

Southern Gulf Flooding – A Message to the Southern Gulf Community

I know that many of you are battling the impact of the massive flooding experienced in our region in recent weeks. Even if you have not been directly affected, I am sure that you share our sympathy for those who have. The scenes we have witnessed are truly distressing.

Our regional community has rallied magnificently in this crisis. Local leaders have stepped forward and with support from the Australian and Queensland governments and agencies have done the best they can to support the cattle industry and regional communities.

Southern Gulf NRM does not have a direct role in emergency management. Instead we are looking to the future. The crisis period will end, and the emergency response will wind down, but we know – as do you – that the impact of these floods will be felt by the cattle industry and communities for years to come. A continuing program to support the regional community is vital.

Natural Resource Management (NRM) is concerned with the productive and sustainable use of the land and resources of our region – and of the people and communities that depend on these industries. **In our region, more than almost anywhere else, the best response to these floods is a community NRM-led response.**

Southern Gulf NRM has developed a program for consideration by governments as part of a wider flood recovery program, that we propose would be implemented over the next four years, following the immediate emergency response phase. Our program – called, *Looking to the Future* – has four main elements:

- 1. A producer led extension and advisory project to promote farm business resilience**
- 2. Grants to support producers implement best land management practices**
- 3. Grants to support producers remediate and stabilise the environmental and productivity impacts of flooding on their property**
- 4. Assessment, planning and monitoring activities to guide investment and monitor change**

This week, we have collated and provided information to the Queensland Department of Environment to contribute to a submission for funding to address environmental damage caused by the floods, that will address the third point of our program. Thank you to all who contributed information at this busy time.

We'll be working hard to secure support for our program. Your advocacy will play an important role in helping us achieve a positive result for our regional community. If you have any questions or comments, please don't hesitate to contact me, or our CEO, Andrew Maclean.

In the meantime, to those of you struggling with the shocking impact of these floods, I offer my very best wishes on behalf of the Board and staff of Southern Gulf NRM.

Megan Munchenberg
Chairperson