

## **4. VISION, OUTCOMES AND OBJECTIVES**

### **4.1. *The Vision***

To use an analogy, a vision is an end point on the road map. It may not necessarily be fully achievable, but it provides a common direction for people to work towards. Ideally, a vision should be something tangible that can, literally, be visualised.

The vision of the Little River Landcare Group (LRLG) for their catchment, is:

***" A healthy, productive and diverse biological and social environment"***.

This vision represents the long-term aspirations of the catchment community; how the people that live and work here would like to see the catchment in the future. The purpose of this catchment plan is to provide a blueprint of how to achieve that vision.

Just like a road map identifies different ways to get to the destination, there will be a range of options to achieve this vision. These options will have advantages and disadvantages and, consequently, different approaches will appeal to different people. At the end of the day though, it is critical that everyone is working towards this common goal, in some way.

In a planning context, the “how to's” are the outcomes, objectives and targets. These aspects of the plan spell out what must happen to achieve the end point. They provide a basis for implementation at the farm, sub catchment and catchment scale. In setting these objectives, the LRLG Steering Committee has applied the SMART rule:

- |          |            |  |
|----------|------------|--|
| <b>S</b> | Specific   | <i>Are the objectives specific?</i>  |
| <b>M</b> | Measurable | <i>Can they be measured to gauge achievements and/or improvements?</i><br>The objectives and associated targets are an important part of the plan; the extent to which they are achieved becomes the measure of success of the plan itself.  |
| <b>A</b> | Achievable | <i>Can the objectives be achieved?</i><br>On one hand, objectives must be realistic and achievable. At the same time though, they must facilitate enough change/activity to adequately address the issues and reverse/halt degradation in the catchment.<br><br>For example: Ideally, 100% of farmers in the Little River Catchment will manage their land according to its capability. Realistically though, this level of adoption is not likely to be achieved. With this in mind, the targets for this objective reflect a) the barriers to adoption and b) the level of uptake prior to the release of this plan. |
| <b>R</b> | Reviewable | <i>Can the objectives be reviewed and revised as circumstances change?</i>   |
| <b>T</b> | Timeframe  | <i>Over what time frame will implementation happen?</i><br>The longer the time for implementation, the greater the level of degradation, and potential for biophysical and economic losses. However, many benefits may not be realized until sometime after implementation e.g. Tree planting impacts on water balance. The timeframe for this plan has been agreed as 10 years.   |

## 4.2. *Outcomes and Objectives*

The planning process has identified eight outcomes (sometimes referred to as goals) to address the issues of community concern, described in the Stage 1 report and summarised in Table 1.1. The agreed outcomes for the Little River catchment management plan are as follows:

- Outcome 1: Land managed in an integrated manner, to achieve long-term sustainability*
- Outcome 2: Improved terrestrial biodiversity and landscape function through increased levels of native vegetation*
- Outcome 3: Healthy riparian zones and streams, capable of supporting a full range of aquatic life and suitable for all domestic and productive uses*
- Outcome 4: Pest animals reduced to levels that do not result in economic losses or environmental damage*
- Outcome 5: Sustainable (non-degrading) farming systems implemented across agricultural land*
- Outcome 6: Profitable enterprises, based on sustainable management of the natural resources and human capital*
- Outcome 7: Well-informed community, with the necessary skills to manage the natural resources in a way that will achieve a viable and stable district***
- Outcome 8: The plan and associated processes and arrangements are relevant, effective and reflect the current conditions.*

The objectives presented below have been devised according to the SMART rules. They provide definition as to how the outcomes will be met, and have been based on the issues that they aim to address. The detailed strategies, actions, targets, benchmarks and monitoring needed to achieve these objectives are outlined in the Integrated Plan in Chapter 8.

#### 4.2.1 Land Management

*Outcome 1: Land managed in an integrated manner, to achieve long-term sustainability*

No	Objective	Associated issues
1.1	Land managed according to its capability (as measured by land use)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Land being used beyond its capability- ie. unsuitable land use OR more intensive or prolonged use than the land can sustain</li> </ul>
1.2	Healthy and productive soils with reduced acidity, sodicity, and improved fertility and soil structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Decline in pH of topsoil and subsoils</li> <li>▪ Soil fertility decline</li> <li>▪ Soil structure decline and compaction</li> <li>▪ Sodic soils</li> </ul>
1.3	Area of dryland salinity stabilised at Year 2000 levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Dryland salinity</li> <li>▪ Rising watertables</li> <li>▪ Urban salinity, including rising damp</li> <li>▪ Damage to infrastructure</li> </ul>
1.4	Minimal soil erosion in catchment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Soil erosion (including gully)</li> <li>▪ Earthworks redirecting water</li> <li>▪ Siltation and sedimentation</li> </ul>

#### 4.2.2 Native Vegetation

*Outcome 2: Improved terrestrial biodiversity and landscape function through increased levels of native vegetation*

No	Objective	Associated issues
2.1	Tree cover restored to levels that provide sustainable landscape function	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Rising water tables</li> <li>▪ Current landuse mixes are unsustainable</li> <li>▪ Plantings needed for multiple purposes, including enhanced agricultural production</li> </ul>
2.2	No further losses of biological diversity and remnant vegetation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Native vegetation decline</li> <li>▪ Tree dieback</li> <li>▪ Loss of biodiversity</li> <li>▪ Poor condition of remnants</li> <li>▪ Lack of regeneration</li> </ul>
2.3	Native fauna habitat enhanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Decline in species numbers and distribution</li> <li>▪ Loss of habitat</li> <li>▪ Need to control native pests</li> </ul>

#### 4.2.3 Water - surface water, groundwater and riparian zone

*Outcome 3: Healthy riparian zones and streams, capable of supporting a full range of aquatic life and suitable for all domestic and productive uses*

No	Objective	Associated issues
3.1	<b>Riparian zones managed as a distinct land management unit, according to Best Management Practice (BMP)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Poor water quality</li> <li>▪ Siltation in river</li> <li>▪ Streambank and floodplain erosion</li> <li>▪ Loss of connectivity of native vegetation in catchment</li> <li>▪ Weeds</li> <li>▪ Need for buffer zones</li> </ul>
3.2	<b>Biodiverse streams, capable of supporting a full range of aquatic life</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Large numbers of carp and other alien fish species</li> <li>▪ Unhealthy river</li> <li>▪ Management of large woody debris</li> </ul>
3.3	<b>Groundwater levels stabilised with watertables deeper than 2 metres</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Rising watertables</li> <li>▪ Understand the hydrogeological processes that drive salinity</li> <li>▪ Poor access to groundwater for stock and domestic purposes in localised parts of the catchment</li> </ul>
3.4	<b>Water quality suitable for recreation, irrigation and drinking water</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Poor quality surface water - salinity, sediment, chemicals and nutrients</li> <li>▪ Poor quality groundwater -salinity, iron content, septic pollution</li> <li>▪ Reduced access to stock water (water harvesting legislation)</li> <li>▪ Unsustainable extraction of surface water - irrigation, farm dams and other water harvesting issues</li> </ul>

#### 4.2.4 Pest Animals

*Outcome 4: Pest animals reduced to levels that do not result in economic losses or environmental damage*

No	Objective	Associated issues
4.1	<b>Pest animals controlled to prevent economic losses and environmental damage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Feral animals under control</li> <li>▪ Native animals and birds in balance with habitat</li> </ul>

#### 4.2.5 Farming Systems (Crops, pastures and weeds)

*Outcome 5: Sustainable (non-degrading) farming systems implemented across agricultural land*

No	Objective	Associated issues
5.1	<b>Best Management Practice implemented on farms</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Production and conservation are not closely linked</li> <li>▪ Soil health decline due to unsustainable practices</li> <li>▪ Water cycle out of balance due to farming practices</li> <li>▪ Pasture degradation</li> <li>▪ Weed invasion</li> <li>▪ Farming systems limited by physical attributes eg acidity</li> </ul>
5.2	<b>Sustainable farming systems developed for the catchment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Inadequate knowledge base about sustainable farming systems suited to Central West slopes region</li> <li>▪ Lack of understanding of climate variability and tools to manage it</li> <li>▪ Role and extent of perennial woody vegetation required for functioning landscape</li> </ul>
5.3	<b>Property plans developed and implemented in line with this catchment plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Coordination required between plans</li> <li>▪ Implementation occurs on farm, while planning for issues such as groundwater rises /dryland salinity and biodiversity conservation is needed at regional scale</li> <li>▪ Lack of community cooperation</li> </ul>

#### 4.2.6 Economics

*Outcome 6: Profitable enterprises, based on sustainable management of the natural resources and human capital*

No	Objective	Associated issues
6.1	<b>Profitable agricultural production, derived from sustainable management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Low farm profitability</li> <li>▪ Low commodity prices</li> <li>▪ High costs of sustainable agriculture</li> <li>▪ Cost of fixing up "past mistakes"</li> <li>▪ Need for regional growth and development</li> </ul>

## 4.2.7 Social Health

*Outcome 7: Well-informed community, with the necessary skills to manage the natural resources in a way that will achieve a viable and stable district*

No	Objective	Associated issues
7.1	<b>Land managers appropriately skilled to achieve profitable and sustainable land management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Need to build capacity of rural and regional communities, including leadership skills</li><li>▪ Lack of local educational opportunities for people of all skill levels and ages</li><li>▪ Current marketing and management skills are limited</li><li>▪ Poor awareness and understanding of sustainable agriculture and natural resource management</li></ul>
7.2	<b>The wider population and all tiers of government informed about sustainable natural resources management, and the need to provide policies and resources that promote stable and viable rural communities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Lack of awareness/appreciation of primary industry by government, leading to inappropriate government policies/programs for rural areas including:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Loss of infrastructure and services</li><li>- Poor state of roads</li><li>- Inadequate telecommunications, especially mobile phones</li><li>- Limited employment opportunities</li><li>- Declining populations</li><li>- Young people leaving area, losing skills and innovation</li><li>- Ageing farmers and poor estate planning</li><li>- Closer settlement (increases risk of degradation)</li><li>- Need for rural readjustment</li><li>- Poor awareness by "local" urban populations of natural resource management issues</li></ul></li></ul>

4.2.8 Monitoring, Review and Evaluation

**Outcome 8: *The plan and associated processes and arrangements are relevant, effective and reflect the current conditions***

No	Objective	Associated issues
8.1	<b>A plan with effective recommendations, appropriate for the current biophysical, human and economic resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Condition of the natural resources monitored</li> <li>▪ Results of monitoring programs evaluated</li> <li>▪ Accountable and effective administration of the plan and its resources</li> <li>▪ Roles/responsibilities defined for all stakeholders and LRLG Steering Committee</li> </ul>
8.2	<b>A catchment plan that is coordinated with other plans</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Need support from all tiers of government</li> <li>▪ Poor coordination between catchment plans and other plans</li> <li>▪ Need for integrated regional planning</li> </ul>
8.3	<b>The catchment plan and vision for the Little River catchment promoted to all stakeholder groups</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Need to keep the local community informed of proposals and progress</li> <li>▪ Poor awareness by urban and metropolitan populations of problems, and difficulties in meeting their expectations</li> <li>▪ Lack of awareness and appreciation of primary industry and regional issues by governments, resulting in inappropriate government policies and programs</li> </ul>
8.4	<b>Government, private industry and local communities share the costs of implementing this catchment plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Need for all stakeholders and beneficiaries to share the costs of repairing degradation</li> <li>▪ Landholders unable to afford to correct mistakes of past policies</li> <li>▪ High cost of sustainable agriculture</li> <li>▪ Need for investment into the region to address social and economic issues, as well as land and water degradation</li> <li>▪ Promote district / regional growth, including in urban areas and villages</li> </ul>

