as information packages and guidelines, and project-by-project arrangements.
- Partnerships with local communities are represented through a variety of approaches, most commonly joint NRM projects.
- Opportunities to increase the level of participation include: involvement in the review of Regional Catchment Strategies, and identification of new projects centred on mutual interests and goals.
- The creation of Indigenous facilitator positions in most CMAs has significantly assisted the building of relationships.
- There are a number of common issues and barriers to Indigenous participation: conflicts within groups and the difficulty of identifying the most appropriate people to sign agreements; uncertainties around the impact of changes to legislation, RAP processes and statutory obligations (e.g. there is confusion about how Indigenous communities work within current and recent legislation changes); difficulties translating agreements into practical actions; the time and complexity involved in developing individual agreements with individual groups.

4.2 What is working

Indigenous facilitators cite many factors that contribute to Indigenous participation. These should be built upon in the future.

What is working	Why it is working
Working guidelines under MoUs (especially regarding Cultural Heritage)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entrenched in the processes • Responsibilities are clear, legislated • Staff and community have someone they can refer queries to • Attitudes are starting to change
Good relationships where RAP's are established (e.g. GHCMA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RAP well defined (in places); people on the land are getting more interested • RAP process allows Traditional Owner groups to develop better resources
Government departments developing a better structure/framework for engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger high level policy and direction • Native Title Settlement Framework a useful resource

Collaboration with strategic partners (agencies, contractors)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-location (Mallee) facilitates relationships between agencies/people • Goodwill developed • Training and employment outcomes
Indigenous peoples' connection and commitment to country is increasingly appreciated by broader community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extension/involvement including with younger people
Cultural change in CMAs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More commitment from CMAs/leaders
Indigenous facilitators, Aust Government facilitator, network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment and direction Catalyst/resources at regional level Establish links to indigenous community • Sharing ideas, common direction
Support from indigenous people (across the board)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We talk • Respect • Set parameters • Resourced to do work
Good examples of engagement/participation (positive stories)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will/commitment/resources from various people/groups (e.g. farmers) • Removes the fear factor of working with Indigenous communities
Cultural awareness activities for the public (canoe tours/school program) (basket weaving/bush tucker)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural interest of public/tourists • Links with history/country/interests • Mutual benefits • Promoted as 'Australian Culture'
Traineeship programs (Lake Tyers/Swan Hill)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Builds skills of participants • Employment outcomes

4.3 What's not working

Workshop participants identified a number of factors preventing real progress towards effective Indigenous engagement. Some of these relate to CMAs and other agencies; others are more about dynamics within the communities.

Issue	Agency Factors	Community Factors
Agreed actions from activities (e.g. arising from conferences, workshops, other processes) are not progressed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions are not translated into organisational priorities • Timeframes are loose • No-one is given or takes accountability • No monitoring or follow-up of progress 	

Issue	Agency Factors	Community Factors
Lack of Indigenous community capacity to effectively interact with CMAs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity building is not something that is readily funded by NRM investment and hence it is not a high priority for CMAs • Lack of investment in succession planning/ mentoring • Lack of opportunities provided for Indigenous employment • Need to identify the most appropriate means of engagement with indigenous groups to ensure two-way information exchange occurs that leads to increased participation at all levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of confidence, skills and knowledge to enable effective working relationships • Low awareness of NRM as a career • Perception that opportunities arise according to 'who you know' • Cost of being involved (access to transport, expectations of significant time to be involved without payment, lack of knowledge of reimbursements available) • Perception that communities need to own land in order to be involved • No tangible rewards for being involved
Lack of understanding about what involvement/ engagement in NRM means	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government's expectations not clear; no guiding principles or strategy for Indigenous engagement • Indigenous issues and involvement often overlooked during project planning • The case for engaging has not been articulated • Lack of leadership (e.g. at senior levels, champions at Board level) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous expectations and priorities not clear/ articulated • Focus is generally on cultural heritage

Issue	Agency Factors	Community Factors
CMAs' role in NRM is not well understood by Indigenous people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interaction with communities is often single-issue and based on CMA (rather than Indigenous) priorities • Lack of clarity about what will be achieved through working together, and what the aims are • CMAs must be responsive to changing NRM priorities of investors and this can be hard to reconcile with priorities of indigenous groups which often stay the same e.g. employment, on-ground works, protection of cultural heritage etc 	
Lack of coordination by government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different and changing investment priorities by the key investors into CMAs (Commonwealth and State) • Boundaries of agencies inconsistent • Traditional owner boundaries often not well understood or acknowledged • Lack of leadership at a strategic level (Traditional Owners, DSE, DPI, PV, AAV) • Changing policy environment e.g. cultural heritage changes have created some uncertainty for CMAs • RAP status uncertain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic leadership from Indigenous groups for NRM
Targets for Indigenous participation in NRM as defined in Regional Catchment Strategies are often well intentioned but unrealistic or unachievable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to address in forthcoming review of RCS 	

Issue	Agency Factors	Community Factors
Diversity of roles and responsibilities for Indigenous facilitators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversity is important to enable regional priorities to be addressed however opportunities for collective learning and approaches can be overlooked e.g. projects utilising Traditional Ecological Knowledge could provide an opportunity to bring facilitators together to share approaches • Roles may require additional levels of support given the context in which these positions operate i.e. community interface, legislative compliance, social and cultural linkages to activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High community expectations on individuals

5. ASPIRATION

5.1 A Strategic Indigenous NRM Framework

While a number of actions were identified through the workshop a key aspiration that came through the discussions was strategic direction at a state level for Indigenous NRM.

The development of a State Indigenous NRM Framework, founded in the values, priorities and aspirations of Indigenous communities was put forward as a critical step in underpinning Indigenous participation in natural resource management in Victoria.

It is important to note that such a development is not something that the VCMC has jurisdiction over. Such an approach at a statewide level would need to be initiated by Traditional Owners with relevant state and Commonwealth agencies.

For the purposes of context a summary of the possible key aspects of a statewide framework is contained hereunder.

In terms of progressing such an initiative the Caring for Our Country facilitator – Indigenous Land Management will work to inform the peak Traditional Owner group in Victoria (Traditional Owner Land and Justice Group) of the concept and will seek this groups support for initiating discussions with Commonwealth and State agencies.

Elements of a framework could include:

1. Guiding principles for Indigenous engagement (by June 2010) including:
 - o the priorities, aspirations and the most appropriate methods of engaging with Indigenous groups
 - o how to identify relevant Indigenous stakeholder groups
 - o how to communicate policy direction to Indigenous groups

Strategic level guiding principles for Indigenous engagement should provide high level engagement advice but direct entities to traditional owner groups who can then articulate their specific processes for being engaged.

Such work needs to be led by Indigenous people and can be informed by and build upon other examples such as the recent pilot workshops run by the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) in the south-west aimed at developing guidelines for Indigenous engagement and partnership building.

The goal for any engagement should be for local level agreements between traditional owner groups and others to ensure engagement is meaningful and relevant.

2. Expectations and targets for Indigenous participation (by June 2011):

Provide an opportunity for Indigenous people to articulate how they wish to be involved in NRM activities, the types of outcomes sought from involvement in NRM activities and the linkages to existing and emerging policy such as the Dept. of Sustainability and Environment Land & Biodiversity White Paper, the Native Title Settlement Framework and the Sustainable Water Strategy.

The 2003 Strategy for Aboriginal Managed Lands in Victoria would be useful resource to help inform this process, however the scope needs to be broader than just Indigenous-held lands.

In addition some workshop participants referred to the Wet Tropics Traditional Owner Natural and Cultural Resource Management Plan as a good example of a strategic level plan that articulated traditional owner values for looking after country.

3. Process for accountability (by June 2012):

Monitoring, evaluation and review of existing programs based on indicators developed in partnership with Indigenous people that will help NRM agencies to measure success in working with Indigenous groups.

An example of indicators used by the Australian government for working with Indigenous communities in natural resource management are attached in Appendix 6.

Promoting success stories and marketing good NRM outcomes delivered by Indigenous people could also be included in a strategic framework document to demonstrate what success looks like on-the-ground.

6. ACTIONS

	CMA Boards	Lead		Status
1	<p>Actions initiated and developed that build the capacity of CMA Boards to engage with Traditional Owner groups.</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participation in cultural awareness training by CMA Board members • providing an overview of Indigenous perspectives on the environment as part of the formal induction process • exploring methods such as stories or examples that can demonstrate to Boards the potential outcomes from effective Indigenous engagement and participation 	DSE		Kevin Ritchie, Project manager CMA Boards, DSE is working on a number of matters related to the above actions. Kevin was a workshop participant.
2	CMA Boards to be encouraged to foster strategic direction from traditional owner groups in CMA planning and decision-making processes.	DSE		
3	VCMC with support of CMA Boards highlight to State government the resourcing issues that adversely impact on CMA ability to appropriately facilitate strategic direction from traditional owner groups. (Appropriate engagement requires time and resources not readily available through NRM investment).	DSE		
4	Investigate training opportunities and capacity development for potential Indigenous members of CMA/other Boards in time for next recruitment process. (Link to Aboriginal Affairs Victoria 'Right People for Country' project).	DSE		
5	Chairs of established Registered Aboriginal Parties to present to all CMA Boards information relating to their requirements, expectations, processes and commitments to enhance Boards understanding of cultural heritage from an Indigenous perspective.	DSE		
	Cultural heritage			
	Develop clearer guidelines for scope of investment for management of Aboriginal cultural heritage in both Commonwealth and State NRM funding programs.	Caring for Our Country, DSE		Caring for Our Country facilitator – Indigenous Land Management (W Philippiadis) has raised this matter formally with the Indigenous Policy Areas of Caring for Our Country.

	Indigenous facilitator positions			
	CMA's continue to support the concept of an Indigenous facilitator network as a forum for shared learning and approaches to Indigenous NRM matters e.g. shared projects utilising traditional ecological knowledge to support biodiversity conservation	CMA's		Indigenous facilitators to promote network in CMA's
	Increase numbers of Indigenous facilitators (at least one per CMA) (from country where possible)	CMA's		This is currently in place via Caring For Our Country investment.
	CMA's to investigate opportunities to enhance succession planning for Indigenous positions with responsibilities for working with Indigenous groups to ensure continuity of engagement and participation in CMA activities.	CMA's		
	CMA Investors			
	Seek clearer articulation of State priorities for Indigenous participation in State funded activities delivered by CMA's	DSE		Caring for Our Country facilitator – Indigenous Land Management has raised this matter informally with DSE Natural Resources Division
	Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation			
	Seek additional resources to capture, promote and market good examples of Indigenous delivery of NRM outcomes in order to demonstrate to the wider NRM community what can be achieved and the methods, resources and time required.	CMA		
	Enhanced Coordination			
	Encourage regional strategic partners to commit to collaboratively plan together to enhance coordination across agencies when working with Indigenous groups. e.g. In the Mallee region the CMA, Parks Victoria and DSE have had some success planning together as a result of being co-located in the same building.	DSE		
	Review DSE South-West Indigenous Engagement and Partnership Guidelines project as a mechanism for coordinating multi-agency approaches to working with Indigenous groups.	VCMC		

	Encourage DSE and CMAs to support 1 or 2 p.a. collaborative planning events between DSE Indigenous facilitators and CMA Indigenous facilitators.	DSE, Caring for Our Country facilitator – Indigenous Land Management		Caring for Our Country facilitator – Indigenous Land Management has raised this matter formally with the appropriate DSE Manager.
	General Actions			
	Promote Indigenous cultural heritage and NRM career pathways in/to schools, and other training and employment networks (work exp, traineeships, cadetships, TAFE) to build NRM awareness in young people.			These actions do not fit specifically into any one agency area of responsibility. They are aspirational and more likely to be picked up as part of the developments that arise from strategic process e.g. the Native Title Settlement Framework; a statewide approach to Indigenous NRM as stated in section 5.
	Increase numbers of cultural heritage officers, where required (from 'country' where possible)			
	Seek resources to facilitate an appreciation by the broader community of Indigenous peoples' connection to Country to underpin their involvement in NRM activities at all levels.			
	Look for opportunities to develop and promote cross-agency Indigenous training programs (+ subsequent employment)			
				Caring for Our Country facilitator – Indigenous Land Management (W Philippiadis) will put these items to the Traditional Owner Land and Justice Group for consideration.

7. APPENDIX 1: AGENDA FOR THE WORKSHOP

Enhancing Indigenous Participation in NRM Activities Coordinated by CMAs

Date: Tuesday 30 June; 9.30am – 4.00pm

Location: Metropole, 44 Brunswick St, Fitzroy
(Parking available in basement; note height restrictions)

Agenda:

9:30	Arrival and coffee
9:45	Introduction to the Workshop (VCMC – Patricia Geraghty) Overview & context (Will Philippiadis) An ideal level of Indigenous participation (in NRM activities coordinated by CMAs) What's happening now?
11:00	Morning Tea
11:15	What's happening now? (continued) How do we get closer to our goal?
12:45	Lunch
1:00	How do we get closer to our goal? (continued) What we can control
15:20	short break
15:35	Monitoring progress Where to from here The Last Word
16:00	Close

Facilitator: Jennifer Lilburn, Kismet Forward

8. APPENDIX 2: LIST OF WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

Region	Facilitators	Attending	Managers	Attending
CCMA	Greg Edwards – Indigenous Facilitator	Y	Sonia Mahony – NRM Facilitator	N
EGCMA	Rob Andy – Community Partnerships Officer and Indigenous Land Management Facilitator	Y	Rob Willersdorf – Major Projects Manager	Y
GBCMA	Neville Atkinson – Indigenous Facilitator	N	Wayne Tennant – Strategic River Health Manager	N
GHCMA	Lenny Cooper – Indigenous Community Coordinator	Y	Mary Johnson – Strategic Partnerships Manager	N
Mallee	Marlon Parsons – Indigenous facilitator Ken Stewart – Living Murray Facilitator	Y Y	Linda Pratt – NRM Manager	N
NCCMA	Mark Pietzsch – Indigenous Facilitator	Y	Brad Drust – Manager NRM Delivery	Y
NECMA	Richard McTernan – Indigenous Liaison Officer	Y	Jeff Cooper – Manager Strategy and Partnerships	N
PPWCMA	-	-	Doug Evans – Community Engagement Manager	Y
WGCMA	-	-	Mikaela Power – Stakeholder Engagement Coordinator	Y
Wimmera	Stuart Harradine – Indigenous NRM Facilitator	N	Max Skeen – Regional Landcare Manager	N

Agency/Other:

VCMC: Patricia Geraghty – Executive Officer, VCMC (Opening comments only)

DSE: Kevin Ritchie – Project Manager CMA Boards, DSE
Earle Clever – Project Officer, Forests and Parks Division, DSE
Gary Howell – Director Parks and Indigenous Land Policy Branch, DSE

Aust Govt: Will Philippiadis – Caring for Our Country Facilitator – Indigenous Land Management DEWHA

Facilitator: Jen Lilburn – Kismet Forward

Apologies: Neville Atkinson - Indigenous Facilitator, Goulburn Broken CMA
Wayne Tennant – Strategic River Health Manager, Goulburn Broken CMA
Stuart Harradine – Indigenous NRM Facilitator – Wimmera CMA
Max Skeen – Regional Landcare Manager – Wimmera CMA
Mary Johnson – Strategic Partnerships Manager – Glenelg Hopkins CMA
Sonia Mahony – NRM Facilitator – Corangamite CMA
Jeff Cooper – NRM Manager – North East CMA
Russell Irving - Indigenous Land Policy and Native Title, DSE

9. APPENDIX 3: WORKSHOP EVALUATION

At the conclusion of the workshop, participants were asked to evaluate the process adopted during the workshop, and were encouraged to note what worked, as well as opportunities for improvement:

What worked well	What could have be done differently
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good chance for me to hear about approaches in other CMA's • Good conversation from all participants re opportunities to improve indigenous engagement in NRM • Well facilitated and good capture of ideas and venue • Seating arrangement, informal and encouraged equal discussion by all • Kept to time really well • 99% of the day. Well facilitated and nicely structured – everything made sense • Consolidating actions at end and matching against initial priorities of "Life after barriers" • Linking in and sharing future directions with groups and seeing where my work fits into bigger plans, (the big picture) • Establishing a good calibre of contents through having various inputs from various people and their positions • Meeting people; mixing up groups. • The timeline on the wall, using the actions – visual, clear, easy to move stuff • Opportunities to hear how other people work • Bringing people together to talk and share perspectives • Starting with vision and focussing on how to move towards it • Group discussions and interactive involvement • All aspects of the workshop • Great group discussions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve n/a • Issues were so big that could have framed discussions a bit more to get to end goal • A bit more context would have been useful – what are the drivers here – where does it fit in and what do we want. Discussion can vary widely without strong context • Review of report of current actions progress was incomplete, could be developed further • Could have included a CMA CEO? • Pity Tricia didn't stay • I think it went well, although because theme was so much information I needed to recheck the context in which we were answering questions • I think what we achieved is sufficient • Start a bit closer to the advertised time (sorry this sounds picky and I know it's not always something that's controllable!) but it does mean the chances of finishing early or on time are better! • Better articulation of <u>shared</u> vision – what we got was still a bundle of different views not a collective view. Probably need more time to achieve this • Clearer articulation of actions – the actual meaning is still open to diverse interpretation in many cases • Nothing to add • The day worked generally well, stronger chariing of meeting would help to keep focussed and on schedule

Additional comments received were as follows:

- "I hope the outcome is efficient for various parts of the state where needs and workings are different. I hope that it accommodates areas that struggle with RAP issues and engagement issues as well as areas that are strong and healthy in those areas."
- "A good day. Everyone was involved, a lot of work done. Positive signs for the future."
- "Seeing where I can avoid problems in the future. Ensure I let people know what I'm working on and ensure they have appropriate input" (DSE)

10. APPENDIX 4: CMA FEEDBACK TO VCMC TEMPLATE

The following information was provided by each CMA prior to the workshop in response to the template prepared by the VCMC.

Protocol, MoU or other agreement	What is working well?	What are the issues?
Corangamite		
MOU between the Corangamite CMA and the Aboriginal Community Organisations in Corangamite (2006)	<p>Huge achievement to bring together 3 indigenous communities in one MOU to work with the CCMA.</p> <p>Set up core principles to protect and manage cultural heritage in the CCMA area</p> <p>Indigenous rep on CCMA Implementation Committee</p> <p>Justification/support for Indigenous NRM position</p>	<p>New legislation disbanded the SW cultural heritage program which affected the CCMA MOU i.e difficult to form reference groups</p> <p>The MOU needs to be updated to reflect new CH legislation and political arrangements ie RAPs, TO in CCMA area</p>

Protocol, MoU or other agreement	What is working well?	What are the issues?
East Gippsland		
<p>RCS has 2 Mgt Action Targets relating to increasing and supporting indigenous participation in NRM decision making.</p> <p>Indigenous Schools Engagement Program</p> <p>Snowy Indigenous Project (partnership with Moogji Aboriginal Council)</p> <p>Regional Catchment Strategy (2005) Community Participation in Improving Natural Resource Management target: " by 2007, representatives of the local Indigenous community will directly participate in key natural resource management decisions".</p> <p>The above target is supported by a Management Action and Target (ref CA10) that states "develop and implement mechanisms to ensure that Indigenous people have improved opportunities to participate in natural resource management decision making processes, and have increased opportunities to benefit from the use of the region's natural resources".</p>	<p>Extension Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ EGCMA Indigenous Schools Program (ISP) engages school aged children directly in indigenous culture in an enjoyable way. ➤ EGCMA Culture in the Catchment Tours (canoe tours) insight into Indigenous culture and catchment management with a canoe tour on the Nowa Nowa arm of Lake Tyers. <p>Indigenous inter agency liaison</p> <p>Both EGCMA Community Partnerships Officer and Community Facilitator are utilised as a point of contact by other agencies to provide indigenous guidance to projects (i.e. Lake Tyers Reserve Fisheries Management Plan Committee).</p> <p>Indigenous involvement in Snowy River Rehabilitation project</p> <p>An EGCMA partnership with Moogji Aboriginal Council (Orbost) over 3 years involves an Indigenous crew employed and trained through Moogji undertaking weed control, fencing and revegetation on the Lower Snowy and environs in support of the Snowy River Rehabilitation program.</p>	<p>Participation in NRM by indigenous communities due to a number of factors including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lack of interest and/or involvement, ▪ Fears regarding use of indigenous knowledge by government, ▪ Disputes over variations in cultural interpretation (i.e. dreamtime stories), ▪ Disputes regarding the Community Partnership Officer and Community Facilitator's legitimacy in communicating local knowledge to non indigenous people. <p>Some initial issues with Indigenous crew stability, but current crew demonstrates commitment and encouraging progress.</p>

Protocol, MoU or other agreement	What is working well?	What are the issues?
Glenelg Hopkins		
<p>No MoU</p> <p>Developing an Indigenous Information Package to guide staff in engaging with Indigenous communities, organisations and individuals</p> <p>[Co-management partnership between Gunditjmara and Parks Victoria; MoU, Statements of Commitment or recognition of local communities operating in 4 of the 11 shires.]</p> <p>Glenelg Hopkins CMA does not have MOU's with regional Indigenous groups. The CMA does have and works through partnership arrangements (both project based and workplace based) with a mutual focus on protecting waterways, land and biodiversity and places of cultural heritage. There is a desire by the CMA to continue to strengthened relationships with Indigenous communities across the region.</p> <p>The subject of MOU has not been overlooked by the CMA – for example there have been discussions with Framlingham in the past. Rather the approach has been to form partnerships through actions (projects) and conduct.</p> <p>Other observations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Indigenous involvement in NRM is particularly strong in circumstances where Indigenous groups own and/or manage their land. o Provide appropriate resources to enable Indigenous involvement in NRM (ie through highlighting Indigenous involvement in NRM Australian Govt Caring for Our Country has placed increased expectations of participation on Indigenous communities) o Indigenous involvement into the Review of Regional Catchment Strategies o Increase awareness of landholders to their responsibilities under the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 	<p>Active engagement through partnership projects, sponsorships, funding, support and education</p>	

Protocol, MoU or other agreement	What is working well?	What are the issues?
Goulburn Broken		
Providing feedback but not able to do so prior to the workshop		
North Central		
Protocol, Principle and Strategy Agreement for Indigenous Engagement	-	<p>Protocols are problematic as not all groups signed them. Some groups feel they do not have ownership of them.</p> <p>There are some concerns within the Traditional Owner groups that the protocol agreement was not signed by the correct people.</p> <p>Significant work is required to turn the agreement into practical actions.</p> <p>Individual agreements for each individual group would be better as one agreement does not suit all.</p>

Protocol, MoU or other agreement	What is working well?	What are the issues?
North East		
<p>Protocols, Principles and strategies for Indigenous involvement in Land and Water Management. (2004)</p> <p>Indigenous engagement procedure (2008)</p> <p>NE intends to establish Indigenous Landcare Group(s) as a conduit for NRM engagement, information & knowledge sharing.</p> <p>An Indigenous Elders Advisory Group will also be established to build indigenous NRM capacity and connection with Country.</p> <p>(Detail provided on each of these proposals)</p>	<p>Information transfer; meaningful engagement between NECMA and the Mungabareena Aboriginal Corporation (MAC); incorporating Indigenous Aspiration into NRM</p> <p>Methods used to identify appropriate engagement tools for Indigenous engagement.</p>	<p>Loss of Indigenous heritage Officers due to change in heritage legislation has meant less interaction on heritage matters with the local Indigenous community.</p> <p>The north east is undergoing a time of change with Traditional Owner Groups becoming more active and the nomination of 2 RAPs for this region. Agreement between all groups is still to be negotiated and may take some time.</p>
Port Phillip Western Port		
Draft protocols/guidelines prepared by GAV	Draft only - not being implemented at present	Quality of the draft document
West Gippsland		
No agreements in place, MOU drafted, but waiting on outcome of RAP processes	<p>Contact with individuals and some groups</p> <p>Re-establishing relationships, working with local government and Indigenous representatives</p>	<p>Internal conflicts in some groups can make establishing and maintaining good relationships difficult</p> <p>We don't understand things well enough</p> <p>It's a big area and lots of people have a keen interest in it (this is not necessarily a bad thing)</p> <p>Progress on RAP process in Gippsland</p>

Protocol, MoU or other agreement	What is working well?	What are the issues?
Wimmera CMA		
<p>Protocol, MOU or other agreement:</p> <p>Indigenous Engagement Protocols</p> <p>Established 2007</p> <p>Indigenous Participation in Strategic NRM Direction:</p> <p>Wimmera CMA is in the process of restructuring Advisory Committee roles and areas of responsibility.</p> <p>Anticipated Indigenous community representation will ensure indigenous views and values are included in all future discussions around strategic planning and investment.</p>	<p>What is working well:</p> <p>Since initiating the Indigenous Facilitator role in 2005 the position has enormously influenced community understanding and acceptance of indigenous and cultural values in NRM. The following is an indication of change and influence delivered by the Indigenous Facilitator project.</p> <p>From past experience we understand that opportunities for interaction between indigenous and non indigenous people are a rare occurrence. As a result Wimmera CMA and NRM partners initiated a number of community engagement activities, events and projects designed specifically to involve and promote engagement.</p> <p>Common interests in Landcare and the natural environment provides opportunities to identify and address concerns common to anyone keen to learn and understand more about the Australian Landscape.</p> <p>Since early attempts at trying to understand the links and similarities of Landcare and Caring for Country, the relationship between NRM organisations, community groups and indigenous people has grown stronger. Regular discussion is common between NRM and Traditional Owner bodies with suggestions and ideas for ongoing improvement high on the list of priorities.</p> <p>Projects and Events with significant indigenous participation and leadership:</p> <p>Mountains to Mallee – a 2 week walk along the length of the Wimmera River</p> <p>Walk Back In Time – annual 1 day journey along the Heritage Wimmera River</p> <p>Mount William Creek Walk – a 1 week walk from Grampians to Wimmera River</p> <p>Yarrilinks – annual biodiversity project with strong indigenous input</p> <p>Project Hindmarsh – national award winner with exceptional indigenous focus</p> <p>Indigenous NRM Forum – Regional event driven by Indigenous community</p> <p>Grampians to Little Desert Biolink – includes strong indigenous focus</p> <p>It is important to point out that while these activities include the now expected Welcome to Country which recognises indigenous people, they go far beyond recognition. They invite, encourage and include indigenous people in delivering an experience that many feel has been missing from past projects. They address indigenous concerns for environment and continue to involve and include indigenous views in their actions and plans.</p>	<p>View for the future:</p> <p>Wimmera CMA and community programs continue to seek and encourage indigenous community involvement with current projects and actions targeting improved NRM outcomes.</p> <p>While these outcomes may fit with some of the aims and aspirations of indigenous people the long term indicator of true indigenous participation will be when indigenous communities and groups are leading NRM projects and inviting non indigenous groups and communities to participate.</p>

11. APPENDIX 5: VCMC TEMPLATE

Background paper

Indigenous Protocols – Status/Feedback

The Victorian Catchment Management Council is interested to find out the present situation regarding existing protocols, Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) or other arrangements in the CMAs. This builds on the information and analysis in 'A VCMC Position/Perspective Paper on Indigenous Engagement in Victoria' 2006.

Further, Council would like advice on how these arrangements are working. Council's own resources are limited so members would appreciate any input from the Victorian Indigenous NRM Facilitator network. Collon Mullett will provide the conduit between the network and the Council.

The sort of information Council would like is summarised below.

CMA region	Protocol , MoU or other agreement	Year signed off or established	What is working well	What are the issues

Council would welcome any suggestions regarding further information. Note that the current Council's term finishes on 20 June 2009 so ideas for new work would be considered by the new members.

12. APPENDIX 6: KEY ISSUES FROM THE 'ENHANCING INDIGENOUS INVOLVEMENT IN NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT' CONFERENCE, JUNE 2004

A joint conference involving representatives of Victorian Indigenous communities and Catchment Management Authorities (CMAs) was conducted at Echuca in June 2004. The conference was funded by the Department of Environment and Heritage for the Natural Heritage Trust project 'Enhancing Indigenous Engagement in Natural Resource Management'. The Echuca conference was an outcome of the project component to conduct workshops within nominated Natural Resource Management regions to enhance Indigenous engagement.

The conference identified several key issues relating to Indigenous involvement in Natural Resource Management. These included:

- The importance of involving Indigenous communities in consultations and negotiations at all project stages and management levels of CMA processes, from initial planning through to project completion i.e. long term, two-way commitment. This should include ongoing feedback and reporting of outcomes, with an understanding that formal agreements and protocols are important to Indigenous people.

Further consideration could be given to:

- Establishing strategic working groups to ensure positive interactions and to provide assistance if problems arise
- Providing ongoing cross cultural training for all CMA personnel (including external contractors) in respect to Indigenous culture, values and aspirations, and assisting Indigenous people to understand CMA roles, responsibilities and funding structures
- Building a cultural overlay into CMA processes and programs
- Supporting Indigenous communities with written submissions
- Ensuring 'practical' outcomes i.e. visible improvements to Country
- Protecting cultural heritage values and managing Indigenous priorities
- The need to build on, maintain and enhance two-way communication processes, ensuring formal, plain language protocols or Memoranda of Understanding between each CMA and the Traditional Owners.

Opportunities exist to:

- Build relationships from the very beginning with an emphasis on trust and respect
- Ensure there are common protocols for adjoining CMAs, recognising that traditional people did not follow existing territorial boundaries
- Use CMA processes to build in cultural heritage values identification and protection
- Allow for measurable goals and outcomes for Indigenous Natural Resource Management and cultural components of CMA program reporting requirements
- Develop agreed communication strategies and protocols by the Indigenous organisations that have a connection to Country in each CMA area

(Appendix 2 of the document outlining conference outcomes provides a valuable resource for Indigenous community interaction).

- Establishing processes that encourage capacity building and employment/training opportunities within Indigenous communities. This might involve:
 - Cadetships/scholarships/traineeships
 - Employment of Indigenous facilitators
 - Engaging other organisations e.g. Landcare, Greening Australia, Coastcare, Koori Business Network, Youth Training, Wur-cum Barra and Health Services
- Promoting the understanding of Indigenous cultural values and interests in Natural Resource Management within the wider community by:
 - Involving Indigenous communities in organisations associated with CMAs e.g. Landcare, VFF
 - Including information recognising the importance of Indigenous values in CMA communications
 - Addressing the issue of fear amongst landholders of negative consequences of acknowledging artefact and cultural sites on private property
 - Establishing a Koori Landcare organisation

Conference participants expressed excitement and a sense of optimism in the potential for Indigenous people to engage with CMAs in Natural Resource Management. However, Indigenous representatives also acknowledged a sense of disappointment when changes in Government personnel/ policies or a failure to 'follow through' had occurred in the past.