**DECISION PAPER**

**ITEM: X**

**DATE: X/X/2013**

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| **Title:** | **Bioregion and subregion boundaries** |
| **Sponsor:** | Bureau of Meteorology |
| **Key points:**  *(issues or impacts)* | ***Background***   1. Original bioregion boundaries were determined out of the R2P2 (Rapid Regional Prioritisation Process) project, mapped by ERIN and announced by the then Minister. 2. The bioregion boundaries describe an area within which CSG and coal developments are considered by the bioregional assessment projects. Maps showing these bioregion boundaries are a useful communication device. Impact zones can extend beyond these bioregion boundaries, and the definition of those impact zones is a scientific output that is determined as part of 3. a bioregional assessment. Assets and receptors are being identified for the preliminary impact zones and the assessment of impacts will be bounded by the extent of these preliminary impact zones rather than by the bioregion or subregion boundaries.   ***Issues***   1. The original bioregion maps do not use spatial datasets, but just lines. Changes that are considered necessary (see Attachment A) have been approved by the OWS Senior Science Advisor (Peter Baker). These include using spatial datasets (not lines) for maps, aligning the subregion boundaries to reflect natural resource management areas, and labelling the subregions to align with the work agreed in the PIDs. 2. The PIDs detail technical deliverables at a subregion scale, except in the Gippsland Basin bioregion and the Clarence-Moreton bioregion, where the bioregion is the reporting unit. The proposed subregions (shown in Attachment A) are:    1. Lake Eyre Basin: 1) Galilee, 2) Cooper, 3) Arckaringa, 4) Pedirka.    2. Northern Inland Catchments: 1) Maranoa-Balonne-Condamine, 2) Gwydir, 3) Namoi, 4) Central West.    3. Clarence-Moreton: no subregions    4. Northern Sydney Basin: 1) Hunter, 2) Gloucester    5. Southern Sydney Basin: 1) Hawkesbury-Nepean, 2) Georges River, 3) Wollongong Coast    6. Gippsland: no subregions. 3. To ensure ongoing version control, it is proposed that the Products Working Group implement changes in the bioregion boundaries and be the custodian of the boundaries and spatial datasets. Changes to these will not be implemented, unless agreed by the OWS Senior Science Advisor (Peter Baker). 4. The version-controlled spatial datasets and maps will be stored on the WRON (water resources observation network) facility and Govdex. 5. Different groups can use these spatial datasets to create their own maps. |
| **Recommendation(s):** | **That the Board:**   1. Note that the technical analysis will concentrate primarily on the area within the preliminary impact zones. 2. Endorse the proposed boundaries of bioregions and subregions. 3. Agree that the Products Working Group will be custodian of the boundaries and spatial datasets. 4. Endorse that map making is not centralised, and the Products Working Group only manages maps for technical products. 5. Note that the projects will seek endorsement from the OWS Senior Science Advisor for any future alterations to the boundaries. |
| **Critical date(s):** | No suggested date, but an early resolution will minimise re-working of existing project outputs. |
| **Previous consideration(s):** | None |
| **Consultation(s):** | Boundary issues discussed with the Project Leadership Group since February 2013. |
| **Resource implication(s):** | **None at this point** |
| **Adviser/project manager:** | **Wendy Welsh** |
| **Attachments:** | **Attachment A: Description of proposed changes to the boundaries of the bioregions** |