

Chapter 1

Report on the Workshop on Integrated Catchment Management Processes. 7 April 1995, Mercure Inn, Townsville

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INTRODUCTION

A new research project, based on a case study in the Herbert River catchment of north Queensland, is focussing on the development of an improved range of strategies for planning and implementing more effective catchment management programmes in Australia. The research is being jointly undertaken by: the CSIRO Division of Tropical Crops and Pastures; the CSIRO Division of Water Resources/Australian Research Centre for Water in Society (ARCWIS); the Department of Geographical Sciences and Planning, University of Queensland; and the Department of Primary Industries, Queensland. It is funded by these organisations with the support of the Land and Water Resources Research and Development Corporation (LWRRDC).

This report provides a summary of the outcomes of a workshop held on 7 April 1995 at the Mercure Inn, Townsville. The workshop involved a range of participants from within the Herbert community, industry, state and local government, and key research bodies, who had an interest in Integrated Catchment Management (ICM) in Queensland, and in the Herbert Catchment ICM process, in particular.

Workshop Aim

The principle aims of the workshop were to:

- (i) Inform participants of the new research on ICM processes being undertaken in the Herbert catchment; and
- (ii) Gain input from a diversity of stakeholders of ICM on what they consider are the most important factors for an effective ICM process.

Workshop Process

In order to gain an understanding of the breadth and diversity of perspective on ICM processes rather than a consensus view, participants were organised into four groups (see Appendix A) as broadly representative of:

1. Herbert River community/industry groups
2. State Government agencies
3. Research institutions
4. Herbert River constituency groups.

Three main workshop sessions were held during the course of the day (see Appendix B). At each session, a separate question was addressed by the four groups:

Session 1: Land and water management issues

In your opinion, what are the land and water management issues in the Herbert and why?

Session 2: Institutional issues

In your opinion, what are the government, industry and community organisational issues in successful ICM, and why?

Session 3: Moving forward

In your opinion, what issues are important in increasing effective government, industry and community involvement in ICM, and how?

At the end of each session, each participant group was asked to present to the full forum a summary of their discussions. A final session reviewed some key questions arising from the day's discussions.

SESSION 1: LAND AND WATER MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Participants were first asked to respond to the question, "*In your opinion, what are the land and water management issues in the Herbert and why?*". This session sought to ascertain what the participants perceived to be the priority land and water management issues in the Herbert catchment at this time, and most importantly, the reasons why these issues were of importance or concern. The responses to these questions have been summarised under ten broad categories, which are not necessarily mutually exclusive but reflect the breadth of the key participant perspective presented at the workshop.

Note: the broad categories are not in any particular order of priority.

1. Lack of effective long term planning of water management with land development

Agricultural production and expansion, urban development, and tourist facilities influence/impact on:

(a) *water quality* in rivers/streams and groundwater systems, as well as offshore zones. For example, chemical pollution, increased nutrient loads in both surface and ground water resources, increased turbidity due to fertilisers, effluent, and "other" effluent from aquaculture and sugar mills lead to increased treatment costs, potential environmental problems (such as loss of river and coastal ecosystems, algal blooms, lowered water utility value), and impacts on vegetation and fauna (such as reduction in 'habitat' value).

(b) *quantity of water available* (e.g. inadequate surface supply, changed flooding patterns, increasing demand for irrigation of cane in dry cycles, and changed/reduced recharge rates for (deep) aquifers) which lead to social conflicts and consequent undesirable impacts including economic hardships, quality of life, and environmental problems.

The general view presented was that there is a need for the development of strategies for long term planning for improved water quality and quantity management with land use and development.

2. Lack of co-ordinated drainage strategies for the catchment

The lack of long term planning of drainage in a co-ordinated way within the catchment with the expansion of cane lands, development of forestry areas, and the building of levees has led to a range of land management problems related largely to altered flowpaths causing localised flooding and prolonged impounding of water. The impacts include:

- loss of crop production
- land degradation
- habitat destruction
- potential impacts on ground water resources/tables
- potential acid sulphate soil problems

A need was recognised for (a) the identification and management of detention areas or sumps, and (b) the development of co-ordinated "environmentally friendly" outlets through mangrove areas for drainage off adjacent canelands.

3. **Flood protection**

There is no general consensus on how much flood protection is required in the lower Herbert catchment. In general, there is: (a) a lack of resources to provide flood protection to many areas; and (b) unreasonable expectations by some members of the community re: the reality of what can be done to provide protection.

Primary causes of localised flooding are: (a) the construction of roads through farms which act as "defacto levees", and alter flow paths and/or impound water for a period of time; and (b) river aggradation (silting). In general it is a vicious cycle (e.g. altered flows cause flooding and vice versa; while aggradation increases the likelihood of further flooding).

The consequences of flood protection are: (a) inequitable flood patterns; and (b) social conflicts.

4. **Riparian zone management**

There is a need for flexibility in guidelines for managing the interface between "the farm" and the riparian zone. On the one hand, there is a need for retention and/or restoration of riparian vegetation to: (a) maintain/reduce loss of habitat and (b) provide stream bank stability. On the other hand, a number of trade-offs need to be taken into account: (a) riparian areas ultimately drain to a stream and the outlet has to be "agriculturally viable", and (b) pest management adjacent to riparian zones has to be balanced against the need for retention of vegetation to stabilise stream bank areas.

5. **Habitat management and protection**

A need was proposed for prevention of loss/modification and/or fragmentation of habitat, as well as the maintenance of corridors, for the protection and preservation of:

- rare and threatened species
- fisheries resource
- Wet tropics/world heritage areas (including the GBR)
- biodiversity
- system function
- amenity.

This issue arises because of, for example:

- increasing public pressure/expectations, particularly with the clearing of land
- differences in perception or opinion, in particular relating to rates of change
- differing perceptions of the role of the catchment, for example, a habitat or a base for production
- increasing alienation/fragmentation of land for other "productive" uses.

Another view expressed was that there is a lack of understanding within the community etc. of the full range of values of water courses, such as:

- drains
- fishing spots
- habitats
- water sources
- amenity areas
- recreation areas.

The need for maintenance of recreational use of land was seen to be threatened by: (a) the alienation of land for other uses, and (b) habitat modification. A need was therefore

recognised for all interests to get together to 'quantify' these values, so that everyone becomes aware of them. However, it was noted that not all these values are tangible. One view proposed that the River Trust should be 'facilitated' to manage the river in view of *all* of these values, and that the Trust needed to be "promoted to be publically accountable".

It was perceived that this issue could be addressed by ICM through the development of a 'Catchment Master Plan', i.e. through a land use planning process.

6. **Increased soil erosion and sedimentation in river system**

Soil erosion and particularly sedimentation in river systems is a major problem caused by, for example:

- lack of vegetation cover
- river bank collapse
- loss of riparian vegetation
- stock concentration along water courses/river banks in the upper catchment
- road construction
- old mining areas.

However, major slips in the gorge also contribute to sedimentation in the river and this begs the question of what is "normal" erosion.

The effects of increased soil erosion and sedimentation include:

- river aggradation (e.g. building of islands in the river)
- impacts on the hydraulic capacity of the river system
- "breakdowns" of river banks (which leads to land loss, infrastructure damage, economic loss)
- increased coastal ecosystem sedimentation (e.g. impact on reefs).

The residual effects of historical alluvial tin mining in the upper catchment are:

- increased river sedimentation downstream
- downstream/lower catchment impacts on water quality and in particular domestic/urban water supply.

7. **Pest management planning**

There is a State legislative requirement for the management of pests (i.e. plants and animals). The consequences of inadequate planning and management include:

- undesirable impacts on cane and pasture productivity
- environmental considerations.

Another view expressed was that pest management adjacent to riparian zones has to be balanced against the need for retention of vegetation to stabilise these areas.

8. **Long term sustainability of agriculture**

The loss of agricultural land (e.g. to urban use, tourism, parks), declining soil fertility, and fragmentation of agricultural lands are major land use 'conflict' that impacts on the long term sustainability of agriculture. The effects of loss of agricultural land include: (a) loss of production and consequently profitability; and (b) conservation losses.

Overgrazing by the pastoral industry particularly in the upper catchment was perceived by some to impact on the pastoral industry viability and land resource sustainability. In particular there is a need for better drought management strategies for the industry.

9. Land development/conservation conflicts

Caneland expansion and clearing for rural development purposes lead to:

- increased runoff
- increased flooding
- changes to drainage patterns
- loss of wetlands, sumps
- nutrients in runoff.

One view presented was the need for a cultural change in respect of agriculture from "every man for himself" to "regulation and polluter pays" principles. However there is: (a) a "lack of integration" of producers and consumers, and (b) a lack of "common interest" between rural and urban communities. Farmers however tend to carry the burden for environmental protection. Consumers do not "naturally" make the link between production and consumption. The impact of environmental controls must be on *all* communities, not only farmers.

Another view presented was that landholders may not be concerned with the "common resource", that is they do not often look beyond their own boundaries and therefore lose the bigger picture. This was considered to be in part due to inadequate understanding of the causes and consequences, such as, loss of aquatic habitat or biodiversity.

10. Community values and conflicts

One view expressed was that changing community goals as well as evolving value systems are a key influence on the degree and nature of conflict over land and water management issues in the Herbert River catchment.

SESSION 2: INSTITUTIONAL ISSUES

Participants responded to the Question: *In your opinion, what are the government, industry and community organisational issues in successful ICM and why?* This question sought to obtain participants' attitudes to the organisational constraints to achieving ICM in the Herbert River. This was interpreted widely to include the characteristics of the approach to ICM adopted in Queensland, as well as the attitudes and activities of the major stakeholders government and community. The workshop was not guided strongly in any direction but it was anticipated and hoped that the participants would touch on the identified elements of the evaluation framework including:

- the objectives of the ICM program
- financial resources and commitment
- coordination amongst implementing agencies
- policies, plans and decision rules of relevant agencies
- recruitment of staff
- opportunities for public involvement

The four focus groups attacked the problem in different ways and their responses have been summarised under three headings:

1. Attitudes and Perspective of Stakeholders
2. Commitment and Support for ICM
3. Coordination and Implementation

1. THE ATTITUDES AND PERSPECTIVE OF STAKEHOLDERS

1.1 General Issues

- there is a need to create a common understanding of ICM - understanding the big picture on all of this as to why ICM is needed
- by creating a better understanding of important community benefits from ICM, projects will help to unify community support and assist the development of projects which can be modified to obtain a win win outcome
- ICM should not be seen as a separate entity (i.e. process rather than institution), but as a "way of doing business"

1.2 Stakeholders

- who are the key stakeholders?
- have we clearly identified their responsibilities?
- there is significant variability between local governments in the region
- special interests groups have to be part of ICM, especially industry, as: (a) they are the users of land and natural resources, (b) they have specific interests which have broader implications, and (c) what they do impacts on others
- there is too much reliance now on the individual in the catchment
- it still boils down to personality/personal motivation - do the groups involved share a common vision?

1.3 Conflicts of interest

- between state government departments/agencies, e.g DPI - Forestry, Water Resources, Land Management
- in the community about development: ICM, growers, conservationists
- concern about international interest: exports, conservation agreements (such as the World Heritage Area)
- national - federal intervention and economic policy
- over land tenure and individual v's community rights
- there are also conflicts among "experts" about biophysical processes and also on which mechanisms to use (e.g. statutory, etc.)

2. COMMITMENT AND SUPPORT FOR ICM

2.1 General Issues

- the most essential task is to gain long term commitment to the process (i.e. in it for the long - haul)
- the (Qld ICM) model is expecting the local community to be able to do it all (pick up on all this information)
- there is the need for local government support because it is the most important action agency, and it has its own representation and structure
- need for federal and state governments to foster cooperation within the community on specific issues such as river management and wetlands retention
- need for community support for funding of projects
- the government requires support of at least 70 - 75% of the community to go ahead, so ICM won't help a divided community
- there is a lack of resources and the government is cutting back on their commitment (\$; employees)
- it seems that government is the hardest to get on side and committed to ICM (more so than agriculture industry and community)

- need support from local government agencies - problems with lack of local control, and authority always come from the top "Brisbane Boffins"
- there is not enough of an educational program within bureaucracy - how can we start to do this ?
- need commitment from the top officials of institutions to participate in order to make ICM work
- is "ICM" relevant to Joe Blow?
- need to ensure continuity of political commitment at local, state and federal levels
- clear "drive" from community level
- need for Valuer General recognition to provide rate relief

2.2 Commitment to Implementation

- there are problems with the voluntary Queensland approach to integrated catchment management, which currently is ad hoc and has only "advisory" status
- difficulty in reaching consensus in such an approach - how then to implement? to deal with peer pressure? to educate? That is compared with regulatory TCM in NSW, land use controls, the Environmental Protection Act, and planning schemes
- need political will to implement legislation
- need land tenure and use controls on leasehold lands (e.g. "lands" policy - freehold - use "rights")
- industry codes of practice as an offset to legislation

Causes of these problems include: lack of expertise; identified lines of communication; people only understand ICM from the issues that affect them; and the general lack of stakeholder's commitment, including government departments.

3. COORDINATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

3.1 Coordination

- there is an urgent need for co-ordination for efficient use of resources, i.e. achieving a movement in the same direction/to appreciate all aspects
- doing things in isolation (e.g. individual government agencies)
- are those on (the ICM) committee the right people (e.g. to link back to their organisation)? Are they legitimate representatives of their stakeholder group?
- local authority - should go back to local government
- need to co-ordinate land and water management controls
- provide community input through advisory groups

3.2 Means

- can ICM outcomes be put in a strategic plan? (statutory)
- identify the appropriate mechanisms for each ICM outcome
- use existing mechanisms wherever possible
- there is a problem of do they know when to use their mechanisms and when to influence? Need to identify who has the mechanisms and influences, and gain their support (re: when to use them - "empower" them)
- there is a question as to whether there should be a lead government agency (i.e. DPI in Qld), or a suite of collaborating agencies?
- the effectiveness of ICM depends on communication - "inter and intra"

3.3 Processes

- there is a need to establish the credibility of the process in the long term - monitoring assessment of ICM and effects (e.g. why do it if no identified outcomes?)

- who - administrators? pays?
- there are equity questions - is compensation payable?
- who is responsible for the on-going management of the ICM program:
 - is there a lead agency? Is there structure?
 - does ICM process have credibility at: department level and community level?
 - are the resources available to effect action?
 - does ICM need legislative authority?
 - organisational politics influencing representation: following party lines
 - territoriality
 - ICM needs recognition as a "peak body"

3.4 Planning

- use shire planning - development controls
- impact on infrastructure on adjacent lands (eg. roads)

SESSION 3: MOVING FORWARD

After having discussed land and water management issues and organisational influences it was fitting to conclude the group sessions by focussing on factors considered influential in stimulating involvement in ICM. Hence, in Session 3, participants were asked the question: *In your opinion, what issues are important in increasing effective government, industry and community involvement in ICM, and how?* How to encourage the participation of different interests in a combined effort on a whole catchment scale certainly constitutes a burning question. To help prompt discussions, participants were asked to consider how to increase ICM's perceived significance and stakeholder motivation in the Herbert and, to do this, the four "Cs" of establishing *confidence, credibility, commitment and continuity* were highlighted.

Note: the following categories constitute broad groupings and are not mutually exclusive.

1. Establish confidence and credibility.

Important broad issues needing to be considered when attempting to increase involvement include ways to increase or secure:

- accountability
- clear identification of all stakeholders
- broad representation of stakeholders (not just the major vested interests), including support from community, industry and government
- defined responsibilities
- resources for concrete action

This will require being active/proactive in the community, using the media, and harnessing the talent and drive of those already committed to the ICM process. One specific suggestion for establishing credibility was to focus on (and aim to ensure) examples of effective ICM implementation are provided from within the catchment or elsewhere. One possible focus could be the establishment of a specific, measurable project within the catchment to highlight progress (eg. a flood plain level system).

Another example put forward was to highlight precursors to modern ICM (such as the local drainage boards) and to show how the situation *before* (eg. conflict, poor productivity) was less appealing than *after* their inception (eg. a "win-win" situation, improved production).

Other activities could include prioritising issues and subsequently convening community workshops on those deemed to be relevant (eg. levee banks), involving action/implementing agencies in the ICM process, and ensuring that *all* relevant industries (such as agriculture, tourism and other industries) are involved in examining strategic (long-term) water supply needs.

A related point here is that ICM denotes a “living process”. While attending meetings is an important part of the overall process, there are many other activities and considerations (such as community workshops) which need to be entertained.

2. **Foster and maintain commitment and motivation**

Commitment and motivation to be involved in ICM can be enhanced by identifying the need for ICM; that is, by fully examining/uncovering local issues. Statutory bodies required to fulfil the aims of ICM should also be identified around this time.

The steering committee (CCC?) could be the main body to identify issues and to focus on key outcomes attainable through ICM. Efforts should be made to make the issues as transparent as possible in order to gain a common understanding for all.

At every stage, progress must be demonstrated to stakeholders at all levels of involvement. Commitment and motivation could also be enhanced by starting on and demonstrating an issue which is small, topical and measurable. An example is nutrient tracing through the catchment, which can essentially be a “win-win” illustration. Thus, as with the means to achieve confidence and credibility noted above, results must be demonstrated.

Other suggestions include:

- setting up terms of reference for ICM (to be done by the CCC)
- gaining media (and other) publicity
- running awareness sessions
- providing the opportunity for local people/identities to address the CCC.

3. **Ensure continuity**

Such efforts need to cater for loss of motivation and burnout, and to adequately deal with related issues such as the fact that ICM is often (certainly in its initial stages) more process than product and may lack biophysical outcomes for a considerable time.

The fact that CCC members may have “too many hats” also needs to be resolved (eg. by efficient use of proxy). This is particularly the case when noting the recommendation that the CCC should meet regularly (in order to be effective). A further recommendation to help cater for over commitment is to (when possible) focus on doing small jobs one at a time.

One factor which needs consideration is the selection process of CCC members, with a recommended onus being on seeking people who are enthusiastic.

The role of the coordinator/facilitator clearly is vital in maintaining continuity (especially when considering the lack of any other DPI presence in Ingham). The position should be well-funded.

4. **Promote education and awareness**

Examples are to:

- publicise ICM goals and activities and “sell” ICM results (and praise)
- place an onus on achieving some visible outcomes (whether process or product)
- invite the media to ICM activities
- project ICM’s role/responsibility to the community - emphasise that it is more than just “another committee” and aim to ensure ICM does have some use-value to those who seek advice
- set up a means for landholders and other stakeholders to obtain such advice
- use key individuals as a catalyst for change
- communicate that ICM does not signify “loss of power”
- participate in school projects (eg. via a CCC sub committee)
- aim to gain resources from the community, industry and government

5. **Act to resolve conflict**

One major point noted is that conflict resolution needs to be accepted as having a central role within ICM. Indeed, conflict is inevitable due to inherent tensions/contradictions in ICM processes such as prioritisation and evaluation of issues/problems.

Ideas put forward here for lessening the need for “obtrusive” conflict resolution included increasing awareness, gaining accurate data and information early on, ensuring people go to the right information source, and carefully examining the consequences of management options.

Another group put forward the key to resolving/lessening conflict as the achievement of commitment to ICM by all participants. This could be realised by building trust between people, endeavouring to build a comfortable social group, finding common ground and components of community value, and identifying tradeoffs and incentives.

It was also noted that legislation and arbitration/mediation could be employed (only) as a final resolution for conflict.

6. **Streamline technical support**

This could possibly be achieved using GIS as a means for information coordination and for forming a land management database with sound information and data. A GIS users group could be formed to assist here.

7. **Achieve clear and measurable objectives** (including quantifiable benefits)

These should be concrete, have assigned responsibilities (eg. for monitoring), and contain defined milestones (eg. monitoring and evaluation dates).

Prospective benefits that are credible and can be assessed should be emphasised.

8. **Investigate possible government mechanisms**

For example, possibilities include using:

- Co-ordinator General
- local government strategic plans (while recognising possible limitations)
- catchments as units of regional planning
- voluntary contracts between local governments, Port Arthur, DEH, DPI
- Trunts inlet model

9. Develop industry codes of practice

Assess, for example, how ICM codes of practice may be related to those of the EPA and NRM (correct?).

10. Give due weight to all considerations (whether social, economic or environmental)

Most of these appear at least initially to apply to the operations of the CCC. For example, there is a need to:

- attach community and economic values to planning options
- recognise the influence of sugar prices
- consider the local politics and other contextual social influences inherent in all discussions (while, at the same time, attempting to keep things focussed)
- balance competing objectives
- account for issues in the upper catchment
- ensure local government talk on a catchment basis (as has happened)
- ensure administrative assistance
- share secretarial duties
- get information out to the wider community
- delegate responsibilities from CCC representatives (to members of their various bodies?)

assess the potential (via a state/national review of ICM) for setting up a whole-of-government advisory group .

APPENDIX A - WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

Group 1: Herbert Community and Industry Groups

Bill Barnes	Herbert River Catchment Co-ordinating Committee Herbert River Improvement Trust
Roy Pace	Cane Productivity Board CANEGROWERS
Ray Quabba	Herbert River Catchment Co-ordinating Committee CANEGROWERS Cane Productivity Board
Peter Sheedy	CANEGROWERS

Group 2: Government Agency Representatives

Steve Gilbert	Department of Lands, Townsville
Peter James	Department of Lands, Townsville
Peter Lindwall	Department of Housing, Local Government and Planning, Townsville
Lynn McTaggart	Department of Housing, Local Government and Planning, Townsville
Mike Merrin	ICM Co-ordinator, Johnstone River ICM

Group 3: Research Agencies

Jon Brodie	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, Townsville
Jeremy Conversi	Sinclair Kinglit Mertz, Townsville
John Taylor	CSIRO, Division of Tropical Crops and Pastures, Brisbane
Peter Zahnlieter	Sinclair Kinglit Mertz, Brisbane

Group 4: Herbert Catchment Constituency Groups

Alan Harvey	Hinchinbrook Shire Council, Ingham
Dave Horsley	Herbert River Catchment Co-ordinating Committee; CSR Pty. Ltd, Ingham.
Richard Humphries Council	Herbert River Catchment Co-ordinating Committee; Herberton Shire Council
Rob Hunt	ICM Co-ordinator, Herbert River ICM, Ingham

Project Researchers

Jenny Bellamy	CSIRO, Division of Tropical Crops and Pastures, Brisbane.
James Butterworth	CSIRO, Division of Water Resources, and Australian Research Centre for Water in Society, Perth
Andrew Johnson	CSIRO, Division of Tropical Crops and Pastures, Townsville
Geoff McDonald	Department of Geographical Sciences and Planning, University of Queensland, Brisbane
Geoff Syme	CSIRO, Division of Water Resources, and Australian Research Centre for Water in Society, Perth
Daniel Walker	CSIRO, Division of Tropical Crops and Pastures, Townsville

APPENDIX B:

AGENDA

9:00 - 9:45	Aim of workshop; Introductions; Aim of project; The Herbert Catchment (Chair : Jenny Bellamy)
9:45 - 10:00	Workshop process (Chair : Geoff Syme)
10:00 - 10:20	Tea break
10:20 - 11:35	Session 1: Land and Water Management Issues (Chair : Andrew Johnson)
11:35 - 12:50	Session 2: Organizational Issues (Chair : Geoff McDonald)
12:50 - 1:45	Lunch
1:45 - 3:00	Session 3: Moving Forward (Chair : James Butterworth)
3:00 - 3:20	Tea break
3:20 - 4:00	Review/summary (Chair : Geoff Syme, Geoff McDonald, Jenny Bellamy)

APPENDIX C: SESSION QUESTIONS

Group:

HERBERT CATCHMENT ICM PROJECT

SESSION: Land and Water Management Issues

In your opinion, what are the land and water management issues in the Herbert and why?

ISSUE _____ _____ _____
WHY _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
Should ICM deal with this issue? Yes/No

Group:

HERBERT CATCHMENT ICM PROJECT

SESSION: Institutional Issues

In your opinion, what are the government, industry and community organizational issue in successful ICM, and why?

ISSUE _____ _____ _____
WHY _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
Should ICM deal with this issue? Yes/No/Maybe

Group:

HERBERT CATCHMENT ICM PROJECT

SESSION: Moving Forward

In your opinion, what issues are important in increasing effective government, industry and community involvement in ICM, and why?

ISSUE _____

WHY _____
