

Overview – Landcare and Caring for our Country Business Plan

By now most of you will have read the Caring for our Country Business Plan and/or attended an information session. In this document I will highlight the aspects of the Business Plan which relate to the NRM volunteer sector, including Landcare, Coastcare etc.

1) Small scale projects \$20,000 - \$100,000

These are designed for Community and NRM Volunteer groups. These projects must however, still achieve the Caring for our Country targets, so it will be necessary to make sure you read the targets and tailor the project accordingly.

With these projects there are three options for submitting them:

- Submit an independent proposal
- Work with your regional body to make your project part of a bigger picture program
- Work with others to either submit it as a small scale project with collaboration or to make it a larger project which falls within the medium scale projects.

I would recommend that you look at partnerships wherever possible, particularly with other landcare and Coastcare groups.

If you have a project which will meet the Caring for our Country targets but will require less than \$20,000 then contact your Regional Body. Although, at the Information Session I attended, the Regional Bodies there had no information or any knowledge of what they were expected to do in these circumstances.

2) Medium scale projects

The aim of these is multiple scale targets at the landscape scale. These projects will be about partnerships and would include Regional Bodies, and a community component such as landcare, Coastcare or local indigenous community.

3) Several of the targets in the business plan clearly identify community group involvement such as cane toads which has a target of 1500 community volunteer days, and coastal engagement which has a target of engaging 500 community organisations in coastal rehabilitation etc.

4) All targets state the need for partnerships between Government, non-government, community groups and NRM Organisations. Some also state that on-ground actions provide opportunities for community groups, including landcare etc to address national priorities by undertaking local actions.

5) The Community Engagement and Participation has targets such as:

- Ensuring all regional NRM organisations assist local communities, including indigenous, landcare and Coastcare groups increase their knowledge and skills by providing information and training opportunities,
- Increase the recruitment and retention of volunteers in community groups involved in managing natural resources,
- Increase the opportunities for short-term members or visitors to contribute to and partake in the protection and management of natural resources
- Ensure all regional NRM organisations provide support to community groups (e.g. through devolved grants) to undertake local projects.

Overall there is hope in the Business Plan and I suggest you read it closely to determine where your group fits. There is plenty of room for change in the Plan, and QWaLC will be working hard over the next 9 months to ensure next years business plan has even more opportunities for the NRM volunteer sector.