

media release

17 March 2009

South Coast Natural Resource Management Inc. today announced the establishment of a unique partnership to enhance the involvement of the community in supporting sustainable environmental, social, cultural and economic outcomes within the South Coast Region of WA.

The three partners – South Coast NRM Inc., Community Sector Banking (CSB) and the Albany, Mount Barker and Tambellup-Cranbrook Bendigo Community Bank[®] branches – have formed the relationship to achieve three overall objectives:

- to work together to further the objectives of South Coast NRM Inc.
- to engage with communities in the South Coast Region to support agreed community enterprise activities, and
- to generate income streams to facilitate this support

A fund, known as the South Coast NRM Region Tax Deductible Donation Fund (NRM Donation Fund) has been established as the mechanism to enable the financial sustainability of these objectives.

Rob Edkins, Chief Executive Officer with South Coast NRM Inc. said today that he was excited about the prospects of the partnership and the potential benefits to the community.

‘This is a groundbreaking step for us that will further the development of local on-ground environmental and NRM activities. The establishment of the NRM Donation Fund means that donations or banking profits will go directly into local natural resource management projects that benefit the local community.’

Community organisations and their employees can support the work of South Coast NRM Inc. by simply banking with CSB via one of the three Bendigo Community Bank[®] branches and indicating that they wish to be part of this initiative. A proportion of the banking profits generated by the aggregate bank accounts (deposits or loan accounts) of these supporters will in turn support contributions to the NRM Donation Fund. Alternatively, community members or businesses can make a tax deductible donation directly to the NRM Donation Fund.

A Management Committee will be established in April 2009 to develop and implement the fund policy and governance framework for the management of the Fund.

South Coast NRM Inc. is the peak regional body in the South Coast of WA working with the community to improve the environment by preserving and protecting unique plants and animals; managing agricultural land and waterways sustainably and economically; and sharing knowledge and skills in natural resource management.

CSB is the result of an innovative joint venture between 20 leading not for profit organisations (Community 21) and Bendigo and Adelaide Bank and is the only banking service in Australia dedicated to the community sector. Most importantly, CSB is focussed on enhancing the capacity of the community sector to deliver outcomes-focussed social impact - by collaborating with not for profit and commercial organisations to develop innovative solutions.

The Albany, Mt Barker and Tambellup and Cranbrook Community Bank[®] branches are part of the Bendigo and Adelaide Bank's Australia-wide Community Bank[®] network, which involves more than 220 communities in the ownership and administration of their local bank branch, in turn receiving a share of the revenue generated by their local banking activity in order to benefit local community initiatives.

South Coast Natural Resource Management Inc. is the regional group for natural resource management on the South Coast of WA. Funding is provided by the Australian Government and the Government of Western Australia.

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