

# News from the LEB CAC



LAKE EYRE BASIN MINISTERIAL FORUM

## Community Advisory Committee

Number 3

May 2005

### 2004 LEB conference Alice Springs

The 2004 Lake Eyre Basin Conference was held in Alice Springs on 27-29 October, around the themes 'Working Together' and 'Sharing Knowledge'.

Issues explored at the conference included:

- Working together across borders in the Basin (cooperation between states and between regions for natural resource management)
- Working together between sectors (e.g. sharing capacity and knowledge between government and the community)
- Aboriginal involvement in the Lake Eyre Basin Agreement.
- Environmental flow requirements for Arid Zone rivers.
- Seeking common lessons and converting knowledge into management action.



South Australian Aboriginal Delegates Valerie Fuschtei, Noreen Gibbs and Raelene Warren at the LEB conference in Alice Springs, Oct 2004.

The LEB Secretariat in Canberra is compiling proceedings. Contact Vol Norris on 07 4658 4435 ([vol.norris@deh.gov.au](mailto:vol.norris@deh.gov.au))



Mr Peter Douglas, Chair of Desert Channels Queensland, and Professor Peter Cullen, Chair of the LEB Scientific Advisory Panel, at the LEB Conference in Alice Springs, Oct 2004.

### 2006 LEB Conference

Planning has begun for the next biennial LEB Conference to be held in October or November 2006.

A location has yet to be decided; we are currently considering Port Augusta, Mount Isa and Coober Pedy. Discussions about the purpose and theme of the conference have centred upon:

- drawing together a picture of the state of our knowledge of the Basin
- showcasing success stories in the Basin, celebrating the achievements of people, communities and industries;
- gathering feedback from grassroots people about how our institutions in the Basin are going.

We are hoping to hold the 2006 LEB Ministerial Forum meeting in conjunction with the conference.

### LEB Aboriginal Forum

The first LEB Aboriginal Forum was held at Hamilton Downs Youth Camp near Alice Springs on 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> October 2004, immediately before the LEB Conference.

26 people attended the Forum, from Alpururulam, Hamilton Downs, Alice Springs and Hermansberg in the NT, Coober Pedy, Marree, Port Augusta and Adelaide in SA, Longreach, Barcardine and Eulo in Queensland, and Canberra.

Objectives of the forum were to:

- build relationships among Aboriginal people from different parts of the Basin
- talk about Aboriginal visions for natural resources in the Basin
- introduce and discuss the Lake Eyre Basin Agreement
- discuss Aboriginal involvement in the LEB Agreement.



Delegates at the LEB Aboriginal Forum, Hamilton Downs Youth Camp, 70km northwest of Alice Springs, NT, 25-26 Oct 2004.

Five main issues emerged from the forum:

- partnership, governance and communication
- Aboriginal membership on the LEB CAC
- Aboriginal cultural awareness for non-Aboriginal people
- The need for a social and community profile of Aboriginal people in the Basin
- The importance of educating children and passing on knowledge.

Recommendations have been submitted to the LEB Ministerial Forum, and we expect LEB Aboriginal Forums will be regular events.

# LEB Hydrology Atlas

The LEB Ministerial Forum, at their annual meeting in June last year, approved funding for a project to combine all available hydrology data in the Basin into an LEB hydrology atlas.

Such a description of the hydrology of the entire Lake Eyre Basin has not been compiled since 1986. This project will review rainfall, evaporation, temperature and streamflow data, as well as information on landform, geology and soils, to produce an up-to-date description of surface water hydrology across the whole Basin. It will provide a foundation for future decisions about the management and monitoring of surface water resources.

A project consultant has been selected (Sinclair Knight Merz) and has commenced work on the atlas, which is expected to be completed in August.

## River gauging stations

The LEB Ministerial Forum also approved, at their 2004 meeting, funding to re-install stream gauging stations at three priority locations in the basin.

The Queensland Department of Natural Resources and Mines will manage the design and construction of the gauging stations, and a funding contract is currently being negotiated for this work. The gauging stations will be located at:

- Georgina River at Roxborough Downs
- Burke River at Boulia
- Diamantina River at Diamantina Lakes

The new gauging stations are expected to be completed this year, and will fill a substantial gap in our knowledge of surface water flows in the Basin.

## Proposed Social and Economic Study

The Desert Knowledge Cooperative Research Centre (DK CRC), based in Alice Springs, has applied for funding for a three-year study of the people, communities and economies of the Lake Eyre Basin.

The LEB CAC, the LEB Scientific Advisory Panel (SAP) and DK CRC jointly compiled the project proposal for submission under the Australian Government's Natural Heritage Trust. The proposal has been endorsed by the SA Arid Areas Catchment Water Management

Board, Desert Channels Queensland, the SA Arid Lands INRM Group, and the Landcare Council of the NT.

If funded, the project will gather information about people, communities and economies in the basin, their characteristics and trends, and the roles of their institutions in sustainable natural resource management.

The LEB Agreement aims to reach the best possible balance of social, economic and environmental outcomes for the Basin, and a sound knowledge of the people and communities of the Basin, along with their social, economic and other circumstances, is essential to reaching this balance.

## Review of the LEB Agreement 2006

By mid-2006 the LEB Intergovernmental Agreement will have been in place for five years, and will be due for its first review.

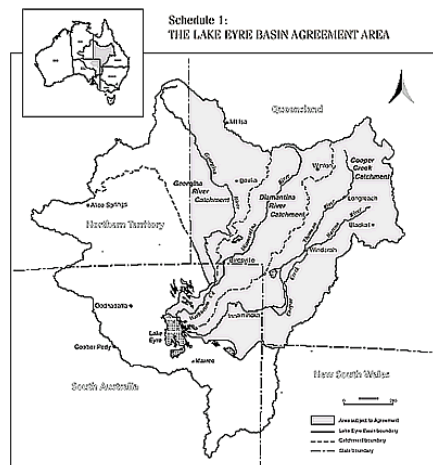
After the fifth anniversary of the commencement of the LEB Agreement, and then every ten years, the Ministerial Forum must arrange a review of the operation of the Agreement and the extent to which its objectives have been achieved.

Terms of reference for the review will be drafted this year, for discussion by CAC and SAP members. The CAC will compile a record of the achievements of the Agreement to date, as part of a submission to the review.

## LEB Agreement Area

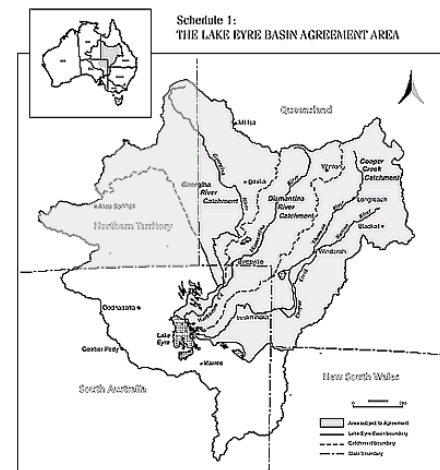
The area covered by the LEB Agreement has grown in the past year, and may increase again, depending a review by the South Australian Government.

Before the NT joined the LEB Agreement, the LEB 'Agreement Area' consisted of the following shaded area:



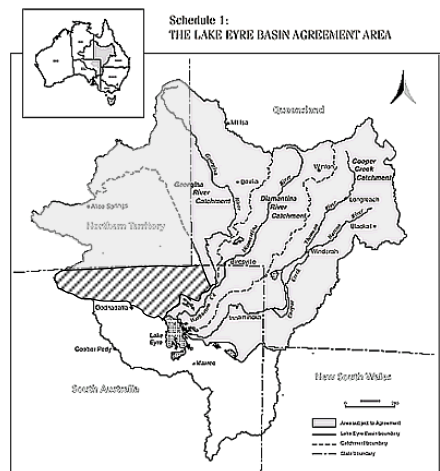
LEB Agreement Area before the NT joined Qld, SA and the Commonwealth as signatories.

Late last year, after the NT joined the Agreement, the LEB 'Agreement Area' was enlarged to include the NT part of the Basin:



LEB Agreement Area after the NT joined Qld, SA and the Commonwealth as signatories.

The SA Government is now considering whether to include the following extra region in the LEB 'Agreement Area':



Option being considered by the SA Government for further enlargement of the LEB Agreement Area.

In February this year, the Dept of Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation consulted people in the north of SA about this proposal.

## 2005 Meetings

Meeting 7 of the LEB CAC will be held at Innamincka on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2005.

The LEB Scientific Advisory Panel (SAP) will also meet on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> June at Innamincka.

CAC meetings are scheduled for the week of 10<sup>th</sup> Oct (Birdsville) and the week of 5<sup>th</sup> Dec (Camooweal), subject to confirmation, depending on the date of the next Ministerial Forum meeting, which is currently scheduled for the week of 14<sup>th</sup> November, in Birdsville.

For agendas, minutes and details, contact the CAC Chair, Mr Angus Emmott, on 07 4658 5953 ([akemmott@bigpond.com](mailto:akemmott@bigpond.com)) or the CAC Facilitator, Mr Vol Norris, on 07 4658 4435 ([vol.norris@deh.gov.au](mailto:vol.norris@deh.gov.au)).