

Moore Catchment Council Futures Workshop – 21 May 2012

Executive Summary

The workshop held in Moora on May 21st 2012 brought together community and government representatives with an interest in the work of the Moore Catchment Council. Presentations included an overview of the Moore River and its Catchments; the history of the Moore Catchment Council; and grants received and projects completed by the MCC. Discussions were held to draw out the major issues from each of these presentations, as well as to identify values, possible commercial undertakings, governance and future points of focus for the MCC.

Issues facing the Moore River and its catchment include the changing nature of the River, e.g., sedimentation, drainage changes, salinity; the lack of research on the River, its catchments, usage, needs, etc.; and associated with this, inadequate monitoring systems to identify changes and needs as they emerge. Additional to the need for research and monitoring, it was noted that communication and education of users, residents and visitors throughout the catchment region is needed to secure engagement and responsible usage of the Moore River system.

Issues facing the Moore Catchment Council include: The need to secure a wider range of revenue options to reduce dependence on grant funding; the need for its operations to be professional, with sound financial and grant administration; The desire to remain independent; The need to confirm its focus as a natural resource management organisation; The need for MCC to attract more members and volunteers and to be a voice for the Moore River and its catchments; and The need to consider changes to the Committee structure to improve governance. Having operated for over 15 years and expended over \$4 million in grant funds, these issues need addressing to secure an effective and long-term future for MCC.

Values identified were: Appreciation of the River and its catchment; Sound environmental management; Protection of the River its catchment; and Openness, accessibility and involvement for members and supporters.

Future areas of focus identified were: To protect and preserve the Moore River and its catchment; Encourage more research and monitoring to understand the profile and needs of the Moore River system; Undertake lobbying, being a voice for the river and its catchment; Educate stakeholders; Lift MCC's profile, including growing the membership base; Promote respectful, appropriate use of the River and its catchment, whether social or economic/industrial/ agricultural; Restructure the Committee of the MCC to a smaller member-elected group; and Develop additional funding streams by identifying initiatives that fit within the aims and values of the MCC and can be provided on a fee-for-service basis. A suggested action plan has been drawn up for these future areas of focus, and it will be the task of the organisation to distil which of these actions best suit the MCC's current needs and can be effectively implemented.

Commercial options identified include: To be an honest broker in Carbon Trading; Environmental offset management; Waste management; Project management for environmental issues; Management of roadside revegetation; Monitoring biodiversity; Biosecurity project management; and Events relating to NRM (educational, social).

Improvements to the **committee structure** include: Amend the constitution to discontinue the current committee structure of two representatives per shire; instead, Consider appointing two shire representatives; Move to a committee and office bearers/executive who are elected by the members; and Develop agreed reporting and consultation procedures with shires and other government stakeholders, to ensure they have input and are up to date on the work of MCC.

The workshop affirmed the importance and contribution to date of the Moore Catchment Council, and confirmed the value of it broadening its operations and revenue streams, revising its governance structure, and having it take a leading role in the oversight and management of the Moore River system.