

Caring for our Country Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement (MERI) Plan

NACC Wind Erosion Project



Document review details

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1: Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the NACC Wind Erosion Project MERI Plan

The continuous and integrated cycle of **monitoring, evaluation, reporting and improvement** is referred to as **MERI** in the Australian NRM context.

A project MERI plan articulates all the different aspects of MERI that will be needed and how they will be implemented over the life of the project.

The project MERI plan:

- Guides MERI for the NACC Wind Erosion project of Caring for our Country in accord with the stated Caring for our Country outcomes and targets (<http://www.nrm.gov.au/me/index.html>) and consistent with the Caring for our Country MERI Strategy (<http://www.nrm.gov.au/me/index.html>)
- Provides a base from which to review the progress the project is making towards the agreed Caring for our Country targets and outcomes and from which to learn about successful implementation strategies and to adapt in response to lessons learnt.

1.2 Broader MERI Context

This plan is nested within:

- The NRM MERI framework (<http://www.nrm.gov.au/me/index.html>)
- The Caring for our Country Outcomes 2008-2013 (<http://www.nrm.gov.au/index.html>)
- The Caring for our Country Business Plan 2009-10 (<http://www.nrm.gov.au/index.html>)
- The MERI Strategy for Caring for our Country Strategy 2009-13 (<http://www.nrm.gov.au/me/index.html>)

2: Scope

2.1 Project description

The project operates in a larger environment but must have boundaries that align with the Caring for our Country outcomes and targets as well as within the project budget and resources. The project context is included in the box below.

Write a brief project description in the box. (Guidance on this scoping exercise is available at Step 1 in the Developing and Using Program Logic in Natural Resource Management User Guide)

The Northern Agricultural Region (NAR) supports a long established, highly productive broad acre, dryland agriculture industry. The landscape is fragmented with patches of remnant bush sustaining biodiversity and ecological function. The NAR landscape has unique qualities that both contribute to high value agriculture as well as increases the impact of the various forms of erosion that occur. These features include:

- long, wide valley floors that enable highly erosive, high velocity wind;
- a high proportion (80% of the region) of soil types vulnerable to erosion such as the powdery clays and loamy sands;
- large tracts of cleared land that support established farming systems and associated infrastructure including machinery and large flock numbers; and
- 500km of coastline that attracts tourists and high value agriculture.

Another key asset of the NAR is the people who live and work in this region, many of whom continue to innovate and invest in sustainable NRM. The NAR is experiencing ongoing wind erosion threats to its remaining biodiversity as well as the region's profitable agricultural industry.

Wind erosion is one of the most significant issues causing landscape deterioration in the region as it removes precious topsoil, resulting in a further decline in the health of agricultural land and the movement of nutrients across the landscape. By addressing wind erosion problem in partnership with the NAR's people, landscape scale change will be achieved.

The issues this NACC wind erosion project MERI plan targets are therefore:

Strategic planning and revegetation of sites vulnerable to wind erosion. A strategic approach in targeting and investing in this issue will be taken. This approach will include:

- Identifying key community groups and individuals, who are community leaders in managing each of the above issues in their own right. These people and groups will be the foundation in the communication and training plan. These leaders will advise on key issues, past successes and failures and key investment areas. The logic of this approach is that important investment and planning initiatives of long-term, complex NRM issues are best developed in a consultative way;
- Working with community and individuals by way of workshops to identify target sites and issues that will benefit from targeted actions, for example, wind eroded sites, sites that may benefit from plantings to reduce wind velocity. The logic of this approach is that NRM history has evolved to show that targeted investment of public funds on strategically impacted sites or those sites with high public value is most likely to provide a good return of the investment;
- Monitoring, evaluation, reporting and improvement (MERI) formats will be applied such that returns on investment can be shown and learnings may be communicated. The logic of this approach is that if an project MERI plan is developed then learnings and outcomes can be both reported to all investors and communicated at extension workshops.

2.2 Project methodology

The methodology including the rationale for investing in this project is summarized in the box below.

Insert description of project methodology into the box below.

The NACC Wind Erosion Project will improve land managers' knowledge and skills of land management practices and the practical application of such practices to reduce wind erosion events in cropping and grazing land in the Northern Agricultural Region (NAR).

FIGURES: It is proposed to engage 720 farmers (i.e. 440 farmers through incentive and 280 farmers through extension programs) who are responsible for around three fifths of the region's 5.5m hectares of agricultural land in a two pronged approach that will see the protection of 8,000 hectares of priority vulnerable soils using incentives and knowledge transfer technologies. Farmers participating in incentives program will have direct impact in landscape-scale change. Farmers participating in the extension program also might indirectly contribute to landscape-scale change.

Vulnerable sites in the Geraldton Sandplain, Perth Basin and Yilgarn will be identified through a desktop survey. Expressions of interest will be called from land managers in the vulnerable areas. Coordinators will undertake subsequent site assessment to prioritise target areas on a property scale, then work with farmers on management plans, increasing technical expertise and evaluation, as well as managing incentives programs, where used. Individual areas on properties will be stabilised to address existing wind erosion, with a view to encouraging the land manager to continue with follow up works.

Information about the project, including the Incentive Program will be disseminated, and regular updates on the projects will be available on email, the web and through media outlets including the local community newsletter which has wide local readership. Displays about wind erosion will occur at popular public events and NACC will provide display material for inclusion in events run by other organisations such as grower and industry group field days and workshops. Local grower groups will be engaged to assist with project communication and local farmer/land manager participation and ongoing support.

Communication links with local landcare, grower groups, Indigenous groups State government agencies, local government and local media will ensure efficient dissemination of information. Workshops and field days will be a key element of the skills, community engagement and knowledge transfer.

Farmers who receive incentives must participate in a survey after the program they are contracted for. Detailed social research will be conducted across a sample of the completed surveys, using metrics designed to measure the uptake of the key sustainable farming practices targeted in the project (plantings, grazing practices and crop paddock management) as well as attitudes and aspirations to adaptation and adoption of a greater range of strategies.

Research anticipates that uptake of the perennials program (see below) will be rapid; however the stubble grazing and crop paddock management (see below) will require a capacity building/ education program including field days demonstrating potential options.

Farmers will be offered membership to industry organisations which operate in the region with a view to increasing base knowledge and transfer of experience. Networking events will encourage motivation and knowledge transfer. Known early adopters will be engaged in proof of concept demonstrations for field days and seminars.

Perennials

The use of perennials is supported by the findings of a four year *Grain and Graze* project completed in July 2008, undertaken in conjunction with four grower groups in the NAR, which reported that "*perennial grasses, correctly sown and established have the ability to reduce total area of soil exposed to*

erosion in the NAR. A study undertaken in one of the region's most vulnerable areas on the Geraldton Sandplain concluded that "*stocking rates can be increased while decreasing erosion risk on sandy soils*" and perennial pastures and tagasaste provide feed value while contributing to a reduced erosion risk compared to annual pasture and crop stubbles, even in times of extreme drought.

An incentive program will be implemented for a planting program at a rate of 110 farmers per year establishing 2000 hectares/ year. Based on current uptake of plantings being offered by the NACC it can be expected that the planting program will be fully subscribed and will not require a great deal of promotion as to the benefits. In the last two years NACC has worked with land managers to establish 3,000 hectares of perennial pastures, and 65 hectares of farm forestry, demonstrating the demand and willingness of farmers to implement this new technology as long as there is training and experience available to assist them in developing management plans for their investments.

Coordinators will work closely with farmers including Indigenous land managers to establish what perennials systems and the farming practices are appropriate for their soil type/s and how the plantings should be managed, eg grazing.

Crop Paddock Management

While minimum and low till techniques are well established there are still many land managers undertaking 'traditional' practices including fallowing and burning which expose bare soil. Derpsch (2004) noted: "*...it is important to maintain the soil covered with plants or with plant residue all year round, avoiding exposure to climatic elements*".

Investigation into 'new' methods such as chaff carting, windrow burning etc has, as yet, had slow uptake., despite the fact that tillage: "*...destroys the vertical pore systems created by roots, earthworm and other soil animals, destroys soil structure, accelerates organic matter mineralisation (depletion) and reduces aggregate stability.*"

Best management practices will be identified and extension workshops delivered to 40 land managers and farmers (20 from sand plains and 20 from sand dunes NAR priority areas) on best management of stubble retention and seeding techniques package

Stubble Grazing

Several years of severe drought have lead to reduced permanent livestock numbers however oportune grazing of stubbles and pastures is still practiced, leaving soils denuded. There is also a movement to "stock finishing" and short term agistment. Research indicates that pasture utilisation is "*not optimized, highlighting the inflexibility of the traditional self replacing flock structure within cropping dominated farming systems*". Farmers will be made aware of management practices that optimise stubbles/ ground cover that will prevent wind erosion between the stock being turned off and next year's crop. Managed stubble grazing, rotational grazing and feed demand and budgeting have been demonstrated to have beneficial results.

The project will involve Incentives:

440 land managers establish 8,000 ha of perennial pastures, saltbush, oil mallees and strategic vegetation as windbreaks. The plantings have been chosen for their contribution to reducing wind erosion:

- Perennial pastures (4,800 ha) – Geraldton Sandplain/ Perth Basin (Note: this soil type predominates)
- Oil mallees (2,000 ha)– Yilgarn
- Saltbush (800 ha)- Yilgarn
- Strategic vegetation as windbreaks Local native and exotic windbreak species (400 ha) –
 - Geraldton Sandplain/ Perth Basin (Note: this soil type predominates)
- 80 Farmers taking up incentives will receive membership to industry organisations.

This project will also involve extension (knowledge & skills):

- An additional **280** farmers will improve their knowledge and skills:
 - 160 farmers will attend stubble retention training workshops.
 - 120 farmers will attend improved grazing management training workshops.

2.3 Caring for our Country targets and outcomes

Table 1 illustrates the specific Caring for our Country outcomes and targets the NACC wind erosion project contributes to.

Using the Caring for our Country Business Plan and the relevant information from project proposal and/or funding agreement complete the details in the table below.

Table 1: Caring for our Country targets to which the NACC Wind Erosion Project will contribute

Caring for our Country Target/s	Funded Activity to be undertaken	Expected contribution of project
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To increase by 42 000 farmers in identified priority regions that have improved their management practices to reduce the risk of soil loss through wind erosion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Land managers & farmers establish 4,800 ha of perennial plants to reduce the risk of wind erosion in the NAR priority areas over four years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 120 Land managers & farmers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Land managers & farmers establish 800 ha of saltland pastures (salt bush) to reduce the risk of wind erosion in the NAR priority areas over four years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 80 Land managers & farmers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Land managers & farmers strategically plant 2000 ha of oil mallees as a windbreak to manage wind erosion in the NAR priority areas over four years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 200 Land managers & farmers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Land managers & farmers establish 400 ha of tree crops (native and exotic spp) as a windbreak to manage wind erosion in the NAR priority areas over four years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 40 Land managers & farmers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Land managers & farmers in the NAR priority areas have adopted improved management practices for stubble retention and seeding techniques over four years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 160 Land managers & farmers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Land managers & farmers have adopted improved grazing management practices within the NAR priority areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 120 Land managers & farmers

2.4 Users of the Plan

Table 2 shows the primary users or the key people who will use this MERI plan to organise data collection, analysis and reporting. The Secondary users are people who may benefit from understanding and being aware of this MERI plan.

Enter the primary and secondary users of your MERI Plan in the space provided.

Table 2: Key users for this MERI plan

Primary users: who will reflect and adapt	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NACC MERI Coordinator• NACC Wind Erosion Project Coordinator• NACC Program Manager• NACC Incentive Program Manager• NACC Social Engagement Officer• Project partners e.g. wind erosion devolved grants projects to landcare and community wind erosion projects• 6 Grower Groups in the NAR (MIG, Liebe, NEFF, Evergreen, Morawa Farm Improvement Group, NAG)
Secondary users: who need to be aware of this plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Australian Government• DAFWA• Wider community

2.5 Key evaluation questions

Key evaluation questions are explicit questions to be answered for the purposes of reporting or improvement as illustrated in Table 3.

Table 3: Key Evaluation Questions

Evaluation purpose	KEQ	The question relates to: Caring for our Country target
<u>Impact</u>	<p>To what extent has the NACC Wind Erosion Project improved land management practices to reduce the risk of wind erosion?</p> <p>To what extent have farmers who have been involved in incentives improved land management practices to reduce the risk of wind erosion on their properties?</p> <p>To what extent have land managers and farmers who participated in field days, training sessions and workshops changed their knowledge and skills?</p> <p>To what extent have land managers and farmers demonstrated an improvement in knowledge, attitude, skills, aspirations and practices after participating in NACC's incentive and extension programs?</p>	<p>42 000 more farmers using improved soil management methods</p> <p>42 000 more farmers using improved soil management methods</p> <p>42 000 more farmers using improved soil management methods</p> <p>42 000 more farmers using improved soil management methods</p>
<u>Effectiveness</u>	<p>Were the NACC wind erosion project immediate activities the most effective way of getting to the desired Caring for our Country outcomes and targets?</p> <p>To what extent were the NACC wind erosion planned activities (on-ground incentive works, training, workshops and field days) achieved? Why or why not?</p> <p>Were the NACC wind erosion projects incentive guidelines, EOIs, selection criteria, protocols, incentive management agreements, extension materials effective in engaging farmer's interest?</p>	<p>42 000 more farmers using improved soil management methods</p> <p>42 000 more farmers using improved soil management methods</p> <p>42 000 more farmers using improved soil management methods</p>

<p><u>Appropriateness</u></p>	<p>To what extent did incentives, workshops and field days prove useful in engaging land managers?</p> <p>Was the information presented at workshops and field days current and appropriate for the targeted stakeholders?</p> <p>How many land managers and farmers have established perennial plants, salt land pastures, oil mallees, tree crops (native and exotic spp) to reduce the risk of wind erosion in the NAR priority areas?</p> <p>To what extent did land managers who expressed an interest actually take up an incentive?</p> <p>To what extent did land managers and farmers comply with management agreements to receive incentive payment?</p>	<p>42 000 more farmers using improved soil management methods</p> <p>42 000 more farmers using improved soil management methods</p> <p>42 000 more farmers using improved soil management methods</p> <p>42 000 more farmers using improved soil management methods</p>
<p><u>Efficiency</u></p>	<p>To what extent has the NACC wind erosion project's immediate outcomes attained the highest value out of the financial incentives?</p> <p>How did the NACC wind erosion project perform to the budget?</p>	<p>42 000 more farmers using improved soil management methods</p> <p>42 000 more farmers using improved soil management methods</p>

2.6 Workplan and budget

MERI workplan and budget for NACC Wind Erosion Project.

After completing your MERI plan summarise the different aspects into the tables below to provide a consolidated and concise picture of how it will be implemented, what MERI activities are to be undertaken and costing for the MERI activities.

Attach the workplan to the MERI plan.

Project timeline for activities			
Immediate project outcomes			
Activity	Achievement towards Caring for our Country Target	By when	Quantity of Target to be achieved
Activity 1	30 land managers & farmers establish 1200 ha of perennial pastures to reduce the risk of wind erosion in the NAR priority areas	Annually (30 June of each year of the project)	30 land managers & farmers; 1200 ha of perennial pastures
Activity 2	20 land managers & farmers establish 200 ha of salt and pastures (salt bush) to reduce the risk of wind erosion in the NAR priority areas	30 Nov of each year of the project commencing 30 Nov 2010	20 land managers & farmers; 200 ha of salt and pastures
Activity 3	50 land managers & farmers strategically plant 500 ha of oil mallees as a windbreak to manage wind erosion in the NAR priority areas	30 Nov of each year of the project commencing 30 Nov 2010	50 land managers & farmers; 500 ha of oil mallees
Activity 4	10 land managers & farmers establish 100 ha of tree crops (native and exotic spp) as a windbreak to manage wind erosion in the NAR priority areas	30 Nov of each year of the project commencing 30 Nov 2010	10 land managers & farmers; 100 ha of tree crops
Activity 5	30 land managers & farmers have improved knowledge and skills concerning grazing management practices within the NAR priority areas	Annually 30 June of each year of the project	30 land managers & farmers
Activity 6	40 land managers & farmers in the NAR priority areas have improved knowledge and skills concerning stubble retention and seeding techniques	Annually 30 June of each year of the project	40 land managers and farmers
Activity 7	80 land managers and farmers participating the wind erosion incentives received memberships from appropriate organization	Biannually (over 1 st two years of the project)	80 land managers and farmers
Activity 8	Devolved grants projects developed for	Biannually	1 partnership

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	community wind erosion, landcare and Indigenous groups	(over 1 st two years of the project)	developed with Indigenous communities
Intermediate project outcomes			
Activity	Achievement towards Caring for our Country Target	By when	Quantity of Target to be achieved
Monitoring			
Activity 1	No. of EOI received; No. of management agreements signed; No. of Agreements completed and Incentives paid	Annually (30 June of each year of the project)	110 EOIs; 110 Agreements signed and completed
Activity 2	No. of land managers & farmers that have established perennial pastures	Annually (30 June of each year of the project)	30 land managers & farmers
Activity 3	Area (ha) planted to perennial pastures	Annually (30 June of each year of the project)	1200 ha
Activity 4	No. of land managers & farmers that have established saltland pastures	30 Nov of each year of the project commencing 30 Nov 2010	20 land managers & farmers
Activity 5	Area (ha) planted to saltland pastures	30 Nov of each year of the project commencing 30 Nov 2010	200 ha
Activity 6	No. of land managers & farmers that have established oil mallees	30 Nov of each year of the project commencing 30 Nov 2010	50 land managers & farmers
Activity 7	Area (ha) planted to oil mallees	30 Nov of each year of the project commencing 30 Nov 2010	500 ha
Activity 8	No. of land managers & farmers that have established tree crops	30 Nov of each year of the project commencing 30 Nov 2010	10 land managers & farmers
Activity 9	Area (ha) planted to tree crops	30 Nov of each year of the project commencing 30 Nov 2010	100 ha of tree crops
Activity 10	No. of participants attended field days, trainings; promotional workshops.	Annually (30 June of each year of the project)	70 participants
Activity 11	Change in the KASAP of the engaged land managers and farmers (incentive and extension)	30 Nov of each year of the project commencing 30 Nov 2010	180 farmers and land managers
Activity 12	No. of land managers and farmers that have received memberships from appropriate industry (e.g. Oil mallees association)	30 June 2010 and 30 June 2011	40 land managers and farmers
Activity 13	No. of devolved grants projects developed and/or completed	Annually (30 June of each year of the project)	5 devolved grants projects per annum
Evaluation			
Activity 14	No. of farmers & land managers that have signed incentive management agreements	Annually (30 June of each year of the project)	110 farmers and land managers
Activity 15	No. of farmers attended training, promotion workshops and field days	Annually (30 June of each year of the project)	70 farmers
Activity 16	Area (ha) protected through establishment of perennial plants, salt land pastures, oil mallees, and tree crops	30 Nov of each year of the project commencing 30 Nov 2010	2,000 ha
Activity 17	Change in knowledge and skills of engaged farmers and land managers	30 Nov of each year of the project commencing 30 Nov 2010	180 incentive and extension KASAP surveys
Reporting			
Activity 18	No. of land managers & farmers successfully establishing perennial pastures	Annually (30 June of each year of the project)	30 land managers & farmers
Activity 19	Area (ha) successfully established to perennial pastures	Annually (30 June of each year of the project)	1200 ha
Activity 20	No. of land managers & farmers	30 Nov of each year of	20 land managers &

	successfully establishing saltland pastures	the project commencing 30 Nov 2010	farmers
Activity 21	Area (ha) successfully established to saltland pastures	30 Nov of each year of the project commencing 30 Nov 2010	200 ha
Activity 22	No. of land managers & farmers successfully establishing oil mallees	30 Nov of each year of the project commencing 30 Nov 2010	50 land managers & farmers
Activity 23	Area (ha) successfully established to oil mallees	30 Nov of each year of the project commencing 30 Nov 2010	500 ha
Activity 24	No. of land managers & farmers successfully establishing tree crops	30 Nov of each year of the project commencing 30 Nov 2010	10 land managers & farmers
Activity 25	Area (ha) successfully established to tree crops	30 Nov of each year of the project commencing 30 Nov 2010	100 ha of tree crops
Activity 26	No. of participants attended field days, trainings; promotional workshops.	30 June and 30 Nov of each year of the project	70 participants
Activity 27	Change in the KASAP of the engaged land managers and farmers (incentive and extension)	30 Nov of each year of the project commencing 30 Nov 2010	180 farmers and land managers
Activity 28	No. of land managers and farmers participating in incentive received memberships	30 June 2010 30 June 2011	80 land managers and farmers in total
Activity 29	No. of devolved grants projects developed and/or completed	Annually (30 June of each year of the project)	5 devolved grants projects
Improvement			
Activity 30	Review and adjust (if necessary) the Program Logic e.g. No. of land managers and farmers, area (ha) protected through establishment of perennial plants, salt land pastures, oil mallees, and tree crops; assumptions and definitions	31 July - each year of the project	180 land managers and farmers (i.e. 720 over four years)
Activity 31	Review and adjust (if necessary) MERI plan e.g. KEQ, Assumptions; MERI Workplan	31 July - each year of the project	
Activity 32	Review and adjust (if necessary) project workplan	31 July - each year of the project	
Activity 33	Final review of the whole of the wind erosion project to determine what to improve if NACC has to run a similar project again	30 September 2013	

Project MERI activities and budget				
Monitoring				Annual Cost \$
Measure	Method of collection	Frequency of collection	Responsibility	
1. No. of land managers and farmers who have established perennial plants, salt land pastures, oil mallees, tree crops (native and exotic spp) to reduce the risk of wind erosion in the NAR priority areas	Incentive database	On-going	Incentive program manager	14400
2. Area (ha) of land planted to perennial plants	Incentive database	On-going	Incentive program manager	7200

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3. Area (ha) of land planted to salt land pastures	Incentive database	On-going	Incentive program manager	7200
4. Area (ha) of land planted to oil mallees	Incentive database	On-going	Incentive program manager	7200
5. Area (ha) of land planted to] native and exotic species	Incentive database	On-going	Incentive program manager	7200
6. Number of awareness raising events such as demonstrations, field days	Excel spreadsheet	Updated after each event	Wind erosion project coordinator; MERI coordinator	2400
7. Number of training sessions & Workshops held	Excel spreadsheet	Updated after each event	Wind erosion project coordinator; MERI coordinator	2400
8. Number of land managers and farmers who received free membership	Excel spreadsheet	Updated after each event	Wind erosion project coordinator; MERI coordinator	2400
9. Number of devolved grants projects developed and implemented	Excel spreadsheet	Updated after each event	Wind erosion project coordinator; MERI coordinator	2400
10. Number of KASAP surveys (incentives) completed	Incentive KASAP survey	Once, before the incentives are paid	Social Engagement Officer (SEO)	9600
11. Number of KASAP survey (workshop) completed	Extension KASAP survey	Twice, at end of workshop and follow-up phone call	SEO	4800
Evaluation				
Key evaluation question	Methodology for addressing this question	Timeframe	Responsibility	
To what extent has the NACC Wind Erosion Project improved land management practices to reduce the risk of wind erosion?	NACC incentive database; Excel spreadsheet and KASAP survey	Annually (30 June of each year of the project)	Wind erosion project coordinator; MERI coordinator	7200
To what extent have land managers and farmers who participated in field days, training sessions and workshops changed their knowledge and skills?	KASAP survey	Annually commencing 30 Nov 2010	SEO	6000
To what extent have land managers and farmers demonstrated an improvement in knowledge, attitude, skills, aspirations and practices after participating in NACC's incentive and extension programs?	KASAP survey	Annually commencing 30 Nov 2010	SEO	9600

Were the NACC wind erosion project immediate activities the most effective way of getting to the desired Caring for our Country outcomes and targets?	NACC incentive database; Excel spreadsheet and KASAP survey	Annually (30 June of each year of the project)	Wind erosion project coordinator; MERI coordinator	12000
To what extent were the NACC wind erosion planned activities (on-ground incentive works, training, workshops and field days) achieved? Why or why not?	NACC incentive database; Excel spreadsheet	Annually commencing 30 June of each year of the project.	Wind erosion project coordinator; MERI coordinator	7200
Were the NACC wind erosion projects incentive guidelines, EOIs, selection criteria, protocols, incentive management agreements, extension materials effective in engaging farmers' interest?	NACC incentive database; Excel spreadsheet and	Annually commencing 30 June of each year of the project.	Wind erosion project coordinator; MERI coordinator	14400
To what extent did incentives, workshops and field days prove useful in engaging land managers and farmers?	NACC incentive database; Excel spreadsheet and KASAP survey	Annually (30 June of each year of the project)	Wind erosion project coordinator; MERI coordinator	9600
Was the information presented at workshops and field days current and appropriate for the targeted stakeholders?	NACC incentive database; Excel spreadsheet and	Annually commencing 30 June of each year of the project.	Wind erosion project coordinator; MERI coordinator	9600
How many land managers and farmers have established perennial plants, salt land pastures, oil mallees, tree crops (native and exotic spp) to reduce the risk of wind erosion in the NAR priority areas?	NACC incentive database; Excel spreadsheet and KASAP survey	Annually (30 June of each year of the project)	MERI coordinator, wind erosion project coordinator	19200
To what extent did land managers who expressed an interest actually take up an incentive?	NACC incentive database; Excel spreadsheet and KASAP survey	Annually (30 June of each year of the project)	MERI coordinator, wind erosion project coordinator	7200

To what extent did land managers and farmers comply with management agreements to receive incentive payment?	NACC incentive database; Excel spreadsheet and KASAP survey	Annually (30 June of each year of the project)	MERI coordinator, wind erosion project coordinator	12000
To what extent has the NACC wind erosion project's immediate outcomes attained the highest value out of the financial incentives?	NACC incentive database; Excel spreadsheet and KASAP survey	Annually (30 June of each year of the project)	MERI coordinator, wind erosion project coordinator	14400
How did the NACC wind erosion project perform to the budget?	NACC incentive database; Excel spreadsheet and KASAP survey	Annually (30 June of each year of the project)	MERI coordinator, wind erosion project coordinator, Investment program manager	10800
Were the guidelines, procedures and protocols developed for NACC wind erosion incentives according to intended planned timeline?	NACC incentive database; Excel spreadsheet and KASAP survey	Annually (30 June of each year of the project)	MERI coordinator, wind erosion project coordinator	3600
Were the written products such as facts, brochures and newsletters produced according to intended planned timeline?	NACC incentive database; Excel spreadsheet and KASAP survey	Annually (30 June of each year of the project)	MERI coordinator, wind erosion project coordinator	7200
Reporting				
Report	Information sources	Timeframe	Responsibility	
Immediate outcomes reporting e.g. number of land manager and farmers adopted incentives works; number of ha protected; and number of training, workshops, field days held	NACC incentive database; Excel spreadsheet and KASAP survey	30 Nov and 30 June of each year	Wind erosion project coordinator, Investment plan officer, MERI coordinator, program manager	16800
Improvement				
Activity 1	Methodology	Timeframe	Responsibility	
1. Annual Review	Review and adjust (if necessary) the Program Logic, MERI plan, MERI workplan, project workplan	Annually (31 July of each year of the project)	Wind erosion project coordinator, MERI coordinator, Incentive program manager, program manager, SEO	24000
Final project evaluation	Final review of the whole of the wind erosion project to determine what to improve if NACC has to run a similar project again	The end of the project (30 June 2013)	Wind erosion project coordinator, MERI coordinator, Incentive program manager, program manager, SEO	24000
Total MERI cost				\$282,000

2.7 Reports

The Australian Government (AG) reporting requirements and timeframes as specified in the funding agreement for this project.

Table 4 below sets out an example of the reporting requirements for the project and reports to be provided for other key recipients e.g. community based stakeholders, internal organisation, board of management, co-funders etc.

The blank boxes at the bottom of the table allow for you to enter any additional reports required, such as internal reports or reports to other funding bodies. (See MERI Strategy Section 3.5, 3.6 and Appendix 2 for further detail on reporting requirements)

Table 4: reporting requirements

Type of report	Requirements	Recipient	Timeframe
MANDATORY CARING FOR OUR COUNTRY REPORTS			
Interim progress report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Results to date against targets using Caring for our Country reporting template ▪ Summary of expenses ▪ For the period July to 30 November of each year that the project is funded 	AG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ With in 60 days of the 30 November for each year of the project
Annual progress report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Results to date against targets using Caring for our Country reporting template ▪ For the period December to 30 June of each year that the project is funded ▪ Financial year funding acquittal for period July to June for each year that the project is funded 	AG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ With in 60 days of the 30 June each year of the project
Final project performance report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Final compilation and assessment of all the Project data/results <i>(May include information from mid-year reports, annual reports, and other research reports)</i> ▪ Summative conclusion on achievements biophysical and /or social, cultural economic or environmental change that has occurred. ▪ Final project financial acquittal for the whole of the projects life 	AG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ With in 60 days of the specified completion date for the project
Milestone report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mandatory report specified against a milestone 	AG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ As specified in Deed of Agreement
OTHER REPORTS			
	<i>Other reports(s) required by project proponents for communications purposes or to co funders of a project</i>		

3. Program Logic

Program Logic is a key element of an evaluation process as it shows a series of expected consequences, not just a series of events, at different outcomes levels within the logic. The program logic describes the relationships between activities and desired outcomes.

The overarching Caring for our Country MERI Strategy is underpinned by program logic, against which the key evaluation questions about the initiative can be clearly articulated. The outcomes range in type and timing from immediate through to longer-term outcomes, and build on foundations such as plans, frameworks, systems, and agreements for knowledge, communication and partnerships.

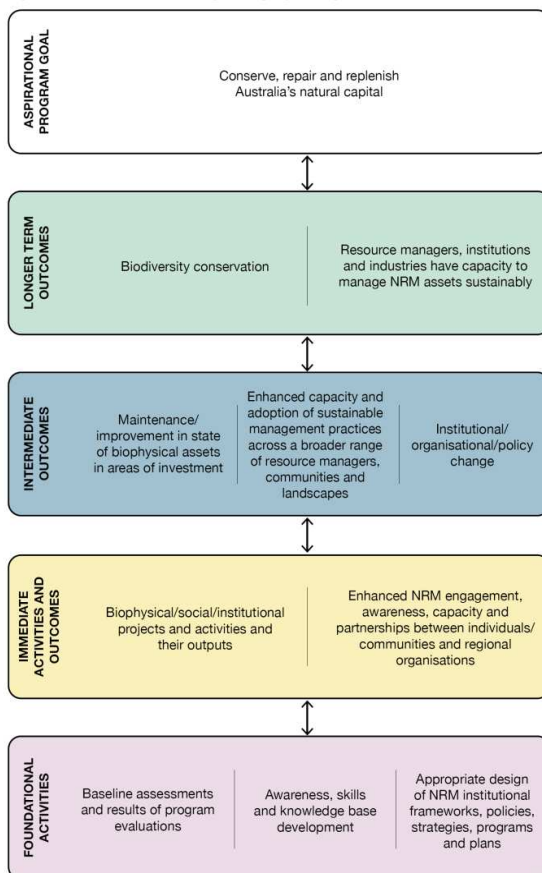
A typical program logic hierarchy for a natural resource management project is illustrated at figure 1

Figure 1: Example of Project Logic hierarchy

Program logic(s) for this MERI plan should be included at Attachment 1

(See *Developing and Using Program Logic in Natural Resource Management User Guide*)

Figure 1 Natural resource management program logic



3.1 Assumptions within the logic and managing risk

Table 5: Managing risk

Assumptions	Likelihood of assumption being wrong 1–5 (1 = rare, 5 = almost certain)	Consequences for longer-term outcomes if assumption is wrong 1–5 (1 = extreme, 5 = insignificant)	Key evidence to support this	Assumption will be tested
The risk and impact of wind erosion will continue to increase as the effects of climate change become more apparent	2	5	CSIRO, IPCC reports	No (Minimal risk)
Land managers and farmers in the NAR priority areas will uptake improved management practices	2	1	NACC targeted investment program draft outcomes report, NACC River care on-ground works	Yes (High risk)
Established perennial plants, salt land pasture, oil mallees and other tree crops will reduced the risk of wind erosion in the NAR priority areas	2	2	DAFWA perennial trails results, Evergreen Perennial pastures on-ground works in the NAR, Tree windbreaks in the Wheatbelt (<i>DAFWA Bulletin 4723</i>), NACC eastern Oil Mallees incentive project outcomes report	Yes (Medium risk)
Land managers and farmers are likely to change their land management practices if incentives are offered	2	2	NACC targeted investment program draft outcomes report, NACC River care on-ground works	Yes (Medium risk)
Land managers and farmers will express interests in the wind erosion incentives and sign management agreements	1	1	NACC targeted investment program draft outcomes report	Yes (Medium risk)
Land managers and farmers will participate in training, field days and workshops to improve their land management practices	2	2	NACC Pasture to Pocket grazing management courses outcomes report, NACC wind erosion farm forestry and windbreak training outcomes report	Yes (Medium risk)
Land managers and farmers will find training on improved soil management practices useful and are prepared to change their knowledge, attitude, skills, aspirations and practices	2	3	Pannell et al 2006; Penny and Miller 2006	Yes (Low risk)
Land managers and farmers find training on improved soil management practices useful and are prepared to change their knowledge, attitude, skills, aspirations and practices	2	2	NACC targeted investment program draft outcomes report, NACC salinity rehabilitation	Yes (Medium risk)

Land managers and farmers will comply with management agreements to receive incentive payments	2	5	extension project final report	
Farmer is a separate individual implementing one incentive type			NACC land program logic targets review draft report	No (Minimal risk)
Training content is appropriate for land managers and farmers	2	2	NACC wind erosion farm forestry and windbreak training outcomes report, KASAP evaluation farm forestry training results	Yes (Medium risk)
Land managers and farmers participated in the training, workshops and field days will stay engaged in NRM program	2	4	NACC Pasture to Pocket grazing management courses outcomes report, NACC wind erosion farm forestry and windbreak training outcomes report	No (Minimal risk)
On average, one farmer will plant 40ha of perennial pasture at \$200/ha	2	3	NACC targeted investment program draft outcomes report	No (Low risk)
On average, one farmer will establish 10 ha of saltbush at \$400/ha	2	3	NACC targeted investment program draft outcomes report	Yes (Low risk)
On average, one farmer will strategically plant 10 ha of Oil Mallees at \$500ha	2	3	NACC targeted investment program draft outcomes report, NACC eastern Oil Mallees incentive project outcomes report	Yes (Low risk)
On average, one farmer will establish 10 ha of tree crops as windbreak at \$1000:/ha	2	3	NACC targeted investment program draft outcomes report	Yes (Low risk)

4. Evaluation questions

Table 6 below illustrates the key evaluation questions and the other evaluation questions that relate to them.

Table 6: Data sources and methods to address evaluation questions

KEQs	Other-evaluation questions	Method	Frequency
IMPACT			
To what extent has the NACC Wind Erosion Project improved land management practices to reduce the risk of wind erosion?	How many land managers and farmers have adopted improved land management practices in the NAR priority area through NACC incentive program?	NACC incentive database e.g. Record No. of farmers & land managers adopted incentives, Record No. of ha protected; KASAP survey	Annually Commencing 30 Nov 2010
To what extent have land managers and farmers who have been involved in incentives improved land management practices to reduce the risk of wind erosion on their properties?	How many incentive management agreements were signed with land managers and farmers? To what extent did land managers and farmers comply with management agreements to receive incentive payment?	NACC incentive database e.g. Record No. of farmers & land managers adopted incentives, Record No. of ha protected; KASAP survey	Annually Commencing 30 June 2010
To what extent have land managers and farmers who participated in field days, training sessions and workshops changed their knowledge and skills?	How many land managers and farmers completed a KASAP survey?	KASAP survey, No. of farmers attended workshops and field days,	Annually Commencing 30 Nov 2010
To what extent have land managers and farmers demonstrated an improvement in knowledge, attitude, skills, aspirations and practices after participating in NACC's incentive programs?	How many land managers and farmers have participated in NACC incentive program to improve their land management practices?	KASAP survey	Annually Commencing 30 Nov 2010
	What increase has there been in the number of land managers and farmers improving their land management practices to reduce the risk of soil loss through wind erosion?	NACC incentive database e.g. Record No. of farmers & land managers adopted incentives, No. of farmers attended workshops and field days, Record No. of ha protected; KASAP survey	Annually Commencing 30 June 2010
EFFECTIVENESS			
Were the NACC wind erosion project immediate activities the most effective way of getting to the desired Caring for our Country outcomes and		NACC incentive spatial data; Record No. of farmers & land managers adopted improved management practices; KASAP survey.	Annually (30 June of each year of the project)

targets?			
To what extent were the NACC wind erosion planned activities (on-ground incentive works, training, workshops and field days) achieved? Why or why not?		NACC incentive database e.g. Record No. of farmers & land managers adopted incentives, No. of farmers attended workshops and field days, Record No. of ha protected; KASAP survey	Annually (30 Nov and 30 June of each year of the project)
	Were the NACC wind erosion projects incentive guidelines, EOIs, selection criteria, protocols, incentive management agreements, extension materials effective in engaging farmers interest?	Collation and compilation of existing information	Twice a year commencing 30 Nov 2009
APPROPRIATENESS			
To what extent did incentives, workshops and field days prove useful in engaging land managers?	Was the information presented at the workshops and field days current and appropriate for the targeted stakeholders?	NACC incentive database e.g. Record No. of farmers & land managers adopted incentives, No. of farmers attended workshops and field days, Record No. of ha protected; KASAP survey	Annually commencing 30 Nov 2010
How many land managers and farmers have established perennial plants, salt land pastures, oil mallees, tree crops (native and exotic spp) to reduce the risk of wind erosion in the NAR priority areas?		NACC incentive database e.g. Record No. of farmers & land managers adopted incentives, No. of farmers attended workshops and field days, Record No. of ha protected; KASAP survey	Annually commencing 30 Nov 2010
To what extent did land managers who expressed an interest actually take up an incentive?		NACC incentive database e.g. Record No. of farmers & land managers adopted incentives, No. of farmers attended workshops and field days, Record No. of ha protected; KASAP survey	Annually commencing 30 Nov 2010
To what extent did land managers and farmers comply with management agreements to receive incentive payment?	How many expressions of interest were received and signed by the land managers and farmers in the NAR priority areas?	NACC incentive database e.g. Record No. of farmers & land managers adopted incentives, No. of farmers attended workshops and field days, Record No. of ha protected; KASAP survey	Annually commencing 30 Nov 2010

EFFICIENCY			
To what extent has the NACC wind erosion project's immediate outcomes attained the highest value out of the financial incentives?		NACC incentive database e.g. Record No. of farmers & land managers adopted incentives, No. of farmers attended workshops and field days, Record No. of ha protected; KASAP survey	Annually commencing 30 Nov 2010
How did the NACC wind erosion project perform to the budget?		Data collected via project financial acquittals reporting	Annually commencing 30 Nov 2010

5. Improvement

5.1 Reviewing the MERI plan

Regular reflection on data, strategies, management processes and progress informs an adaptive management approach for continuous quality improvement of the project.

Table 7 provides a model for the review of the MERI plan, associated program logic(s) and for recording changes to achieve improvements in project implementation.

Table 7 MERI Plan Review Schedule

Date	Participants	Type of review	Resources/materials required	Agreed adaptive management strategy	Communicate results
July each year for four years	NACC wind erosion project coordinator, MERI plan manager, and Investment program coordinator, Investment project officer, and Incentive program manager, and Social engagement officer	Annual project review	Program logic, MERI plan, Project work plan, KASAP results		August each year for four years
July each year for four years	NACC wind erosion project coordinator, MERI plan manager, Social engagement officer	Amendment of project delivery timeframe, project guidelines and criteria, MERI plan	Program logic, MERI plan, Project work plan, KASAP survey		September each year for four years

5.2 The feedback cycle

The feedback cycle documents how the project influences the project plan and informs key users of the plan and other stakeholders whether the assumptions, targets, investment approaches including partnerships, were correct and appropriate and whether a good job was done in managing any particular risks

- Annually (i.e. 31 July of each year of the project), the Wind erosion project coordinator, MERI coordinator, Incentive program manager, program manager, SEO will meet, review and adjust (if necessary) the Program Logic, wind erosion project assumptions, project workplan, MERI plan, MERI workplan.
- In August for each year of the project, lessons learnt will then be communicated to key stakeholders and feedback used to improve the wind erosion project MERI plan.

5.3 Communicating results

Where appropriate develop strategies to communicate evaluation results to maximise learning and improvement within the project and more broadly within the community.

- Use existing newsletters to communicate NACC wind erosion project results,
- Use NACC websites to communicate NACC wind erosion project MERI plan
- Outcomes reporting to Australian Government, NACC board of directors and wider community

Attachment 1

Attach project program logic

Attachment 2

Attach MERI workplan and budget.