



# SOUTH COAST Strategy FOR NRM

## WELCOME TO THE SOUTH COAST REGION

The South Coast Regional Initiative Planning Team (SCRIPT) Inc brings people, organisations and information together to help the regional community drive sustainable natural resources management (NRM) with positive social and economic outcomes.

SCRIPT is not a statutory body. It is strongly independent, benefiting from a high degree of volunteerism, which reflects the strong sense of ownership and commitment within its community.

Initially aimed at developing a regional land and water strategy in the mid 90s, SCRIPT began as a grass-roots regional partnership utilising broad community consultation and support.

From this initial vision and strong leadership by key community members, a growing membership has dedicated considerable time to developing the partnerships and wider community support that has given governments confidence in SCRIPT as a sound vehicle for NRM investment, decision-making and advice.

Through community representatives, the Committee ensures regional planning and management takes account of the needs and circumstances of distinct geographical areas within The Region.

There is a close working relationship between community and government agencies in SCRIPT.

Of note is the highest level of input from government agencies via their regional managers and involvement and commitment of community stakeholder groups over a long period. SCRIPT relies heavily on its other key partners – the six South Coast subregional groups, LCDCs, farmers, tertiary institutions, environmental groups, local government authorities, industry groups, non-government organisations, coastal and marine groups and Indigenous organisations.

The Strategy development process required extensive consultation across a large and diverse region, recognising world-class biodiversity assets, spectacular coast, a rich marine biodiversity only recently exposed through the Recherche Archipelago study, water resources, high value horticulture and viticulture, broad acre agriculture and cultural heritage.



## GETTING STARTED

# SOUTHERN PROSPECTS 2004-2009

### **THE SOUTH COAST REGIONAL STRATEGY FOR NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

8 September 2005 :: The drafting of Southern Prospects 2004 -2009: The South Coast Regional Strategy for Natural Resource Management was led by Paula Deegan, SCRIPT Manager, and David Jan, Resource Information Analyst. An electronic copy of this publication, together with the appendices and background papers that informed its development, are included on the companion CD-ROM.

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

SCRIPT would like to acknowledge the dedication and contribution of a wide range of individuals, community organisations, agencies and industry bodies that have helped develop this Strategy. Sincere thanks are also extended to all those who took part in community consultation workshops and gave their time to assist in the identification and discussion of relevant issues. SCRIPT would especially like to acknowledge the contributions of Paula Deegan, David Jan, John Simpson and Jean Webb. The contribution of the past and current members of the SCRIPT Management Committee, past and current members of the SCRIPT Regional Strategy Subcommittee and past and current members of SCRIPT staff is also recognised.

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## A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

ENVIRONMENTAL, ECONOMIC & SOCIAL OUTCOMES DELIVERING  
SUSTAINABLE BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY.



*With these great achievements arising from our regional partnerships, I feel both proud and optimistic for the future of natural resource management as the South Coast Region migrates to the new regional delivery model.*

It gives me a sense of pride in the South Coast community to see the completion of *Southern Prospects 2004-2009*.

This strategy for natural resource management in the South Coast Region has been developed over several years with extensive contributions from, and in consultation with, the diversity of stakeholders in our Region.

The comprehensive amount of information and support from government NRM agencies combined with the personal input of the people of The Region giving their aspirations and direction to this strategy has been a monumental achievement.

This document acknowledges a persistence and maturity of our community in adapting to a new way of managing our natural resources for their environmental, social and economic benefit. It sees a shift to a strong forward planning approach, where the visions of the community are to be delivered by strategic actions and investment to address threats to our natural resources.

With limited funds to invest compared to the size of the challenges before us, investment will be in those areas of highest priority where there is a likelihood of multiple benefits. A complementary Investment Plan to this Strategy has been developed in consultation with the community. It serves as a precursor to the investment of the largest ever allocation of funds by the Australian and State Governments to address threats to our natural and cultural assets.

I would like to thank all who have contributed to the process so far and look forward to your continuing involvement, particularly as we move through the investment phase and into implementation when all the past work will start to bear fruit.

**GARRY ENGLISH**  
CHAIRMAN, SOUTH COAST REGIONAL  
INITIATIVE PLANNING TEAM (SCRIPT)





# GETTING STARTED

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*Southern Prospects 2004 -2009: The South Coast Regional Strategy for Natural Resource Management* (the Strategy) aims to ensure the sustainable use of natural resources, protection of natural and cultural values, and the development and maintenance of strong and vibrant regional communities within the South Coast Region. It provides the vision and the framework for natural resource management (NRM) for the Region and will guide investment in, and delivery of, prioritised on ground actions for the sustainable management of the Region's natural resources.

The development of the Strategy was coordinated by the South Coast Regional Initiative Planning Team (SCRIPT), building on several previous regional planning processes and working in collaboration with the South Coast Management Group (SCMG). Extensive involvement with partner organisations and a comprehensive consultation process engaged the wider community and a range of stakeholders to collate information, discuss issues, identify regional priorities and provide input into setting realistic targets for NRM.

Two of the main requirements for the development of Regional NRM strategies are achieving effective integration across a range of land and water uses, management responsibilities and stakeholder interests, and getting the most effective return on the investment of time and resources by those stakeholders.

This Strategy is intended to strengthen the Region's ability to achieve that integration of purpose and effort, and work effectively to protect our natural resources by providing:

- The vision for NRM and directly related social and economic matters;
- The values and condition of, and threats to the Region's natural resources;
- The specific goals and targets that will provide the steps towards achieving the vision;
- A range of actions required to achieve the targets and an indication of their relative priorities;
- A framework for implementing the actions, with an emphasis on partnerships between stakeholders;
- The basis for an investment plan that will assign costs to the priority actions for the Region.

**What can be achieved?** The South Coast community's vision is to be recognised locally, nationally and internationally for its outstanding biodiversity, its sustainable primary production systems, respect for diverse cultural values and its strong community stewardship of valued natural resources.

With a clear vision of the long-term future to help direct efforts, objectives were set to focus actions:

- Community: The South Coast has a strong community with the capacity to plan and to manage natural resources for the maintenance of a wide range of employment, educational, recreational and lifestyle opportunities.

- Conservation: The Region's biodiversity is conserved and the natural landscapes and marine values are maintained.
- Sustainable use: The Region's economy is diverse and robust, and is based on managing all natural resource-dependent industries and activities in an ecologically, socially and economically sustainable manner.

**What is important?** Natural resource assets include Land, Water, Biodiversity, Coasts and Marine, Cultural Heritage and Regional Capacity. Each of these has environmental, social and economic values. An indication of the range and scope of those values is gained through a brief description of the Region:

*The South Coast Region of Western Australia includes tall tingle and karri forests in the south west, southern WA's only mountain peaks in the Stirling Range and Porongurups, many remarkable rivers and inlets such as the Pallinup, Waychinicup and Walpole-Nornalup, hundreds of wetlands ranging from large lakes to small damplands, many offshore islands such as those of the Recherche Archipelago, and the waters of the Southern Ocean to the three nautical mile limit.*

*It also includes agricultural landscapes that range from the broad acre cropping and grazing in areas such as the Jerramungup and Esperance plains to the expanding forestry, viticulture and horticulture industries and an increasing number of other natural resource-based industries, such as native seeds supply, sandalwood and nature-based tourism.*

*The Region's community has a long history of involvement in caring for its assets, and a strong network of community groups and individuals working to protect, restore, sustainably use and better understand natural resources.*

The Strategy has developed Aspirational Goals and Outcomes to be achieved within the next 50 years for Land, Water, Biodiversity, Coasts and Marine and Regional Capacity. Progress on meeting the long-term Outcomes will be measured through Resource Condition Targets which will assist the Region to measure its progress in maintaining or improving its natural resources, and will also be included in State and national monitoring and evaluation frameworks to assist in measuring progress at those scales.

**What are the threats?** Threatening processes facing the Region include altered hydrology, degradation of soils, loss of habitat and ecological communities, plant diseases such as *Phytophthora cinnamomi* (dieback), weeds and feral animals, altered fire regimes, degradation of waterways and wetlands, and climate change. Some of the perceived social and economic threats include an increasing reliance on a decreasing number of volunteers for on ground actions, withdrawal of government resources (skills and funds) and institutional, legislative and market arrangements that either undervalue or actively degrade natural resources.





What needs to be done? Addressing the range of threats to the values of natural resources across the Region clearly requires the involvement of a wide range of individuals, organisations and governments, working cooperatively and with some common goals. This Strategy aims to provide the guidance for that cooperative effort through prioritised management actions. The management actions required to achieve the objectives include on ground works, building community capacity, developing our information base and management options, benchmarking and monitoring our performance, and any additional planning or policy measures that are required.

**How to measure success?** Setting measurable and achievable management action targets allows progress towards meeting objectives to be monitored. Meeting the targets requires collaboration and partnerships between stakeholders. This Strategy fits within a national framework requiring that certain resource condition targets be set.

**What will it cost?** The Strategy will provide the basis for an investment plan that will identify priority actions, assess their costs and relative benefits, and possible cost sharing arrangements. While the investment plan will be submitted to the Australian and WA governments for funding under the Natural Heritage Trust (NHT) and the National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality (NAPSWQ), it may also form the basis of a Regional NRM Prospectus for other investors.

Through this Strategy, SCRIPT seeks to ensure that the natural resources of the South Coast Region are better managed by a community that is informed, involved and inspired.