



Aerial views of the Ramsar Site
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WHAT WAS YOUR BEST CEPA INTERVENTION IN THIS TRIENNIUM?

Emma Williams

Natural Resources Management North (NRM North), Australia



Your Position/Role and Country:

Coastal Coordinator with NRM North – one of three regional non-government organizations in Tasmania, Australia.

Title of your CEPA activity/product

Property Management Planning with private landholders.

Other collaborators – please identify other organizations that assisted you or were your partners

Tasmanian Government -
Department of Primary Industries,
Parks, Water and Environment;
Macquarie Franklin - Consultants

Key stakeholder group(s) targeted by your product/activity (e.g. decision-makers, teachers, families, journalists etc.)

Private commercial landholders (farmers) in both the Lower Ringarooma River Floodplain Ramsar Site and Little Waterhouse Lake Ramsar Site. The majority of participants are graziers raising beef cattle and sheep, with some dairy farmers (there are three dairies operating within the boundaries of the Ringarooma Ramsar Site) and potato croppers.

When did this event take place/when was your product launched?

Actually, it began in 2008 and continues to date, as more landholders are involved.

What was your key message?

With support and planning, landholders are able to implement management practices that benefit both their agribusiness and Ramsar values.

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Brief description of your product/ activity / material you used

Participants were engaged through Property Management Planning. This is a process that provides landholders with an overall picture of their property and its natural values (through farm visits by a consultant) and then support to identify options representing the best practices available to improve the sustainability of their farming practices. The process is considered a 'kitchen table' activity, that is, it is undertaken with individual landholders (and their partners or families) on their property, often starting at the kitchen table or farm office. Targeted information, such as that delivered in subsequent field days, is provided to clusters of participants. The initial process may take months, and involve an on-going relationship between the landholder and NRM North as further support for on-ground activities is provided.

What was your intended outcome from this product/ activity? (e.g. change in behaviour of target group; volunteer help with a wetland project; newspaper article)

More than 20 landholders undertook planning to improve catchment management activities. This included information and assistance provided to understand control of the introduced pathogen *Phytophthora cinnamomi* (root rot) which was brought to Tasmania accidentally in potted soil during European settlement. Over 170 native plants are recorded hosts for *P. cinnamomi* and a large number are killed by it, threatening species and altering plant community structure. The disease is spread through infected soil, including machinery and stock. Landholders were given farm hygiene information to help manage this.

What kind of impact did this activity/product have on the target audience?

The activity has spanned the past five years and continues. Some participants have been involved in an on-going basis. Participants in the planning process have continued their involvement by implementing on-ground management actions to reduce negative catchment impacts - such as loss of native riparian and coastal vegetation, stock effluent (nutrient) input to wetlands, weed, disease and sediment movement - on local Ramsar Sites and other waterway and coastal areas. This integrated approach has been successful in delivering not only an increase in communication and awareness of local Ramsar values with those members of the community living closely with these values, but also provided a targeted approach to supporting landholders in their aims of improving their sustainable land management practices, at a landscape scale, for positive conservation outcomes.

Is there a follow-up activity/product planned, if yes briefly describe

Landholder participants have also been provided with investment support to implement on-ground management actions resulting from the Property Management Planning process. These include weed control (such as willows and gorse, which invade both productive and reserved land and waterways), and stock management for improved waterway health. This has involved fencing stock out of waterways and the provision of off-stream watering points. The results are that stock no longer damage riparian vegetation or directly foul water through erosion or effluent in these locations, with benefits for the farmer (easier stock movement, cleaner water passing through pumps and other infrastructure, cleaner water for stock watering and irrigation) and for waterways (lower nutrient input, better riparian integrity and connectivity, improved biodiversity conservation.) Improved dairy effluent management practices have also been encouraged, to reduce nutrient input to wetlands and weed spread. On-going engagement continues.

Why do you identify this as your best CEPA intervention? What makes it stand out?

Property Management Planning is not a regulatory process but requires voluntary participation and investment from landholders. When planning and funding support is offered, landholders are often willing to participate.

What was the source of your funding?

Through the Australian Government's Caring for Our Country Program



Part of a grazing property adjacent to the Ringarooma Ramsar Site. Coastal vegetation, including heath mosaics dominated by *Xanthorrhoea* sp. (grasstrees)
© Leanne Sherriff-Macquarie Franklin



Soil testing on a property for *Phytophthora cinnamomi*
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Dairy cattle being moved within the Ringarooma Ramsar Site as part of the management process
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