



research projects

Cooperative Research Centre for Irrigation Futures

An evaluation of the corporate governance arrangements of Australian Irrigation water providers *Project 1.06*

Overview

This project will produce a typology to classify the current corporate governance models in Australian Irrigation Water Providers (AIWP) and identify which models have best facilitated the adoption of the Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) requirements of the Council of Australian Governments (CoAG) and the National Water Initiative (NWI). This will require an examination of the processes used to separate the service provision and the resource management regulation roles of the water service providers in each State and the current linkages between such bodies. The data collection methods include non invasive content analysis of the top management reports of the major AIWPs, surveys of the Chief Executive Officers and a survey of some growers in selected jurisdictions.

Stage 1

- Preparation of a discussion paper that:
- expands and clarifies the research objectives;
 - provides contextual analysis of CoAG ESD requirements;
 - describes the development of a typology for characterising AIWP; and
 - provides a survey proposal and case study framework.

Stage 2

Establishment of key criteria to establish the typology of the corporate governance arrangements and institutional arrangements of the AIWP. The key variables will be arrayed on an access data base. Data has been collected regarding product details, raw treated water supplied by volume and/or customers, corporate governance arrangements i.e. company, revised co-operative, local government etc, board appointment details and processes, expenses and revenue and data sources. This information is available from data published by the AIWP and other bodies.





Stage 3

Establishment of the ESD performance criteria used by each State. This reflects the 1992 and 1997 Commonwealth government's seven principles. The way each State government presents this obligation to the CEOs has been obtained for each State through the CRC for Irrigation Future's partners. In addition organisational charts have been obtained.

Stage 4

Content analysis of the top management reports of the Annual Reports of the AIWP to identify those reporting ESD outcomes. This will be used a basis to classify the AIWP and to make preliminary conclusions as to the type of institutional structure which best facilitates ESD achievement.

Stage 5

Interview of the CEOs of the AIWP on a range of issues including barriers in their institutional arrangements to achieving ESD.

Stage 6

In a few areas a survey of growers and consumers will be undertaken to assess their attitudes to perceptions of their AIWP and their perspectives on ways to improve institutional arrangements.

Stage 7

Evaluation of results and report findings. Presentations of outcomes to all participants and industry.

Project outcomes

The project findings will contribute to the development of a research agenda for further high level policy research by the CRC IF.

Partner institutions

- NSW Department of Primary Industries
- Queensland Department of Natural Resources and Mines
- University of South Australia
- University of Western Sydney
- Victorian Department of Primary Industries

