

Victorian Catchment Management Council

Catchment Knowledge Exchange

Principles and objectives

Background

The National Action Plan (NAP) for Salinity and Water Quality is funding a three year Knowledge Management Business Plan and Knowledge Broker Trial Project, known as the Catchment Knowledge Exchange.

The steps involved in the project are illustrated Figure 1.

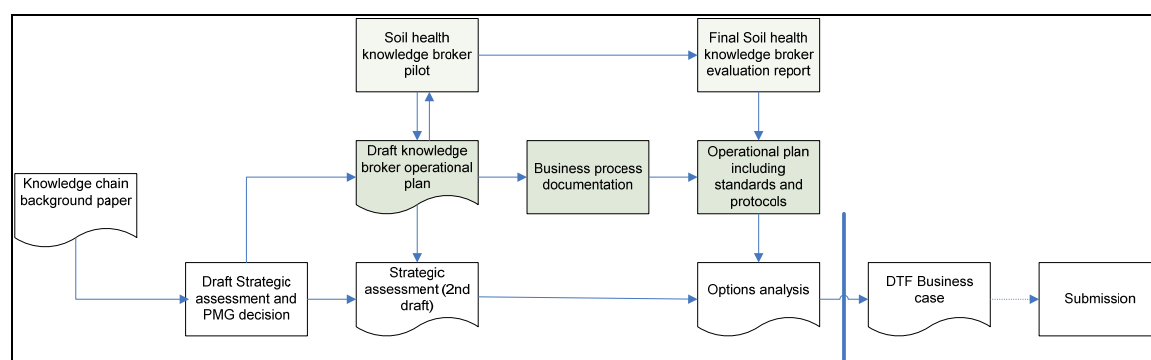


Figure 1 Overview of the Catchment Knowledge Exchange Project

Project objectives

The primary objectives of the project are to:

1. Build a business case for knowledge brokering services that is evidence based and supported by Victoria's Catchment Management Framework
2. Design, implement and test a Soil Knowledge Broker service that provides a generic model for other natural resource management themes
3. Provide a generic blue-print in order to facilitate the ongoing, effective and efficient use of catchment knowledge across Victoria

Principles for the Catchment Knowledge Exchange

- A. **Collaboration**, by internally and externally fostering good communications, open decision-making and teamwork.
- B. Striving for **relevance** by promoting the assessment of interventions, the outcomes of which matter to people making choices in catchment management.
- C. Enabling **wide participation** in the work of the Service by reducing barriers to contributing and by encouraging diversity.
- D. Promoting **access**, by wide dissemination of the outputs of the Service by taking advantage of strategic alliances, and by promoting appropriate cost sharing, content and media to meet the needs of users.

- E. Ensuring **quality**, by being open and **responsive** to feedback, applying advances in methodology, and developing systems for quality improvement.
- F. Keeping **up to date**, by a commitment to ensure that best management practices are maintained through identification and incorporation of new evidence.
- G. **Minimising bias**, through a variety of approaches such as scientific rigor, ensuring broad participation, and avoiding conflicts of interest.
- H. **Continuity**, by ensuring that responsibility for the knowledge brokering service and key functions is reviewed, maintained and renewed.
- I. **Avoiding duplication**, by good management and co-ordination to maximise economy of effort.

The Knowledge Chain

The knowledge chain is adapted from the Campbell and Cochrane Collaborations and describes the different functions or elements that the knowledge broker may undertake within the entire knowledge management system.

The elements of the knowledge chain are not necessarily sequential but they do represent a broader understanding of the entire knowledge management system that the broker operates within.

Table 1 The Knowledge Chain

	Elements	Example
1	Identification of business need	Such as policy (a request from the NRM ministerial council), or management (needs arising from the increased interest in raised bed cropping)
2	Quality assurance	Peer review
3	Knowledge synthesis	State of knowledge report on the science behind biological farming Synthesis of special editions of a journal Tracking journal papers
4	Consolidations of datasets and specialist knowledge	Victorian Water Resources Data Warehouse
5	Reporting and dissemination	Web products GRDC seminars Newsletters
6a	Practice Change through evidence to practice- management, paddock level	DPI Extension services Birchip Cropping Group Pivot agronomists Dairy industry extension
6b	Practice Change through evidence to policy and strategy	Adaptive Management Modelling and mapping to support priority setting
7	Learning and evaluation	LWA Research return on investment
8	Identification of knowledge gaps	Victorian Water Trust Assessment of Knowledge Gaps
9	Development of knowledge collaborations	Land Technology Alliance Water Research Cluster (The University of Adelaide)
10	Knowledge generation, through R&D, monitoring and evaluation, and contributions from practitioners	Our Rural Landscapes LWA Healthy Soils Initiative Tertiary Sector
11	Knowledge Chain Facilitation	Oversight of the functioning of the overall chain and the interactions between the elements.

