Lachlan Catchment Action Plan upgrade

Engaging our communities

What is the Lachlan Catchment Action Plan?
The Lachlan Catchment Action Plan (CAP) is most commonly referred to as “the CAP”. It is a cabinet approved document which outlines the investment priorities and delivery targets for natural resource management (NRM) across the Lachlan catchment. These targets/priorities must align with the NSW Government’s State-wide Targets. Catchment Management Authorities (CMAs) across the state are currently reviewing and upgrading Catchment Action Plans. The existing Catchment Action Plans were developed in 2004-05 and knowledge, information and data has advanced significantly since then. The Catchment Action Plan upgrades will allow this new information to be considered against community values to ensure a collaborative plan is developed and implemented.

What will differentiate the CAP upgrade from the existing CAP?
The Natural Resource Commission (NRC) has released “The Framework for Assessing and Recommending CAPs”. This document clearly defines the key concepts of the CAP as whole of government and whole of community plan. The task of facilitating the CAP upgrade has been given to CMAs however the final plan will reflect and encourage investment from government agencies, non government organisations and community members. The CAP upgrade will be a significant move towards more effective and collaborative investments which reflect not only community values but also recognise the resilience of our ecological systems. The vision for the Lachlan CMA is to have a CAP which is a whole of catchment tool to encourage, guide and attract investment to catchment targets and priority areas in natural resource management.

What does that mean for me?
The Lachlan CMA is excited to be building on the knowledge we have obtained about our communities over the last seven years. We are expanding our vision of the landscape to more extensively consider social interactions with environmental aspects. We will look to strengthen our understanding of your values to ensure that the ecological priorities align with the values of the community.

Top image: 2011 Lachlan CMA photographic competition entry “Swimming hole at the bottom of the falls”
Call to action - its your home too!

How do I become involved?
As a community member within our catchment we invite you to participate in the Catchment Action Plan upgrade. A process has been designed to ensure that the views, experience and values of the community are captured within the upgraded Catchment Action Plan. The initial part of this is a survey available from your local office and on the Lachlan CMA website. In the autumn of 2012 a series of community workshops will be held throughout the catchment to help collect community input. A second series of workshops will be held in spring to report back and check the draft Catchment Action Plan.

We encourage you to register your details at your local office, follow us on Facebook or sign up to the Lachlan Bundle newsletter to ensure we notify you of upcoming opportunities to participate.

Key concepts of the Lachlan Catchment Action Plan
There are two significant concepts which will feature in the Lachlan Catchment Action Plan.

Social-ecological systems
A social-ecological system is an integrated ‘arrangement’ of ecosystems and human societies that emphasises the “humans-in-nature” perspective. Understanding of the two way relationship between people and the environment in which they live requires an understanding of ecosystem goods and services that are used, that are non-marketed and unknown along with the ‘state’ or health of the people collectively.

The use of a social-ecological system approach to the planning and implementation of natural resource policy the recognises the role of individuals and their values to the management of our environment.

Resilience
Resilience is a measure of the landscapes’ capacity to cope with shocks and undergo change while retaining essentially the same structure and function. Resilience thinking aims to identify a small number of important variables that control the way a complex landscape system is functioning and the thresholds within which the system can continue to function in desired way (NRC Framework for assessing and recommending CAPs, 2011).

How will the upgraded Lachlan Catchment Action Plan be developed?
Lachlan CMA has prepared an Engagement and Delivery Plan for the CAP upgrade. It comprehensively defines stakeholders, key concepts and the process for integrating community and ecological priorities. The Lachlan CMA will gather community input on values, changes, trends and disturbances experienced by the communities of the catchment. This community input will be a vital point of information that feeds into the integrated plan of social and ecological priorities.

Parallel to the community consultation process, Social–ecological System Panels will be formed to work through the science of social–ecological systems (ecological and biophysical science, spatial data and policy).

Throughout the process of developing the upgrade there will be a transparent process for revision and feedback points for all stakeholders including our community members across the catchment.

The following diagram shows how the process will interact to form the Lachlan Catchment Action Plan.

For further information
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