

Role of the Swan Catchment Council in Integrated Water Management

The Swan Catchment Council (SCC) is one of 56 Natural Resource Management regions in Australia, and covers the Perth metropolitan area as well as some of the peri-urban areas. It is an incorporated Association with a committee of 19 comprised of State and Local Government, research institutions, industry and community. The SCC has produced an the Swan NRM Strategy which looks at protection and restoration of the natural assets of the Swan Region. It has also produced two Investment Plans to allocate expenditure of the \$4 million allocation of Natural Heritage Trust funds.

The SCC has four regional delivery programs which include the Integrated Water Management Program. This Program has five 20 year targets which it aims to reach by 2020.

- Maintain and improve condition of inland aquatic ecosystem integrity, as measured at representative sites, by 2020 (with quantified targets for major rivers and waterways in the Region set by 2005)
- Maintain and improve condition of inland aquatic ecosystems integrity, as measured at representative sites, by 2020 (with quantified targets for priority wetlands in the Region set by 2005)
- Maximum concentrations, for priority waterways, do not exceed 0.1mg/L for total phosphorus and 1.0mg/L for total nitrogen, by 2020
- Maintain and improve condition of aquatic environments in the Region, as measured at representative sites, by 2020 (with quantified targets for turbidity / suspended particulate matter set by 2005)
- Maintain and improve condition of surface waters in priority catchments in the Avon Upper Swan Region, as measured at representative sites, by 2020 (with quantified targets to reduce salinity set by 2005)

In order to achieve these targets, the SCC has initiated a number of projects:

- Avon Upper Swan Salinity and Nutrient Management Project
- Wetland Watch Project
- Water Quality Monitoring and Evaluation Project
- Superficial Aquifer Health Project
- Sustainable Landscaping Project
- Swan-Canning Foreshore and tributary Assessment Project
- Canning Environmental Flows
- Wetlands Indigenous Project
- Waterwise on the Farm
- Swan Alcoa Landcare Program

The Swan Catchment Council obviously has only a small budget and limited options for direct funding of projects. However as a community organisation which has strong links to Australian, State and Local Governments as well as industry and

community, it has a pivotal role in facilitating partnerships and coordination of water management activities. The Reference Group for the water program includes representatives from Department of Water, Department of Environment and Conservation, Swan River Trust, CSIRO, the Stormwater Industry Association, Water Corporation,, University of Western Australia, Local Government, community and an indigenous representative.

This group has management of the Swan Catchment Council projects, but is also important in forming partnerships with other organisations to deliver better outcomes for water management. Strong links have been made for example with Intensive Horticulture Associations to reduce their water use through the Waterwise on the Farm Project. Partnerships are also in place with community groups to set up standardised water quality monitoring programs in partnership with Local Government.

In the future the Swan Catchment Council has a key role in facilitating and coordinating the investment made by Local Government and industry in areas of water quality and quantity, and in aligning this investment with the business plans of State Agencies. There is a need for the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders to be clearly defined and resourced.