



## What does regional NRM deliver?

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In collaboration with (the late) Prof Geoff McDonald



## Overview

1. **New for old? Historical context of regional planning in Northern Australia**
2. **Overview of TSCRC Healthy Planning Evaluation Project**
3. **Comparing regional and NHT program perspectives on outcomes delivered from regional NRM**
4. **Negotiating the evidence to inform integrated governance of savanna environments**



## Conclusions

### Negotiating the evidence to diagnose regional NRM

**On a few priority targets for defined & mutually beneficial outcomes**

**To inform partnerships that fit the purpose of the given NRM problem**

**To inform regional brokering capabilities and roles**

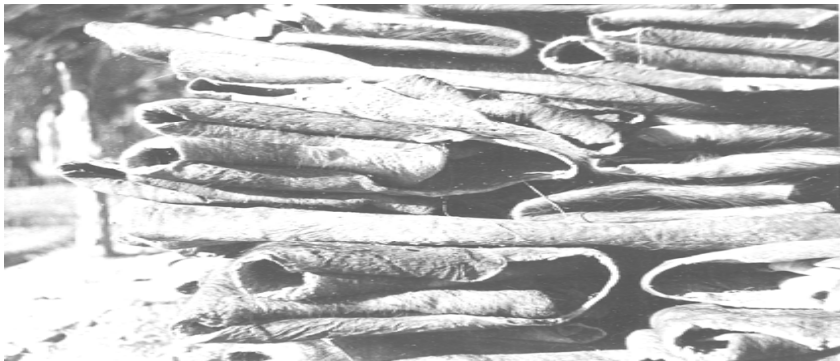


# New for old? Historical context of regional planning in Northern Australia

The object of regional planning is to develop and wisely use resources in order to provide a rising standard of human welfare . . . .

Regional planning implies that in each region the interest, knowledge and experience of the residents in the region will be brought on the region's problems and transmitted to the appropriate government or other body

**(Commonwealth Department of Post-War Reconstruction 1949: viii)**



## Sub-regional Arnhem Land performance reports

X dugongs + Y turtle shells + Z buffalo hides = white / productive Arnhem Land ?



# 'New' planning rationales & the TSCRC Healthy Planning Project

## **Evaluating the efficacy of this 'new' experiment to deliver improved environmental management through integrated regional planning**

Enabling regional communities and non-government institutions to be involved in the design and implementation of sustainable environmental management programs.

Growing recognition that that responding to the NRM challenge requires an appreciation of regional diversity as well as a national gaze

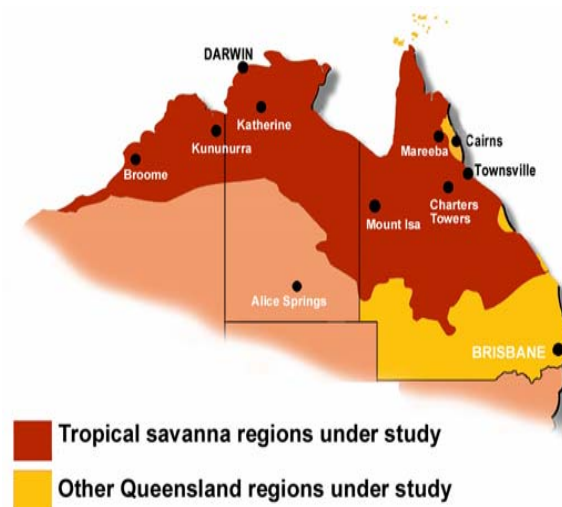


## To identify constraints, lessons and opportunities for improving regional planning systems in Northern Australia

### Scope & approach

4 year study included Northern WA, NT and Qld.

Collaborative & reflective approach with government and regional partners



### Data

- Interviews regional and extra-regional NRM participants
- NRM Plan reviews
- Regional planner workshops
- Policy, program and performance report analysis

**Criteria** developed to evaluate the context, structural, process & outcome elements of the hybrid and integrating dimensions regional planning



# Evaluation Criteria

## Evaluation framework consists of four major criteria components of 'healthy' natural resource planning and management in regions

- *Context criteria* - recognises a wide range of environmental, economic, social, policy/institutional and technological factors affecting regional NRM
- *Structure criteria* - addresses the rules and institutional arrangements
- *Process criteria* - addresses the activities, operations and relationships that define and influence regional NRM
- ***Outcome criteria are the intentional and unintentional products and impacts***
  - ***Substantive outcomes*** – improvement in condition of priority (natural, social, cultural, economic) regional assets
  - ***Enabling outcomes*** - procedural and structural changes or interventions that improved capacity of resource managers and institutions to repair, maintain or protect regional assets



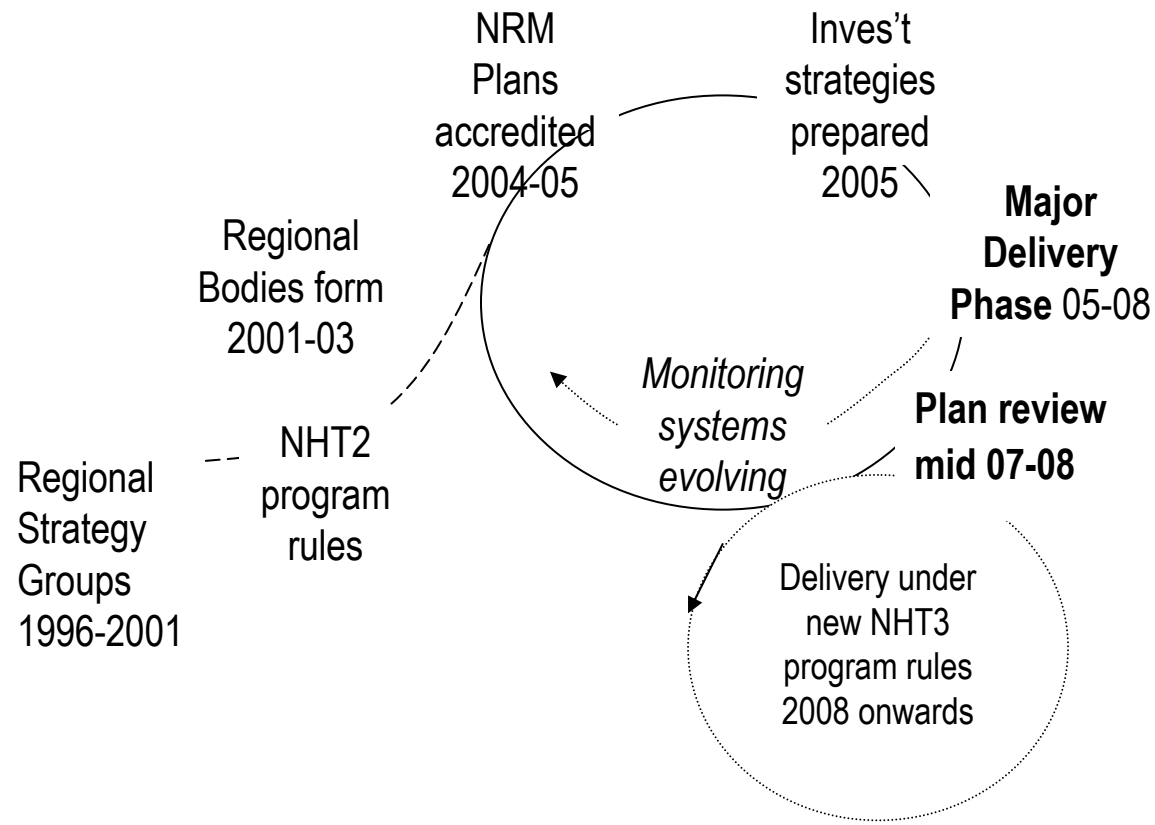
# Outcomes – What did savanna regional NRM deliver?

## Key findings

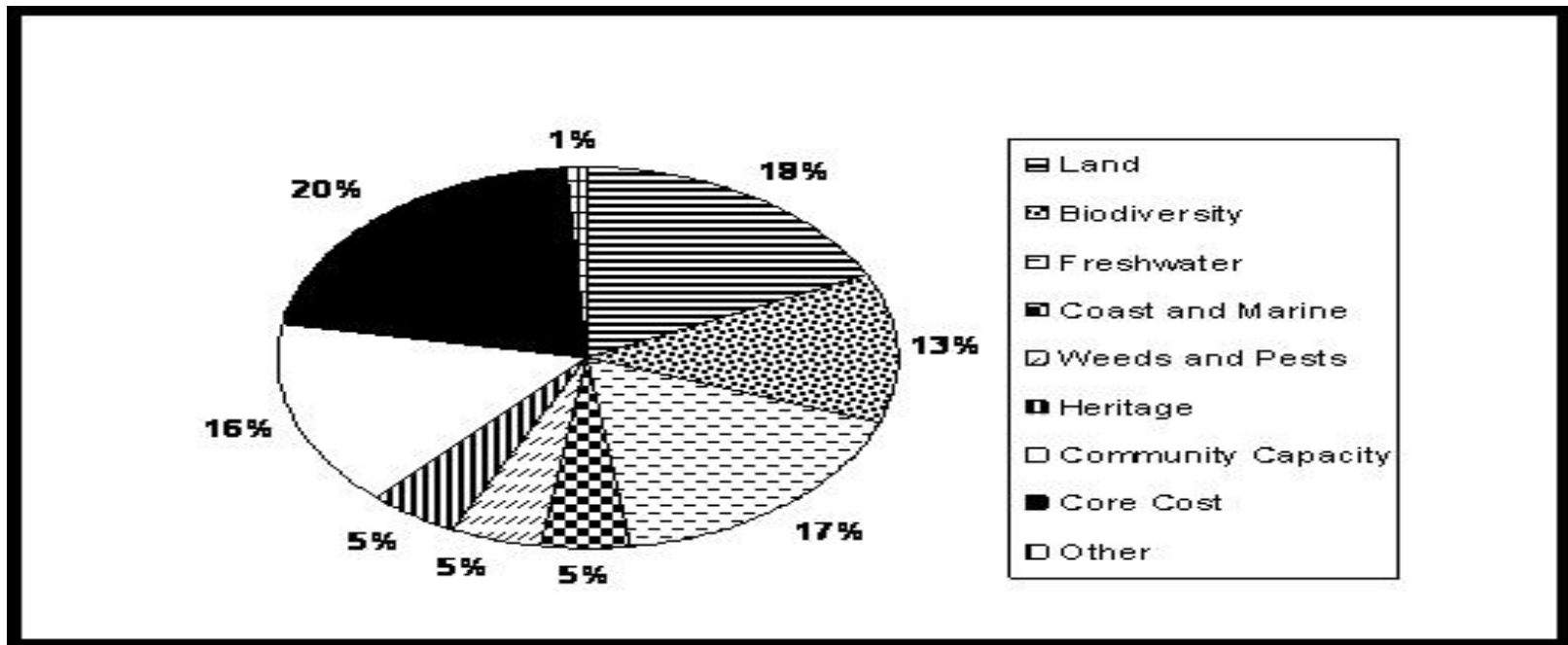
1. Significant costs associated with efforts to deliver substantive outcomes required to negotiate and implement savanna regional NRM plans
2. Integrating regional and program measures of regional delivery efficacy a challenge
3. Regional bodies are core ‘hybrid’ brokers– required to facilitate myriad of action-outcome expectations and evaluations



# 1. Costly to deliver substantive outcomes in the savannas



# Costs to build regional NRM capabilities



Focus of investment in Nthn Australia NHT regions

Source: Regional Investment Strategies 2004-2006



## Reporting on outcomes of savanna regional NRM

*TSCRC 05 benchmark report:* regional NRM partners ‘getting used to new roles’, ‘engaging with new partners’

*TSCRC 06 benchmark report of early implementation* – ‘frustration’ with some NRM partners who continue to resist contributing to regional planning agendas; ‘strong desire’ to get ‘runs on the board’ and ‘demonstrate delivery on regional priorities’

*TSRCRC 07 report of implementation / review* –

- existing M&E does not support evidence-based regional planning;
- savanna agencies and communities struggle commit to actions needed for integrated NRM;



## 2. Integrating regional and program measures of regional delivery efficacy

- Emphasis placed on (environmental, social, economic, cultural) **substantive outcomes** not necessarily shared
- Priorities and resources dedicated to deliver **enabling outcomes** – e.g. capacity building, developing new knowledge systems – might also not be agreed.
- **Savanna regional realities and variations**
  - *Regional variations – sub-regional delivery networks & capabilities, size, etc*
  - *Long-term enabling outcomes and non-environmental substantive regional outcomes desired.*
- **NHT program**
  - *Enabling regional outcomes are a means to substantive biophysical resource condition improvement*



# Ability to report on single nationally defined outcomes

<b>NRM region</b>	<b>Salinity</b>	<b>Soil cond</b>	<b>Rivers w-lands</b>	<b>Turb &amp; Nutrients - aquatic environs</b>	<b>Native Veg</b>	<b>Sig Native sp.</b>	<b>Sig invasive sp.</b>	<b>Coast / Marine</b>
<b>SG</b>	No*	No 1	No 1	No	No 1	No 1	No 1	No 1
<b>NG</b>	No	No 1	No	No	No 1	No 1	No 1	No 1
<b>Bur</b>	No 4**	No 1	No 3	No 2	No 2	No 1	No	No 1
<b>WT</b>	No	No	No 1	No	No 2	No 1	No	No 1

Note that no Queensland northern region was able to report on progress in addressing resource condition targets relevant to the resource condition issue by 2005.

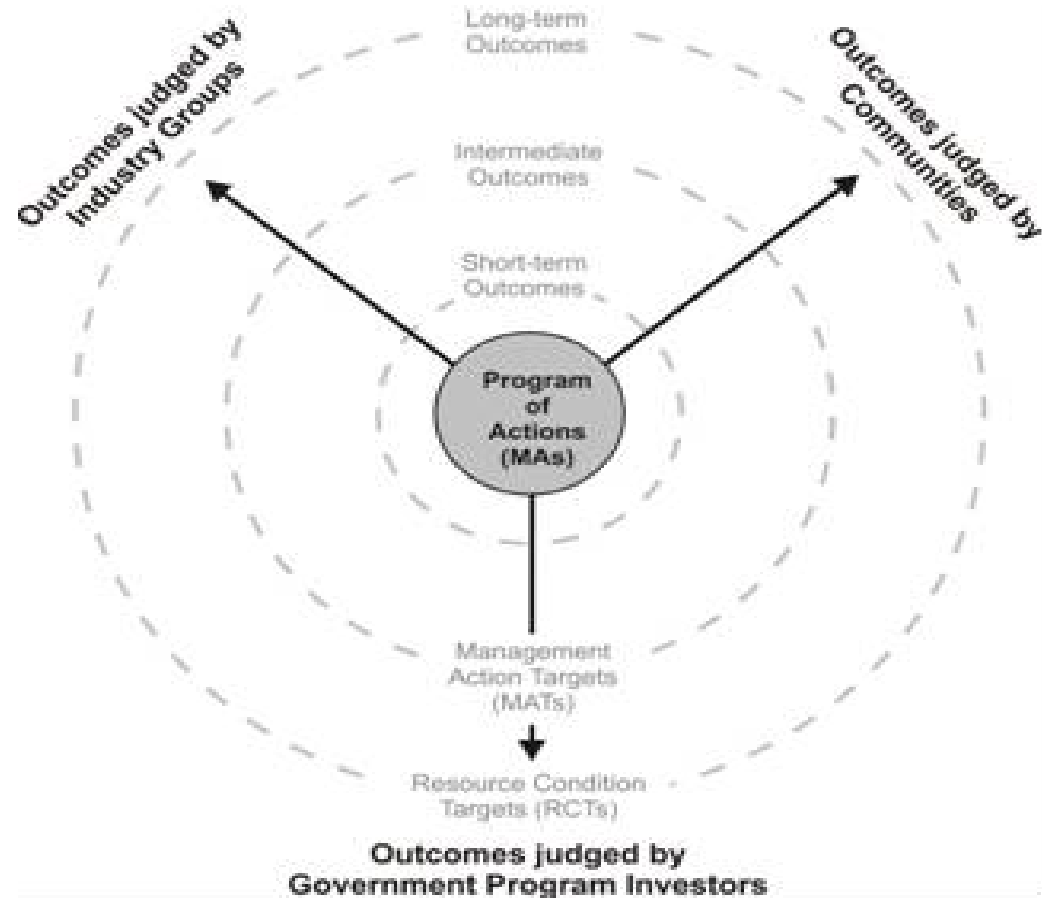
1 = <\$500,000, 2 = \$500,001 - \$1,000,000, 3 = \$1,000,001 - \$1,500,000, 4 = \$1,500,001 - 3,000,000, 5 = >\$3,000,000

### 3. Brokering multiple action-outcome expectations and realities

**Regional bodies -core ‘hybrid’ brokers in this governance network**

**Required to broker differences in action-outcome planning logics**

- types of outcomes
- spatial scale of action impact
- Temporal scale of action impact



#### **On a few priority targets for defined & mutually beneficial outcomes**

- **Expect target setting to rely on iterative review and adjustment**
- **NRM objectives do not need to be shared but need to be defined to forge mutually beneficial outcomes**





## Negotiating the evidence to diagnose regional NRM

### **To inform partnerships that fit the purpose of the given NRM problem**

- **Most effective type, level and membership of partnership to deliver target**
- **Collaborative drivers for inclusiveness may be quite inconsistent with effectiveness considerations of selective (or exclusionary) courses of action.**
- **Consider the cost of those not engaged & those dis-engaged**



## To inform regional brokering capabilities and roles

- **Note savanna regional realities – it takes time to re-align institutional relationships and practices**
- **Brokering impact - rational between the action- outcome relationship is not one dimensional**
  - different spatial and temporal dimensions of outcomes delivered.
  - Variable priorities placed on different types of substantive and enabling outcomes that collaborators are able and willing to deliver.



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Thank You