



# Pilbara Regional Water Planning Forum

First Meeting

All Seasons Hotel, Karratha

Monday, 28 May 2007

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## OUTCOMES REPORT

Prepared by:  Bessen Consulting Services

# INTRODUCTION

The Department of Water (DoW) held the first Pilbara Regional Water Planning Forum for stakeholders on Monday, 28 May 2007 at the All Seasons Hotel in Karratha.

## Background

The State Government recently released the *State Water Plan 2007* to guide water resources management to the year 2030. The State Government is also modernising its water legislation, policies and regulations through a process of water reform. Different regions within Western Australia face different water resources issues and implementation of the State Water Plan and the water reform process needs to be regionally relevant. To be regionally relevant, the Department of Water is working with regional stakeholders to prepare Regional Water Plans for all regions of the State.

The Pilbara Regional Water Plan will set the overall strategic directions for water resource management in the Pilbara.

The Pilbara Regional Water Plan will take into consideration the potential impacts of climate change and climate variability, it will look across the total water cycle and will integrate both water planning and land use planning. Stakeholder input into the regional water planning process and support for the regional water plans will be essential for success.

The Department of Water is also working with regional stakeholders on a Pilbara Mining in Water Policy which will provide an operational framework to support the overall strategic directions relevant to the mining sector.

Within the strategic directions set by the Regional Water Plan, the Department of Water will develop, over the next two – three years, surface water and groundwater management plans which will guide licencing and other management actions.

## Objectives

The aim of the forum was to seek input from stakeholders in the Pilbara region in order to consolidate the directions and processes for regional water planning in the Pilbara.

By the end of the forum, participants had:

- provided feedback on the demand and supply status for water in the Pilbara;

- clarified the major issues to be addressed in the Pilbara Regional Water Plan;
- agreed on the broad directions for water management in the Pilbara; and
- confirmed the planning processes to be undertaken over the next eight months.

## Participants

Some 55 participants attended the forum. Participants came from the mining sector, the pastoral sector, local shires, ports authorities, Water Corporation, State government agencies and regional development organizations.

## Acknowledgements

The Department of Water would like to thank the participants for their contribution to the forum and is very appreciative of the time and resources that participants provided.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Pilbara region is arid region, with the average annual rainfall ranging from 200 mm to 350 mm. Average rainfall figures however mask the highly variable rainfall in the Pilbara. Severe droughts and major floods can occur at close intervals. Climatic conditions are dominated by tropical cyclones, which occur predominantly in January to March. Other rainfall comes from local thunderstorms and, in the south-west, from the northern edge of frontal systems that bring winter rains to the south-west of the State.

The limited and highly variable nature of rainfall and runoff in the Pilbara region present supply planning challenges in harnessing conventional surface and groundwater resources. An additional water planning challenge is the change in water supply reliability resulting from changes in climate and climate variability.

The Pilbara region is also experiencing significant resource and industrial development growth. As a consequence there is strong water demand growth which is placing pressure on the Region's limited and variable water resources. Some of the Region's water supply schemes need augmentation to meet this projected demand growth and improve security of supply. In addition there are a growing number of self supply demand needs.

Water is important in the Pilbara, not only in terms of meeting demand growth but also in terms of environmental values, social and amenity values and cultural values.

The Pilbara region has been proactive in improving the management of water in the mining industry and in improving water use efficiency and water reuse and this provides a foundation for further improvements.

Participants at the forum discussed the water demand and supply situation in the Pilbara, the strategic directions which they feel are important for future water management and the consultative process for undertaking the Regional Water Plan.

Key feedback provided by forum participants on water **demand status** is:

- The number of new ports maybe higher than initially considered;
- Managing surplus and deficit water in mining is a critical opportunity;
- Planning *with* uncertainties is a necessity;
- Matching water quality with use is a key requirement.

Key feedback provided by forum participants on water **supply status** is:

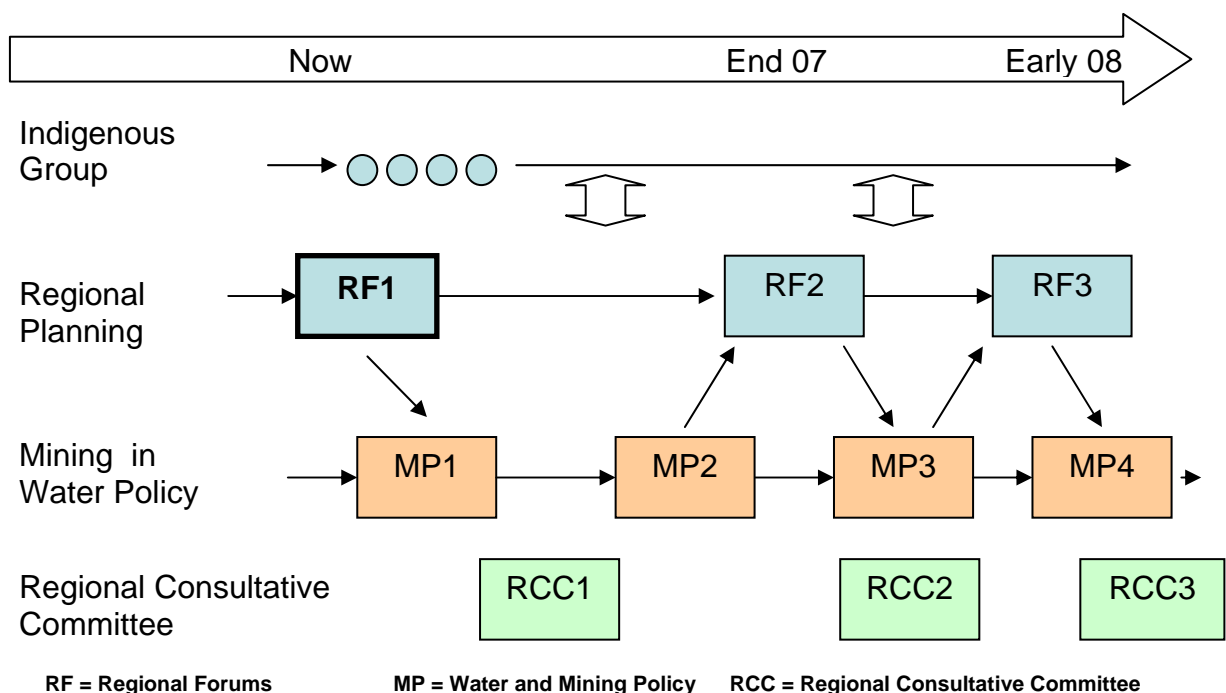
- Improving knowledge and access to knowledge about all potential sources is essential;
- How to assess potential water sources (cost, timing, reliability) is important;
- Joint ventures and collaboration on supply are a vital opportunity.

Forum participants identified the following **critical strategic directions** for the Regional Water Plan:


- maximising achievement of environmental, social and economic values (triple bottom line);
- availability of information and knowledge;
- management of cumulative impacts;
- link to land use planning needs to be built in (whole of water cycle);
- must be a useful and enabling document.

Forum participants discussed a **consultation map** for the Regional Water Plan and the related mining policy:

**Figure 1: Pilbara Water Planning Consultation Map**



**Participants provided the following feedback:**

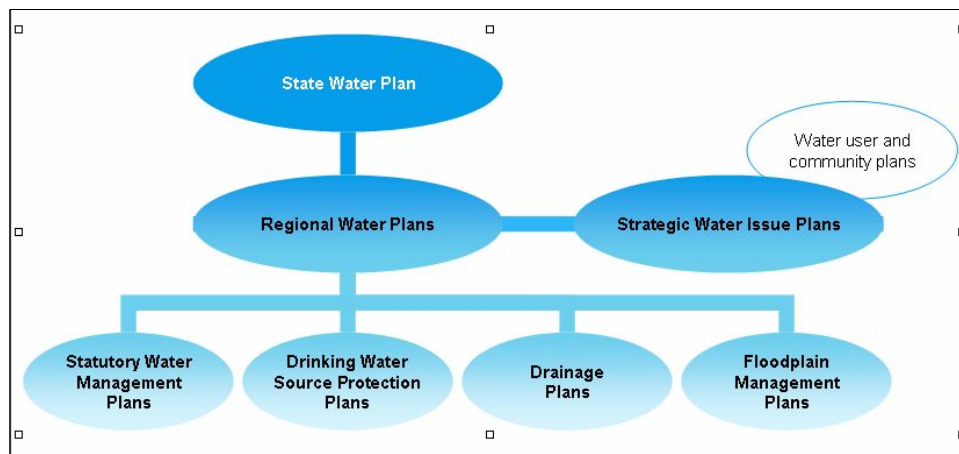
- They were generally happy with the proposed consultative process but wanted further information on what would be provided at each of the consultative steps and what milestones were to be achieved;
  - A terms of reference needs to be provided for the Regional Consultative Committee;
  - Indigenous consultation should take place in forums better suited to effective engagement and should be cognisant of the engagement already being undertaken by the mining industry.
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**Steve Bellussi**, Acting Regional Manager, DoW, Karratha, welcomed participants and emphasised the importance of participation and ownership of the Regional Water Plan.

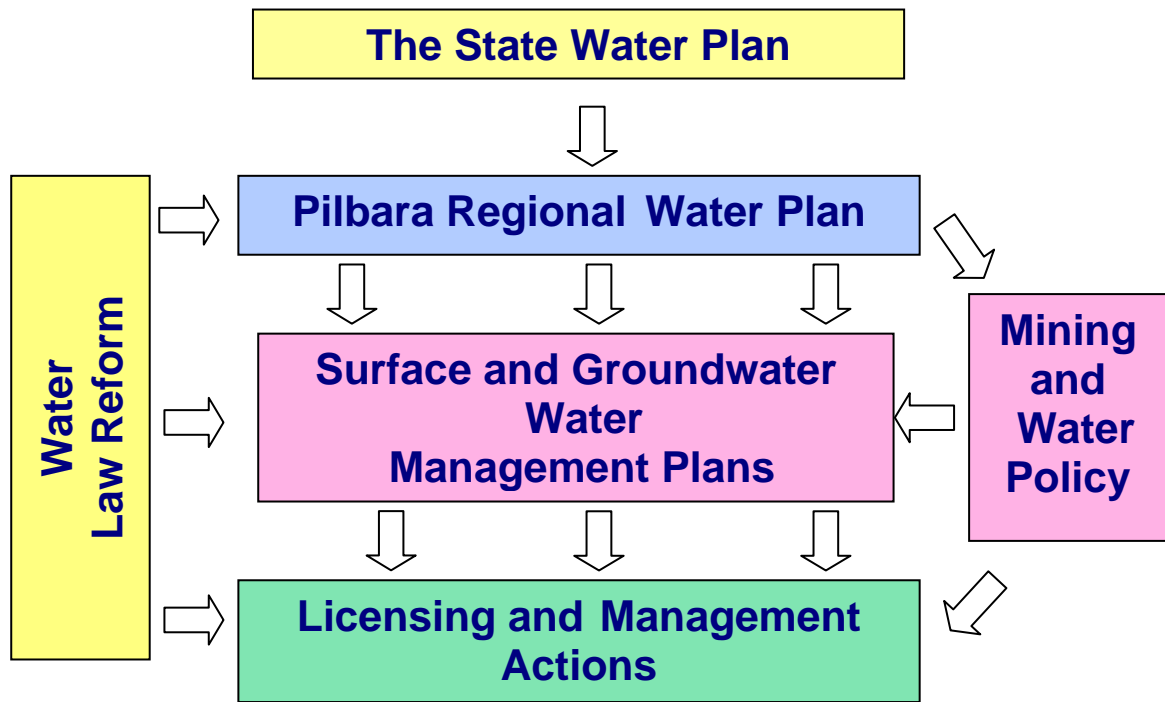
**Susan Worley**, Branch Manager, Water Allocation Planning, DoW noted that there is currently an opportunity to consolidate water planning in the Pilbara and to build in boundaries for the protection of environmental and cultural values.

**Fiona Lynn** of Strategic Water Planning, DoW outlined the water planning processes in the State planning context. She highlighted the Pilbara Regional Water Plan as setting the overall strategic directions for water resource management in the Pilbara, supported by management plans covering water allocation, drinking water source protection, drainage and floodplain management.

The relationship between regional water plans and other plans is shown in the two figures below.



**Figure 2: State Water Planning Framework**



**Figure 3: Pilbara Water Planning and Management Model**

The Pilbara Water in Mining Water Policy will be developed to support both the regional water plan and the management plans.

**Roy Stone**, provided an overview of demand and supply of water in the Pilbara. In terms of demand, water use will treble over the next 25 years, due primarily to the demand from the mining industry for both port water and mine site water.

Both surface water and groundwater supply are dependent on episodic cyclone events and subject to high variability. The combination of high demand growth with the inherent reliability risks and limited availability of new groundwater/surface water options along the Pilbara coast make desalination of seawater an important consideration in new supply source planning.





### DEMAND ISSUES

The Regional Water Planning Team has identified the following three major demand issues to be considered in the water planning process:

- The implications of rapid growth in demand for water at the Pilbara coast port centres of Dampier / Karratha and Port Hedland as well as a possible third new port between them.
- The implications of the very large projected volumes of water required to meet the needs of new or expanded inland mine sites.
- Management options, such as increased inland ore conditioning and direct shipping, that could be explored to address the projected rapid increase in mining and associated water demands.

### Discussion

Forum participants were asked the following questions:

- *What is your feedback on the top three demand issues?*
- *What's been missed or needs to be added?*

### Overall

The overall response was:

- **The number of new ports maybe higher than initially considered;**
- **Managing surplus and deficit water in mining is a critical opportunity;**
- **Planning *with* uncertainties is a necessity;**
- **Matching water quality with use is a key requirement.**

## In Detail

The group responses were as follows:

### *Group One:*

- Feedback:
  - Demand on port facilities needs to be considered:
    - Cape Ronsard,
    - Cape Preston,
    - expansion of Cape Lambert,
    - Port Hedland and Dampier;
  - Delivery to new facilities as well as current facilities;
  - Issue number 2 is agreed as an issue;
  - Management of surplus dewatering is a major issue;
  - Ore processing techniques impact water use, ie:
    - low vs high grade ores,
    - wet vs dry processing;
  - Integrating dewatering with demand is an opportunity.

### *Group Two:*

- Feedback:
  - Separate consumptive use and dewatering use;
  - Can dewatering contribute to watering supply – contingency and direct?;
  - Require data regarding quality (pH, ETC, etc);
  - Linking water supply and demand needs to be facilitated by DoW between stakeholders;
  - Planning must recognise the inherent uncertainty of demand;
  - Establishing priorities for developing water resources is critical.
- Add:
  - The number of ports has potentially been overlooked;
  - Demand beyond West and Central Pilbara is not well understood or known;
  - Scenario planning approach considering resource demands (ie: mining) is needed.

### *Group Three:*

- Feedback:
  - Lack of data, information and assessment of the broad impacts across the whole system;
  - Inability to plan for step growth due to the lack of information.

### *Group Four:*

- Feedback:
  - Cape Preston development;
  - What processes are used to assess demand?;
  - Being flexible with demand estimations;

- Other significant water source options besides the 14 that come up in the Coastal Study;
- Demand needs to include population increases (ie residential uses);
- More efficient water use of residents – many have their water bills paid for them;
- DPI awareness of water issues when developing plot sizes;
- Demand from many smaller mines is likely to be significantly higher than from one large mine (ie stockpiles hang around longer).

*Group Five:*

- Feedback:
  - Mine water use:
    - water quality,
    - dewatering vs use,
    - dewatering management (separate issue?),
    - water sharing;
  - Storage of surface flow:
    - where to put?,
    - no dam?;
  - New ports.
- Add:
  - Water quality:
    - fit for purpose,
    - desalination – what quality?;
  - Water harvesting:
    - where to store?,
    - store for reuse,
    - environmental implications.

*Group Six:*

- Feedback:
  - Potential for more than one port to be constructed and additional water demand due to increased residential services:
    - Ronsard Port,
    - Cape Preston;
  - “Slurry pipelines” may be used to transport ore to ports which will mean a huge increase in water usage;
  - Inland ore processing needs to be studied further to weigh up impacts; this point needs to be reinforced because it is a way of moving water demand from the coast further inland (associated pros and cons).
- Add:
  - Management of dewatering discharge and the potential to re-inject or reuse in areas of demand.

## SUPPLY ISSUES

The Regional Water Planning Team has identified the following major supply issues to be considered in the water planning process:

- Demand projections indicate that major supply augmentation is likely to be required for the West Pilbara, Port Hedland and Onslow supply schemes within the next five years;
- A new water supply scheme or expansion of one of the existing schemes may be required in the medium term to service a new port between Dampier and Port Hedland;
- There are limited conventional new source options along the Pilbara coast;
- The supply reliability of Pilbara supply schemes needs to be clearly addressed to prevent possible disruption to port operations and/or source overdrafts causing damage to dependant environmental and social values;
- The above issues make desalination of seawater an important option for Pilbara coast new supply source planning;
- For inland mining operations, the very high future demand projects and limited water resource availability make coordinated management of water from 'surplus' mine sites to 'deficit' mine sites within and between companies imperative;
- Wherever possible water supplied should be 'fit for purpose' with lower grade water being used for lower grade use and high quality water reserved for high grade use;
- Groundwater is likely to continue to be the dominant supply source for inland areas, but greater use of artificial recharge storage structures may be warranted.



## Discussion

Participants addressed the following questions:

- What is your feedback on any of the supply issues listed?
- What are the three priority challenges for supply?

## Overall

The overall response on the three priority challenges for supply was:

- **Improving knowledge and access to knowledge about *all* potential sources is essential;**
- **How to assess potential sources (cost, timing, reliability) is important;**
- **Joint ventures and collaboration on supply are a vital opportunity.**

## In Detail

The group responses were:

*Group One:*

- Feedback:
  - Water supply for ports:
    - inland mines – self supply,
    - high priority for expanding community;
  - Surplus supply:
    - water sharing,
    - contractual issues (security);
  - Cost of water;
  - Investment in supply infrastructure:
    - who?,
    - regional sustainability;
  - Desalination of brackish water;
  - New port at Ronsard and water supply needed;
  - Use less water?
- Priority issues:
  - **Understanding the amount, value and hydrocycles of water in the Pilbara;**
  - **Coordination and integration of water supply and dewatering;**
  - **Sustainable supply to the coastal regions;**

*Group Two:*

- Feedback:
  - Opportunities to use discharge for supply; share arrangements; artificial recharge of supply areas and water service providers;
  - Fostering partnerships;
  - Quantifying EPWs (environment vs economic and social needs);
  - Need to understand how much water is in the Pilbara;
  - Use of dewatering infrastructure, aquifers and mine voids post mining.
- Priority issues:
  - **Encouraging water sharing and other options;**
  - **Data quality and knowledge of water sources;**
  - **Regulatory flexibility to accommodate variable resource availability.**

*Group Three:*

- Feedback:
  - Security of supply for public use;
  - Defining what the resource areas are capable of sustainably supplying;
  - Regional Water Plan needs to identify actions required to confirm resource availability;
  - Legislative changes to incorporate water needs between stakeholders (ie: licence requires that Mine A pipes excess water to Mine B);
  - Good communication strategy between stakeholders, facilitated by DoW;
  - Long term water quality issues post mine closure, on a regional level.
  - Broad ranking of source options, considering environmental, cultural and social impacts, as well as potential supply volume (include quantitative assessment);
  - Whole of Government approach for the future use of Millstream;
  - Realise the value of dewatering for consumptive use or environmental benefits;
  - What are the projected impacts of climate change (and association variability)?
- Priority issues:
  - **Development of incentives and direction for water use efficiency;**
  - **Regional water sharing – how to implement a sharing strategy that is cost, time, demand and geographically efficient;**
  - **Security of supply at a level that is environmentally sustainable in the long term; developing contingencies.**

*Group Four:*

- Feedback:
  - Infrastructure timing framework needs to be compressed to suit commercial demands;
  - Agree – continue to invest in scientific research into existing aquifers and groundwater supply areas to gain a better understanding of the availability and potential impacts coinciding with increased demand;
  - Increase the focus on joint venture providers and water users (mining, community, etc);

- Agree – “fit for purpose”; may need incentives or initiatives for mining companies to follow; may require a Government directed approach; buyers tend to prefer ore washed or processed with higher quality water;
  - Desalination – water issues may be solved but what about the associated impacts of increased power demand and discharges, etc.
  - Long lead times are needed to establish supply and demand;
  - Evaluation of the unknown new supplies.
- Priority issues:
- **Baseline data and benchmarking of water resources (time and location);**
  - **Competing use;**
  - **Understanding development across the board;**
  - **Planning for the next port.**

*Group Five:*

- Feedback:
- Other sources in the Pilbara?; have some water sources been discounted and are they a potential future option?;
  - Have environmental water requirements been considered when defining a resource?;
  - Dewatering as a potential water source – does legislation allow it?;
  - Cost issues associated with supply options;
  - Huge variability (seasonal and geographic variability);
  - Data needed on reliability;
  - Regulation and licensing of sites were the resource is moved.
- Priority issues:
- **Economics and incentives as a key:**
    - **holistic,**
    - **who pays?,**
    - **technology;**
  - **Geography;**
  - **Water resource knowledge and constraints;**
  - **Co-operation between Industry, Government and the community.**

Presentations were given to the forum on major water issues in the Pilbara.

## Environment and Water Management Issues

**Mike Braimbridge**, Senior Environmental Officer, Environmental Water Planning, DoW, gave a presentation on the major environment and water management issues in the Pilbara.

The Pilbara region has a unique assemblage of ecosystems that are a reflection of its geological history and existing climate and geomorphology. High conservation value ecosystems are often associated with water resources. The challenge for water resource managers is to allow appropriate use of water resources whilst adequately protecting environmental values within the context of a highly variable climate.

The Department also recognises a strong need to consider social and cultural values and their consideration during the planning process.

Some of the key environmental issues include:

- *Dewatering*. Altered hydrology through dewatering and the resultant introduction of a constant water supply alters ecosystem composition and structure.
- *Dewater discharge*. Artificial ecosystems created as a result of dewatering are likely to survive only as long as dewatering continues and will collapse once mining and dewatering stop. The capability of individual species to adapt to natural climate variability and/or a return to a near pre-disturbance hydrological regime is also impaired as a result of dewatering discharge.
- *Abstraction*. Groundwater dependent ecosystems are affected by regional cumulative effects of drawdown and localised groundwater abstraction.
- *Conservation*. Ecosystems associated with permanent water (often groundwater dependent) are often of elevated conservation significance due to their relative abundance and role as refugia in a typically arid environment.
- *Approvals process*. The associated issues with approvals and licensing process will be targeted during the Pilbara Water in Mining Policy workshop which is to be held in July 2007.
- *Infrastructure*. Infrastructure such as roads and pipelines have the potential to alter surface water hydrology and impact ecosystems through the disruption of sheetflow.



## Non-mining Sectors and Their Major Water Issues

**John Verbeek**, Senior Project Officer for Economic and Infrastructure Development from the Pilbara Development Commission presented the forum with the issues affecting the non-mining sectors in the Pilbara.

**Issue 1:** Forecasting demand for urban water usage is problematic due to inability to accurately determine exact population numbers and further exacerbated by large fluctuations due to resource developments:

- projection of the Pilbara population is a climb back to 50,000 people by 2031:
  - this has resulted in large housing land releases (1700 lots in Pilbara over the next four years),
  - this creates an opportunity to continue with issuing guidelines for water efficiency in new housing estates.

**Issue 2:** Potential impacts on household amenity if metropolitan style water restrictions are placed on Pilbara communities.

**Issue 3:** Adoption of Waterwise behaviours by Pilbara residents.

**Issue 4:** Determining water requirements for new commercial and light industrial developments.

**Issue 5:** Provision of water to improve community amenity.

**Issue 6:** Concerns over potential future charges for bores and dams.

**Issue 7:** Impact of dewatering and discharging by resource sector on adjacent pastoral leases.

**Issue 8:** Impact of tourism and recreation on surface water catchment areas.

## Major Water Issues for the Mining Sector

**Gary Humphreys**, Senior Hydrogeologist with the Water Resource Assessment Branch outlined the regulation stages and processes for proposals, development and operation of mine sites.

There are three regulation stages in mine water management which need to be considered when developing a decision making process for mine water management these are:

1. Planning and development stage;
2. Operational stage;
3. Closure and abandonment.

Gary also discussed the importance of impact management and the need to consider the impacts on users other than mining, such as impacts on the environment and the water resources itself (the aquifer).

In order to support good mine water management practices at mine sites, the Department is developing a hierarchy of disposal options for dewatered water. The hierarchy suggested is:

- re-use on site;
- relocation for use nearby;
- re-injection;
- sub-surface reticulation;
- controlled discharge;
- uncontrolled discharge.

If this hierarchy is to be adopted as a DoW policy, it will require stakeholder consultation. At this point in time it will remain as an informal guide.

## Water Use Efficiency

**Susan Worley** made the following points about water use efficiency:

- efficiency, sufficiency and fit for purpose are key principles;
- policy has evolved through years of experience in the Pilbara;
- Water Corp has moved on significantly in terms of water use efficiency;
- reuse of waste water and demand management programs have been introduced in West Pilbara and in Port Hedland;
- DoW, WC and DEC are working together on the management of Millstream;
- Water to ports: both Rio and BHPBIO have achieved significant water use efficiencies; cultural change has moved to mine sites now;
- we need to review the list of what's been done, identify the other options and enshrine into policy;
- we need to build water use efficiency into a principles-based approach to planning.

## SESSION FOUR: STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Participants identified the strategic directions they believed to be most important for the Regional Plan, by addressing the following question:

*From all that you have heard, what are the key strategic directions to guide the Pilbara Regional Water Plan?*

The overall response was:

- **maximising achievement of environmental, social and economic values (triple bottom line);**
- **availability of information and knowledge;**
- **management of cumulative impacts;**
- **link to land use planning needs to be built in (whole of water cycle);**
- **must be a useful and enabling document.**

The group responses were:

*Group One:*

	<u>Votes</u>
➤ Priorities:	
• <b>Evaluation of the resource base needs to be ongoing, to ensure water is available into the future;</b>	<b>6</b>
• <b>Availability of information and improved access to that information:</b>	<b>6</b>
– <b>to improve forward planning,</b>	
– <b>to report on what has happened;</b>	
• <b>Balance of environmental, social and economic values.</b>	<b>5</b>
➤ Others:	
• Fair access, irrespective of size;	<b>3</b>
• Improve communication around water between mining and non-mining users – get formal agreement between all users before a development proceeds;	<b>3</b>
• Processes and planning for new development need to be better, more streamlined and more effective;	<b>2</b>
• Understanding the value of water to encourage efficient use – getting across some of the simple messages (ie: Statewide day-time sprinkler bans);	<b>1</b>
• Statewide policies need to be made to fit the region to reflect regional differences;	<b>1</b>

- Knowing where the water is, to assist in natural resource management (ie feral animal control); -
- Non-mining development opportunities with water; -
- Indigenous communities: -
  - existing communities made sustainable,
  - need to follow through and turn consultation into action; link it with operational outcomes.

*Group Two:*

➤ Priorities:

- |   | <u>Votes</u> |
|---|--------------|
| • <b>Management of cumulative impacts on a subregional scale, with information and model sharing between all water users;</b> | <b>7</b>     |
| • <b>Ensuring highest value use of water as a key objective of the Plan:</b>  | <b>5</b>     |
| – <b>social,</b>  |              |
| – <b>cultural,</b>  |              |
| – <b>environmental, and</b>   |              |
| – <b>economic values;</b>   |              |
| • <b>Outcomes-based policy.</b>   | <b>5</b>     |

➤ Others:

- Applying the Hierarchy of Use of dewatering water is an essential objective but should not be a key policy;
- Promoting communication between key stakeholders (Government, industry and community);
- Development of clear, concise guidance on technical issues;
- Clearly define the applicability of the Plan.

*Group Three:*

➤ **Priorities:**

- **Security of resource;**
- **Environmental setting and the Hierarchy of Use;**
- **Wise use of water (efficiency or fit for purpose).**

➤ Others:

- Collaborative approach to water resource outcomes;
- Flexibility:
  - geographic diversity,
  - community variation,
  - uncertainty,
  - management response;
- Enabling Strategic Water Plans (resolve strategic issues);
- Approvals alignment (clarify process);
- Identify gaps and prioritise water resource knowledge and investigations
- Gotta be useful!

*Group Four:*

➤ **Priorities:**

- **Improving the knowledge base:**
  - **biodiversity,**
  - **groundwater resources,**
  - **demand scenarios,**
  - **surface water resources,**
  - **climate variability,**
  - **supply security,**
  - **cultural and heritage issues;**
- **Developing partnerships:**
  - **incentives,**
  - **recognising the value of water,**
  - **policy and regulatory tools.**
- **Clear policy on project evaluation, operational activities, access to water resources and competition.**

➤ **Others:**

- Balance between demand and sustainability;
- Accountability, monitoring and evaluation to measure effectiveness;
- Supply security;
- Mining issues?

*Group Five:*

➤ **Priorities:**

- **Security of supply;**
- **Define the true values of water (triple bottom line);**
- **Recognise impact *and* opportunities of broader catchment management (cumulative impacts).**

➤ **Others:**

- Further define *all* Pilbara water resources (prioritise);
- Maximisation of value, according to agreed methods (eg: trading);
- Water use efficiency, recycling, fit for purpose;
- Security through diversity (just like the Water Corporation says).

*Group Six:*

➤ **Priorities:**

- **The Plan must be a positive, proactive and enabling document;**
- **Promote knowledge and data sharing (via establishing an effective ongoing Water Advisory Network);**
- **Whole of water cycle plan (including climate change).**

➤ **Others:**

- In addressing “sustainability”, define what this is and how it is measured;
- Set in context of the Pilbara being a resource development region;
- Strategic direction setting document (establish priorities);
- Acknowledge the diversity and spatial extent of the Pilbara Region;
- Acknowledge the Indigenous linkage to water;
- Cross-sectoral and cross-agency coordination.

**Patrick Seares**, Program Manager for Water Allocation Planning, Dow, spoke to the forum about the proposed planning and policy activities.

### The Scope of the Work Ahead

#### *Planning Table*

Plan	2007	2008	2009	2010
Regional Water Plan	[Shaded]			
Mining Policy		[Shaded]		
Statutory Water Mgt Plan		[Shaded]		

**Figure 4: Project Timelines**

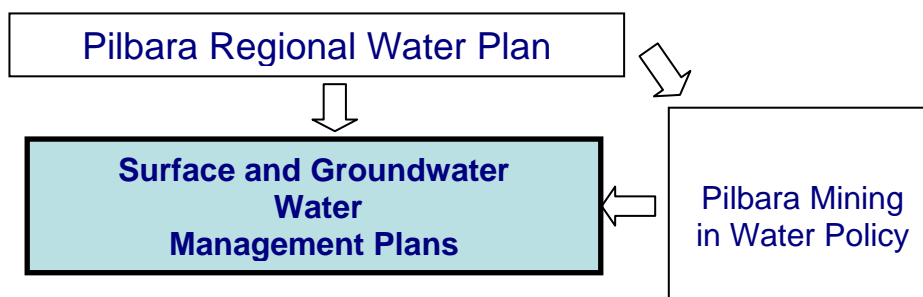
### The Work Ahead

#### *Regional Plan*

- confirm the strategic water issues;
- consider the policy and action options;
- stakeholder acceptance of strategic policies and actions;
- Government agreement.

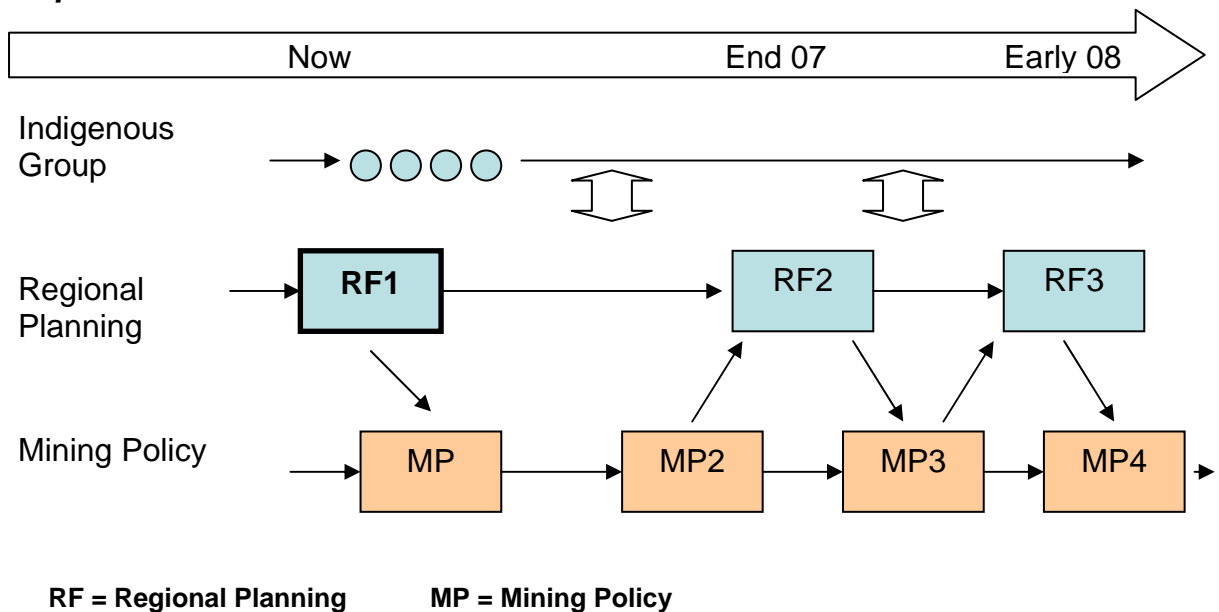
#### *Pilbara Water in Mining Policy*

- confirm the specific management issues;
- consider the policy and process options;
- formalise the changed or new processes, operational policies and guidelines;
- formal Policy approval;



## Stakeholder Involvement

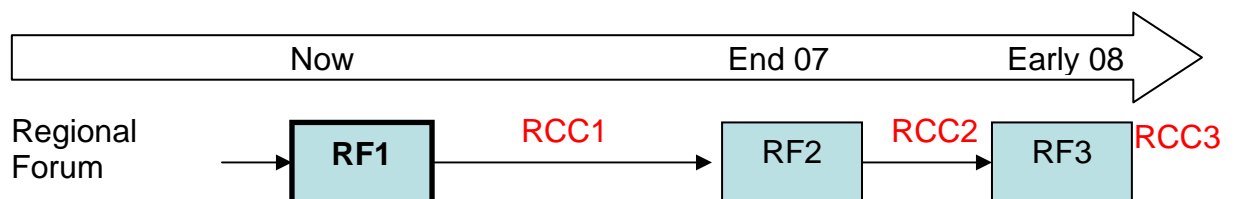
### Map of 'Consultation'



### Groups for Consultation

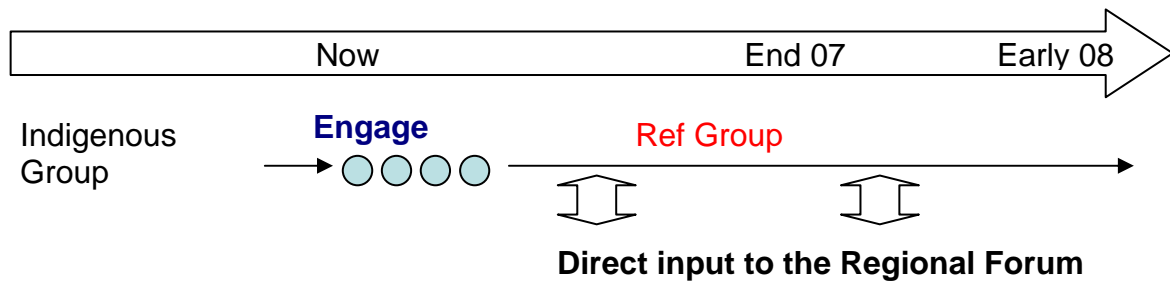
- Regional Forum (RF) - consists of all interested parties (~50 people);
- Indigenous interests - with initial Traditional Owner discussions (several groups) and then an Indigenous reference group;
- Consultative Committee (CC) - comprises of a select representative group (~10 people);
- Mining sector group (~15 people) - made up of mining sector representatives and regulatory agencies.

### Regional Forum



- RF1** Forum workshop to confirm the issues.
- RCC1** Work with to define and select preferred policies.
- RF2** Forum workshop to confirm policies and actions.
- RCC2** Work with to finalise policies and actions.
- RF3** Forum workshop on the draft Regional Plan and forward consultation strategy.
- RCC3** Work with to address any comments.

## Aboriginal Meetings



### Engage

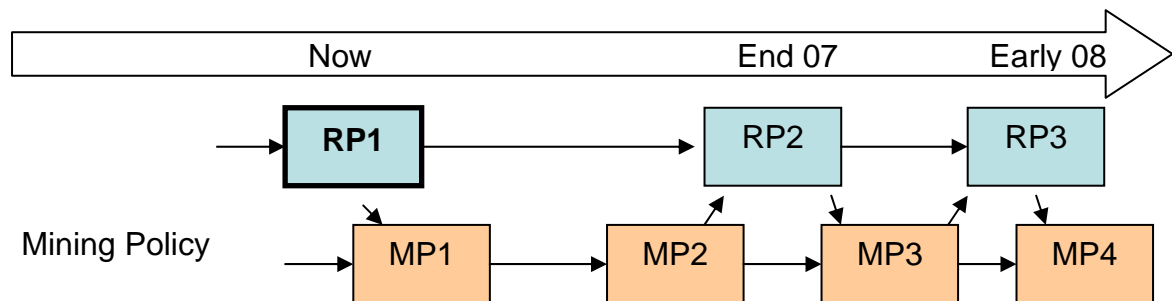
Several meetings in country with language groups

- begin reforming links to DoW and planning processes
- confirm outputs of previous consultation
- agree initial Regional Planning consultation
- begin definition of MoU for ongoing water management engagement through an Indigenous reference group

### Ref Group

For regional planning and all other water issues

## Pilbara Water in Mining Policy



**MP1** Mining companies to confirm or add to issues and agree forward consultation.

**MP2** Workshop to agree input to higher level policy options.

**MP3** Workshop to refine and accept higher level policy.

**MP4** Workshop to discuss operational updates.

**MP?** TBD.

**MP Final** Workshop to formalise draft policy.



### ***Indigenous and Mining Groups***

- only partially focussed on the Regional Plan;
- discuss and input to high level Regional Policies and Actions;
- focus on specific issues:
  - mining – processes, standards, operational policy, etc,
  - Indigenous – ongoing consultation framework, involvement in decision making, etc.

### **Summary**

- A consultative process for input from all stakeholders to the Regional Plan is in place;
- Mining Sector involvement on issues specifically dealing with mining actions (input from Regional Planning);
- The Regional Plan will define the ongoing consultation for Statutory Water Planning.

### **Next Steps Discussion**

The following questions were posed to the participants in regards to the presentation:

*How can we improve on the proposed consultation?*

*Are the times realistic for the next forums? (November and February?)*

*Can you commit your time and resources to the Consultative Committee?*

The responses were as follows:

- Consultative Committee;
  - meet every couple of months in the Pilbara;
  - responses are also required outside of meetings;
  - first meeting in July 2007;
- Alternatives or proxies as a possibility for pastoral representation;

- Selection process:
  - Expression of Interest from people,
  - weigh against number (10) and issues to cover (balanced representation);
- Terms of reference:
  - initial outline,
  - confirm at first meeting;
- Consultation:
  - provide a clear outline of the questions asked prior to Regional Forums and Consultative Committee meetings;
- Lock in dates of meetings as early as possible;
- Mining Policy Group needs to consider port use issues and the NWI policy;
- Generate a set of milestones around each planned workshop;
- Consider the involvement of the Chamber of Minerals and Energy;
- Remember that mining companies are in continuing consultation on Indigenous issues.

## **Actions**

The following actions were agreed:

- A Brief Report as feedback from the First Regional Water Planning Forum;
- Agreed policies as an outcome from the Second Regional Water Planning Forum;
- A draft Regional Plan from the Third Regional Water Planning Forum.



## CONCLUDING COMMENTS

**Ed Hauck**, Branch Manager, Strategic Water Planning, DoW, made the following concluding comments:

- there is evident good will and engagement from the stakeholders;
- the proposed strategic directions are solid;
- there is a willingness to share issues, options and contribute to the solutions;
- this is an important initiative for the Pilbara;
- make use of stakeholder networks and the DoW contacts wherever you can.

## Reflection Comments

Participants were asked to write a brief comment about the forum.

## Summary

- Feedback on the session indicated the following:
  - useful;
  - informative;
  - range of views (and common ground)
- Comments on the planning process are:
  - collaborative and consultative approach supported;
  - timeframe a challenge;
  - capacity of State to meet demand.
- Priority issues and gaps are:
  - sustainability of resource;
  - cumulative and downstream impacts of water use;
  - water sharing principles are important;
  - more conservation focus required;
  - recognise significant increase in supply required.

## In Detail

In detail, the comments are:

- a useful and informative forum to discuss strategic water issues in the Pilbara with a range of different parties;
- today was worthwhile; information sharing and good communication amongst varied stakeholders is positive; challenge remains to develop a positive Regional Plan;
- useful, challenging and interesting;
- enlightening forum of other water users to discuss other points of view;
- informative session on the issue of sustaining water supplies in the Pilbara, particularly taking into consideration all interested parties, including Indigenous communities, mining companies and urban users;
- Regional Plan being formed; in the near future, require a significant increase in supply of water; Dept of Water needs to evaluate additional sources; a consultation process is in place;
- informative overview of the status of water use;
- encouraging to see that it is going to be a collaborative, consultative process;
- fairly mining focused vs conservation focused;
- a valuable opportunity for our agency to give input into a vital planning process to ensure the sustainability of arguably our most valuable resource; well organised and well facilitated; look forward to being involved in the ongoing process;
- that “sustainability” of resource will be a key driver of the Regional Plan; this may include end water quality (ie in pit lakes), as well as aquifer yield and impact to other users;
- the process looks good but worried about the timelines and the State’s ability to meet demand;
- useful interactions and discussions;
- well attended day covering many stakeholder views and discovering that there was generally common ground to build on;
- there’s a lot of planning going on in the Pilbara;
- what are the key success criteria for a Regional Water Plan?;
- a useful start to deliver on an extremely valuable Plan for the State;
- better to be involved and shaping direction than to be surprised further down the track;
- the forum was useful for highlighting issues that need to be addressed in the Regional Water Plan for the Pilbara and gave a good place from which to expand on thinking and acting towards a sustainable future;

- shorter, clearer and to the point, much better than the first meeting; great value;
- the importance of water sharing principles and framework will be included in the Pilbara Water Plan;
- the Regional Forum is an important working group that is focused on the State’s water resources;
- the DoW has formulated an effective model in the Regional Water Plan, however there is considerable work to be undertaken to meet everybody’s expectations;
- pleasing to participate in a process where a variety of “stakeholders” could come together to help develop a way forward for planning the management of a vital resource for this region’s future;
- broad representation of groups (no TO’s present though); good overview of the process and current context; great opportunity to develop an appropriate plan;
- we have a long way to go; there is a lot of enthusiasm; we need to get it right;
- mining industry needs to play a key part (lead) in water planning in the Pilbara;
- informative and constructive discussion and concerns on future water plans;
- it was a very productive forum which captured the various concerns and thoughts of a whole spectrum of interested parties;
- demonstrated a consultative approach to the regional planning process, good interaction;
- good to be able to help in formulating a strategy for the industry we work in;
- initiation of a consultative process to develop the Pilbara Regional Water Plan involving Government and other stakeholders; broad agreement on key strategic issues.



## Participant Comments

Participants also reflected on the forum by offering a single word or phrase.

- informative;
- communication;
- involvement;
- concise;
- strategic;
- outcomes;
- fantastic;
- on the same page;
- useful;
- challenging;
- focused;
- sharing;
- effective;
- proactive;
- realistic;
- important;
- convivial;
- constructive;
- enabling;
- good start;
- enlightening and helpful;
- productive;
- collaborative;
- first step;
- resourceful;
- cooperative;
- interesting;
- positive;
- appreciated.

