

# News from the LEB CAC



LAKE EYRE BASIN MINISTERIAL FORUM

## Community Advisory Committee

Number 4

December 2005

### 2005 LEB Ministerial Forum Meeting

The fourth meeting of the Lake Eyre Basin Ministerial Forum was held in Adelaide on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2005.

Key outcomes from the meeting included:

- Agreement to proceed with the second phase of the Lake Eyre Basin Rivers Assessment.
- Agreement to increased Indigenous consultation initiatives in the Lake Eyre Basin
- Approval of replacement appointments to the Lake Eyre Basin Community Advisory Committee, including representatives from the mining, tourism and conservation sectors
- Agreement to the objectives for the 2006 review of the Lake Eyre Basin Intergovernmental Agreement
- Agreement to implement twelve priority strategies to address cross border issues in the Lake Eyre Basin.

Next year's LEB Ministerial Forum meeting is hoped to be held in November 2006 in Alice Springs.

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### LEB Agreement Web Site launch

The Lake Eyre Basin Agreement web site has been launched at [www.lebmf.gov.au](http://www.lebmf.gov.au)

The site describes the LEB Agreement and associated arrangements, along with the roles and work of the Ministerial Forum (MF), the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) and Scientific Advisory Panel (SAP). It includes a brief overview of the natural and cultural heritage values of the Basin, the background to the LEB process and LEB Agreement, and summaries of current projects and initiatives. PDF copies of publications under the LEB Agreement available for download include:

- the LEB Agreement and Schedules
- meeting outcomes
- newsletters, media releases
- procedures, plans and reports on current projects
- LEB conference proceedings.

The site includes brief biographies for all CAC and SAP members, contact details for CAC members and staff, and links to major LEB land management and NRM groups.

The site also includes a mailing list subscription facility to receive LEB updates and information, and will contain a photo gallery of people and places in the Lake Eyre Basin.

All information we distribute via email or post will be available on our web site. We invite you to visit the site to keep abreast of LEB matters or to send us your feedback and ideas on any of the work under the Agreement.

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### LEB Agreement Strategies

The LEB Ministerial Forum, at its 4<sup>th</sup> meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2005 in Adelaide, agreed to implement 12 priority strategies to address cross-border issues in the Basin.

The endorsed strategies include the following:

- Scope the need for convergence and/or alignment of legislation, policy and planning for water resource management in different jurisdictions.
- Coordinate water quality monitoring and data management frameworks across jurisdictions.
- Develop principles to guide the comprehensive assessment of water resource development proposals in the Agreement Area.
- Encourage best practice in road and other engineering works that have potential to

significantly affect the distribution and timing of river flows.

- Improving community and other stakeholder access to data and information on the Basin, including Internet based systems
- Identify opportunities for improved coordination and consistency in weed and feral animal management activities.

The twelve high priority strategies are the result of discussions held over the last 18 months between the jurisdictions in the Basin, the CAC, the SAP, and major community groups.

Implementation plans for the strategies will be compiled early next year based on audits of existing initiatives relevant to each strategy.

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### LEB Social and economic review project

Work has commenced on the 3-year project: 'People, communities and economies of the Lake Eyre Basin— Their characteristics and trends, and the roles of their institutions in sustainable NRM in the Basin'.

Funding for the project, under the National Competitive Component of the NHT, was announced in August, and project planning commenced in September.

The project manager, Desert Knowledge CRC, has appointed Mr Lynn Brake of the SA Arid Areas Catchment Water Management Board to the part-time position of Project Coordinator. A project steering committee has been established, including representatives of the SAP and CAC, along with key individuals from government and regional NRM. CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems in Townsville will carry out a substantial part of the project work. (see the enclosed project flyer for more details).

## LEB Aboriginal Forum—2006

The second Lake Eyre Basin Aboriginal Forum will be held in South Australia in late 2006.

Mount Searle, in the northern Flinders Ranges 50km east of Leigh Creek, is the likely location for the Forum, which will follow on from the first LEB Aboriginal Forum held at Hamilton Downs Youth Camp near Alice Springs in October 2004.

In the lead-up to the Aboriginal Forum, the CAC will be consulting Aboriginal groups and communities in the Basin on water and land issues. The Forum is expected to run for 2½ days in the weeks leading up to the main LEB biennial conference. It will be an opportunity to provide feedback and report on progress on the outcomes of the first LEB Aboriginal Forum, and to take the next steps in Aboriginal involvement in the LEB Agreement.

In addition to Aboriginal people from the Basin, CAC members, SAP members, Government Officers and Ministers will be invited to attend the forum to strengthen relationships with Aboriginal people.

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## LEB Rivers Assessment

The Ministerial Forum has approved commencement of the second phase of the Rivers Assessment including on-ground pilot projects such as floodplain salinity mapping methods and waterbird breeding assessment in the Basin

Ms Amy George will be appointed for twelve months as full-time Project Officer, with responsibility for progressing the Rivers Assessment work. She will be located within the SA Department of Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation in Adelaide, and is currently compiling a draft work plan and milestones for immediate monitoring work and pilot studies in the Basin.

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## CAC membership

Following appointment of several replacement CAC members by the Ministerial Forum at its meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> October, CAC membership currently stands at 15, as follows:

Chair: Mr Angus Emmott  
Mr David Brook (pastoral/community Qld)  
Mr George Cooley (Indigenous SA)  
Ms Joslin Eatts (Indigenous Qld)  
Mr Jim Forwood (community/reg'l NRM NT)  
Prof Richard Kingsford (community science)  
Ms Jan McIntyre (pastoral/community Qld)

Ms Maree Morton (pastoral/community SA)  
Ms Sharon Oldfield (pastoral/community SA)  
Mr Rob Palmer (conservation)  
Mr Chris Reed (community/reg'l NRM SA)  
Mr Joc Schmiechen (tourism)  
Mr Jeremy Taylor (mining)  
Ms Andrea Tschirner (pastoral/commun. NT)  
Mr Paul Woodland (petroleum)

Contact details and brief biographies for all members can be found at [www.lebmf.gov.au](http://www.lebmf.gov.au)

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## Indigenous membership to increase

The Ministerial Forum also agreed on 14<sup>th</sup> October to increase the Indigenous representation on the CAC to include up to 2 Indigenous members per State/Territory. Indigenous communities and groups in the Basin will be consulted about nominations to fill the extra four Indigenous positions on the CAC, two from the Northern Territory and one each from South Australia and Queensland.

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## 2006 Review of the LEB Agreement

2006 marks the fifth anniversary of the effective date of the LEB Agreement, and the first formal review of the operation of the Agreement.

The main purpose of the LEB Agreement is the development and implementation of policies and strategies concerning water and related natural resources, to avoid or eliminate adverse cross-border impacts in the Basin.

The Ministerial Forum has agreed on the terms of reference for the review, which will be conducted during 2006 by an expert consultant. The review will assess progress towards implementing the objectives of the Agreement and will consider possible changes to improve the relevance of the Agreement and reflect new knowledge, emerging issues and institutional frameworks.

A copy of the LEB Agreement can be viewed at <http://www.deh.gov.au/water/basins/lake-eyre/agreement.html>

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## Possible LEB Tertiary scholarship

CAC members have recommended that an LEB tertiary scholarship be investigated as a possible avenue for providing study opportunities and raising the profile of the Basin.

The purpose of a scholarship could include:

- to assist people living within the Basin to study at college or university; and/or
- to attract research interest and study of issues in the Basin in need of improved knowledge.

A scholarship could include assistance for undergraduate degrees, postgraduate research, cadetships, joint/collaborative funding through linkage grants, and formal mentoring by CAC and SAP members.

CAC members and government representatives will further investigate possibilities and options for a Scholarship, for discussion at future meetings.

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## Other happenings in the Basin

### Australian Bush Heritage Fund purchases Cravens Peak

On 31<sup>st</sup> October this year, the Australian Bush Heritage Fund purchased Cravens Peak, a 233,000 hectare station in far western Queensland near the northern edge of the Simpson Desert.

Cravens Peak, between the Qld/NT border and the Mulligan River, is the Fund's 21<sup>st</sup> reserve and lies to the north of Ethabuka Reserve, another Bush Heritage property.

The Australian Bush Heritage Fund is dedicated to protecting Australian species and habitats through the creation of reserves on private land. Cravens Peak contains a wide variety of landscapes, including parallel dunes, plateaus, low sandstone ranges, grassland and woodland plains. Over 220 species of wildlife have been recorded on the property, and most of its 21 known vegetation communities are either unreserved or poorly reserved in Queensland.

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## CAC meetings 2006

The next LEB CAC meeting (meeting 9) will be a teleconference in January 2006. The next face-to-face CAC meeting (meeting 10) will be in Alice Springs in April 2006.

The April 2006 Alice Springs meeting will coincide with joint meetings with the Great Artesian Basin Coordinating Committee. Future CAC meetings are likely to be in July and November 2006.

CAC meetings are open to interested observers, with provision for closed sessions for sensitive or confidential matters.

For more information about the next CAC meetings, or to raise agenda issues, please 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)). Summaries of previous meetings are available from our web site [www.lebmf.gov.au](http://www.lebmf.gov.au)