



Four Nations  
Natural Resources Management  
Governance Group

Strategic Plan 2007 - 2010

**Kaurna**

*Red Kangaroo*

**Ngadjuri**

*Peppermint Gum*

**Ngarrindjeri**

*Pondi (Murray Cod)*

**Peramangk**

*Emu*

*Dolphin represents the salt-water association*



## **Government of South Australia**

### Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges Natural Resources Management Board

This Strategic plan was funded by a regional partnership agreement between the State and Commonwealth Governments and the Adelaide Mount Lofty Ranges Natural Resources Management Board.

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**In Memory of**  
**Richard John Hunter**  
**27<sup>th</sup> May 1948 – 7<sup>th</sup> October 2006**



**A valued contributor and leader of the Four Nations NRM  
Governance Group!**

*Richard was the first child to Harry Hunter and May Hunter (nee Richards) Richard was born Swan Reach Mission and educated at Swan Reach Area School where he was Head Prefect, Sports Captain, Tennis Captain and Football Captain. On leaving school Richard did any work he could get, on fruit blocks to jackarooing etc., before joining the railway where he rose to be Head Ganger with 24 men under him. On leaving the railway Richard joined the Mannum Council as Gardener and stayed until his love of Archaeology led him to Uni to achieve his dream. Archaeology took Richard all over the world, but the River was his home. In the last year of his life he achieved so many things, Co-management of Ngaut Ngaut, S.A. Citizen of the year 2006 and 2 days before his death, the title to the land known as Sugar Shack was divested. This was his dream, Ngaut Ngaut safe and land belonging to his people on the river. Richard will be sadly missed by his 12 children Sharon, Ivy, Geoffery, Rynald, Rebecca, Belinda, Phillip, Isobelle, Mavis, Samantha, Shannon, Stephanie and many grandchildren.*

## 1 FOREWORD – FOUR NATIONS NRM GOVERNANCE GROUP

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The chronicles on Aboriginal People the world over has recorded a dismal history of systematic cleansing of people from their Land & Country. There has been no economic, political and or social benefit offered to any Traditional Owners for the theft of Aboriginal Cultural Assets. It is a history that goes back a long time.

In Australia, the early experiments of the European founding fathers tried to make this country look like England, by stripping and clearing the land for the expansionist frontier of cultivation, and introduced species of flora and fauna, thereby changing the landscape forever. Whilst changing the country, the hostile colonisation by settlers dispossessed Aboriginal people of their “hunter gatherer life style”

These acts of aggression were accompanied by forcible, often brutal acquisition of land and attempts to invalidate customary rights of Aboriginal people to use the natural resources on their country and sites of significance. The current attempts to usurp traditional knowledge are the latest manifestation of the piecemeal subversion of historical rights to land and natural resources.

We can't subscribe to any more bad practice - we have to save our selves and our country!

The challenge for the Four Nations NRM Governance Group and the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges NRM Board is to be engaged and make a difference, too correct centuries of injustice. To convert attitudes and prejudices that have hardened into concrete blocks of resistance, together collaboratively working in partnership to develop the pathway forward. In doing so, building a NRM legacy for the future.

Working with Aboriginal affairs is the hardest area of policy - making in the country. NRM allows us the opportunity to talk in more strategic and reasonable ways about issues previously considered out of bounds. The mounting pressure on the public sector to provide sustainable NRM solutions to the Aboriginal Community is making it increasingly important to look within and around traditional models towards collaborative approaches in NRM policy development.

The key to the success of any collaborative alliance, joint venture or partnership is the transformation of policy & programs, to allow appropriate integration of Aboriginal people in sustainable NRM programs. Further discussion about resourcing, capacity building, and an appropriate infrastructure is needed as a priority to further and strengthen NRM outcomes.

## 2 INTRODUCTION

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The following combines efforts and aspirations of Aboriginal people who make up the Four Nations NRM Governance Group.

This document represents the start of a new chapter in the management of the regions natural resources. This document will act as a starting point for negotiations between the AMLR NRM Board and the Four Nations NRM Governance Group. The development of a working agreement to navigate western methods of land management with the integration of Aboriginal interests for land, sea, rivers, inland waters and all water care will benefit all in the region.

The Four Nations NRM Governance Group has inherent cultural & heritage obligations to country. Aboriginal cultural assets, skills and knowledge have been passed on by oral and written histories. Aboriginal cultural landmarks and icons make up the whole region of the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges.

Aboriginal people have a unique cultural inheritance. These inheritances make up the Aboriginal way of life, ethics and institutions, mannerisms, rituals and traditions. When Aboriginal people refer to their culture they are recognizing their obligations to their Country, to their Ancestors and future generations. Further information can be obtained from the Tools of Knowledge information via the NRM Board

Every thing our Ancestors needed to live and survive came from the earth. The importance of looking after country and managing country is our lifestyle, creation and teachings.

It is important to note that the representatives of the Four Nations NRM Governance Group report back to their Nations people. By doing this they utilise the capacity of their own people to carry out the broader Nation consultation.

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### 3 FOUR NATIONS NRM GOVERNANCE GROUP

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The Four Nations Natural Resources Management Governance Group is a collaborative “Policy Development Management Philosophy “. It is highly recommended that the Four Nations NRM Governance Group be the priority mechanism for the integration of indigenous issues into sustainable NRM programs



Peramangk hosted meeting



Ngadjuri hosted meeting

#### **Kurna reps.**

Lynette Crocker

Merle Simpson

Joe Mitchell

Jeffrey Newchurch

#### **Ngarrindjeri**

Grant Rigney

Luke Trevorrow

Tracie Turnbull

#### **Ngadjuri**

Vincent Branson

Trudimay Shattell

Betty Branson

Patricia Waria– Read

#### **Peramangk**

Richard Hunter

Cynthia Hutchinson

Isobelle Campbell

Ivy Campbell

## 4 VISION

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***The Four Nations NRM Governance Group will work together to promote and preserve Aboriginal cultural heritage, native title and spirituality in relation to Soils, Water Resources, Geological Features and Landscapes, Native vegetation, Native Animals, Other Native Organisms and Ecosystems.***

***Through this vision, the Four Nations NRM Governance Group will be upholding customary obligation and in doing so, fulfil their cultural inheritance to country.***

## 5 PURPOSE

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The Four Nations NRM Governance Group will be a “one stop shop” to negotiate with all groups of interest to achieve NRM and employment outcomes that provide social and economic equity, encourage and support youth through to senior Aboriginal people to fulfil cultural obligations to country.

The Four Nations NRM Governance Group consists of people from Kurna, Ngadjuri, Ngarrindjeri and the Peramangk Nations. People from these Nations have come together with the view of moving forward, developing and promoting social change and most of all actively participating in the management of the states natural resources.

As a group we support the integration of NRM in the region and look forward to a strong relationship with the NRM Board.

## 6 ABORIGINAL INTERACTION IN THE AMLR NRM REGION

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### Stage 1



**2002.** The Interim NRM Group consulted widely with Aboriginal People in the region to seek input into the plan and subsequent investment strategy. A number of recommendations were made to the Group

### Stage 2



**2003.** Adoption of recommendations saw the formation of an interim advisory group to progress Aboriginal engagement and assist with the integration of Aboriginal values into NRM within the region.

### Stage 3



**2004 - 2005** An investment strategy project provided the opportunity for the Four Nations to develop two documents to assist the region with ongoing engagement and understanding of Aboriginal issues and values. The Protocols and Tools of Knowledge documents reflect an extensive collaboration between the Four Nations NRM Governance Group (FNGG) to inform the region on how to go about integration of NRM. Parallel to this the group undertook specific governance training utilising the NRM Act as a mechanism to learn about effective governance in addition to NRM

### Stage 4



**2005 - 2006.** Further investment from the region has allowed the Four Nations NRM Governance Group to develop a high level strategic approach to integrating Aboriginal issues and cultural values into NRM at three levels, Policy, Planning and On ground works. The approach will also allow for valuable communications links and capacity building within the region about NRM and Aboriginal issues.

### Stage 5



**2006 - 2007.** This project will hopefully establish a significant move forward for the Four Nations NRM Governance Group and the NRM Board in defining a formalised working agreement on the long-term integration of NRM for the region. This stage will also see the finalisation of the Engagement protocols document, the internal FNGG terms of reference and the FNGG strategic plan from stages 3 and 4.

### Stage 6

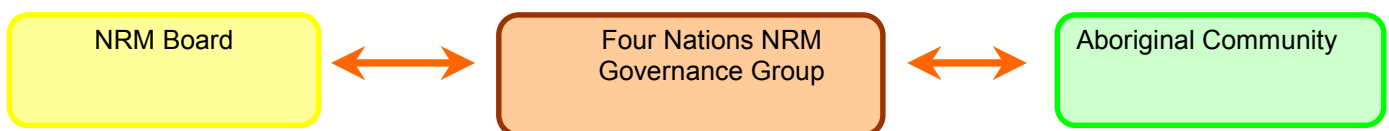


**2007 - 2008.** Depending on outcome of stage 5

## 7 RELATIONSHIPS

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- The Four Nations NRM Governance Group are elected members from the Kurna, Ngadjuri, Ngarrindjeri and Peramangk people, who work together to support each other's NRM aspirations. The relationship shared by the Nations groups stretches beyond this program and is inherently linked to the deep spiritual and cultural values that Aboriginal people in the region share.
- The NRM Act 2004 states as one of its objectives: "*consideration should be given to Aboriginal heritage, and to the interests of the traditional owners of any other land or other natural resources.*" (Objective 7-3h of Acts and General statutory duties)



- Rural Solutions SA (RSSA) - Indigenous Services Team has been engaged by the AMLR Board to project manage the regions Aboriginal engagement process. In doing this, RSSA has facilitated the development of the Four Nations NRM Governance Group and frequently seeks direction from this Group. RSSA engages the Four Nations NRM Governance Group through individual service level agreements to deliver on outcomes. The decision to continue to work with RSSA is a decision of the Four Nations Governance Group.

## 8 OUR VALUES - PARTICIPATE

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<b>P</b> roactive	Leadership will provide a clear direction for the future and build supportive and democratic relationships with, Members, Government, Service Agencies and Developers.
<b>A</b> ction	Positive outcomes come from positive healthy relationships which result in equitable outcomes for the FNNGG
<b>R</b> espect	Respect each other's culture, Lore, ideals, and values
<b>T</b> ransparency	Working relationships, performance, conversations consultations, and forward planning requires transparency and honesty
<b>I</b> ntegrity	Model high standards of respect, caring and honesty within our group's aims and objectives.
<b>C</b> ulture	Cultural obligations provide the basis for our beliefs and participation
<b>I</b> ntegration	Aboriginal Cultural Values and NRM are important and significant to everyone
<b>P</b> rotocols	Encourage, adhere to and endorse the Protocols and Tools of Knowledge package as best practice within the region
<b>A</b> ccountability	Of the Four Nations Governance Group and its membership to its member nations, in our roles and responsibilities, in decisions and actions together and in the working relationship with governments, services and developers.
<b>T</b> ogether	Working together will achieve best results
<b>E</b> nvironment	Understand the changing social, technological, economic and political landscape in regards to managing cultural heritage, land, sea, rivers and water care.

## 9 OBJECTIVES

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- ❖ Achieve culturally appropriate outcomes for Soils, Water Resources, Geological Features and Landscapes, Native vegetation, Native Animals, Other Native Organisms and Ecosystems
- ❖ Become the peak group for all Indigenous / Aboriginal consultation in the AMLR NRM Region
- ❖ Include and encourage youth / participation in NRM
- ❖ Own the copyright and intellectual property rights to all Aboriginal materials
- ❖ Have sources communication source between the community, the Board, and other people of interest, using newsletters, web pages, educational documents and media
- ❖ Develop opportunities for fulltime employment for Aboriginal people
- ❖ Encourage investment in Aboriginal owned and run projects
- ❖ Assist with problem solving by “talking it out”
- ❖ Integrate Aboriginal cultural values into all projects in the AMLR Region, where appropriate
- ❖ Develop and provide nation groups the capacity for cultural educational programs and traineeships
- ❖ Establish and maintain a link with the Aboriginal State-wide Advisory Committee (ASAC), Aboriginal Affairs & Reconciliation Division and other government agencies relevant to NRM
- ❖ Deliver Cultural Awareness training to groups within the AMLR Region
- ❖ Provide input into the AMLR NRM Investment Strategies and Board Planning around Soils, Water Resources, Geological Features and Landscapes, Native vegetation, Native Animals, Other Native Organisms and Ecosystems

## 10 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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Roles and responsibilities of the Four Nations Governance Group will be defined in the 2006/07 funding year.

A list of roles and responsibility appear in section 5.1.1 of the NRM Act. The Four Nations NRM Governance Group have entered into a process with the AMLR NRM Board to address the following requirements.

*Under part 3 – NRM Regions and boards, Division 7 – Committees and delegations 35 – Committees*

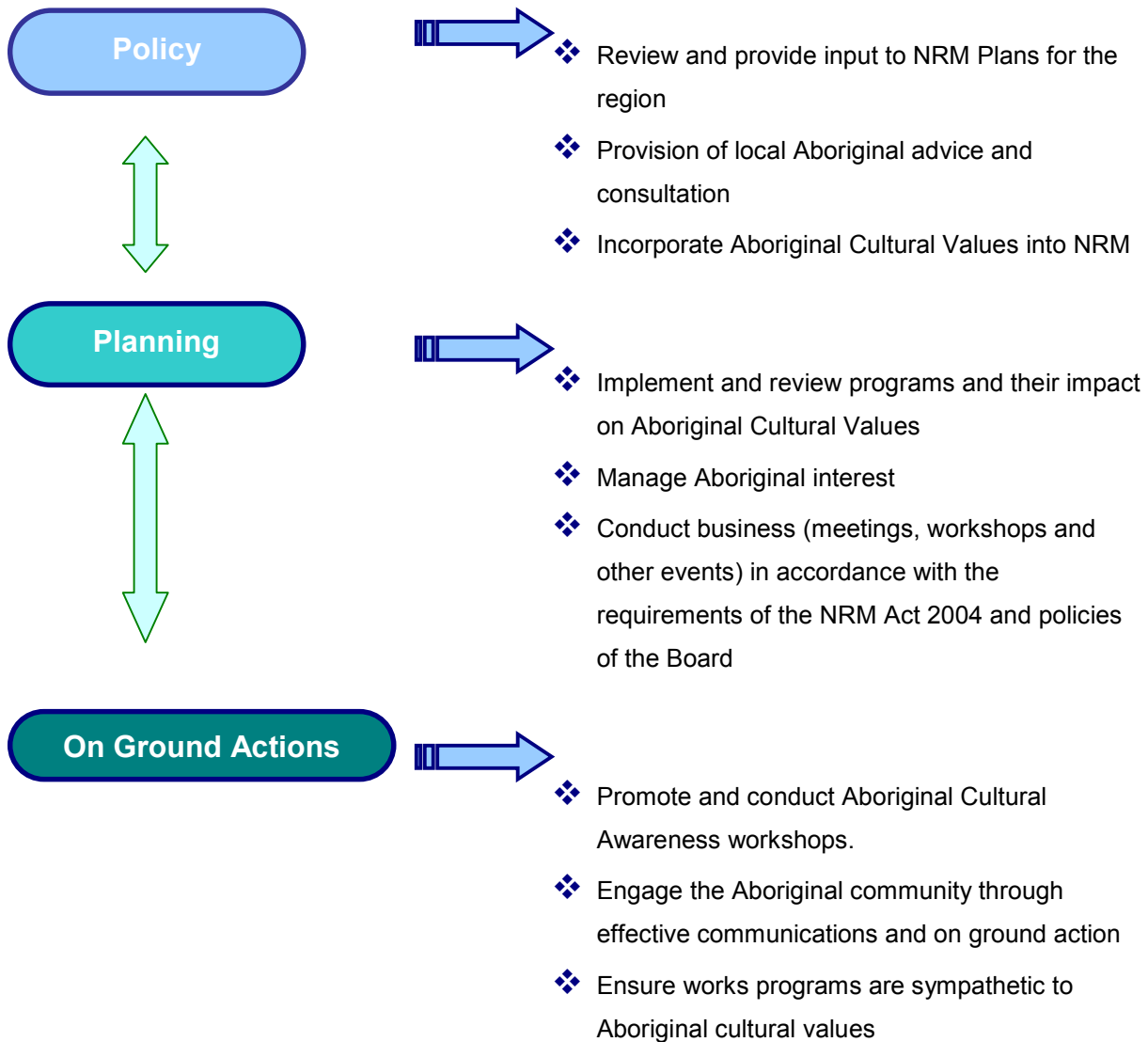
*(3) The procedures to be observed in relation to the conduct of business of a committee will be-*

- (a) as prescribed by regulation; or*
- (b) insofar as the procedure is not prescribed by regulation – as determined by the regional board: or*
- (c) insofar as the procedure is not prescribed by regulation or determined by the regional NRM Board – as determined by the committee.*

*(4) A regional NRM Board must, in acting under this section, comply with any guidelines issued by the Minister for the purpose of this section.*

## 10.1 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES – OUR ASPIRATIONS

Provide assistance to the Board in three key areas



## 11 SWOT ANALYSIS

This SWOT analysis was undertaken to assess the current situation of the FNGG. The SWOT analysis extracts information that will be used in integrating FNGG involvement into NRM activities in the AMLR NRM region.

<p><b>STRENGTHS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Unity of the four Nations</li> <li>▪ Coming under the mantle of NRM</li> <li>▪ Knowledge of the land and waters</li> <li>▪ Wider peripheral vision, physical world, human world, sacred world</li> <li>▪ Support network for each other</li> <li>▪ Respect</li> <li>▪ Passion / People a powerful combination</li> <li>▪ Determination to succeed</li> <li>▪ Aboriginal Heritage</li> <li>▪ Diversity of age within group</li> <li>▪ Family / Clan Group connections</li> <li>▪ Role eldership mentoring models</li> </ul>
<p><b>WEAKNESSES</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Inadequate funding and resources</li> <li>▪ Differences of understandings at all levels of government provisions</li> <li>▪ Boundaries / cross borders as applied by the Government departments agencies</li> <li>▪ No Legal agreement document with NRM</li> <li>▪ Weakness in the actual Heritage Act (“toothless Tiger”)</li> <li>▪ Lack of employment and training</li> <li>▪ Racism</li> <li>▪ Lack of infrastructure</li> <li>▪ Lack of internal communication</li> <li>▪ Lack of Youth involvement</li> </ul>
<p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Overseas investment</li> <li>▪ % of the Levy to fund the Aboriginal Program in total</li> <li>▪ Newsletter</li> <li>▪ Building Better relationships with NRM</li> <li>▪ Receiving adequate funding</li> <li>▪ Having an Aboriginal voice for the region</li> <li>▪ Being heard and listened to in regard to future developments</li> <li>▪ Business opportunities</li> <li>▪ Development of a one stop shop for Indigenous / Aboriginal questions</li> <li>▪ Employment strategies</li> </ul>
<p><b>THREATS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lack of appreciation of cultural spirituality</li> <li>▪ Lack of understanding</li> <li>▪ Racism &amp; prejudice, fear of the unknown</li> <li>▪ Lack of certainty</li> <li>▪ Lack of documented cultural knowledge</li> <li>▪ Misinterpretation of cultural knowledge by Government departments and developers</li> <li>▪ Lack of infrastructure funding</li> <li>▪ Lack of cultural water flows</li> <li>▪ Poor succession planning in Indigenous / Aboriginal Communities</li> </ul>

## 12 COMMUNICATION TWO -WAY

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Good communication is a process that builds stronger relationships and good governance with each member of our Four Nation Governance Group. Good Communication will assist each member in their negotiations skills with other Aboriginal groups, with the Natural Resources Management Board members and other service delivery agencies providers.

***The Four Nations NRM Governance Group believes that good communication consists of:***

- ❖ Respecting & acknowledging each other's diversity
- ❖ Commitment, trust and ability to positively influence
- ❖ Assertive communication
- ❖ Progressive discipline
- ❖ Preparing objectives
- ❖ Know that when conflicting ideas arise, that we are respectful
- ❖ We can agree or disagree, without feeling guilty about it
- ❖ Listening to the person who is speaking.
- ❖ Know that we can have our "clash time or dust up" without them affecting our relationships and impinging on our meetings.
- ❖ Good conflict resolution policy
- ❖ Humor



Good communication at the Four Nations Governance Group meetings

## 13 RISK MANAGEMENT

The following identifies areas of concern, raised at meetings and identifies strategies aimed at addressing these concerns:

Issues	Description	Strategies
<b>Resources</b>	<i>The Four Nations NRM Governance Group and Aboriginal people in general have limited access to Resources for looking after country and being proactive in NRM</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Continue to work with the NRM Board via the Four Nations Governance Group to integrate programs and adequately resource Aboriginal involvement at all levels of NRM</li> </ul>
<b>Competing Pressures</b>	<i>We have Cultural Commitments such as NAIDOC Week, Funerals, Sorry Business, Nation Commitments, competing Agency pressures, resources, family pressures and commitments.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Establish clear guidelines</li> <li>❖ Embrace the Protocols documents of the region.</li> <li>❖ Define responsibilities and requirements early</li> <li>❖ Be understanding</li> <li>❖ Develop others to Step in</li> <li>❖ Adopt a professional business approach</li> </ul>
<b>Overload of information</b>	<i>NRM requires understanding many complex issues, this can be overwhelming, and language used is often confusing and unclear</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Ensure information is clear, relevant, precise and easy to understand for people at all levels.</li> <li>❖ Allow sufficient time for information to be received understood and for feedback to be provided</li> </ul>
<b>Burials &amp; Sites</b>	<i>The return of skeletal remains from overseas and protocols of reburials requires careful attention Aboriginal Sites are highly important and need to be treated as such</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Work with Appropriate departments and Nation representative to ensure appropriate procedures are followed.</li> <li>❖ Ensure Nation representatives are involved in policy planning and on ground work activities to ensure sites are treated with respect according to cultural lore and the Act</li> </ul>
<b>Communication</b>	<i>The Four Nations Governance Group and Aboriginal people in general within the region need to be informed appropriately and within context</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Regular Nations Newsletter, Message Stick</li> <li>❖ Development of a mail out list</li> <li>❖ Secretariat and access to resources</li> </ul>
<b>Conflict</b>	<i>Factional issues occur between Individuals, family and Clan Groups Black business /white business, doesn't always reach a resolution</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Nation representatives to deal with internal issues as they arise</li> <li>❖ Work with the Board to achieve positive outcomes for all concerned</li> </ul>

## 14 OUR FUTURE ASPIRATIONS

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The Four Nations NRM Governance Group has been asked many times “**What do Aboriginal people want**”? What future do they see for their Lands, Seas, Water, Biodiversity and, Culture? Below are our Goals; these wishes have been talked about many times, in fact every time we have a forum to debate our concerns about the future, we highlight the same things.

### **The future Goals for the Four Nations Ancestral or Traditional Lands are:**

- ❖ To be acknowledged and respected by everyone
- ❖ Lands, sea and water-ways protected from pollution and from other damaging impacts, with past damage rehabilitation and natural environment restored
- ❖ Healthy lands, sea and waterways = healthy people
- ❖ Cultural Awareness about land, sea and water-ways and the Cultural heritage significance of lands and waters protected
- ❖ Good relationships with Non Aboriginal People and Government
- ❖ A strong network of Aboriginal land holders working and supporting each other
- ❖ Increased resources for Aboriginal Traditional Owners for the ongoing joint management of their lands sea and waters-ways, including resources which can make good the damage from the past unjust treatment of Aboriginal peoples, their land and water-ways
- ❖ Community members, especially young people who are well trained in environmental care and natural resource management, who understand both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal knowledge about Natural resource, and who have real opportunity for real jobs and good careers
- ❖ A strong role for Aboriginal people in making decisions about all land and water management, employment, monitoring and recommending sustainable use of land, sea and waterways biodiversity
- ❖ Cultural Security for our grandchildren and future generations.

## 15 OUR PATHWAY FORWARD & RECOMMENDATIONS

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For the Four Nations NRM Governance Group, there is a major move forward in understanding the changing nature of NRM funding and service delivery arrangements. Keeping this in mind, and recognizing that more consultation and negotiation is required, the following proposed model is recommended as a starting point for a shared responsibility discussion and agreement.

**The preferred framework consists of the following at three distinct levels:**

### Policy

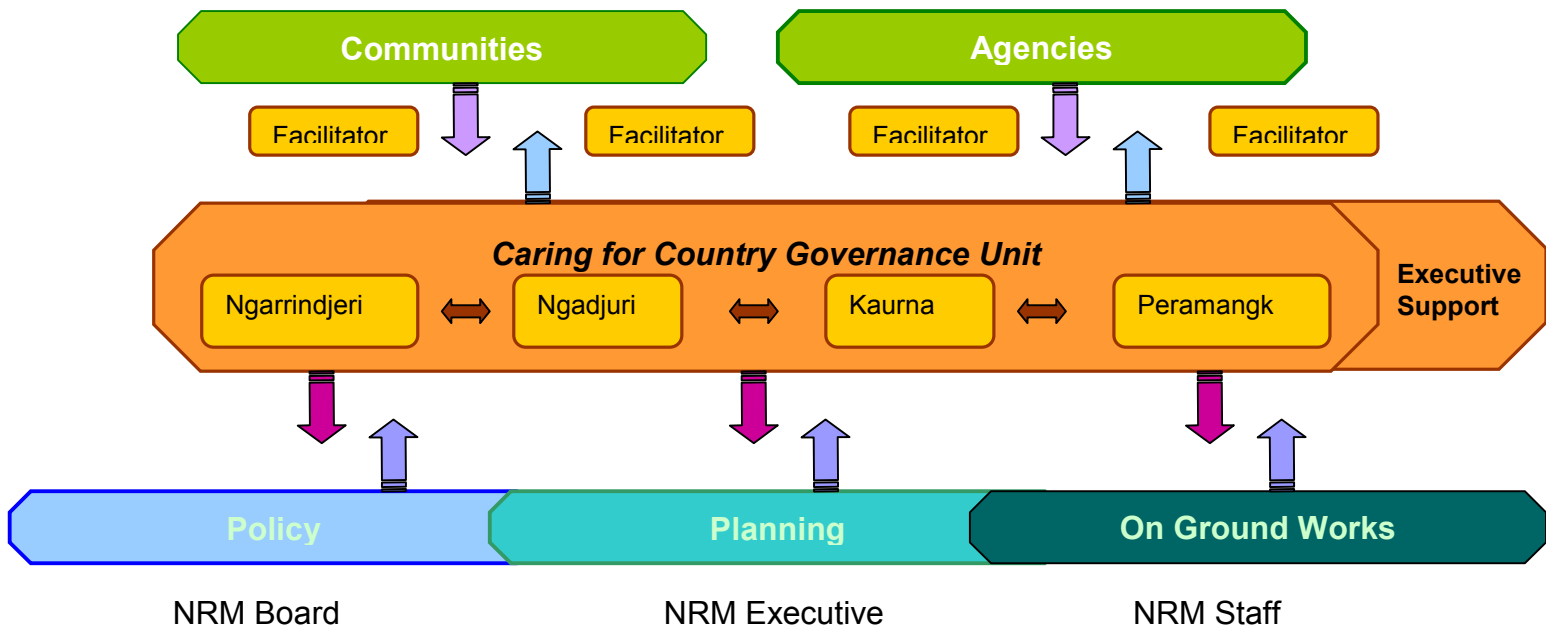
- ❖ Ensure the Board's grants programs for on-ground works provide opportunities for addressing projects of cultural significance
- ❖ Research and develop common policies that embody Cultural values
- ❖ Provide advice and advocacy at State Wide and regional NRM Forums/ Committee and Group events as required

### Planning

- ❖ A Four Nations NRM Governance group **“Caring for Country Governance Unit”**, based in Metropolitan Adelaide, reporting to a Board of Management to conduct the following activities.
  - Provide a reference point for people from Aboriginal Traditional Owner Groups, Aboriginal landholders, Aboriginal Organizations and NRM Agencies in respect to, land, sea and water biodiversity management, land acquisition matters, possible funding partners and resource leveraging sources.
  - Native Title Representative Body and Traditional Owners will work with peak Aboriginal Agencies such as Indigenous Land Corporation, S.A Premier and Cabinet Taoundi Aboriginal Collage, State & Commonwealth NRM, Agencies Division of Heritage Trust, Indigenous Coordinating Centers, State Consultative Committees, Local Government Associations LGA & Councils that have responsibility to improve land justice outcomes.
  - The Four Nations NRM Governance Group to be resourced by the State and Commonwealth agencies to establish a “Regional Caring for Country NRM Network” to research and administrate grants for on – going work in the Region.
  - Facilitate appropriate representation (based on country and authority to speak) for Aboriginal people in NRM Boards of Management, Land use planning and implementation groups and other NRM Forums LGA in Mt Lofty Region.
  - Provision for Executive Support and On going mentoring of the Group

## On Ground Actions

- ❖ Ensure works programs observe and incorporates Aboriginal cultural values
- ❖ Four Nations NRM Governance group to elect on ground Facilitators for each Nation
- ❖ Aboriginal NRM facilitators based in other NRM / Management /Authorities, such as DEH, SA Water, EPA, Transport SA, LGA, AARD, Marine & Coastal Care, Premier & Cabinet
- ❖ Provide a Resource/ Information Centre that produces a quarterly newsletter.
- ❖ Employment for Aboriginal people through delivery of on ground works
- ❖ Mandatory Cultural Awareness training for NRM staff with in the region



The Diagram represents a two-way flow of information and positive communication from the Ground to the Board and back again via the prescribed mechanism. It ensures Aboriginal people have input at all levels and are represented equally at the three levels of activity.