South Australian Murray-Darling Basin Natural Resources Management Board

Our focus 2019-20

Message from our Presiding Member

Natural resources management (NRM) is going through a time of review and change. There is a new state government with a new vision, a change in Australian government funding models, and a need to adapt to the stresses of a changing climate. At the same time it is important to continue doing the foundational activities that enable us to manage our natural resources better.

The SAMDB NRM Board is responding to these influences by continuing to invest in fundamental programs for the region. The 2019-20 budget will deliver a range of activities and programs which will support landscape scale pest and weed management. We will also engage young people in NRM Education and provide support to our loyal and numerous volunteer groups. We will be working to ensure effective water management so that we can play our part in delivering the Basin Plan and will continue our work to improve the resilience of the landscape. The SAMDB NRM Board is also partnering with the Australian Government to invest in four Regional Land Partnership projects for the region:

• Building skills in farm soils and vegetation management for improved resource sustainability and productive capacity
• Restoring the ecological character of the Ramsar wetlands of the SA Murray-Darling Basin
• Collaboration to restore the iron-grass natural temperate grassland of South Australia
• Improving habitat viability and other recovery actions for EPBC listed Mallee woodland birds including Malleefowl, red-lored whistler and black-eared miner.

These projects provide a great opportunity to maintain our support to farmers to achieve sustainable and profitable production while conserving our environment with its diverse ecosystems and the species that rely on them.

The SAMDB NRM Board will work with farmers, irrigators, industry, the community and all tiers of government to ensure we have healthy soils, good quality water and natural landscapes well into the future.

Your NRM levy contribution supports the good management of our natural resources and contributes to the economic investment in regional businesses and communities. It keeps jobs in the region and makes sure that our natural resources are able to support thriving agricultural and tourism industries.

Regards

Dianne Davidson AM
The South Australian Murray-Darling Basin Natural Resources Management (SAMDB NRM) Board develops an operational plan annually. The operational planning process produces an approved work plan that clearly aligns with the strategic directions and focus areas of the Board.

The SAMDB NRM Board works together with the community, industry and across government to manage the natural resources of the SAMDB region in a way that achieves a balance between our collective need for resources and the needs of our environment.

### About the annual operating plan

**Annual operating plan priorities**

#### People

- Support volunteer recruitment and participation in natural resources management
- Increase community involvement (including young people) in NRM decision making
- Increase awareness, understanding, and respect for Aboriginal culture with NRM staff, NRM community and broader community
- Deliver media and communications activities that promote the work of the Board and the region
- Engage young people throughout the SAMDB in the NRM Education Program.

#### Foundational

- Develop and monitor strategies to evaluate our projects
- Partner with the Australian Government to deliver the Regional Land Partnerships program
- Respond to referral matters e.g. Development Application and Development Plan Amendments
- Encourage and facilitate strategic, collaborative approaches to common problems to achieve NRM outcomes.

#### Adaptive capacity

- Incorporate climate adaptation into NRM planning to ensure actions are climate ready
- Improve the capacity of land managers to adapt to change

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*Red-lored whistler (Image credit: Graeme Chapman)*
Annual operating plan priorities

**Sustainable production**
- Facilitate coordinated landscape scale pest plant and animal control across the region
- Maintain weather station networks across the region
- Continue to optimise irrigation in key irrigation districts in partnership with irrigators
- Deliver sustainable farming initiatives including the understanding and adoption of soil acidity management through partnerships with farming groups, land owners and industry.

**Biodiversity**
- Work to ensure that the clearance of native vegetation is minimised
- Deliver the Mallee emu-wren translocation project
- Work with the National Carp Control Program to reduce the impact of carp
- Protect key biodiversity hotspots
- Work towards the recovery of threatened wetland species through priority intervention activities

**Water**
- Work on implementing the Basin Plan
- Process permits for water affecting activities
- Ensure the use of water resources in prescribed areas is managed with sustainable limits
- Maintain collaborative relationships and shared decision making with stakeholders
**Investment in the region**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of funding</th>
<th>Total investment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Natural resources management levies is a combined total of the NRM levy collected</td>
<td>$14,429,170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>through council rates notices and the water levy associated with licensed water</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>allocations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External (Australian Government)</td>
<td>$2,850,442</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$17,279,612</strong></td>
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</tbody>
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Note: The Board may receive additional external funds during 2019-20.

**Distribution of levy investment in 2019-20**

When determining the allocation of investment into the region, the SAMDB NRM Board considered the alignment of priorities to the Board’s strategic directions, its regional focus areas along with the delivery approaches important to the Board (community at the centre, legacy, enabling and a balance of forming, norming and storming).

The diagram below displays investment in the delivery of the Board’s strategic directions, with the foundational focus area investment distributed across the strategic directions. This recognises that the foundational investment underpins the delivery of all NRM outcomes.

**Investment in Board strategic directions**

- Biodiversity: 17%
- Water: 19%
- Sustainable production: 10%
- People: 36%
- Adaptive capacity: 17%
- Foundational - knowledge, capacity, planning and improvement: 1%