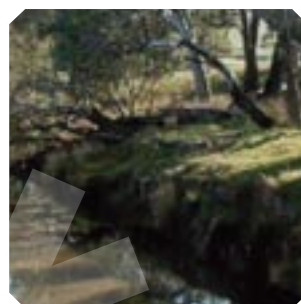
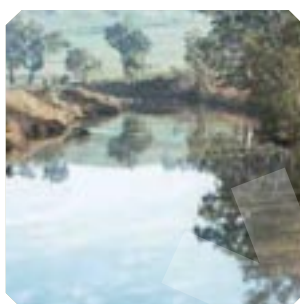


NSW Government

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

corporate plan

2006–2009





Minister's Foreword

It is my pleasure to present the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Corporate Plan 2006-2009.

DNR is responsible for managing our land and water resources in an equitable and sustainable way. It is a crucial task, and one that is central to our ability to look forward to the future with confidence.

Issues like water scarcity, river health, native vegetation loss, soil degradation, coastal erosion, and flooding represent DNR's core challenges, with each posing a massive threat to communities in NSW.

DNR approaches these challenges by working with natural resource stakeholders across the State, bringing to the role a combination of world-leading science and know-how and practical on-the-ground ability.

Land and water are our two most essential but fragile natural resources. If we do not manage them wisely today, we will face serious consequences in the future and our rural industries and communities will be hit harder than most.

That's why I look forward to working with stakeholders and DNR staff to realise the vital objectives set out in this Corporate Plan.

The Hon Ian Macdonald MLC
Minister for Natural Resources



Director General's Message

This is the first Corporate Plan for the Department of Natural Resources, identifying our key priorities for the next three years.

DNR's natural resource management activities are divided into four closely-related areas: water management, soil and vegetation management, coastal and floodplain management, and Western Lands management and administration.

These areas are underpinned by the best-available scientific expertise, by the collection of natural resource information, and by ensuring that access to natural resources complies with NSW legislation. All the Department's work areas and staff are in turn supported by corporate services.

This Corporate Plan describes our challenge, our role and vision, and our structure, values and stakeholders. It then sets out in detail our planned outcomes and strategies in five key result areas and identifies the key performance indicators we will use to measure our success.

Our staff will be central to achieving these ambitions. So while this Corporate Plan is focused on the outcomes we want to achieve for the people of NSW, at no stage will we forget the diverse and often unseen ways in which DNR staff contribute to these outcomes every day.

I am delighted at the way we have worked together to plot a course for the future. Now it's time to deliver.

Richard Sheldrake
Director General
Department of Natural Resources

NSW Department of Natural Resources

our challenge

Natural resources like land and water are the essence of life, the pillars upon which everything we do is based. Here in Australia, with its harsh and variable climate, they are in delicate balance.

Land helps to define and sustain us as a people, while its fragility also presents us with major challenges. The NSW landscape is under continuing pressure, threatening our land resources and the communities and industries that depend on them.

Water sustains our environment, towns and cities, farmers, and industry. Managing water represents one of the most difficult issues we face as a nation: how much water we use today and how much will be available to us in the future.

our role

The Department of Natural Resources is responsible for managing land and water resources in NSW and building on the great progress made over the past decade. We are the lead agency for key natural resource legislation in NSW.

Our job is to manage competing claims for land and water from the environment, towns and cities, farmers, and industry. Our goal is to ensure that everyone across the state enjoys the benefits of healthy and productive natural resources, today and in the future.

our vision

*land and water for life – having the needs of our
environment and our economy in balance*



our key result areas

This Corporate Plan outlines how we will realise our vision in the coming years.

Over the following pages, we identify the outcomes we want to achieve, the strategies we will use to achieve them and the performance indicators we will use to measure our success.

Below is a brief overview of our main roles in each of these key result areas.

KRA 1

water management

Water management is the allocation of NSW water resources to various users including the environment, towns and cities, farmers, and industry. The Department aims to share water to stimulate regional economic growth and to improve the condition of our rivers, wetlands, and aquifers. Responsible water management will benefit everyone today and support our children tomorrow.

KRA 2

soil and vegetation management

Soil and vegetation management activities aim to improve, or at least maintain the condition of soil and vegetation, and increase or maintain the extent of native vegetation. We work closely with Catchment Management Authorities (CMAs) and rural land managers to reverse the damage of some past land management practices, to ensure equity of access for all land users and to protect our landscape for future generations.

KRA 3

coastal and floodplain management

In coastal and floodplain management, DNR works with local councils, CMAs and community groups to improve amenity and reduce risk. That work includes managing the State's vulnerable coastal areas to improve the condition of our coastal and estuarine environments and to minimise losses from coastal erosion. It also includes managing flood-prone areas to minimise the emotional and economic losses individuals and communities suffer as a result of flooding.

KRA 4

Western Lands management and administration

For the Western Division of NSW, the Department combines natural resource management with a number of administrative functions. The Department promotes an integration of environmental, economic and social interests of the Western Division, which is managed through the office of the Western Lands Commissioner.

KRA 5

organisational capability

We are continually trying to enhance our capacity to deliver excellent services to our clients across the State, being responsive to their needs and responding appropriately at all times. Within our Department, we are aiming to build an organisation that provides a safe, satisfying and equitable workplace for our staff.

our structure

Natural resource management is about achieving the best outcomes for the people of New South Wales, now and in the future. That priority is reflected in our key result areas, which are outlined opposite and described in detail later in this Corporate Plan.

Our structure differs to our key result areas, and reflects the fact that a large number of important functions are required to manage natural resources. So, while our objectives are focused on the outcomes that matter most to people, the structure of our Department is designed to deliver those core functions effectively.

The Department comprises five divisions, two of which are focused specifically on natural resources, reflecting our key areas of operation. The other three divisions provide specialist services. In addition, corporate executive, legal and communications services are provided Department-wide from a separate, small Office of the Director General.

Water Management Division

Water Management Division provides the policy and technical expertise needed to manage water resources. Our staff have a wide range of responsibilities, which include: monitoring water quantity and quality; sharing water between different users and the environment; assessing the impact of water management decisions; planning to recover water, revitalise wetlands and improve water quality; and influencing and implementing water policies at state, inter-state and national level.

Landscapes Division

Landscapes Division is focused on managing and protecting catchments, soil and vegetation, the coastal zone, and floodplains. Our staff provide funding and technical support to partners in landscape management, including the CMAs, rural land managers, local councils, and Aboriginal communities. The wide variety of the division's work is reflected in the diversity of our staff, many of whom are located in offices throughout NSW to encourage local decision making.

Compliance and Licensing Division

Compliance and Licensing Division provides the Department's compliance program for water, vegetation and other natural resource legislation, and a licensing program that processes applications for licences, consents or other authorities. Our activities are directed at supporting the successful implementation of the Government's water and native vegetation reform agendas. Key compliance roles are ensuring stakeholders are aware of their obligations, the risk management of alleged breaches, development of remediation agreements, and where appropriate, prosecuting serious offences.

Science and Information Division

Science and Information Division enables decision making across the Department to be based on best available science. Our staff are responsible for developing knowledge, managing information and assessing the impacts of natural resource management initiatives.

Corporate Services Division

The Corporate Services Division provides corporate services like finance and administration, human resources, assets and information technology to DNR, as well as to external clients such as the Department of Planning and CMAs.



water management

planned result

Sustainable allocation of water between the environment, communities, farmers and industry.

performance indicators

- * Proportion of water extraction covered by water sharing plans
- * Volume of water purchased through the Aboriginal Water Trust
- * Proportion of licence holders issued with tradeable water access licences
- * Level of compliance with consents
- * Volume of water recovered for the environment
- * Condition of freshwater ecosystems

outcomes	strategies
Water shared between competing users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide for the diverse range of competing needs for water, including the environment, basic landholder rights and Aboriginal cultural and commercial access. • Establish statutory water sharing plans across the state and assist communities to adjust where necessary. • Develop policies to support water sharing such as managing growth in use, floodplain harvesting, water use efficiency and connected groundwater and surface water systems.
Co-operative management of water across borders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead NSW implementation of the National Water Initiative. • Represent NSW interests in the management of water across state boundaries and deliver NSW commitments under the Living Murray and Snowy Initiatives.
Clear and enforced rights to water supporting a viable water market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide perpetual, mortgageable and guaranteed licensed rights to water. • Promote compliance through an integrated, risk-based approach involving education and communication, monitoring, investigation and taking appropriate action as necessary. • Facilitate and expand the water trading market, including on-line access to information on water licences and trades.
Improved condition of freshwater ecosystems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure delivery of environmental water rules and maintain extractions to protect environmental share. • Implement water savings projects and buy back of water licences to recover additional water for the environment. • Administer approvals for activities impacting on the quality and quantity of water resources. • Implement strategies to manage thermal pollution, algal blooms and water salinity, including salt credits scheme.
Informed decisions on the use and protection of water resources and the cost of management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop information management systems that enable access to the best available science and information. • Measure and assess the quality, distribution, use and health of NSW water resources and freshwater ecosystems. • Assess the hydrologic, socio-economic and environmental impacts of water management rules. • Achieve appropriate user pays pricing for water management activities.



soil and vegetation management

planned result

Sustainable use, conservation and improvement of soils and native vegetation.

performance indicators

- * Condition of soil and native vegetation
- * Area of land maintained or improved by Property Vegetation Plans (PVP)
- * Number of consents granted to landholders for operations under the Private Native Forestry (PNF) Code
- * Area of land assessed as illegally cleared
- * Level of compliance with legislation and statutory instruments
- * Proportion of milestones in CMA investment strategies that are achieved

outcomes	strategies
Sustainable land use and management practices developed and promoted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End broadscale clearing of native vegetation. • Develop, review and publish legislation, policies, strategies and codes for PNF, plantations and riparian corridor management. • Work with the Department of Planning on regional strategies and advise councils on local planning and land use strategies. • Develop and implement an Aboriginal natural resource management policy and action framework and communications strategy.
Clear and enforced rules for land resource access and practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support CMAs and the PVP development process. • Assess and issue permits for activities in the riverine corridor and on State Protected Lands. • Assess and authorise private native forestry and plantation activities. • Promote compliance through an integrated, risk-based approach involving education and communication, monitoring and investigation and taking appropriate regulatory action as necessary.
Investment in conservation and improvement of soils and vegetation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to work with the Australian Government on natural resource funding programs. • Manage funds to CMAs for incentive payments to landholders for improved vegetation outcomes. • Assist CMAs develop and review their catchment action plans and investment strategies for alignment with natural resource policies and targets and practical implementation. • Develop partnerships for Aboriginal engagement and capacity building with CMAs and other stakeholders.
Informed decisions about the use, conservation and improvement of soils and vegetation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect and analyse data and provide information, advice and education on soil condition hazards, land capability and native vegetation. • Provide science, information and other support for CMA plans and programs. • Develop data, tools and models for the integration of economic, social and cultural assessment into natural resource management decision-making. • Monitor and report on progress towards State-wide targets for native vegetation.



coastal and floodplain management

planned result

Improved condition of NSW coastal environments and reduced losses from flooding, coastal erosion and other hazards.

performance indicators

- * Condition of coastal environments
- * Value of coastal rehabilitation projects implemented
- * Average cost of losses from flooding, coastal erosion and other hazards
- * Number of Local Government plans made in coastal zone and on floodplains

outcomes	strategies
Improved condition of coastal environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and implement priority projects to rehabilitate degraded coast and estuary environments. • Work with local governments and CMAs and provide technical and financial support for works to enhance the coastal zone. • Provide mechanisms for integrating CMA and local government investment in the coastal zone.
Losses from flooding, coastal erosion and other hazards reduced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administer the <i>Coastal Protection Act 1979</i> and provide expert advice on coastal developments. • Oversee the implementation of the NSW Flood Prone Land Policy. • Prepare and gazette rural floodplain management plans and assess and approve rural floodplain levees and other 'controlled' works. • Promote compliance through an integrated, risk-based approach involving education and communication, monitoring and investigation and taking appropriate action as necessary.
Land-use planning controls adopted and projects implemented that support sustainable management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with Department of Planning and local councils in the preparation, evaluation and review of regional strategies, planning instruments and planning controls effecting natural resource outcomes. • Manage the provision of funds to Local Government for coastal, estuary and floodplain management programs. • Provide policy and technical support and training to Local Government in preparing coastal, estuary and floodplain management plans.
Informed and supported decisions on uses in coastal zone and floodplains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with other State and Commonwealth agencies and organisations to define natural hazard exposures including climate change impacts. • Collect, analyse, record and maintain environmental as well as social and economic data for coasts and floodplains. • Increase scientific knowledge and understanding of the inter-relationships between environmental systems. • Develop information management systems that enable access to the best available science and information. • Develop tools and models for the integration of Aboriginal community and cultural values into decision-making.



Western Lands management and administration

planned result

Integrated resource management and efficient administration of Western Lands.

performance indicators

- * Condition of soil and native vegetation
- * Level of compliance with legislation and lease conditions
- * Area of land privately managed for conservation in the Western Division
- * Proportion of established Rangeland Assessment Program sites monitored annually
- * Proportion of Western Lands leases for residence converted to freehold

outcomes	strategies
Western Lands protected from unsustainable land use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage Crown Reserves. • Set conditions on leases for land use including stocking rates and cultural heritage conservation. • Administer cultivation consents and monitor changes in areas cropped. • Facilitate land use diversification through change of lease purpose and subdivision. • Contribute to the development of a Regional Environmental Plan for the Unincorporated Area. • Promote compliance through an integrated, risk-based approach involving education and communication, monitoring, investigation and taking appropriate action as necessary.
Land, soil and vegetation in Western Division improved or maintained	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide incentive payments to landholders for improved vegetation and conservation outcomes and to cap and pipe bores in the Great Artesian Basin. • Monitor changes in native vegetation condition in partnership with the community through the Rangeland Assessment Program. • Integrate the <i>Western Lands Act 1901</i> assessment process with the new native vegetation management process.
Crown Lands administered efficiently	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and improve Crown Lands administration functions including transactions and rent collection. • Facilitate conversion of residential leases to freehold.
Social, economic and environmental interests of the Western Division promoted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide the unincorporated area with appropriate local services. • Maintain the dog-proof fence along the Queensland and South Australian borders. • Establish legal road network in the Western Division.



organisational capability

planned result

Being responsive to stakeholders' needs through the provision of excellent services, with staff supported and resourced appropriately.

performance Indicators

- * Level of client satisfaction
- * Proportion of DNR branches with operational business plans
- * Number of workplace injuries and incidents
- * Cost of workers compensation claims
- * Financial performance against budget

outcomes	strategies
Service delivery is aligned with stakeholder priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and increase opportunities to provide information and services to clients via the web, including online transactions. • Develop and manage service level agreements with clients for delivery of services. • Develop a program to evaluate and manage stakeholder priorities.
A sound corporate governance framework in place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a system of management improvement linking team and business plans to the Corporate Plan. • Develop and implement communication frameworks and protocols.
Staff are suitably skilled and work in safe, healthy and equitable work environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement core business skills training and provide development opportunities for staff through internal networks and groups including Spokeswomen, Young People's Group and the Aboriginal Support Network. • Implement NSW public sector OH&S targets detailed in <i>Working Together - Public Sector OHS and Injury Management Strategy</i>. • Implement equity and diversity strategies which support public sector initiatives.
Systems are streamlined to support effective decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the Information Management and Technology strategic plan to create infrastructure and business systems to support business areas. • Develop an Information Management Standards and Governance Framework to improve the organisation and quality control of information assets. • Strengthen, co-ordinate and deliver high quality, customer-focussed, GIS capability across DNR.
The Department's operating costs are managed within budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement financial performance measures for each cost centre manager. • Develop opportunities with Department of Primary Industries and other agencies for office co-locations, as well as sharing resources and systems, state-wide.

our values

As individual staff, work teams and as a Department we seek to:

- * **act with integrity** – being ethical, impartial and honest, supporting a corruption resistant culture
- * **act professionally** – treating colleagues and clients with respect, basing decisions on the best-available science and being innovative and pursuing excellence
- * **work collaboratively** – demonstrating teamwork and developing partnerships with stakeholders and other organisations
- * **focus on client service** – being responsive and accountable, demonstrating commitment to achieving results for communities
- * **reconcile Aboriginal values** in natural resource management – supporting Aboriginal community values and involvement in planning, policy, programs, projects and decision making
- * **implement sustainability** in natural resource management - considering all the relevant environmental, social, economic and inter generational factors in our policy making

our key clients and stakeholders

- * Minister for Natural Resources
- * The people and communities of NSW
- * NSW, Commonwealth, and local governments
- * Land and water users
- * Catchment Management Authorities
- * Peak industry and environment groups

More information on the Department's programs and services is available from:

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or visit our website www.naturalresources.nsw.gov.au



