



Australian Government



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This poster presents results from one component of the *People, communities and economies of the Lake Eyre Basin Project*.

More information about the project, including project reports and publications, can be found at:
www.desertknowledgecrc.com.au/research/lakeeyrebasin.html.

References

Herr, A., Smith, T and Brake, L., 2007. *Regional Profile of the Lake Eyre Basin Catchments*. Desert Knowledge CRC, Alice Springs

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Factors for successful NRM engagement in Lake Eyre Basin

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Photo: Vol Norris

Background

Across Australia, regional bodies are working with communities and government to improve the use and management of natural resources.

Remote regions present unique contexts and challenges for NRM compared to other regions due to:

- variable climate
- sparse population and
- remoteness from markets and key decision makers.

This study has focused on how NRM organisations across the Lake Eyre Basin can best engage with communities and government.



Figure 1: Lake Eyre Basin state based management authorities. (Herr et al 2007, p3)

Methodology

The project combined extensive literature reviews with:

- Eight interviews with state and federal government representatives; and
- 49 interviews with community members living within the Lake Eyre Basin.

Community interviews were carried out by community members who were specially trained by the project team to access existing networks of trust and local knowledge.

All interviews were recorded, transcribed and analysed using NVivo Software.

Results from the literature review and key themes and perspectives from the interviews are summarised here.

Factors for successful engagement

Work strategically in the system

Successful NRM engagement relies on maintaining community trust while carefully navigating government processes:

- Inform policy
- Learn how the system works
- Be adaptive
- Use partnerships effectively

Build and maintain networks

Effective NRM engagement in sparsely populated areas is built on trust, networks and effective communication:

- Develop community ownership
- Have realistic expectations
- Maintain transparency
- Desert talk – face to face communication is best but difficult across large distances

Support local champions

Individuals can make or break NRM projects in remote regions:

- Identify and support key individuals

Focus on desert timeframes

Thinking ahead, being prepared and maintaining commitment are crucial to long-term survival:

- Think of long term results from short term initiatives
- Access resources when you can
- Be determined



Photo: Angus Emmott

Implications for remote desert areas of Australia

It is clear that NRM engagement requires a multitude of seemingly contrasting characteristics:

- to be independent yet maintain effective partnerships;
- to be the voice of the community whilst being in alignment with government priorities; and
- to be determined yet adaptive.

