

The Management Plan and planning process Values Mapping Issues Paper

Purpose of a management plan

The purpose of a Management Plan is to identify values, threats (real and potential) to those values, and uses that are consistent with maintaining ecological character while sustaining the livelihoods of local communities.

The 5 key steps in the Management Planning process are:

1. Identifying priority values
2. Identifying threats to the priority values
3. Identifying the sources of those threats
4. Developing management strategies and recommending actions to manage those threats, including goals for each priority value
5. Monitoring & review – allowing changes and adaptation to new needs and ways of thinking.

Note: This approach is known in conservation science as the **‘5S’ approach** to planning, the steps including - Identifying the **Systems, Stresses** and their **Sources**, Developing cooperative management **Strategies** and Measuring **Success**.

Community-based management planning: a summary of key activities

1. Undertake a desktop assessment and prepare a Background Paper
2. Guided by the Background Paper, establish a Community Reference Group (CRG) and Scientific and Technical Advisory Group (STAG)
3. Consult with the CRG and STAG on the Background Paper via a facilitated workshop
4. Undertake a values, condition and threat assessment (desktop and/or on-ground) and prepare an Issues Paper
5. Develop a Communication Strategy to disseminate information in the Issues Paper to raise broad awareness in the community
6. Consult with the CRG and STAG on the Issues Paper and Communication Strategy, via focus groups and a facilitated workshop
7. Implement the Communication Strategy
8. Develop the Draft Management Plan in consultation with the STAG and following feedback from the CRG and broader community (through the Communications Strategy)
9. Consult with the CRG and STAG on the Draft Management Plan, via a facilitated workshop
10. Public release of the Draft Management Plan

For further information on what’s involved in undertaking these activities, download the [Community-based management planning brief](#).

Two critical components of the management planning process are:

- **Values Mapping** - a tool for building management partnerships
- **Issues Paper**

Values Mapping – a tool for building management partnerships

Habitat of importance to both resident and migratory shorebirds is frequently in areas that have importance for other uses.

Recent reports indicate that many wetland bird species across the country are in decline, and that in coastal areas the birds and the wetland areas they rely on are facing development, disturbance and pollution pressures.

Planning for the future management of wetlands has a key role to play in reversing these disturbing trends.

The Values Mapping process uses identification strategies from business marketing and consensus-building strategies from Alternative Dispute Resolution, as a tool for bringing together the diversity of interests in a range of aspects of planning for sustainable living.

The Values Mapping process involves:

- **Background research** directed to understanding the issues, the language relevant to the area and its issues, and the history of the issues
- **Identifying the key players** – their interests and roles in management of the area
- **Designing the process** so that it is accessible and meaningful to all who need to be involved
- **Establishing ‘buy in’** – encouraging participation and building trust
- **Mapping values - reporting on the outcomes**

Four key activities in Values Mapping

1. Telephone Survey

People with an interest in the area, whether for conservation reasons or as recreational or commercial users, are asked to complete a telephone survey addressing the values of the area and management issues.

2. Focus Group Sessions

A series of information gathering sessions (usually of 1-1½ hours duration) with interest groups (e.g. farmers & graziers, commercial fishers, recreational fishers, other recreational users, scientific researchers, government staff with management responsibilities in the area, and community conservation representatives).

These focus group sessions are directed to gathering and confirming local and technical knowledge of the area – what places are special, what makes them special, what are the threats to those values and what management actions are possible.

3. Field Trip

A field trip, which all participants are strongly encouraged to attend, looks at key sites and the management issues of concern for retaining those values, helps all participants

gain a shared understanding of the area and the differing values it holds for people in the area.

4. Facilitated Workshop

A professionally facilitated Values Mapping workshop, which brings together the knowledge and experience of the different sectors with an interest in the area, shares values and concerns, and seeks to find common ground which will help achieve the best possible future management for the area.

Both the focus group sessions and the Values Mapping workshop use topographical or other suitable maps of the area, with overlays to depict visually the areas valued and the management issues of concern.

Further Information

Values Mapping Final Report NW Tasmania and Roebuck Bay

Values Map Roebuck Bay

Contacts

Community Solutions www.communitysolutions.com.au

Issues paper

The objectives of an Issues Paper (focused on shorebirds, as apposed to broader natural, social and economic values) should be to:

- Review the status of knowledge on shorebirds and their habitat.
- Investigate and identify threats to important shorebird habitat, rank threats and identify sites/habitats with the highest level of threat.
- Investigate and identify options for mitigating threats and prioritise these options.
- Recommend opportunities for collaborative approaches to manage threats among local stakeholder groups.

A Shorebird Issues Paper developed for the Clarence Estuary in NSW took the following approach to meeting the objectives stated above:

Review the status of knowledge on shorebirds and their habitat

To review the status of knowledge on shorebirds and their habitat it is necessary to evaluate the data and identify gaps in the data/data collection.

Data evaluation – things to consider:

- Survey duration – the period over which surveys were undertaken.
- Survey frequency – the number of survey periods (individual surveys).
- Survey effort – the number of survey days/survey period.
- Methods used – general indication of how data were collected.
- Number of personnel – number of counters involved in the survey.
- Number of sites sampled – the number of sites listed in the data and sites within the area sampled.
- Survey coverage – general appraisal of the area surveyed.

- Data presentation – notes on the manner in which data are presented. This information is important for assessing the utility of data in identifying important roost and feeding sites.

Potential gaps – things to consider:

- Temporal coverage of surveys to document use of the site during northwards and southwards migration.
- Number of high tide surveys that encompass the entire site.
- Number of low tide surveys that encompass the entire site.
- Management of data i.e. specific information for each site sampled.
- Nocturnal surveys to identify night roost and feeding sites.
- Accessibility of information on methods and timing.
- Use of standard site names.

Assessing the importance of habitat

Things to consider in assessing (and comparing) the importance of habitat:

Roost sites

- Maximum spring/summer counts,
- Average spring/summer counts,
- Species diversity and occurrence of threatened species between sites/locations

Note: This provides a broad indication of the relative importance of known roost sites, however, there are important issues such as nocturnal habitat use, nesting and feeding sites and roost function (i.e. spring, neap or staging; spring tide roosts given a higher ranking than either neap roosts or staging areas).

Investigate and identify threats to important shorebird habitat, rank threats and identify sites/habitats with the highest level of threat.

Threats to shorebirds and their habitat can be broadly categorised as:

- Habitat Loss – removal of habitat through reclamation and in severe cases erosion.
- Habitat Modification – changes in the characteristics of habitat that reduces its utility for shorebirds.
- Habitat Disturbance – activities that often result in disturbance to roosting and foraging birds (incl. sources of disturbance i.e. location of infrastructure + types of disturbance i.e. activities that may affect shorebirds)
- Habitat Pollution – accumulation of pollutants in body fat that reduces life span and potentially reproductive ability and abundance of food.
- Mortality – death of individuals through hunting by humans for food, recreation or site protection.

To rank threats, their occurrence and proximity to shorebird habitat was assessed and a matrix developed to allow comparisons among sites.

The method adopted to rank threats included:

- Each threat was given a score of 1, 5 or 10 depending on its proximity to a site.
- A score of 10 was given to threats that occur on-site, 5 for threats within 100m of a site and 1 for threats within 1km of a site.
- A score of 20 was given to sites approved for development. Such a high score was deemed necessary to reflect the strong likelihood that the site would be removed once the development proceeds.
- Threat scores were then added together to give a combined threat score. Sites were then ranked from highest to lowest based on the total threat score.
- The higher the score the greater level of threat experienced.
- A general indication of which threats are most prevalent was obtained by adding threats across sites to obtain a total threat score.
- Comparing the importance of each site to the threat scores gave an indication of where conflicts between habitat values and threats exist.

Investigate and identify options for mitigating threats.

Options for managing threats to shorebirds/their habitat were broadly categorised as follows:

- Further research to clearly identify threats
- Community awareness and involvement
- Improved environmental planning and regulation
- Habitat conservation and remediation.
- On-ground works

Further Information

Clarence Estuary Shorebird Issues Paper