



OUR FISH,
OUR FUTURE



NATIVE FISH:
A RECIPE FOR
HEALTHY RIVERS

HEALTHY FISH,
HEALTHY RIVERS

OFF THE HOOK:
RESTORING OUR
RIVERS

Scoping Future Native Fish Strategy Communication and Engagement Activities



FIX THE FISH
AND THE RIVER
WILL FOLLOW

NATIVE FISH:
OUR FRESHWATER
FUTURE



NATIVE FISH:
REHABILITATING
OUR RIVERS



2010 Native Fish Forum 15 September 2010

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The 5 year review of the Native Fish Strategy (June 2009) recognised the need to update the communications and engagement for the Strategy.



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In May 2010, MDBA contracted Sefton & Associates to develop a scoping paper. The project's objectives were to review/identify:

- Communications and engagement activities
- Key stakeholders
- Barriers to greater support and involvement
- Evaluation techniques
- Processes/structures



A final report for the project is due in late September 2010.



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The Process

- Reviewed the current communication plan and engagement activities
- Interviewed Community Stakeholder Taskforce (CST), Advisory Panel, Coordinators and staff
- Issued online survey to 400+ stakeholders, received 130+ responses
- Reviewed communication products/tools and media coverage



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Findings – Strengths

- NFS communication and engagement activities are well regarded – especially demonstration reaches, Native Fish Awareness Week and the NFS Forums
- Staff, Coordinators , CST and Advisory Panel align well on key messages, key stakeholders and the major activities to focus on and expected outcomes



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Findings – Strengths

- Coordinators, CST and associated networks are an effective mechanism for supporting communication and engagement
- Stakeholders have a good understanding of the issues affecting native fish



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Findings – areas for improvement

- The NFS communication plan 2007-10 is well regarded by those familiar with it but it lacks accountability for implementation
- The NFS would benefit from a greater focus on targeted engagement activities
- Monitoring and evaluation is not being undertaken for many activities making it difficult to justify changes or increased resources



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Support and coordination of communication activities could be improved

- Resources are out of date
- Website materials are difficult to access
- Publications take too long to be published



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Recommendation 1 – *Organizational commitment and support*

Changes due to the formation of the MDBA have impacted on the amount of support available to the NFS from the MDBA

The NFS would benefit from working with the MDBA stakeholder engagement team to:

- streamline communication and engagement processes for the NFS
- enhance engagement efforts by the MDBA
- provide a pathway for stronger integration of the NFS in the Authority



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Recommendation 2 – *Planning and Delivery*

- The NFS would benefit from a dedicated role for coordination of communication and engagement activities – ideally employed by MDBA as part of a NFS team

The coordinator could focus on:

- Key point of contact for Coordinators, CST and NFS Team
- Planning and prioritising of effort
- Maximising the benefits from communication and engagement activities



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Recommendation 2 – *Planning and Delivery* (continued)

- Increased communication and engagement support for Coordinators
- Resource kits for CST members, coordinators and other volunteers
- Updated materials and information products
- Provide an intranet service to NFS members



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Recommendation 3 – *Build on the strengths of NFS*

This would allow NFS to capitalise on significant strengths with a focus on:

- A small number of well-resourced communications and engagement initiatives
- Continue targeting specific stakeholder groups, such as recreational fishers, local councils and NRM bodies
- Putting the plan into action in a coordinated manner
- Monitoring and evaluating the outcomes



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Communication and engagement activities

- Maximise engagement benefits of demonstration reaches
- Develop and support a network of influential recreational fishers (and clubs)
- Continue to partner with CMAs and local government
- Partner with MDBA stakeholder engagement targeting ministerial advisors, senior government officials and regional and rural industry media.



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Communication and engagement activities (continued)

- Build the knowledge brokering capability of the NFS
- Create a network of key influencers and champions
- Focus education activity on a few key initiatives
- Integrate a monitoring and evaluation plan



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Communication and engagement activities (continued)

- Immediately update websites and explore new internet strategies
- Provide communication and engagement training for NFS members
- Establish and support stakeholder databases
- Support forums, workshops, field days other key events
- Guidelines to assist recognition and acknowledgement of the NFS



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In Summary

- Native fish unite our communities
- NFS is a great resource, it thrives in a challenging environment at times, it is a valuable asset with the potential to change the attitudes and behaviours of the target audiences and stakeholders
- For the NFS to reach its goals, it needs a well resourced and effective communication and stakeholder plan that can be measured



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Thank you.



**SEFTON
& ASSOCIATES**

