

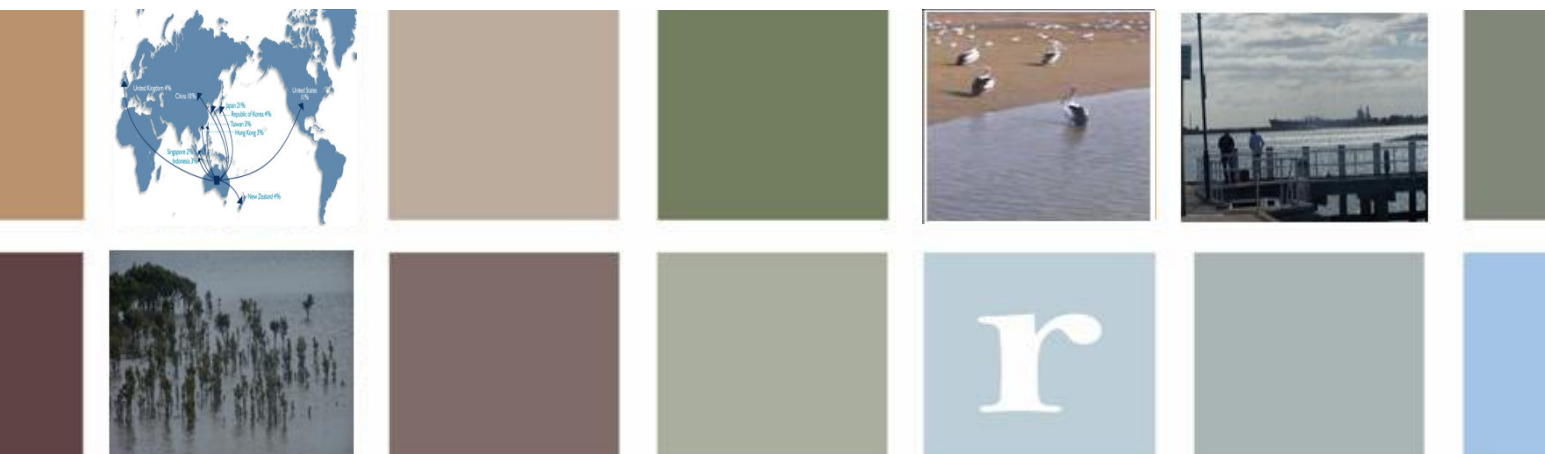
EVALUATION REPORT

Performance of the Mornington Peninsula and Western Port
Biosphere Reserve Evaluation Study

Prepared for

Department of Sustainability and Environment

May 2010



Roberts Evaluation Pty Ltd

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We would like to thank the Mornington Peninsula Western Port Biosphere Reserve Foundation executive for being so open with us and they were always supportive of our efforts.

Acronyms

BR	Biosphere Reserve
CMA	Catchment Management Authority
COP15	15 th Conference of the Parties (United Nations Climate Change Conference 2009)
CTTE	Committee
DIIRD	Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development
DOT	Department of Transport
DPCD	Department of Planning and Community Development
DSE	Department of Sustainability and Environment
EO	Executive Officer
EPA	Environmental Protection Authority
KEQ	Key Evaluation Question
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MAB	Man and the Biosphere (UNESCO program)
MPSC	Mornington Peninsula Shire Council
MPWP	Mornington Peninsula Western Port
MPWPBR	Mornington Peninsula Western Port Biosphere Reserve
NP	National Park
OEOF	Our Environment Our Future
PNL	Panel
PoHLUTS	Port of Hastings Land Use and Transport Strategy
PPWCMA	Port Phillip and Westernport Catchment Management
RCS	Regional Catchment strategy
RMIT	Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology
SBB	Southern Brown Bandicoot
UNESCO	The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

1 Summary

1.1 Background

Biosphere reserves are sites recognised under UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Program. Biosphere reserves are made up of three zones: the core zone which is the conservation area, a buffer zone between the core and the transition zone where development takes place. The objective of these biosphere reserves is to reconcile the needs of wilderness and humans. To achieve their objective, they have three functions: conservation, sustainable development and logistic support (implementation to include education). The reconciliation originally relied on preserving the unique qualities of the core zones, however, in the most recent iterations (UNESCO, 2008), it was recognised that the role of biosphere reserves should take more of an educational function and be places where people learn how to live sustainably by experimenting with solutions.

The Mornington Peninsula and Western Port Biosphere Reserve (MPWPBR) was designated as a biosphere reserve in 2002. The MPWPBR implementation structure (the Foundation) is made up of a governing board and six community roundtables (committees) where its members meet. The board is made up of up to 15 members including the directors of the roundtables, representatives from government and industry. The Foundation is supported by advice from an advisory panel and a research committee. The MPWPBR Foundation is currently involved in two main projects: the Southern Brown Bandicoot and Watson's creek. It has initiated or been involved in up to eight others since its formation. Its funding comes from membership fees and from the councils of Mornington Peninsula Shire, Frankston City and Cardinia Shire. It also receives some funds from projects.

The MPWPBR is endorsed by the Victorian State Government and its status and impact is regularly reviewed. It is to this end that the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) commissioned this review.

1.2 The review

The *State Government policy of Biosphere Reserves* includes a set of criteria by which the status and impact of the biosphere reserves they support can be measured. These criteria formed the key evaluation questions for this review. The terms of reference for this review stipulate that it was to be confined to just the MPWPBR and not be a comparative study with other reserves. Further, that it was to provide information for an internal review of the Government's policy, not make specific recommendations on policy or on how the operations of the MPWPBR should be improved.

The key evaluation questions from Government were:

1. How well is the MPWPBR meeting the criteria for designation of biosphere reserves in Article 4 of UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme Statutory Framework for the World Network of biosphere reserves?
2. What environmental, social and economic effects have occurred as a result of the designation of the MPWPBR and the establishment and operation of the Foundation?
3. To what extent are the current and proposed MPWPBR Foundation's programs consistent with, and an enhancement of, ecologically sustainable development state government programs?
4. How well have stakeholders been engaged and how is this reflected in the level of support for MPWPBR and community capacity building and involvement?

5. How appropriate are MPWPBR Foundation’s governance and business arrangements to enable the MPWPBR to achieve on-ground outcomes?

Additional questions to do with barriers, stage two and the support the three functions give to each other were added to fill perceived gaps.

1.2.1 Data collection

Data were collected through: a document and literature review, a focus group, interviews, an on-line survey and a Summit workshop. A total of 96 individuals contributed to this review, 14 provided data for more than one role they had with the MPWPBR, for example, they were a member of a roundtable and an environment group or they took part in more than one data collection event, for example, an interview and the Summit workshop.

Not all individuals were asked all of the questions, therefore, the number who responded to each question varied and this is reflected in the reporting of the results. There were five categories of respondents in all and they were:

Category 1. Total 69	MPWPBR Foundation members (21), Environment groups (12), Business groups (15) Government (21)
Category 2. Total 61	Environment groups (12), Business groups (15) Government (21), Board (8), Research/advisory group (5)
Category 3. Total 48	Environment groups (12), Business groups (15) Government (21)
Category 4. Total 33	Environment groups (12), Government (21)
Category 5. Total 13	Board (8), Research/advisory group (5)
All categories: total 110	MPWPBR Foundation members (21), Environment groups (12), Business groups (15) Government (21), Board (8), Research/advisory group (5), Roundtables (8), Misc (3), late interview (1), Summit workshop (8).

The questionnaires in an appendix of this report show how the questions were allocated.

Documents covering policy, plans, strategies, project reports and research were reviewed.

1.2.2 Findings

Comments made from individuals who participated in this review and evidence from a review of the literature showed that there was overwhelming and universal support for the concept of a biosphere and for the MPWPBR. However there were some strong differences of opinion about its governance. The findings for each key evaluation question will now be described. The division of opinion arises in some of the findings.

Key evaluation question one: How well is the MPWPBR meeting the criteria for designation of biosphere reserves in Article 4 of UNESCO’s Man and the Biosphere Programme Statutory Framework for the World Network of biosphere reserves?

Evidence, from a review of the literature, shows that formal arrangements to comply with the criteria for designation are in place and reflect the goals in the MAB Seville Strategy and the Madrid Action Plan. Similarly, policies, a strategic plan, implementation strategies and programs have been developed to



carry out the three functions of a biosphere reserve. There is a requirement that the MPWPBR needs to be community driven. The evidence from interviews and the literature shows that the nomination process involved the community. However, during the implementation phase many who had been involved to that point felt sidelined. Documents shows that a rift developed between the MPWPBR Foundation and community members in 2003 about the process that was used to develop the constitution and then to have it accepted. This rift is ongoing among this original group.

Key evaluation question two: What environmental, social and economic effects have occurred as a result of the designation of the MPWPBR and the establishment and operation of the Foundation?

Environmental, social and economic effects were greater than expected given the limited budget on which the MPWPBR Foundation depends. Environmental impacts resulted from specific projects and included the effects of revegetation and the re-creation of habitats for the Southern Brown bandicoot as well as the restoration of parts of Watson's Creek. Specific details about the impacts were not recorded such as the effects on the bandicoots of the hectares rehabilitated or any improvement in the water quality of Watson's creek.

Social impacts relate to the awareness, learning, development of skills, collaboration, fostering an attitude of stewardship of the environment and building capacity of individuals. Data from respondents and from documents show that social impacts were extensive and came not just from activities related to projects but also from events organised by the MPWPBR Foundation such as the forum on climate change and the seminar on the Southern Brown Bandicoot. The MPWPBR made a social impact on at least 24 out of 33 members of the Foundation (this figure includes 21 who responded to the online survey and 13 who were interviewed) who reported that their awareness had been raised. The report on the seminar to do with bandicoots, attended by approximately 100 people, indicated that much had been learnt by the participants.

Economic impacts were thought to be insignificant at first but when a list was compiled, by the Chair and CEO of the MPWPBR Foundation it showed that the MPWPBR attracted in the order of \$200,000 to the region and provided employment for at least two staff and two contractors. Respondents were not asked to speculate on the counterfactual (what would the impact be if there was no MPWPBR) as originally planned given that very little was known about any economic impact. Even so, it was important to consider the counterfactual in the planning stage of this review because it was thought that an economic impact could have been discernible.

Key evaluation question three: To what extent are the current and proposed MPWPBR Foundation's programs consistent with and an enhancement of ecologically sustainable development state government programs?

A review of program reports, strategies, policies and plans found that there was considerable overlap between the intentions of the Man and Biosphere program, the MPWPBR Foundation, Government and industry. Documents to do with the MPWPBR showed that the Foundation used a broader range of activities in the way it approached its logistic function than Government or industry and because of this enhances the activities of Government. For example, from the descriptions of programs and activities in these documents, it seemed that Government and industry focus on education and capacity building whereas the MPWPBR Foundation also included activities such as learning from a sister biosphere overseas, interactive events, and creating a reference library to which the public has access.

Key evaluation question four: How well have stakeholders been engaged and how is this reflected in the level of support for MPWPBR and community capacity building and involvement?

The majority of respondents (41 out of 69) from all groups who took part in the review and for whom this question was relevant were satisfied with their level of engagement with the MPWPBR Foundation. However, they were not as satisfied with the Foundation's level of communication with them; only 25 out of 69 were satisfied in this regard. Those who were directly involved through activities such as projects were more likely to be satisfied with the current level of communication. It was difficult to link the level of satisfaction of engagement with support for the MPWPBR or its Foundation. Confusing factors included that individuals supported the concept of the MPWPBR (27 out of 48) and were satisfied with their level of engagement (41 out of 69 and which could be very small) but at the same time did not automatically renew their annual subscription. Therefore, the drop in subscriptions cannot be construed as a waning in interest in the MPWPBR nor can a high level of satisfaction with engagement be seen as support.

General knowledge about the MPWPBR was high among local environment and business groups but low among individuals from local and State Government. Involvement with the MPWPBR has built the capacity of individuals: awareness, knowledge, skills and networks have all increased. Most notably, being involved with the MPWPBR and its Foundation has developed the members' communication, leadership and creative thinking skills (20 out of 33) and members have gone onto to become involved with research, education of others, developing Government policy and local Government planning (19 out of 33). In other words, they have become more involved with the business of Government.

Key evaluation question five: How appropriate are MPWPBR Foundation's governance and business arrangements to enable the MPWPBR to achieve on-ground outcomes?

The MPWPBR Foundation has a policy document (the Charter), operational documents (the *Living Strategic Plan*, the research committee's strategic plan) and a Constitution. As already pointed out, the formal governance structures of the MPWPBR Foundation are appropriate. The MPWPBR is mobilised through a board, research committee, advisory panel, and roundtables. It is through the roundtables that the board exchanges information and ideas with the community. Currently only three out of the six roundtables function. The data also show that influential members on the board are either becoming frustrated with or losing interest in using this mechanism to engage the community.

The board's changing view on the role and value of the roundtables further accentuates community members' feeling of alienation. The impression from the community is that they are being marginalised. Members of the community feel that the way the board currently interacts with the roundtables seems to contradict the intention of its operational principles as set out in the MPWPBR *Charter*.

Key evaluation question six: To what extent do the Foundation's projects past and current support and influence each of the three functions of the biosphere reserve?

The three functions are: conservation, sustainable development and logistic support. The term "logistic support" here is used to include education and information exchange (as per the Charter). It was thought to be important with regard to efficiency to investigate with the three functions supported each other.

The two main projects: Southern Brown Bandicoot and Watson's Creek have elements of the three functions. The Southern Brown Bandicoot has a strong focus on conservation and there is logistic support through education and community involvement. In the Watson's Creek project, sustainable development is very important and is implemented through a partnership approach with industry. Therefore, the three functions do support each other which means that the outputs of the MPWPBR Foundation are achieved more efficiently than if the three functions operated independently. For example, the conservation function operates more efficiently if it is carried out by also looking for opportunities to build the knowledge and skills of those involved.

What are the barriers to the MPWPBR being successful?

When asked to identify barriers, the majority of respondents who made a comment about barriers articulated difficulties in making the ideal a reality. This discrepancy between the implementation and ideals of the Man and Biosphere program is expressed in the frustration of stakeholders in responses to many questions asked in this review. Nearly all of the barriers focus on fundamentals such as funding, governance and direction.

What are the views and opinions of the MPWPBR community regarding stage two of the MPWPBR?

The majority of respondents (34 out of 61) supported going to stage two. Those who did not thought that more work needed to be done on getting stage one working well before moving to stage two. Some, who gave qualified support, stated that more needs to be done to engage the MPWP community. One of those who supported going to stage two stated that it was because they felt it was critical to conserving the core area.

2 Background

The Mornington Peninsula and Western Port Biosphere Reserve (MPWPBR) is a reserve designated under the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Program (MAB). The nomination was conditionally approved by the Victorian State Government in June 2002 leading to its approval by UNESCO on 8 November 2002.

The objective of the MAB program is to encourage the development of solutions which reconcile the conservation of biodiversity with sustainable development. Three functions of these reserves are set out in Article 3 of the Statutory Framework of Biosphere Reserves:

- Conservation of landscapes, ecosystems, species and genetic variation
- Development which is socio-culturally and ecologically sustainable
- Logistic support for projects, training, research and monitoring of national and global issues of conservation and sustainable development.

Biosphere reserves have three zones or areas:

1. A core area devoted to long-term protection, according to the conservation objectives of the biosphere reserve. In the case of the MPWPBR the core consists of three national parks, a State park and a Flora and Fauna Reserve.
2. A buffer zone which is “surrounding or contiguous to the core area or areas, where only activities compatible with the conservation objectives can take place” (Article 4 of the Statutory Framework). In the MPWPBR case the buffer zone consists of most of Western Port Bay (except the shipping lanes) and a small zone around the core of 50 metres in width.
3. An outer transition area where sustainable resource management practices are promoted and developed. In case of the MPWPBR it includes all those areas that are not covered by the other two zones.

2.1 State Government Policy

The State Government supports the biosphere reserve concept in principle as a way to encourage ecologically sustainable development. It does so, however, on the condition that the biosphere reserve is:

1. Community driven
2. Self funding
3. Based on voluntary participation
4. Does not restrict otherwise legitimate uses of land.

These conditions are based on State Government’s policy (2002) on the biosphere reserves. Paragraph 2 of that policy requires the evaluation of a new biosphere reserve (the MPWPBR) before considering any new proposals.

The MPWPBR has now been operative for approximately seven years and a full evaluation was considered timely especially in light of paragraph 2 of the policy and also in view of a desire by the Foundation to nominate to UNESCO Stage two of the MPWPBR.

3 Methodology

3.1 Scope

The primary objective of the evaluation was to provide advice of relevance to amending the Biosphere Reserve Policy taking into account the findings of this study so as to inform the internal review by DSE. In doing so, it is necessary to assess the biosphere reserve using the criteria in The State Government Biosphere Reserve Policy. This evaluation was required to cover the full period of operation of the MPWPBR, to compare what the nominators said they would do in the nomination document with what has actually happened and to take into account the views and actions of stakeholders influenced by the designation of the MPWRBR and activities of the Foundation.

What is excluded from the study is detailed advice on how the Biosphere Reserve Policy should be amended and also on how the MPWPBR Foundation could improve its operations.

3.2 Context

For this evaluation, the context was important. Here the important issues were:

- When the Government approved the nomination, it had reservations about the possible impact and direction of the MPWPBR as evidenced by the conditional nature of the support for the nomination.
- In particular, the Government was keen to ensure that the MPWPBR would not restrict otherwise legitimate uses of land. So in evaluating the economic effects of the Foundation's programs (KEQ 2) it is important that both beneficial and perverse economic effects are identified, as well as perceived and actual impacts.
- Another consideration was the desire to ensure that the MPWPBR does not have a financial impact on the Government and again it will be necessary to identify what have been the financial implications for the Government.
- The impacts of the Foundation's activities so far should be seen in the context of a small funding base and a heavy reliance on volunteers. It is a modest operation.
- In measuring the environmental, social and economic effects, regard was given to the projects so far undertaken. Particular emphasis was placed on the potential for economic impacts. Environmental impact was defined as biophysical impact. Raised awareness about environmental issues is defined as a social impact not an environmental impact.
- This is the only biosphere reserve of its type in Victoria and so it has to be judged on its own merits. A detailed examination of similar biosphere reserves was not expected in this study and this is a limitation.

3.3 Key Evaluation Questions

The key evaluation questions guided the data collection and formed the basis of the report. Key evaluation questions one to five were developed by the client and refer to Victorian State Government policy and selection criteria for biosphere reserves. Key evaluation questions six and seven were developed by the evaluators to cover perceived gaps (KEQ 7) or to collect added information that could better describe impacts (KEQ 6).

The Key Evaluation Questions are:

1. How well is the MPWPBR meeting the criteria for designation of biosphere reserves in Article 4 of UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme Statutory Framework for the World Network of biosphere reserves?
2. What environmental, social and economic effects have occurred as a result of the designation of the MPWPBR and the establishment and operation of the Foundation?
3. To what extent are the current and proposed MPWPBR Foundation's programs consistent with and an enhancement of ecologically sustainable development State Government programs?
4. How well have stakeholders been engaged and how is this reflected in the level of support for MPWPBR and community capacity building and involvement?
5. How appropriate are MPWPBR Foundation's governance and business arrangements to enable the MPWPBR to achieve on-ground outcomes.
6. To what extent do the Foundation's projects past and current support and influence each of the three functions of the biosphere reserve?
7. To what extent has the MPWPBR met the criteria of the original proposal?

A response to KEQ 7 became redundant because it was covered by the data for KEQ 1.

Two other questions were added later by the client:

What are the barriers to the MPWPBR being successful?

What are the views and opinions of the MPWPBR community regarding stage two of the MPWPBR?

3.4 Data Collection

As mentioned above, data for the study were collected through:

- A document review
- A focus group
- Face to face and telephone interviews
- An on-line survey
- A summit workshop

Two focus groups with business and industry were scheduled but cancelled because of lack of numbers. Instead, individuals in this category were interviewed by telephone.

3.4.1 Document review

A review was carried out of relevant documents on policy, strategy, evaluation, frameworks, and impact to see whether they aligned with the documentation on the MPWPBR. Documents and the literature were also reviewed to collect evidence about impact.

3.4.2 Focus Group

One focus group was run with a range of stakeholders. It included members of two of the roundtables, the Port Philip and Westernport Catchment Management Authority, two local councils, and representative from the research committee and Government. There were eight participants in total. While useful data were collected at this event, it was composed of a number of fractious individuals who interfered with the process and hindered others from expressing their views freely. The level of unrest exposed by this focus group was also evident in most interviews and in the data from some of those who responded to the on line survey. The source of the conflict is commented on in the *Results* section of this report.

3.4.3 Interviews

Interviews by telephone and face to face were carried out with stakeholders listed below. Their views, perceptions and opinions were sought on topics that reflected the key evaluation questions.

There were times when it was important to supplement the facts from interviews with documented evidence. For example, the range and impact of projects, activities and events could only be completed by reading documents and reports and interrogating the website. No one source was sufficiently comprehensive.

For **businesses** the following groups were targeted:

- Those in areas where development is potentially affected by the MPWPBR such as in the Hastings area and those affected by the freeway
- Those involved in relevant projects such as the Bass Coast Sustainability Program and the Watson's Creek project to gauge the impact of these projects
- Businesses which operate in or near the buffer zone such as eco-tourism
- Businesses which were involved in the nomination such as Blue-Scope Steel, Patrick Ports, Monsanto, BHP (if not already included in the focus groups).

Two stakeholders were unavailable during the data collection period. They were representatives from the Port of Hastings Corporation and Vic Roads.

3.4.4 On line survey

Roberts Evaluation developed an online survey for members of the MPWPBR Foundation which was implemented with the help of the MPWPBR Foundation. This survey collected the views of 21 members.

Table 1. Summary of participants to the survey, focus group, on line survey and interviews

Government	Number of respondents	MPWPBR Foundation	Number of respondents
Department of Environment and Water Resources (Commonwealth)	1	Foundation Executive officer	1
Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development	1	Directors	7
Department of Planning and Community Development	1	Advisory panel/research committee	5
Department of Sustainability and Environment	2	Roundtable representatives	8
Department of Transport	1	Members of the Foundation	21
Environment Protection Authority	1		
Local Government	6	Other	
Melbourne Water	1	Businesses (includes: Tourism Victoria)	15
Parks Australia	1	Port of Hastings Corporation	unavailable
Parks Victoria	1		
Port Hastings community	1	Environment groups	12
Port Phillip and Westernport CMA	1		
South East Water	1	Focus group	8
Victorian Coast Council	1		
Vic Roads	unavailable	Miscellaneous individuals	3
Vic Track	1	Summit w/shop	8
Victorian Regional Channel Authority	0		
Western Port water	1		
TOTAL			110

Note: The DSE carried out a separate survey of individuals who live in the MPWPBR but are not necessarily associated with it.

The total of 110 responses was made up of data from 95 individual respondents, where 14 respondents provided data for more than one role they had with the MPWPBR or at more than one data collection event. The data from one respondent (VicTrack) were noted but too late to include in the results.

Participants to the review were grouped into a number of categories as the table below indicates. The categories reflected the relevance of the question to these individuals. For example, the question about building capacity was only asked of those for whom it was relevant.

Table 2. Categories of respondents

Category 1. Total 69	MPWPBR Foundation members (21), Environment groups (12), Business groups (15) Government (21)
Category 2. Total 61	Environment groups (12), Business groups (15) Government (21), Board (8), Research/advisory group (5)
Category 3. Total 48	Environment groups (12), Business groups (15) Government (21)
Category 4. Total 33	Environment groups (12), Government (21)
Category 5. Total 13	Board (8), Research/advisory group (5)
All categories: total 110	MPWPBR Foundation members (21), Environment groups (12), Business groups (15) Government (21), Board (8), Research/advisory group (5), Roundtables (8), Misc (3), late interview with Victrack (1), Summit workshop (8).

3.4.5 Summit workshop

A Summit workshop to present the evaluation findings was held on the 10th March 2010 at Frankston. The purpose of the Summit workshop was to provide a participatory forum for those most interested in the results to scrutinise the data. In the workshop, these individuals were involved in:

- Reviewing the data collected
- Assessing preliminary findings developed by the evaluation team
- Analysing evidence that determined the key findings
- Providing comments about what should be modified.

The Summit workshop was facilitated by Roberts Evaluation staff, and in attendance were four members of the steering team and four members of the MPWPBR Foundation.

The evidence was presented to stakeholders in poster format, with ten posters in all displaying the information collected in the review. Each research question had its own poster and then there were a cluster addressing barriers, the place of community, and support for stage two of the MPWPBR. There was also a separate poster on the evaluation methodology. Participants worked in pairs and spent approximately 10 – 20 minutes at each poster. All participants were asked to comment on all the posters. In addition, members of the Foundation were asked to verify the history, the organisational structure of the MPWPBR and to clarify their view on what is community. The project steering team was asked to comment on the list of documents that had been reviewed for the research.

4 Results

As part of the review, a number of individuals were contacted who were part of the original working party. The working party was responsible for researching and writing the MPWPBR Nomination. Here is a brief account from one interviewee of the development of the MPWPBR.

Box 1. The development of the nomination document

“The proposal to create a biosphere reserve was included in the French Island management plan for Parks Victoria. At the time the land conservation council was doing a review of public land. We put the proposal to the Land Conservation Council and they put it in their recommendations to State Government.

To make anything happen with Government you have to pull a lot of the levers. In this case the Government was a bit wary because it was basically a reservation which meant that the Government had to rely on the private conservation people and the Government thought that it would have to fund things.

It took from 1996 to 2000, four years, to widen the support and get it to the stage of a working party. The working party then prepared the nomination which went for review to the Commonwealth, State Government and UNESCO.

Once the Nomination was accepted in 2002 there was a very tedious process in hammering out the administrative structure, it was as much about control as it was about philosophy. Surprisingly it [MPWPBR Foundation] has continued when a lot of people expected it to collapse in a heap”.
[Member of the working party]

Before interviewees from the Foundation executive, the Department of Sustainability and Environment, and the Commonwealth (total 16) and were asked to provide their views in relation to the key evaluation questions, they were asked about what they saw was the role and value of the MPWPBR, and their vision was for the MPWPBR. The following is a collation of their views.

Role: With regard to the role, respondents reflected the three functions of a biosphere reserve which are to conserve biodiversity, to promote sustainable development and to provide a means of implementing the former two.

- To coordinate, integrate and lead activities to do with sustainability
- To protect the core zone
- A laboratory and show case for sustainability in an ecologically interesting setting.

Value: Environmental groups, businesses, agencies and Government stakeholders were asked to state what they thought was the value of the MPWPBR. They stated that the value of the program is that it:

- Links the region together on single issues, it has a broader charter than single organisations (i.e. catchment management authorities)
- Has increased awareness of the MPWPBR
- Is community driven

- Is a living laboratory for studying change
- Provides a leadership role on sustainability issues
- Is impartial and unbiased

Vision: Environmental groups, businesses and Government stakeholders were asked what vision they had for the MPWPBR. They stated that they would like to see it:

- Lead and coordinate action on sustainability
- Provide a forum where ideas can be exchanged
- Be community driven
- Be a valued member of an international network
- Be recognised for the work done through it
- Become self sustaining
- Increase the scale of the core zones

Finding: The comments in the three areas of role, value and vision are not in conflict with what is stated in various documents that prescribe the MPWPBR.

Results for the key evaluation questions are now presented.

4.1 Meeting the criteria of the MAB framework

The first key evaluation question was:

How well is the MPWPBR meeting the criteria for designation of biosphere reserves in Article 4 of UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme Statutory Framework for the World Network of Biosphere Reserves?

To answer this question, the main focus was on paragraphs 6 and 7 of Article 4 of UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme Statutory Framework for the World Network of Biosphere Reserves:

Paragraph 6, Article 4 states:

Organisational arrangements should be provided for the involvement and participation of a suitable range of inter alia public authorities, local communities and private interests in the design and carrying out the functions of a biosphere reserve.

Paragraph 7, Article 4 states:

In addition, provisions should be made for:

- (a) mechanisms to manage human use and activities in the buffer zone or zones;*
- (b) a management policy or plan for the area as a biosphere reserve;*
- (c) a designated authority or mechanism to implement this policy or plan;*
- (d) programs for research, monitoring, education and training.*

Paragraph 6 was dealt with in two parts. The first was to investigate the organisational arrangements and the second was to see what level of participation was gained through them.

4.1.1 The formal organisational arrangements to involve the range of stakeholders

The MPWPBR Foundation was established in December 2003 to implement the UNESCO MAB Program in the Mornington Peninsula and Western Port Region. The MPWPBR Foundation functions through a company limited by guarantee which has a Charter and a Constitution.

The Charter: The intention of the Charter is to be inclusive *“(t)he Foundation will, as far as possible be ‘community driven’ and be organic rather than hierarchical”*. Importantly for this evaluation, the Charter also sets out the Operational Principles of the board of the MPWPBR Foundation:

“Whilst it is acknowledged that the board must and will undertake a range of functions necessary to comply with their obligations under the Foundation’s governing legislation...it is intended that the board will be facilitative in its approach rather than directive, except where necessary to ensure that the Foundation meets its obligations under the law, its Constitution and the MAB. The board will seek to guide and resource the activities of the roundtables which will be the driving force of the Biosphere.”

The Constitution: The vision and mission statements in the Constitution are as per the Charter.

“Guiding the functions of the Foundation is a vision of the Biosphere Reserve as a place where people attain an enduring relationship with the natural world and contribute to the needs of society as a whole by showing a way to a more environmentally, socially and economically sustainable future...It is the Foundation’s mission to lead the community.”

The board: The board represents the various levels of Government and the community (through the roundtables). All board members are nominated except for the roundtable representatives who are elected. The board is advised by an advisory panel of nine experts in fields relevant to the environment and sustainable development and are invited by the Chair and approved by the board; and a research committee of seven with links to scientific and educational institutions.

The roundtables: Provision is made in the Constitution for six roundtables to represent the five local Government regions: Bass Coast, Cardinia, Casey, Frankston and Mornington Peninsula plus French Island. The roundtables are the vehicle through which the community is represented. Each member nominates which roundtable they want to belong to. It is through the roundtables that members’ views and ideas are collected. Each roundtable elects a director to the board and this person is the conduit for these ideas to the board and for guidance from the board.

The members: The public become members of the Foundation by applying to the board and paying the \$25 fee. Membership can be renewed annually by paying the prescribed fee. In addition to their role as members of a roundtable, members have the right to attend and vote at the Foundation’s Annual General Meeting.

Table 3. MPWPBR board composition (formal and current)

Potential representation	Board Members	Current representation	How chosen:	By whom:	Current status
6	Bass Coast roundtable	1	Elected	By roundtable members	Active
	Frankston roundtable	1	Elected		Active
	Mornington Peninsula roundtable	1	Elected		Active
	Casey roundtable		Elected		Inactive
	Cardinia roundtable		Elected		Inactive
	French Island roundtable		Elected		Inactive
5	Bass Coast Shire Council		Nominated	By Local Government	Inactive
	City of Frankston Council	1	Nominated		Active
	Mornington Peninsula Shire Council	1	Nominated		Active
	City of Casey Council	1	Nominated		Active
	Cardinia Shire Council	1	Nominated		Active
1	DSE	1	Nominated	By the Victorian Minister for the Environment	Active
1	Representative of parks Victoria	1	Nominated	By Parks Victoria	Active
1	Representative of industry or commerce		Nominated	By the board of the MPWPBR Foundation	Vacant
1	Chair	1	Nominated	By the MPWPBR board with the Minister for the Environment	Active
15	TOTAL	10			

4.1.2 Involvement and participation of members and different agencies and stakeholders

In developing the MPWPBR nomination a wide range of both public authorities and community interest groups were involved. The five founding partners were: Mornington Peninsula Shire, Department of Infrastructure, Parks Victoria, RMIT University, Phillip Island Nature Park. Subsequently eight additional partners formed part of the nomination. Namely: Bass Coast Shire, Frankston Mornington Peninsula Local Learning and Employment Network, Port Phillip Catchment and Land Protection Board, Kulin Nations Inter-Council Aboriginal Consultative Committee, South East Water, Environs Australia, Central Coastal Board, and Mornington Environment Association.

The nomination also mentions 54 individual community representatives who had strong involvement, and a wide range of environment and community groups who supported the process. Companies and business groups were also consulted. For example, the nomination document cites briefings of business and business groups (14) which included five peak bodies or associations representing different sub-sectors such as tourism, farmers and vignerons.

Membership has been dropping since 2004 with a current membership which is less than 43% of the 2004 membership.

Table 4. MPWPBR Foundation membership (2003, 2004 and 2009)

Roundtable paid up members	19-Dec-03	15-Jul-04	1-Jul-09
Bass Coast	11	12	11
Cardinia	5	6	3
Casey	4	13	4
Frankston	25	25	11
French Island	11	18	4
Mornington Peninsula	65	88	33
Total	121	162	66

Source: Hyman (2004) and MPWPBR Foundation records.

An examination of the members register showed that the spread of members who came from organisations were environmental groups (approximately two thirds), businesses (approximately one fifth), public institutions or unclassified (approximately one 10th). The public institutions or unclassified members included South East Water, Port of Hastings Corporation Authority and one school. These figures are taken from the historical register of members and are not indicative of those members who have paid their membership fees. These figures are designed to show the general balance of membership types.

Community: Given the lack of formal representation for community stakeholders on the board, community representation depends on the roundtables. Of the six roundtables, only three are operative: Mornington Peninsula, Frankston and Bass Coast. It was reported that French Island has always struggled to establish itself with its low permanent population and while Cardinia and Casey formed roundtables in the early days the membership was also low, interest waned and they ceased to remain functional (MPWPBR Foundation board and Government interviews and focus group).

Indigenous community representatives of the region were involved in the development of the MPWPBR nomination and are mentioned as important stakeholders in the nomination:

“This Foundation will include representatives of State and local Government, industry and the community, and have access to the provision of expertise covering the interests of: Conservation, The indigenous community, ...”

However there is currently no engagement with indigenous groups in the region. One respondent explained why this is the case:

“With indigenous engagement there is a dispute between the two groups in the area. It is quite challenging to engage with them. Once you talk to one group the other one won’t talk to you.”

The capacity for the Indigenous community to follow through is difficult as they are quite stretched.” [MPWPBR board member]

Local and State Government agencies: Presently Government agencies (local and State) have representation on the board as noted above (see Table 1). Other public authorities that have an interest but are not formally represented have the option of becoming members of the Foundation and joining a roundtable. Port Phillip and Westernport CMA, Melbourne Water, Victorian Coast Council and Port of Hastings Corporation are all members of the Foundation and of their local roundtable. Some agencies are closely involved in the MPWPBR’s projects. For example, the staff from Melbourne Water are involved in the Watson’s Creek project and the staff from Parks Victoria have an active interest in the project on the Southern Brown Bandicoot (MPWPBR 2008).

Business and industry: The importance of business or industry to the MPWPBR is indicated by the board position reserved for this sector. However, that position has never been filled and it was the gap mentioned most often by board members. They stated that they have been looking for the *right* person to fill this seat but are finding it difficult to identify a business representative who has the time, the broad interest and a network at the regional level.

Businesses currently participate as Foundation and roundtable members. There are currently eight firms represented. These include an industrial company, a vineyard, two tourism companies, two nurseries, a steel company and a services company.

4.1.3 The role of community

From responses and the discussions during the focus group it is evident that the concept of ‘community’ is contentious.

During the focus group and at the summit workshop the question of which stakeholders can be regarded as community was raised. This led to questions about whether the MPWPBR is community driven.

Who are the Community: There were differences in the way respondents defined community. Some stated that community included all groups that are not Government whereas others included all stakeholders.

With whom should the MPWPBR Foundation engage: Opinions differ greatly as to how inclusive and targeted the MPWPBR Foundation’s efforts should be towards reaching out to the community. Engagement with the community was said to be very good and inclusive initially, however, participation has dropped off significantly (see section below on *Engagement*). A board member explained that some members of the board describe the relationship between the MPWPBR Foundation and the community as follows:

“It is a sustainability foundation working with the community not the community working with the biosphere reserve.”

Which the respondent feels contradicts the intention of the Charter.

The origin of this description was made in a submission to the organisational review (2005) in response to a comment about options for the roundtables. It was stated:

"The Biosphere is a "foundation for sustainability -- for the community" NOT a "community foundation for sustainability".

Is the MPWPBR Foundation community driven: Some interviewees reported feeling disempowered by the MPWPBR Foundation. One interviewee explained that the MPWPBR board members are *"good at presenting to the community but not at letting the community participate"*. A similar perception was expressed by a primary producer who stated that:

"The people that were there [in the roundtable] were very middle class, public servants and I am a rural farmer...One person actually said, 'what are you doing here. You should be at another roundtable.'"

Anxieties about the process of engagement used by the Foundation have been voiced at least since December 2003 when the constitution was accepted at a meeting of members and they continue to appear in various documents (Hyman 2004, submissions to the organisational review 2005) as well as those voiced in this review. At the meeting in December 2003, many members felt that they had no choice but to accept the Constitution as written since they were only given the option to accept or reject it. There was no opportunity to alter the proposed Constitution which unlike the nomination document, had not been developed through a participatory process.

Box 2. Descriptions of the voting in of the MPWPBR constitution at a public meeting in Hastings (2003)

Past MPWPBR Foundation member and member of the Working Party:

"Part of the (working party) discussions were around what form or structure would be best to incorporate the biosphere. This all came to nothing when a public meeting was called and at that meeting a company was formed. It had a Charter and a Constitution which was more or less put to the meeting as a fait accompli. The meeting was held at Hastings and was chaired by the CEO of the Mornington Peninsula Shire Council. There was a lot of anger in the meeting over the lack of consultation on the structure, the Charter and Constitution. Overall the consultation process went out the window and there were a lot of people who were disappointed and felt disenfranchised."

Current board member and member of the Working Party:

"The Foundation that was set up at the end of 2003 as the delivery mechanism has a Constitution ... There was some upset at the inaugural meeting of the Foundation because of having to adopt a Constitution rather than choosing from a range. So a review was scheduled for a year later. The review concluded that the Constitution was working well."

Current board member and member of the Working Party:

"At the meeting in Hastings where .. (the chair) introduced the board structure there was disquiet but it went through. The board structure had to be adopted, [the meeting was told] take it or lose it...."

The reasons put forward to explain this lack of community engagement were:

- **Not seen as a priority.** The focus of the MPWPBR Foundation is on the corporate and local Government.
- **The leadership** [board] does not value the input from the community and is steering away from community engagement

“A lot of good people that have come to the MPWPBR Foundation have left because they feel that they have had their ideas ‘poo poohed’ and skills not recognised and turned away aggressively by some members of the board. It has been a failing of some key board members to not recognise the importance of community involvement...The community has been highly critical of the MPWPBR Foundation and then the leadership of the MPWPBR Foundation has not been able to effectively respond to these views and this could be due to a lack of knowing how to engage with the community at that level. It is seen as a bother rather than an opportunity.”

- It was thought by some that the **roundtable** model had failed. Although others suggested that this was less due to a failure of the roundtable model but more to the board’s lack of support for the roundtables. Roundtable members (past and current) spoke of the board not listening to them, not allocating them funds they are due from membership payments and generally feeling undervalued.

None the less, it was recognised at the summit workshop by one MPWPBR Foundation participant that community engagement is important: *“Having local representation is very important because the board cannot be in all places at all times.”*

4.1.4 Provisions MPWPBR has made for management, policy, implementation and programs

Provisions for management are stipulated in paragraph 7 of article 4 of the nomination document and refer to:

- (a) mechanisms to manage human use and activities in the buffer zone or zones;
- (b) a management policy or plan for the area as a biosphere reserve;
- (c) a designated authority or mechanism to implement this policy or plan;
- (d) programmes for research, monitoring, education and training.

Mechanisms to manage human use and activities in the buffer zone or zones: The buffer zones are under the jurisdiction of Parks Victoria, local councils, private land holders and agencies of the Transport Portfolio, therefore, mechanisms to manage human use falls to them. Three examples cited of actions taken by the MPWPBR that could relate to the buffer zones were:

- A submission regarding the impact on Peninsula link during its Environmental Statement process focusing on its possible effect on the Southern Brown Bandicoot habitat (2009) (Annual report MPWPBR 2009)
- Engagement with the Port of Hastings Corporation over its expansion (2005 and ongoing) (PoH website: community Reference Group)
- The use of conservation covenants by some landowners (2009 and ongoing) (Ecology Australia 2009)

A management policy or plan for the area as a biosphere reserve: The Foundation has a strategy, the *Living Strategic Plan 2007-2011* and a Charter. In the Foundation's strategy, the themes and objectives (especially for the conservation, sustainable development and logistical support) are generally broadly framed. However some of the more specific programs and initiatives of the Charter are not taken up. The "Current and Planned Projects" do not always show how the broader objectives will be met. Nevertheless, the *Living Strategic Plan* is a plan for the management of the MPWPBR.

A designated authority or mechanism to implement this policy or plan: There is a designated authority to implement the management plan, namely the Foundation. It is a legal entity with appropriate powers and processes as described above. The role of the Foundation is examined further in a subsequent section on governance.

Programs for research, monitoring, education and training:

Research: There is a research committee and a number of research projects. The research programs include: The Southern Brown Bandicoot Recovery Project. Sustainability indicators for the MPWPBR, Mass Balance Project looking at all energy coming into the MPWPBR at stage two level and all energy leaving the MPWPBR, student theses (Hanley 2003, O'Bryan 2007, Kraska 2009) and an inventory of relevant research (Mungere 2008).

Monitoring: Monitoring only takes place as part of the Southern Brown Bandicoot and the Watson's Creek projects. From a governance perspective meeting minutes are recorded and are publicly available.

Education and training: There is a significant amount of education or links into education programs, however, there is no formal education or training programs unless as part of a project.

4.1.5 Findings: Meeting the criteria of the MAB framework

Formal arrangements: These are in place and reflect the goals in MAB Seville Strategy and Madrid Action Plan. The arrangements include formal documents such as: the Charter which is the policy document that sets out the values and principles that govern the operations of the Foundation; the Constitution; and the strategic plan that set out the operational obligations and intentions.

The structural arrangements are that the Foundation has a board that represents community and Government (industry is still to be represented), a research committee and advisory panel that are made up of relevant and appropriate experts to advise the board, and roundtables that regionally based and made up of community, industry and Government members of the Foundation.

Practical involvement: Data from interviews and documents show that the nomination process was driven by the community and included a diverse range of groups and individuals. Current membership shows that two thirds of the members are from environmental groups, one fifth from business and the rest from public institutions. Membership of the Foundation has been dropping since 2004.

When it came to the implementation phase of the MPWPBR, many who had been involved during the nomination felt sidelined and much anxiety and anger remains with some community members about this and the leadership of the Foundation. This anxiety dominated the conversation of most

respondents to this review. The origin of the conflict goes back to the meeting in December 2003 when the draft Constitution was presented and reluctantly accepted by many.

The value of indigenous representation was recognised as important. However it was also the experience of respondents that it is difficult.

Cardinia and Casey councils are losing interest although there is renewed interest by the board to work more closely with their CEOs. This may lead to the roundtables in these regions to be reinvigorated.

Community: The definition and role of community is changing. Community is defined now as inclusive of Government and the role of roundtables as representatives of community is being diminished. Some members of the roundtables accuse the board of not listening to them, supporting them or seeing them as valuable.

Mechanisms to control activity in the buffer zone: This is outside of the direct control of the Foundation although there has been much activity to raise awareness (see the later section on *Engagement*) of the MPWPBR and sustainability.

Policy or plan: The *Living Strategic Plan* is a limited document whereas the Charter more fully reflects the *Seville Strategy* document.

Organisation to implement the plan: The Foundation fills this role.

Programs for implementation: There are programs for research, however, little by way of monitoring and training but there are a number of activities in education even if not formal. (See section below and the section on *Engagement*)

4.2 Environmental, social, economic effects

The second key evaluation question was:

What environmental, social and economic effects have occurred as a result of the designation of the MPWPBR and the establishment and operation of the Foundation?

This question was addressed by collecting data through a document review and a series of interviews with MPWPBR stakeholders.

4.2.1. Document review

The project activities as outlined in the available documents show that research has been carried out in all three areas of conservation: environmental (MPWPBR 2008; Hanley 2003); social (Kraska 2009; O'Bryan 2007; Watson's creek annual report; Hanley 2003); and economic (Kraska 2009; Hanley 2003).

The documents showed many activities and works that would lead to environmental outcomes. Documented evidence of potential environmental change was:

- Estimate that over 40 foxes have been killed with a 1080 fox control program across 250km² and 20 private properties
- Fencing to keep predators out
- The Cardinia Environment Coalition running a complementary bandicoot project. Activities included habitat restoration; predator control, including a fox-baiting program
- Planted thousands of indigenous plants on private properties at Bayles and Cardinia.
- Recreated habitat on private properties
- Southern Brown Bandicoot Habitat Restoration



<http://www.biosphere.org.au/projects/bandicoots/index.html>

Documented evidence of social change included:

- A public meeting on bandicoots to bring stakeholders together where project partners included Melbourne Water, Cardinia Shire Council, Western Port Swamp Land Care, Bayles Regional Primary School, City of Casey, and private landholders
- Raised community awareness about the plight of the bandicoot
- The creation of a bandicoot buddy system

There was no documented evidence of economic change, however Hanley (2003) mentions its potential and Kraska (2009) talks about economic indicators.

✓ = content of document

Reference	Env	Econ	Social	M&E	Qualitative comment
MPWPBR Foundation Ltd (2006)	✓		✓	✓	This report centres on biological information about the bandicoot and then how to replicate its habitat in the transition zone and tells people how to do that
http://www.biosphere.org.au/projects/bandicoots/index.html#projects	✓		✓		Project has evidence of social, environmental progress. Project is working with private enterprises (farms) but to create habitat not profit.
http://www.biosphere.org.au/projects/watsoncreek/index.html	✓	✓	✓		The emphasis on this report is on community engagement and working with businesses and improvement in environmental quality will be of benefit.
Hanley 2003 honours thesis	✓		✓		Data from tourism businesses was about what they knew about sustainable development and the cost business imposes on the environment but also the cost of not engaging them. (This is only an honours thesis)
O'Bryan 2007 thesis			✓		Useful data about behaviour change, Frankston. Cannot find data about Frankston footprint
Kraska T 2009 Master thesis			✓	✓	Listed areas in which previous authors had created indicators but no list for MPWPBR
Business sustainability evaluation	✓	✓	✓	✓	This project targeted business but was about sustainable behaviour rather than building profit. Businesses had already made changes

4.2.1 Results: Interviews

There were data from 48 interviews and two recurring themes in this section. The first was the apparent lack of actual environmental, social or economic impacts and the second is the perceived potential value that the MPWPBR has for the region.

Many of the interviewees, including members from the board and research committee, representatives of agencies, environmental groups and businesses, when asked about the impacts of the MPWPBR responded that these are small, with some saying that there were none. Respondents had difficulty pointing to concrete benefits that could be attributed to the MPWPBR's activities. *"I think there is awareness that there is a biosphere reserve and that the region is unique, but no more than that"*.

In contrast to the evidence from the document review, many stakeholders who were interviewed did not perceive that the MPWPBR Foundation projects had an impact in the region. Only 16 out of 48 respondents stated that projects had an environmental, social or economic impact. Respondents from businesses were most positive about the impacts of the MPWPBR on the region whereas respondents from Government (local and State) were least positive about these impacts (most of the Government

representatives who were recommended for this review were located outside of the MPWPBR and not directly involved in projects).

As can be seen in the graph below (Figure 1), most respondents, (32 out of 48) were either unable to point to any impact or reluctant to answer this question explaining that they are unaware of any impacts (environmental, social or economic).

Of the three groups identified in the graph below (Figure 1) the respondents from the group, Agencies and Government, were least likely to answer that the MPWPBR had an impact in the region. Seventeen of the 21 from this group were either not aware (6) or did not think (11) that the MPWPBR had an impact in the region. Conversely, over half (8 out of 15) respondents from group, Business, stated that the MPWPBR had an impact in the region.

From the Environmental Groups, only three out 12 stated that the MPWPBR had an impact in the region. The rest of them indicated that the impact was limited (2) that they were unaware of any impacts (4) or chose not to answer this question (3).

Not shown in the graphs below (Figures: 1, 2, 3 and 4) is the number of respondents, 19 across all stakeholder groups, who spoke of the MPWPBR’s potential to impact the region environmentally, socially and economically. Their responses are described in a section below.

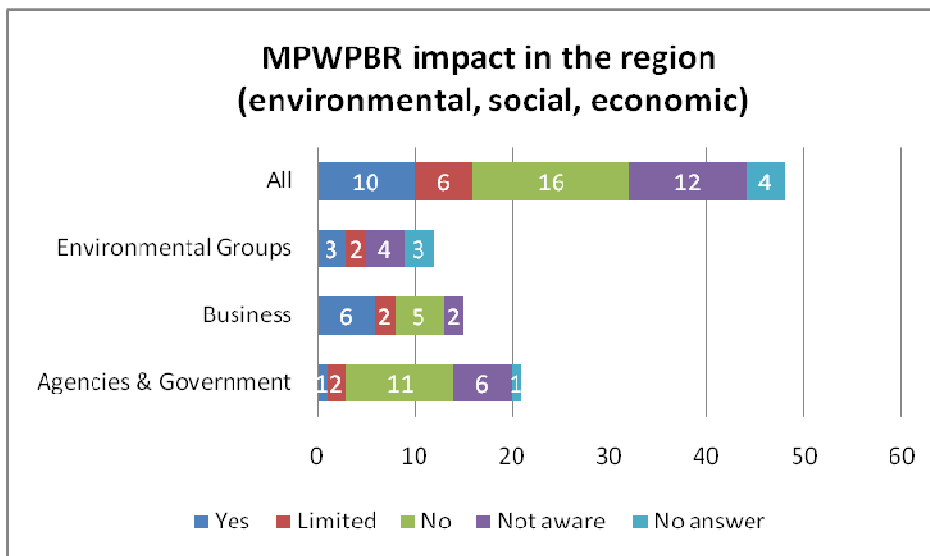


Figure 1. MPWPBR impact in the region

4.2.2 Environmental impacts

Environmental impacts refer to impacts that affect the environment only. For example revegetation is an environmental impact however better knowledge about vegetation is a social impact in that it is an impact on a person.

Overall, only eight interviewees out of 48 answered that they felt that the MPWPBR had an impact on the environment.

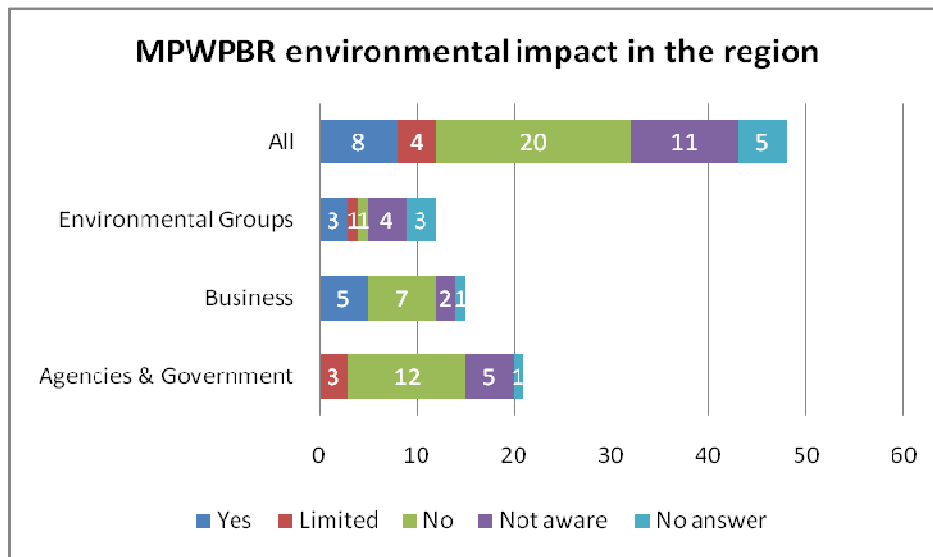
Many stakeholders, (31 out of 48,) in particular stakeholders from Government group, (17 out of 21), found it difficult to attribute environmental impacts to the MPWPBR. This they said was mainly due to the large scale of the MPWPBR program and a lack of monitoring and measurement.

Of the three stakeholder groups represented in the graph (Figure 2), the environmental groups were least confident in answering this question; seven out of 12 answered that they were either *unaware* of any environmental impacts or chose not to answer this question. Their response is not supported by the literature. One reason for their lack of knowledge is their lack of involvement with the MPWPBR Foundation. Those directly involved with the Foundation’s projects are aware of its impacts on the environment in the region.

The Business group (of the three; business, environmental and agency) was the most positive in regards to the MPWPBR’s environmental impacts with five out 15 answering that the MPWPBR has had an environmental impact. Nine out of 15, respondents in this group either stated that they did not know or were unaware of the MPWPBR’s environmental impact in the region.

On ground impacts that were identified by all respondents included:

- Re-vegetation [Southern Brown Bandicoot project]
- Fox control measure put in place [Southern Brown Bandicoot project]
- Rehabilitated areas that are creating bio links [Watson’s Creek project]



Agencies and Government refer to all local and State agencies. This is the case in subsequent graphs.

Figure 2. MPWPBR environmental impact

4.2.3 Social impacts

Social impacts refer to impacts that affect people. For example better knowledge of the Southern Brown Bandicoot is a social impact as are changes in attitude, skills and practice.

Overall, only seven out of 48 respondents stated that there had been any social impact. Of the three groups, those from the group Agencies and Government stated that they knew of no social impacts (9 out of 21) or made no comment (10 out of 21).

As with the results on the environmental, respondents from the Business group were most likely to answer that the MPWPBR had a social impact. Five respondents in this group out of 15 answered positively. The remainder responded that the MPWPBR had no social impact in the region.

From the Environmental Groups, only three responded that the MPWPBR had a social impact in the region. The rest from this group either were either unaware of any impacts (4 out of 12), or chose not to answer this question, (5 out of 12).

While capacity building is also a social impact it is dealt with in a later section.

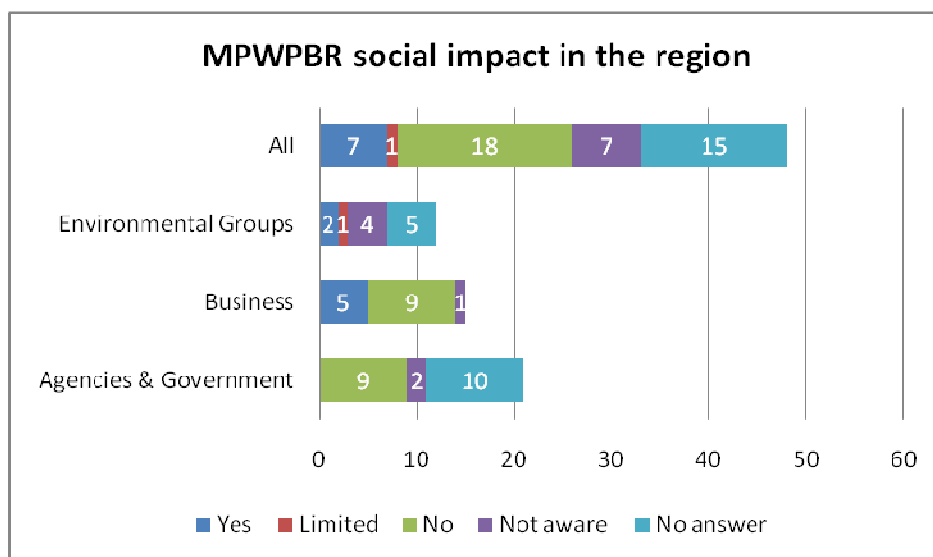


Figure 3. MPWPBR social impact

4.2.4 Economic impacts

Economic impacts can be measured in monetary terms. For example grants are economic impacts regardless of what they go towards.

The majority of respondents could not point to any economic impacts. Overall, only five respondents stated that the MPWPBR had an economic impact in the region and even then, respondents were only able to identify minor economic impacts or ones that are not directly related to the MPWPBR.

Overall, respondents found it most difficult to identify the economic impact of the MPWPBR with half, or 24 out of 48, responding that they were either unaware of any economic impacts or chose not to answer this question.

As with the environmental and social impact (Figures 2 and 3), the Business groups were most positive, recording the highest number of responses (3 out of 15), that the MPWPBR had an economic impact in

the region. Both the Agencies and Government group and the Environmental Groups only had one respondent each stating that the MPWPBR had an economic impact in the region.

Economic impacts included:

- **Contractors** paid for on ground restoration work (n=2)
- **Profile of region.** Where the goal of improving the environment is complementary.
“The aims of the biosphere reserve are complementary and its success will positively impact on our business.” [Business]
- **Attracting significant funds through grant application equating to over AU\$200,000.** The MPWPBR Foundation board members stated that the Foundation had been successful in attracting over \$200 000 funding to the region since it began.

“[Being a UNESCO Biosphere region], that is something unique that they’ve got and...they may be able to attract funds using that international link.” [Environmental Groups]

“If I want to undertake more work – I can use those projects to seek funding for further research for example.” [Environmental Organisations]

- **Employment** of the MPWPBR Executive Officer and the temporary employment of a project officer employed between grants, contractors employed to carry out works.
- **Volunteer time** spent on the MPWPBR is seen by some environmental groups as a negative impact.

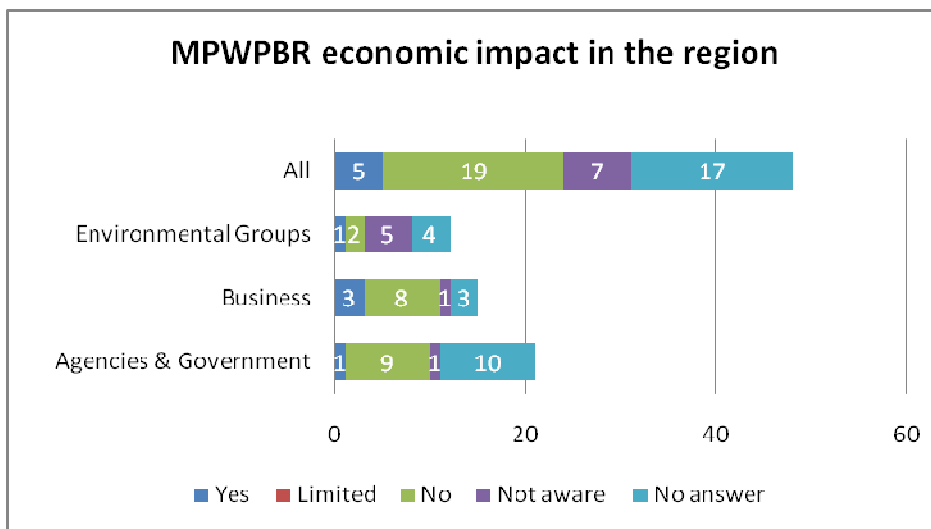


Figure 4. MPWPBR economic impact

4.2.5 Potential impacts

A common theme throughout the responses was the **potential** of the MPWPBR. There was a lot of goodwill expressed about the MPWPBR's existence in terms of the potential impact it could have for the region. Nineteen respondents (out of 48) across all stakeholder groups spoke in terms of the potential value of the MPWPBR for both their organisation and its impact on the region rather than what had been achieved to date:

"There's real potential for a really strong relationship but it hasn't been fulfilled"
[Environmental Groups].

"Hasn't had much impact and it would be possibly overstating it to say it was adverse. Most likely neutral which is disappointing as it has the potential to be positive"
[Environmental Groups].

Respondents also supported the MPWPBR's potential to build on its current achievements.

"I think the impacts have been very modest but I think that it has been useful in that the reputation of the Mornington Peninsula has been enhanced. I think we have benefitted by some of the work done. There is considerable potential benefit to be derived from expansion."
[Agencies and Government]

Also the success of the Noosa Biosphere reserve was seen as encouraging.

"Noosa is another Biosphere area. It is well promoted as part of the eco tourism credentials. That hasn't been looked at here. The tourism here is around ecotourism and wildlife though, so there is potential." [Government]

Respondents suggested that the MPWPBR had the potential to:

- Promote more sustainable behaviour
- Develop a sustainable business accreditation project to encourage changes in business behaviour (the tourism and agriculture sectors were identified as initial targets)
- Disseminate knowledge
- Create a space where all stakeholders can meet

4.2.6 Findings: environmental, social, economic impacts

To approximate the extent of impacts, it was important to read project documents, interrogate the website for information and to ask interviewees about specific instances of impact. No one source was comprehensive. The results show that individuals and groups do not keep themselves informed of what is happening with regard to the MPWPBR even though, information is readily available on the MPWPBR website. Unfortunately, newsletters from the MPWPBR Foundation on the Bandicoot project ceased in 2008.

Potential environmental impacts came from specific projects and related mainly to the project on the Southern Brown Bandicoot. Impacts included revegetation and the re-creation of habitat for bandicoots as well as the restoration of parts of Watson's Creek. Specific data about impacts were not recorded.

There was a lack of knowledge by individuals from the environmental groups about possible environmental impacts. This may be an indicator of their lack of connectedness with each other's projects but more likely that no monitoring data is being collected systematically to be able to report on impacts.

Social impacts were not readily identified by respondents even though they were aware of the work (as opposed to impacts) carried out by the projects. However, data from project and the research committee reports show that awareness was raised, skills developed and attitudes changed. For example, approximately 100 individuals attended a public meeting in November 2006 to learn about the Southern Brown Bandicoot (MPWPBR 2008). This is just one of the information exchange events organised by the MPWPBR. Learning from an event such as this produces an immediate social outcome unlike works in the environmental area such as revegetation which have to take effect before an environmental impact can be measured.

Economic impacts were thought to be insignificant by almost all respondents to the review but a list could be compiled by the CEO and Chair of the Foundation who had examples of economic impact. This list showed that there were many instances where the MPWPBR attracted funds and some where employment was provided.

Respondents were not asked to speculate on the counterfactual (what would the environmental or economic impact be if there was no MPWPBR) given that very little was known about any impact. Therefore, to put the counterfactual would have made no difference. Even so, it was important to consider it in the planning stage of this review because of the likelihood of known impacts.

Respondents to the review were more confident about talking about the MPWPBR's potential economic benefit than the actual benefit. It seems that only those individuals who are directly involved with projects and the application for funds know the extent of the actual impacts.

4.3 Consistency with Government programs

The key evaluation question for this section was:

To what extent are the current and proposed MPWPBR Foundation's programs consistent with and an enhancement of ecologically sustainable development within State Government programs?

This key evaluation question has been addressed through a document review covering relevant Victorian State Government and the MPWPBR Foundation's policies and programs. Specifically, this review considered consistency from two main perspectives:

1. Any possible **misalignments** with Government initiatives have been examined by comparing the MPWPBR Charter, Constitution and nomination documents with relevant State Government policies and legislation. Beginning with wider policy and frameworks, action statements and local strategies have been reviewed.
2. Any possible **gaps** left by the current policy and legislation. Noticeably the MPWPBR is a combination of conservation, sustainable development and logistical support functions and it may

be that other initiatives do not cover all three in that same way. This review will also focus on whether the biosphere reserve concept has a capacity to enhance other sustainability programs.

Table 5. Table of programs, policies and plans

✓✓✓ = the relative weight given to this area in the document ✓ = mentioned, ✓✓✓ = focus

Program/Policy/Plan	Conservation	Sustainable development	Logistical support	M&E	Comment
UNESCO MAB framework (Seville and Madrid, evaluation framework)	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	Recent MAB documents from the meetings in Seville and Madrid show that the program now focuses more on the Biosphere Reserves being places where individuals can learn how to live sustainably.
MPWPBR, Charter, nomination doc, Living Strategic Plan	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	The Charter and the Living Strategy Plan have specific intentions of M&E
UNESCO eval framework	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	Provides a good framework for local/international work
State Gov policy BR	✓	✓	✓	✓✓✓	
Growing Victoria Together 2001					
Melbourne 2030	✓✓✓	✓✓✓			Mercer (2009) states it challenges the principles of the MPWPBR
Melb @ 5 million	✓	✓			Complements the green wedges doc and Melbourne 2030
Program/Policy/Plan	Conservation	Sustainable development	Logistical support	M&E	Comment
Our Environment Our Future	✓	✓✓✓	✓	✓	Has very specific and measurable outcomes. Includes sustainability framework and The Accord program
Our Water Our Future	✓	✓✓✓			
Western Port Ramsar Management Plan	✓✓✓		✓✓✓	✓✓✓	Several mentions of the Biosphere Reserve and need to liaise with management committee
RCS PPWCMA	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	Several mentions of Biosphere Reserve as shareholder
White paper Securing our Natural Future	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	Clear outcome statements
Vic Coastal Strategy	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	
Vic Transport Plan		✓✓✓			

Freight Futures 2008		✓✓			Considers reduction of carbon emissions and damage to the environment
Port Futures		✓		✓✓	Mentions the concept of a green port and mitigation of risk
PoHLUTS	✓	✓✓	✓		Mentions a technical working group that may be of use to the MPWPBR Foundation
Pt Hasting Sustainability policy	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓		One page doc with principles statements. Link to biosphere on website
French Is NP Plan	✓✓✓		✓✓✓	✓✓✓	
Ass'ment community education for sustainability		✓✓✓		✓✓✓	Aligns with OEOF and evaluates against community engagement framework. Useful for the MPWPBR
Bass Coast/ M Pen profile					Minimal usefulness. No statements of intent.
Green Wedge guide	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	
Future Farm Findings and directions	✓✓✓	✓✓✓			
Broiler code		✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	
Landcare	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓		

The [Victorian Biodiversity Strategy \(1997\)](#) was not reviewed for this study. It is currently being renewed.

4.3.1 Adding value to environmental programs

Even though the programs in the following table are volunteer programs, they are funded or supported by government. An analysis of their literature shows that their activities complement those of the MPWPBR Foundation. Data from the interviews with members of environmental groups suggested that members varied in their opinion about what value the MPWPBR Foundation could be to them. However, it is clear that the MPWPBR Foundations can provide a forum where these groups can lodge their information. The website is the obvious place and currently it does not have links to these groups. Victoria Naturally Alliance is an organisation that is an umbrella for environmental groups produces a regular newsletter to update groups about each other's work. The MPWPBR Foundation could do something similar for its region.

Table 6. Adding value to environmental groups

Program/Policy/Plan	Conservation	Sustainable development	Logistical support	M&E	Comment
Coast Care	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓	This is jointly funded C'wealth/state funded

					program
Land for Wildlife Victoria	✓✓✓	✓✓✓			This is a program that asks landholders to voluntarily set aside land for wildlife.
Waterwatch Victoria	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	An extensive community network of water monitors that operates mainly in schools.
Threatened Species Network	✓✓✓	✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	TSN works in conjunction with WWF.
Birds Australia	✓✓✓	✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	This has a strong emphasis on monitoring
Australian Conservation Volunteers and Australian Biosphere Volunteers	✓✓✓	✓	✓✓✓	✓	These organisations coordinate volunteers to carry out environmental works. ACV is quite extensive in its operations
Friends of groups	✓✓✓	✓	✓✓		These groups operate in conjunction with DSE and Parks Vic.

4.3.2 Findings: Consistency with Government program

Alignment: There are no misalignments in the intention of the statements made in the documents that were assessed for this review with the exception of the *Melbourne 2030 report* and its follow up *Melbourne @ 5 million*. Mercer and Hyman (2009) suggest that the aspirations for sustainability outlined in the MPWPBR Charter will be challenged by the emphasis on development of these Government reports. The intent and wording of all other documents: the UNESCO documents, the MPWPBR documents and the plans and strategies of Government have a similar intent which is to conserve the natural environment, promote sustainable living and educate the community in this regard.

Enhancement: There is only one important area of difference between the documents that relate to the MPWPBR and the others. This is in the approach to education and community engagement. In all the documents reviewed here that have an education component, none are as comprehensive as the statement in the *Charter*. Most documents focus on community education with regard to sustainable living, capacity building or a specific area of interest whereas the statement in the Charter refers to: the creation of a research institute, networking of information, accrediting, investigating and researching, developing, encouraging, partnering, working with a sister organisation and creating an on line library to which the public has access and so on. The intention of the education aspect of its responsibility is comprehensive.

4.4 Engagement

Key evaluation question four was:

How well have stakeholders been engaged and how is this reflected in the level of support for MPWPBR and community capacity building and involvement?

This key evaluation question has been addressed through data collected through an online survey, interviews (face to face and by telephone), a focus group, and a Summit workshop. References to the Foundation in this section include the EO, the board, the research committee and the advisory panel.

4.4.1 The engagement strategy

Respondents from the Foundation disagreed as to whether the MPWPBR Foundation has in place a strategy to engage with stakeholders. A number of respondents (5 out of 13), stated that there is “no strategy” currently in place. They described the current methods employed as ad hoc, opportunistic, and “more a product of people’s extended networks”.

Table 7. The MPWPBR Foundation's strategy

	Yes, has a strategy	No, has not got a strategy	Total
Board (incl. EO)	5	3	8
Research CTTE & advisory PNL	3	2	5
Total	8	5	13

4.4.2 Level of satisfaction of stakeholders regarding engagement

Respondents to this question came from: the environment groups (12), the members online survey (21), the business groups (15) and agency/government group (21) which make a total of 69. Over half, 41 out of 69, were satisfied with their level of engagement. It is worth noting that of the 41 who were satisfied with their level of engagement, six were not at all engaged with the Foundation and happy with that. Eight respondents from the Foundation members group stated that their level of engagement had increased over time in terms of the practical aspects of their involvement, and their passion or loyalty to the idea and aims of the organisation. However, five others, from the same group, indicated a drop in their level of engagement due to frustration with the structure and implementation.

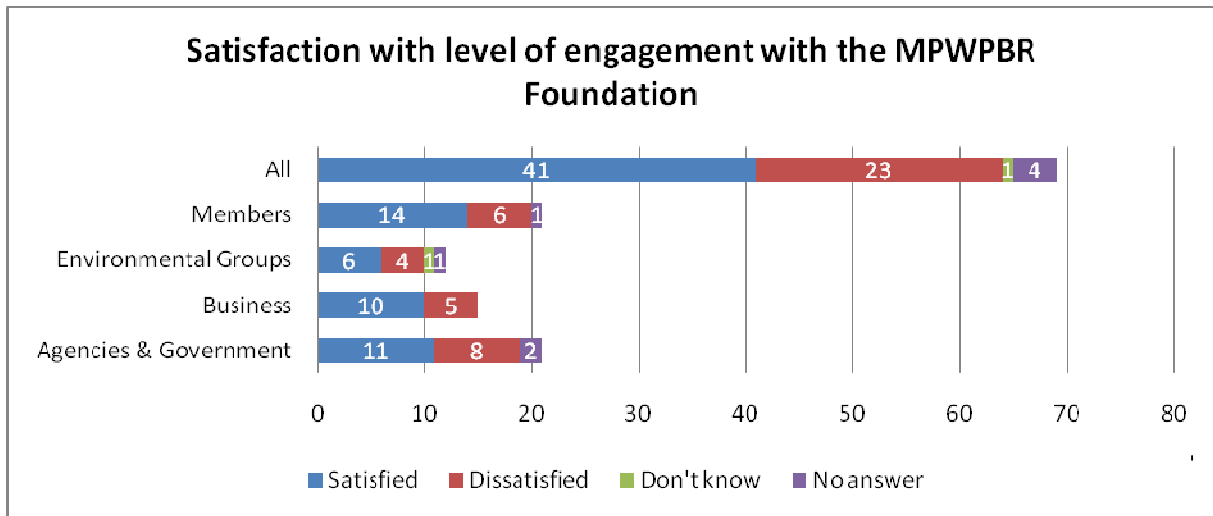


Figure 5. Satisfaction with level of engagement

4.4.3 Level of satisfaction of stakeholders regarding engagement

Well under half (25 out of 69) were satisfied with the level of communication coming from the MPWPBR Foundation. This low level of satisfaction was more obvious from non members than members. Some said that communication was either inadequate or they did not receive any: *"I don't think there has been enough"*[non member Business], *"[I] had a couple of emails but I wouldn't know what's happening."* [non member Environmental Group]

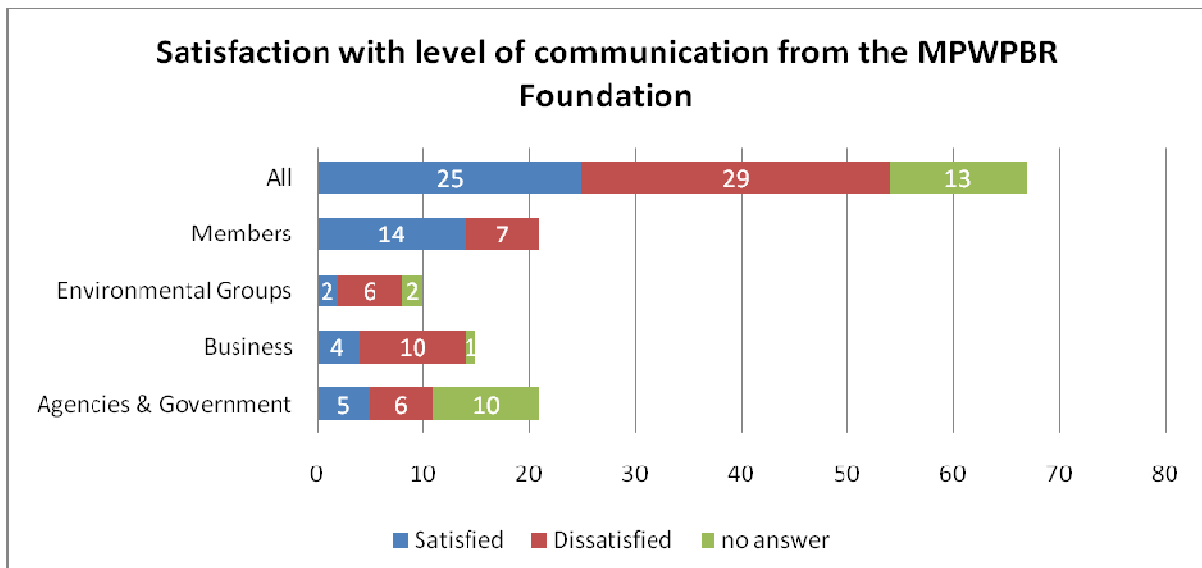


Figure 6. Satisfaction with level of communication

Interviewees from the MPWPBR Foundation all agreed that the level of communication could be improved, and acknowledged that it was poor. Some were specific in their answers arguing that more work needed to be done with the community generally, with agencies and local landholders.

4.4.4 Level of awareness of MPWPBR

Over three quarters, (25 out of 33), of Government (21) and environmental group representatives (12) interviewed estimate that the level of public awareness of the MPWPBR is “low” or “almost non-existent”.

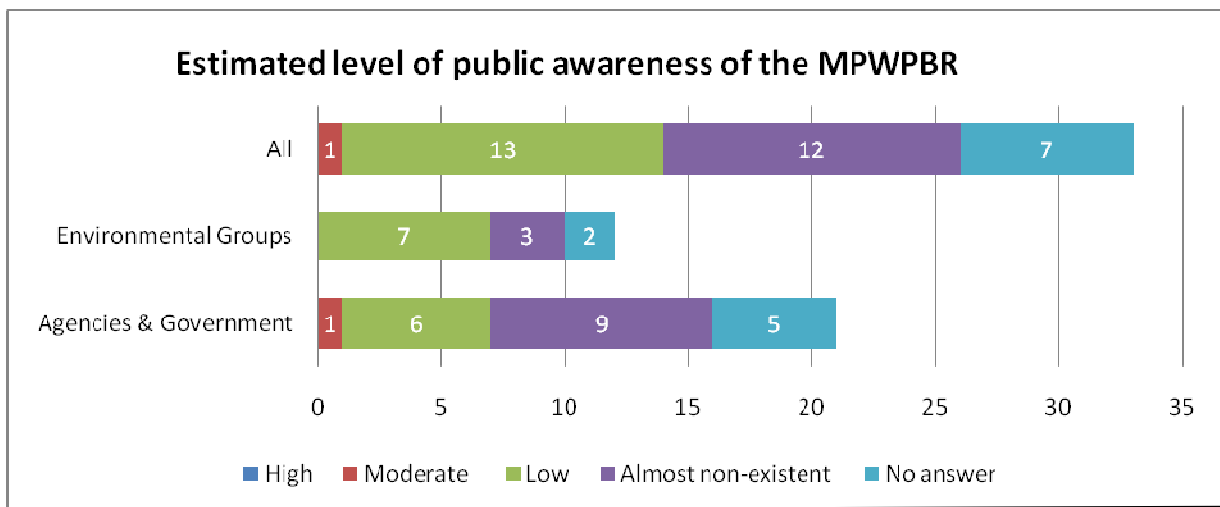


Figure 7. Level of awareness of MPWPBR

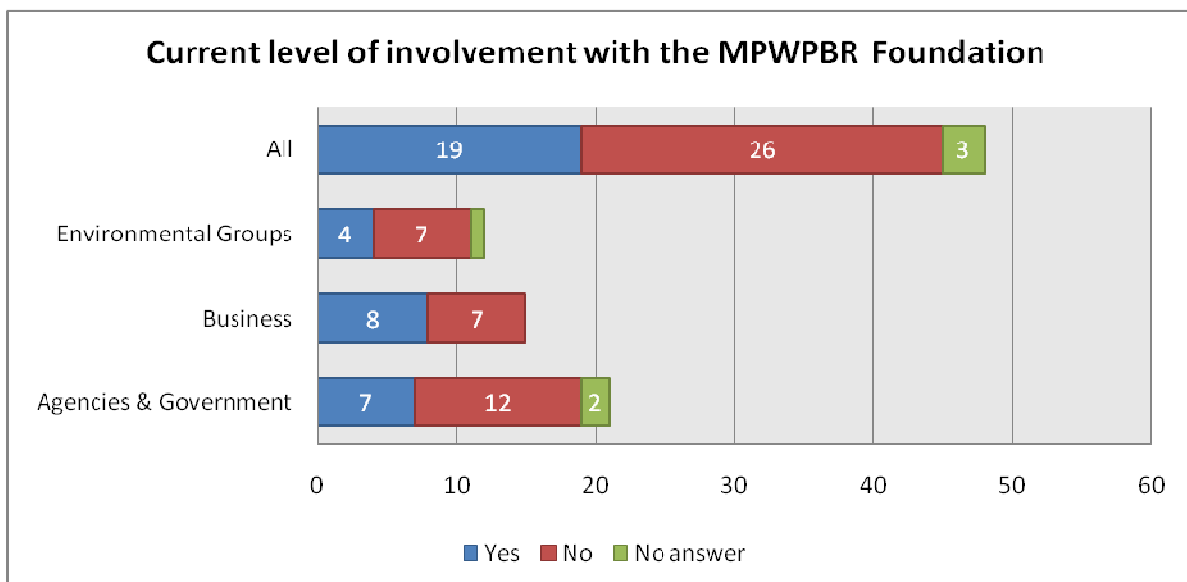


Figure 8. Current involvement with the MPWPBR Foundation

According to members of the MPWPBR Foundation the level of enthusiasm for the MPWPBR varied over time and between stakeholders. One respondent was more specific and stated that the level of enthusiasm was notably higher with stakeholders engaged in specific MPWPBR Foundation projects.

4.4.5 Knowledge of the MPWPBR

Questions about knowledge of the MPWPBR were asked of environmental groups (12), businesses (15), and agency/ Government stakeholders (21). They were asked if they were familiar with the aims and functions of the MPWPBR (see graph below). Just over half of respondents (26 out of 48) said that they are familiar with the aims of the MPWPBR. Respondents from the agencies and Government representative group were less likely to be familiar with the aims of the MPWPBR than those from the businesses and environmental groups.

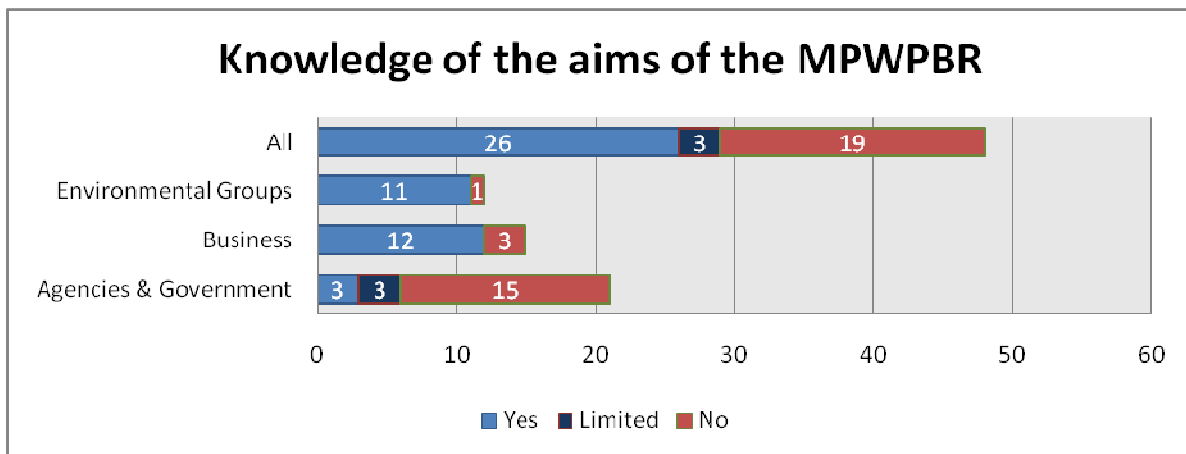


Figure 9. Knowledge of the aims of the MPWPBR Foundation

4.4.6 Increased awareness/knowledge/attitude

Respondents from the MPWPBR Foundation (total 33) were asked whether their involvement with the Foundation had assisted them in increasing their awareness and knowledge, in extending their networks and in developing new skills. Below is an analysis of their responses.

Awareness: Many respondents (24 out of 33) felt that their own awareness of the issues covered by the MPWPBR had increased.

Knowledge and understanding: Respondents (21 out of 33) reported increased knowledge of:

- The Southern Brown Bandicoot in particular in identifying habitats, weed control, vegetation management
- The international context for sustainability
- The sustainability challenges that face the Westernport region
- The relationships between people and ecosystems
- Local communities

Attitude: Respondents (13 out of 33) found it difficult to answer the question on attitude change but a few noted a change in their attitude towards sustainability and reported having acquired a broader approach to thinking.

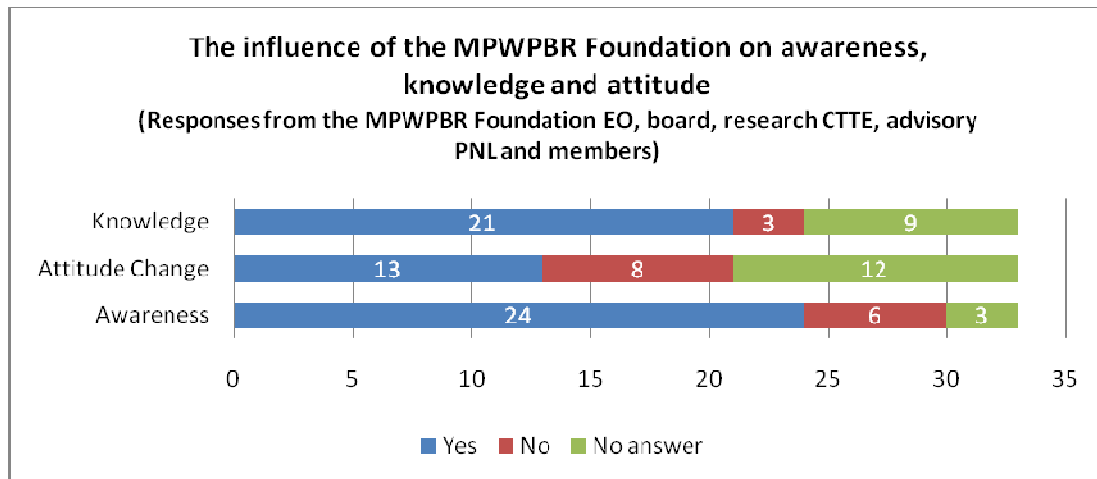


Figure 10. Influence of the MPWPBR on awareness, knowledge and attitude

4.4.7 Networks/Skills

Networks: The majority of respondents (22 out of 33) stated that their involvement with the MPWPBR Foundation had improved and increased their networks. They also reported that their networks had grown in influence. The new members of their networks included contacts in: Noosa, the Fitzgerald River Biosphere reserves, international networks (through the COP15 conference in Copenhagen), the local scientific community, local Government, Community Liaison Committee and relevant local groups.

Skills. Program participants stated that their skills had benefited in the following areas from direct involvement in the following areas:

- Communication (20 out of 33)
- Governance and administration of community organisations; such as taking on roles of office, strategic planning, grant writing, finance, management, writing and reporting skills (5)
- Creative thinking about the environment (15)
- Leadership and planning (16 out of 33)

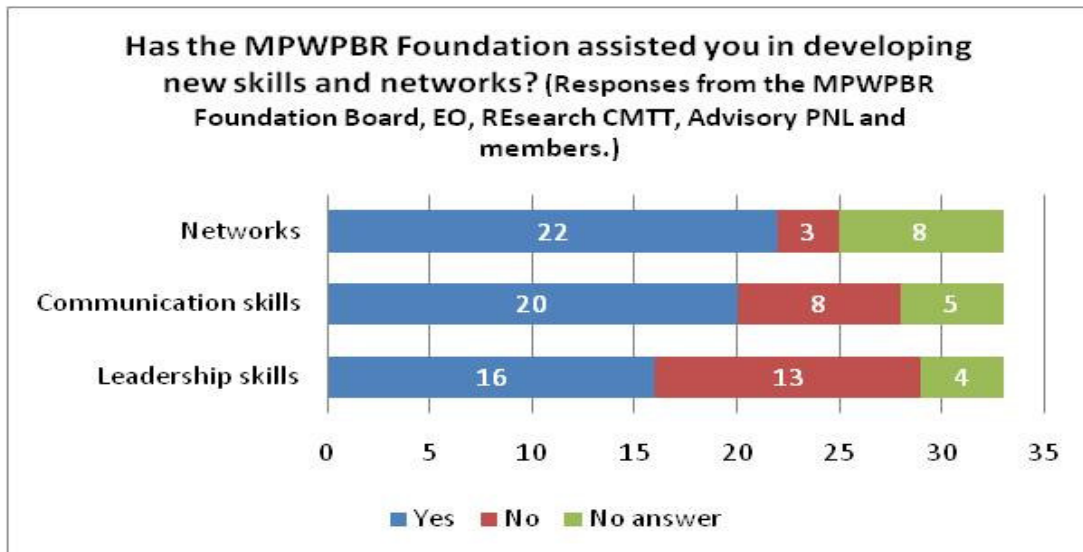


Figure 11. Influence of the MPWPBR Foundation on networks and skills

Respondents in this group were also asked whether their involvement with the MPPWPBR Foundation had stimulated them to contribute to research projects, education of the wider community, Government policy and local Government planning. Respondents (19 out of 33) were stimulated to contribute to the education of the wider community. Respondents (19 out of 33) were stimulated to contribute to the education of the wider community, 18 to research projects, 17 to local Government planning and 13 to Government policy.

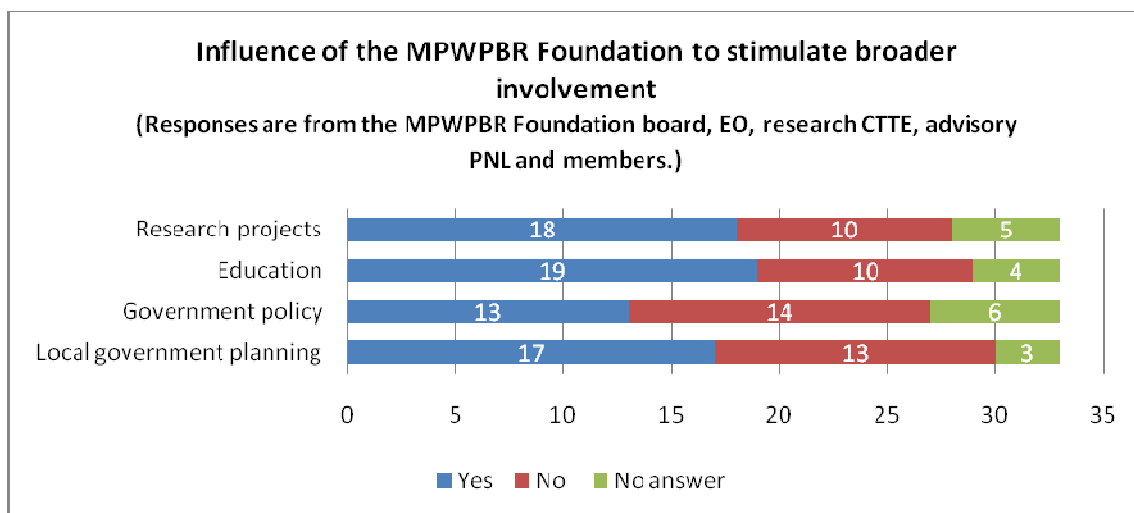


Figure 12. Influence of the MPWPBR Foundation to stimulate broader involvement

4.4.8 Findings: Engagement

The majority of respondents were satisfied with their level of engagement but not with the Foundation's level of communication with them.

There are many ways in which the Foundation engaged with stakeholders. These ranged from direct contact through presentations to remote contact through the website.

Those directly involved with the MPWPBR Foundation's environmental activities were more likely to be satisfied with their level of engagement with the MPWPBR Foundation than those who were not.

General knowledge about the MPWPBR was high among local environment and business groups contacted for this review but low among individuals from local and State Government. This could be in part due to most agency and Government interviewees being based outside of the MPWPBR.

Involvement with the MPWPBR has built the capacity of individuals: awareness, knowledge, skills and networks have increased. Most notably, being involved with the MPWPBR and its Foundation has developed the members' communication, leadership and creative thinking skills and members have gone onto to become involved with research, education of others, developing Government policy and local Government planning. In other words, they have become more involved with the business of Government.

4.5 Governance

The key evaluation question regarding governance was:

How appropriate are the MPWPBR Foundation's governance and business arrangements to enable the MPWPBR to achieve on-ground outcomes?

This broad question was broken into two parts:

- (i) In a formal sense are the governance arrangements appropriate?
- (ii) The ability of the governance and business arrangements to achieve on ground change.
 - Have on ground changes been achieved during the Foundation's period of operations? .
 - How does the current structure (such as the roundtables, advisory and research committee) help or hinder this objective?
 - How effective is the *Living Strategy* as a document in achieving on-ground change?
 - How have these structures been received by stakeholders?

4.5.1 In a formal sense are the governance arrangements appropriate?

The MPWPBR is run by a Foundation which is Company Limited by Guarantee with 15 directors representing five local Government areas, six community roundtables, DSE, Parks Victoria, industry or commerce. It has an independent chair and an executive officer. The roundtables have their own committees, initiate projects and participate in activities across the MPWPBR with other roundtables. The Foundation has approximately 117 (66 paid up) members who pay an annual fee of \$25. The Foundation has a budget of \$50 000 derived from local government support and donations. It receives

no funding from the State of Federal government. Project funding comes from sources such as Envirofund and WWF.

The formal arrangements as set out in the Governance section above and the entity chosen to implement the Charter, namely a Company Limited by Guarantee is appropriate for a non-profit organisation such as this. Under company law the Constitution vests in the Board of Directors the power to control and direct the Foundation. It also incorporates the “operational principles of the Board” (Clause1). Having a board, roundtables, a research committee, and an advisory panel are appropriate arrangements.

4.5.2 The ability of the governance and business arrangements to achieve on ground change

How does the current structure help or hinder this process?

The board: Under the Charter it is intended that the board be facilitative (to help) rather than directive. The Charter outlines the operational principles of the board. In its mission to *lead the community*, as far as possible it will be facilitative, organic and ‘community driven’ and *guide, support and resource the activities of the roundtables which will be the driving force of the Biosphere (Charter)*.

The roundtables: Provision is made in the Constitution for six roundtables to represent the five local government regions: Bass Coast, Cardinia, Casey, Frankston and Mornington Peninsula and one to represent French Island. The roundtables are the vehicle through which the community is represented. When joining the Foundation members are allocated or nominate a roundtable to belong to.

There is no formal representation on the board for community and environmental groups at the local level and the main avenue for this sector is the local roundtable. Here people can join in their own right or they might belong to a local organisation and bring that perspective with them. Of the six roundtables only three are operative: Mornington Peninsula, Frankston and Bass Coast.

It was anticipated that roundtables would be autonomous and would be encouraged to develop their own projects. Part of that process would be to work with the research committee and others to deliver MPWPBR-wide projects (www.biosphere.org.au/membership.html#roundtables).

A representative comment is as follows:

“... they [the roundtables] are failing. We have not fully engaged all sectors of the triple bottom line”
[MPWPBR Foundation]

The research committee: The research committee is another means by which the functions of the MPWPBR can be implemented. The strategy for the Research Committee is a statement of intent of what activities it is involved with.

Finances: For the financial year ending June 2009 there was an operating loss of \$54 511. Over the last two years the outgoings have exceeded income and the Foundation has had to rely on its reserves to meet its commitments. The Foundation’s weak financial position restricts its ability to fund projects according to respondents from the MPWPBR Foundation. So far projects have been developed to fit available funding rather than the Foundation’s own direction and strategy.

Effectiveness of the Living Strategic Plan as a document to achieve on ground change

The *Living Strategic Plan 2007-2011* is a modest document. It is difficult to discern priorities and subsequent actions. It is quite limiting when compared to its parent document the *Charter*.

How have these structures been received by stakeholders?

Interviewees from the MPWPBR Foundation members group and environmental groups were very supportive of the MAB Biosphere Reserve concept.

“The man and the biosphere concept is a perfect way for the community to become involved with improving the way we as a society do things, build things, and manage our impact on the environment.” [MPWPBR Foundation member]

However, respondents questioned the MPWPBR Foundation’s interpretation of the Biosphere concept and the way in which the MPWPBR Foundation board is implementing its role.

“I’m thoroughly committed to the concept of the organisation. There is a great body of work behind them but I don’t think that in the early stages that they have been clear and worked through the biosphere concept and what it ought to be.” [Environmental Group]

“The tension between biodiversity, sustainability and cultural connection has not been handled well. The constitution is clear but strong personalities have waged a futile war of words instead of recognising the value of each contribution.” [MPWPBR Foundation member]

4.5.3 Findings Governance

The formal governance structures are appropriate.

However the implementation of the objectives of the MPWPBR is through the roundtables and currently only three out of the six functions. This is a limiting factor. The members of the roundtables are the main, formal link the board members have to the community.

Overall the consensus was that the roundtables are not working in their intended form. This is demonstrated by the factual evidence, only three of the roundtables are operational and the falling membership of the MPWPBR Foundation, and by the comments made by respondents in regards to the roundtables and their relationship with the board.

The way the board interacts with the roundtables seems to contradict the intention of its operational principles as set out in the MPWPBR *Charter*. It intends to be facilitative and organic but the leadership by the board is reported as directive and hierarchical. It is unclear if this interferes with the ability to achieve on ground change but it is reported that it interferes with the roundtables being “the driving force” of the MPWPBR Foundation.

Some put this “*failing*” down to the roundtable model others suggested that this was due to the board’s lack of support for the roundtables. Roundtable members (past and current) spoke of the board not listening to them, not allocating them their due funds from membership payments, and generally feeling undervalued.

The financial position of the Foundation makes it difficult to achieve on ground change.

The *Living Strategic Plan's* effectiveness is limited by its lack of clarity.

There is still very strong support among the community for the concept of the biosphere but not for the governing structure of the MPWPBR Foundation or for its leadership.

Groups and members who felt marginalised in the past have remained in an entrenched position. Their indignation and outrage continues. Is this long lasting, unresolved conflict appropriate for a community based organisation such as the MPWPBR?

4.6 **Overlap of functions**

The key evaluation question for this section was:

To what extent do the Foundation's projects past and current support and influence each of the three functions of the biosphere reserve?

The Functions are:

1. Conservation of landscapes, ecosystems, species and genetic variation
2. Development which is socio-culturally and ecologically sustainable
3. Logistic support for projects, training, research and monitoring of national and global issues of conservation and sustainable development

The projects are:

- Business sustainability program (2004)
- Southern Brown Bandicoots started (2006)
- Watson's creek (2007)
- Hypothetical (2007)
- Forum climate change green paper (2008)
- Schools water audit date (2005 – 2006)
- Frankston eco footprint date (2004 - 2006)

1. Conservation	2. Sustainable development on a regional scale	3. Logistic support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southern Brown Bandicoot Recovery • Watson's Creek Integrated Catchment Management Project • Forum: Land and Biodiversity at a Time of Climate Change Green Paper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bass Coast business sustainability program • Sustainable schools water audits • Eco-foot printing, Frankston • Climate change forum (content) • Hypothetical event-challenges for Western Port (content) • Watson's Creek 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of common sustainability indicators • Thinking of a Business and product accreditation • International network • Climate change forum (event) • Hypothetical event-challenges for Western Port

4.6.1 Findings: Overlap of functions



The two main current projects: Southern Brown Bandicoot and Watson's Creek do have elements of the three functions although the extent and impact varies.

The Southern Brown Bandicoot has a strong focus on conservation and there is logistic support through education and community involvement. Having the Southern Brown Bandicoot listed as an endangered species, for example, lifted the Bandicoot's profile and made the issue more prominent in the Peninsula Link proposal. This project also has a sustainable development function.

In Watson's Creek, sustainable development is to the fore through the partnership approach and the involvement of industry and community engagement. Photos from the core zone (Yaringa Marine National Park) were used to stimulate action with regard to its protection. There is some evidence of conservation in the repair and revegetation of riparian area.

The term "logistic support" here is used broadly to include education and information exchange (as per the Charter). Two of the main aspects of logistic support nominated in the Living Strategic Plan 2007-2011 are research and monitoring with a particular emphasis on improving sustainability. Little progress has been made in this regard but there is potential given the relationship with the objective of "sustainable development on a regional scale".

There is evidence in Hanely's thesis (2003) that there was some valuable two way interaction between tourism operators and National Park operators (conservation and sustainable development). Enquiries for this review were not able to verify that this was still happening.

4.7 Barriers

Respondents from the Foundation executive (total 13) were asked specifically to identify barriers to the success of the MPWPBR. Comments about barriers also arose in responses from other participants in the review regarding project impacts (KEQ2), stakeholder engagement (KEQ4), governance (KEQ5), and the future of the reserve. It is difficult to give definitive numbers because of the overlapping data sources, however, barriers relating to resources and governance were most mentioned.

4.7.1 Resources

Financial resources were identified by all stakeholders groups as a barrier to the MPWPBR Foundation's success and was the most commonly identified barrier by respondents. It was felt that the Foundation needed more funding, and that funding should come from a sustainable and reliable source.

Four of the board and research committee members argued the Foundation's lack of funds restricts its ability to fund projects of its choice. So far projects have been developed to fit in with members' interests and available time and the available funding rather than the Foundation's own direction and strategy.

Furthermore, it was reported that the lack of funding presents a barrier should the MPWPBR Foundation apply to go to stage two. The MPWPBR Foundation estimates that meeting the MAB requirements for stage two will cost between \$50,000 and \$100,000. The stage one nomination came at a cost of \$70,000 in 2000-02.

Two respondents from the Foundation executive argued that the Foundation's activities have been limited by its small staff consisting of one part time executive officer and volunteers.

"The challenge with the bottom up is that it elevates people beyond their capacity."[MPWPBR Foundation]

Another two argued that the Foundation relies heavily on volunteers and felt that this limited the Foundation's ability to grow.

4.7.2 Governance

The current governance is seen to be a barrier to the MPWPBR meeting the MAB and state criteria on biosphere reserves. The following points were made by respondents in relation to this issue:

- Not sure the governance structure is right.
- Currently the approach is top down and has alienated the Roundtables and thereby the community.
- Too much local Government representation on the board.
- Not many structures for engagement with the community and other stakeholders.
- Board leadership is an issue that alienates some stakeholders in particular the community stakeholders (environmental groups, local businesses and local Government).
- The board is too big. Decision making is slow and cumbersome.
- The Chair should be local.
- Complexity of corporate structure.
- Apathy with the engaged stakeholders.
- Lack of clarity of roles.
- Interpersonal issues, specifically the ongoing infighting over the introduction of the constitution.

4.7.3 The concept

The concept of a biosphere reserve is recognised by interviewees as one of the biggest barriers to its success. It is clear from the interviews that the MAB biosphere reserve concept has been interpreted in a number of ways. Twenty two respondents from the stakeholder group (business, environment and agency, total 48) were unable to describe the zones of a biosphere reserve and were at a loss when asked to describe the MPWPBR's functions. The following comments were made.

"I'm thoroughly committed to the concept of the organisation. There is a great body of work behind them but I don't think that in the early stages that they have been clear and worked through the biosphere concept and what it ought to be." [Environmental Group]

"Sort of, it is confusing really. What are they on about?"[Agency and Government]

“Is it a ‘sustainability’ organisation or is it a ‘conservation’ organisation?” [Member of the MPWPBR Foundation]

4.7.4 Public presence and advocacy

Twenty five from a total of 33 (environment groups and agency) found that the level of awareness of the MPWPBR by the general public is very low. This was seen as a barrier by a member of the Foundation.

“[The MPWPBR] has never raised its profile in the community”. [Member of the MPWPBR Foundation]

4.7.5 Strategic direction

Respondents from all stakeholder groups as well as Foundation members and volunteers appear to be either unsure about the strategic direction of the MPWPBR or suggest that there is no strategic direction guiding the project.

“At this stage, for resourcing reasons the things we have done have been things that were identified by members and for which we could find a funding stream. We have had very little opportunity to use MPWPBR resources for projects. The Charter includes what you might describe as a wish list the limiting factor is the resourcing.” [MPWPBR Foundation]

4.7.6 The State Government Policy on biosphere reserves

Three respondents from the Foundation executive group (13) thought that the State policy on biosphere reserves posed a barrier to the success of the MPWPBR, specifically point 1.(d)(v):

*“In deciding whether or not to endorse a particular biosphere reserve proposal, (The State Government) will consider the following factors:
... (v) whether the proposal demonstrates its financial viability without requiring additional direct Government funding for its administration”*

One respondent explained how *“of the 107 countries that have biosphere reserves, 106 have Government funding except for Australia. All of our funding has come from local government, neither the State nor the Commonwealth funds us.”*

One Summit workshop participant suggested that the State policy needed to be reviewed as the MPWPBR has posed no risk to the Government.

“The policy was written at a time when there was uncertainty and the risk needed to be managed. The risk has been managed and now we need to manage the opportunity.”

4.7.7 The Geography:

The geography of the MPWPBR: Western Port Bay was seen as a physical barrier to people attending meetings and participating in the MPWPBR activities. This was particularly the case for French Island and Bass Coast residents.

4.7.8 Findings: Barriers

Nearly all of the barriers identified focus on fundamentals such as funding and governance. Many respondents argued that a lack of resources affects the effectiveness of the MPWPBR Foundation in a range of areas of implementation including:

- Capacity of the Foundation
- Public profile
- Governance.

4.8 Stage two of MPWPBR

All stakeholders for whom this question was relevant (61) were asked about their views on the expansion of the MPWPBR to stage two. Opinions were divided as the table below shows.

	Agencies & Government*	Business	Environmental Groups	Board	Research CTTE. & Advisory PNL	Other	All
Yes	11	10	4	6	3	0	34
No	1	3	5	1	2	1	13
unsure	9	0	2	0	0	0	11
don't care	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
No answer	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
TOTAL	21	15	12	7	5	1	61

Table 8. Support for stage two

4.8.1 Unsure

Just under one fifth (11 out of 61) were unsure and felt unable to answer this question. Two reasons were put forward. Some did not feel that they knew enough about the MPWPBR and its activities to comment. Others were unsure how the expansion of the biosphere reserve would impact on their group's operations and thought they needed more information to assess whether it would be beneficial.

"I guess what I'd need from my organisation's perspective is for them to come to us and explain what they want to do in the area. But we need to talk about how we're going to coexist, with funding and doing the same things, with collaboration and partnerships."
[Environment Group]

4.8.2 Opposition to stage two

Just over one fifth (13 out of 61) thought that the MPWPBR was not ready to go to stage two. The main reason put forward was that work still needs to be done in the stage one area.

"There are challenges because I don't think that stage 1 is completely implemented. A lot of local government just pay lip service. Also the resources are an issue." [Business]

In particular respondents said that work is still required to get the structure and function of the existing biosphere reserve working effectively.

"I think there needs to be structural development within the existing biosphere before they take the next step."[Environment Groups]

One respondent questioned whether the biosphere reserve should continue to exist:

"It is such a mess, a terrible waste of time and money. Maybe it's better not to have a biosphere." [Environment Groups]

The need for **greater commitment from State and local Government** was also cited as a reason for non-support.

"Projects such as the development of a set of regional sustainability indicators have not got "legs" because of "turf" issues pertaining to local Government. "Why should the Foundation do this when we already are?"

4.8.3 Support for stage two

Those who answered that the MPWPBR should go to stage two (34 out of 61) included respondents from all groups who were interviewed. Those who gave unconditional support argued that stage two was needed to better protect the core areas:

"[Stage two] couldn't be soon enough, the second stage should go ahead. It is critical to the core areas."[Business]

These respondents stated that they felt that the delineation between stage one and two is not necessary and over complicated. Meanwhile others stated it should go ahead, but that the Foundation should **engage** with a wider range of stakeholders. In stage one, all councils were not fully engaged, the Mornington Peninsula Shire Council was the only council with all of its borders fully included in the MPWPBR. Therefore, stage two should have all of the participating councils' area within the biosphere boundary.

Others showed their support for a second stage **in concept**, implicitly stating that its application may need to be improved.

"I think it would be a good thing in terms of the original concept."[Environment Groups]

4.8.4 Findings: Stage two

Just over half of the respondents (34 out of 61) supported going to stage two. Those who did not thought that more work needed to be done on getting stage one working well first. Some, who gave qualified support, stated that more needs to be done to engage the MPWP community. One of those who supported going to stage two stated that it was because they felt it was critical to conserving the core area.

5 Conclusion

Following are the questions that this review had to address:

1. How well is the MPWPBR meeting the criteria for designation of biosphere reserves in Article 4 of UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme Statutory Framework for the World Network of biosphere reserves?
2. What environmental, social and economic effects have occurred as a result of the designation of the MPWPBR and the establishment and operation of the Foundation?
3. To what extent are the current and proposed MPWPBR Foundation's programs consistent with and an enhancement of ecologically sustainable development State Government programs?
4. How well have stakeholders been engaged and how is this reflected in the level of support for MPWPBR and community capacity building and involvement?
5. How appropriate are MPWPBR Foundation's governance and business arrangements to enable the MPWPBR to achieve on-ground outcomes.
6. To what extent do the Foundation's projects past and current support and influence each of the three functions of the biosphere reserve?

There was also a question about barriers and one to do with canvassing the views and opinions of respondents about going to stage two.

How well is the MPWPBR meeting the criteria for designation of biosphere reserves in Article 4 of UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme Statutory Framework for the World Network of biosphere reserves?

The criteria for designation that were investigated for this review were those mentioned in article 4, paragraphs 6 and 7 of the nomination document and were to do with formal arrangements for the inclusion of stakeholders and methods of implementation.

It was found that formal arrangements are in place and reflect the goals in MAB Seville Strategy and Madrid Action Plan. The arrangements include formal documents such as: the Charter; the Constitution; and the strategic plan that set out the operational obligations and intentions. Formal arrangements also include the structural arrangement which is the Foundation that has a board that represents community and Government (business is still to be represented), a research committee and advisory panel that are made up of relevant and appropriate experts to advise the board, and roundtables that regionally based and made up of members of the Foundation.

With regard to inclusion, data from interviews and documents show that the nomination process was inclusive but that the implementation phase excluded some of the individuals who were part of the nomination process. Even though a diverse range of groups and individuals are still involved in the MPWPBR Foundation, anger remains with some community members about being excluded and blame the leadership of the Foundation for this.

Cardinia and Casey councils are losing interest in the MPWPBR, in part because of the conflict, although there is interest by the board to work more closely with their CEOs. This may lead to the roundtables in these regions being reinvigorated and a renewed interest by those local governments.

The definition and role of community is being reworked by the board of the Foundation. Community is talked about now as being inclusive of Government. The role of the roundtables as the main representatives of the community is being diminished and this change is not well accepted by the all members of the roundtables although one of its main instigators is the director of one the roundtables.

What environmental, social and economic effects have occurred as a result of the designation of the MPWPBR and the establishment and operation of the Foundation?

While no specific details were recorded about the environmental impacts, some information about them can be discerned from project reports. Impacts resulted from specific projects and included the effects of revegetation and the recreation of habitat for bandicoots as well as the restoration of parts of Watson's Creek

Data from project and research committee reports show that there were social impacts. For example, awareness was raised, skills developed and attitudes changed. An example of an event that contributed to this was a public meeting in November 2006 where about 100 individuals attended to learn about the Southern Brown Bandicoot (MPWPBR 2008). This is just one of the information exchange events organised by the MPWPBR. Some social impacts are immediate such as raised awareness and learning, unlike environmental impacts that rely on the on ground works to take effect.

Economic impacts were thought to be insignificant by almost all respondents to the review but in fact there were instances where the MPWPBR attracted funds and some where employment was provided. Respondents to the review were more confident about talking about the potential benefit of the MPWPBR. It seems that only those individuals who are directly involved with projects and the application for funds know the extent of the actual economic impacts.

To what extent are the current and proposed MPWPBR Foundation's programs consistent with and an enhancement of ecologically sustainable development State Government programs?

In the main the current and proposed programs of the MPWPBR Foundation are consistent with and enhance the ecologically sustainable development programs of Government.

How well have stakeholders been engaged and how is this reflected in the level of support for MPWPBR and community capacity building and involvement?

The majority of respondents were satisfied with their level of engagement but not with the Foundation's level of communication with them. It is difficult to make the link that the satisfaction with engagement is reflected in the level of support of the MRWPBR because many individuals reported that they supported the MPWPBR concept (27 out of 48). However this level of support for the concept did not then translate itself into high levels of engagement. In the members' group seven out of 21 were unhappy with the way in which the Foundation is actualising the concept. Furthermore, six interviewees

were happy with very low and non-existent levels of engagement with the Foundation. What was also telling was that members were waiting to be asked to renew their membership and pay their annual fees and the implication is that they were happy to do this but would not do it automatically. Therefore, the drop in membership cannot be interpreted as a drop in interest. It is just as likely that it is because members were not reminded to pay the annual subscription.

How appropriate are MPWPBR Foundation's governance and business arrangements to enable the MPWPBR to achieve on-ground outcomes?

The formal governance structures are appropriate. However the implementation of the objectives of the MPWPBR is through the roundtables and currently only three out of the six function. This is a limiting factor. The financial position of the Foundation makes it difficult to achieve on ground change.

There is still very strong support among the community for the concept of the biosphere but not for the governing structure of the MPWPBR Foundation or for its leadership. Groups and members who felt marginalised in the past have remained so.

To what extent do the Foundation's projects past and current support and influence each of the three functions of the biosphere reserve?

The two main current projects: Southern Brown Bandicoot and Watson's Creek do have elements of the three functions although the extent and impact varies. That the three functions work together is efficient to achieve the aims of social, environmental and economic impact.

Finally, there was information about barriers and the most significant was the lack of resources and governance to make the ideals of a biosphere reserve a reality. The discrepancy between the implementation and ideals of the MPWPBR is expressed in the frustration of stakeholders in responses to many other questions asked in this review.

The majority of respondents (34 out of 61) supported going to stage two. Those who did not thought that more work needed to be done on getting stage one working well first. Some, who gave qualified support, stated that more needs to be done to engage the MPWP community. One of those who supported going to stage two stated that it was because they felt it was critical to conserving the core area.

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7 Appendices

7.1 Timeline

Research

Bandicoots 2006 ongoing
Student theses (Hanley 2003, O'Byran 2007, Kraska 2009)
Mungere Inventory of research (2008)

Projects:

2004 Business sustainability workshop
2006 SB Bandicoots started
2007 Watson's creek
2007 Hypothetical
2008 Forum climate change green paper
2008/09 Schools water audit
Frankston eco footprint

2005 D. Risstrom's report
15 positions on the Board and 6 round tables to represent the regions.
Active participants in round tables 160+ July 2004, now 66

December 19 2003 constitution and charter presented to a meeting of newly elected members and passed. Notion to review administration arrangements during second year of operation (2005)
First attempt at a governance structure was not adequate for the legal status of the MPWPBR. Maddocks, lawyers brought in to draft a constitution for a limited liability company at the cost of \$65 000. Costs met by the Mornington Peninsula Shire Council.

2003 working groups develop vision and structure. Work is reported as slow and conflicted but many people involved. Meetings were open

Feb 2003 BAG becomes Biosphere Interim Group (BIG) led by Michael Kennedy
Membership is open and decisions made by consensus
Research group also established (BIRG)

May 2002 Nomination submitted to UNESCO
November 2002 UNESCO accepted the nomination/ designated Biosphere Reserve
December 2002 MPWPBR celebrated

2000 – 2002 BAG developed the nomination document. Difficulty in achieving State government endorsement.

1996 – 2000

Environment and community groups and interested individuals and organisations discuss the possibility of a nomination.
Process led by Ian Morris and contributors became the Biosphere Advisory Group (BAG)

1996 (Oct) French Island National Park Management Plan

7.2 Questionnaires

Management general (DSE, Parks Vic, C'wealth)

(telephone or face-to-face interviews)

Preamble

Hello, is this xxx?

I am ... from Roberts Evaluation. We have been commissioned by the Victorian Department of Sustainability and Environment to carry out a survey to find out what have been the effects of the Mornington Peninsula and Western Port biosphere reserve, established in 2002

We have been given your name by the DSE and I understand that you are.....? Is it Ok if I ask you some questions about the ??? The interview will take about 20 minutes.

Your comments will be treated as confidential.

Role and vision

1. What do you believe is the role of the biosphere reserve?
2. At the **present** time what do you believe the overall value of the biosphere reserve with regard to finding a solution to the reconciliation of conservation with sustainable land use?
3. What is your vision for the biosphere reserve?
4. How does this fit with your policy?
5. What do you see as the environmental, social and economic effects of the biosphere reserve?

	Actual	Potential
Environmental		
Social		
Economic		

6. How satisfied are you with:
 - Stakeholders' level of engagement? What is their level of interest and enthusiasm?
 - Support from the general public?
7. What do you think are barriers to the biosphere reserve's success?
8. How can it be improved?
9. Do you think it is valuable to go to stage 2 and expand the biosphere reserve (prompt with Map)?
10. Do you have any other comments?

Foundation Management (CEO, board, Advisory bodies) (telephone or face-to-face interviews). For the Research Committee same questionnaire without questions 4, 5, 9, 12 and 17 and for questions 7 and 21 only for research programs and the research committee

Preamble

Hello, is this xxx?

*I am ... from Roberts Evaluation. We have been commissioned by the Victorian Department of Sustainability and Environment to carry out a survey to find out what have been the effects of the Mornington Peninsula and Western Port biosphere reserve, established in 2002
We have been given your name by the DSE and I understand that you are.....? Is it Ok if I ask you some questions about the biosphere reserve? The interview will take about 20 minutes.
Your comments will be treated as confidential.*

Role and vision

1. What do you believe is the role of the biosphere reserve?
2. At the **present** time what do you believe is the overall value of the biosphere reserve with regard to finding a solution to the reconciliation of conservation with sustainable land use?
3. What is your vision for the biosphere reserve?

KEQ 1 How well is the MPWPBR meeting the criteria for designation of biosphere reserves in Article 4 of UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme Statutory Framework for the World Network of Biosphere Reserves?

The main focus for this study is on paragraphs 6 and 7 of Article 4.

Paragraph 6, Article 4

Organizational arrangements should be provided for the involvement and participation of a suitable range of inter alia public authorities, local communities and private interests in the design and carrying out the functions of a biosphere reserve.

Paragraph 7, Article 4. In addition, provisions should be made for:

- (a) mechanisms to manage human use and activities in the buffer zone or zones;*
- (b) a management policy or plan for the area as a biosphere reserve;*
- (c) a designated authority or mechanism to implement this policy or plan;*
- (d) programmes for research, monitoring, education and training.*

- 4 Public authorities, local communities and private interests are involved either on the board, roundtables, advisory and research panels. Is the range of organisations involved in the biosphere reserve, reviewed over time? (When, how, who is involved,...)

Who	When	How

- 5 Are there groups that still need to be recruited?

- 6 Para 7 of article 4 asks about provision of mechanisms to manage human use and activities in the buffer zone. What are these mechanisms?

- 7 With regard to Para 7 article 4 part (d) which refers to the need to make provision for research, monitoring, education and training programs, what are:

Programs	
the research programs	
the monitoring programs	
the education programs	
the training programs	

KEQ 2. What environmental, social and economic effects have occurred as a result of the designation of the MPWPBR and the establishment and operation of the Foundation

8. What have been the environmental, social and economic effects of the biosphere reserve?

	Actual	Potential
Environmental		
Social		
Economic		

(Social effects can be impacts such as: an increase in learning, skills, capacity)

Change	Who
Awareness	
Attitude change	
Knowledge	
<i>Skills:</i> Leadership Communication skills <i>e.g. negotiating grants, how to work with Government</i> Facilitation Critical thinking Planning <i>Networking:</i> Who they network with?	

Are these networks new?	
What influence do they have	

Economic effects refer to costs and benefits.

9. With regard to the economic effects caused by the biosphere reserve, can you list which stakeholder groups you feel are likely to have their costs or benefits directly or indirectly affected?

[Probe: Tourism, public relations, planning opportunities, etc; costs, time, profitability, productivity, ability to leverage, etc]

Stakeholders	Benefits		Costs	
	Direct	Indirect	Direct	Indirect
<i>Example: Tourism Operators</i>	<i>Greater demand for tourism providers?</i>	<i>Improved public image, advertising</i>	<i>N/a</i>	<i>Restricted development opportunities</i>
<i>Plant nurseries</i>	<i>Greater demand for indigenous plants</i>	<i>Information going to the public about the need to plant indigenous plants</i>		

Environmental effects include improvements in habitats, increased numbers of specific species (it does not include increase awareness by people. That is a social impact)

KEQ 4 How well have stakeholders been engaged and how is this reflected in the level of support for MPWPBR and community capacity building and involvement?

10. What type of engagement strategy or strategies have been employed since the biosphere reserve commenced to engage with stakeholders?

11. How successful have those strategies been?

Stakeholders are involved as:

- Members of the Foundation
- Representatives on the board and the advisory bodies
- Members of Roundtables
- Volunteers
- Agency with an interest.

12. How are these individuals involved, that is what do they do?

	How involved (what do they do?)	Level of engagement High/medium/low
Members of the Foundation		
Board Directors		
Reps of the advisory bodies		
Members of roundtables		
Volunteers		
Program managers		
Research Committee		
D. Innovation. Industry & Regional Development		
D. of Transport		
Tourism Victoria VicRoads		
VicTrack		
Port Hastings Corporation Melbourne Water & other water authorities as mentioned previously		
Port Phillip and Western Port CMA		
Victorian Coastal Council Victorian Regional Channel Authority		
Local Governments		
Industry/business		
Environment groups		

13. One of the aims of the biosphere reserve is to build the capacity of those involved. What skills have been developed?

14. More specifically, what skills have you gained because of your involvement with the biosphere reserve?

15. As a result of your involvement in the biosphere reserve have you been stimulated to contribute to:

Local Government planning Government policy	
Education of the wider community	
Research projects	

16. How satisfied are you with:
Stakeholders' level of engagement? What is their level of interest and enthusiasm?
Support from the general public?

17. How has the biosphere reserve benefitted from the community' involvement?

	Comments
Numbers of volunteers in the biosphere reserve projects	
Numbers of new groups formed for MPWPBR projects	
Number of successful grants?	
Number of members of the MPWPBR	
Range of projects	
Stakeholders involved from a different demographic from what is usual for this type of program	
Other?	

18. What have been the benefits to the environment of being in a biosphere reserve?

19. What are the barriers to the effectiveness of the biosphere reserve?

KEQ 5. How appropriate are MPWPBR Foundation's governance and business arrangements to enable the MPWPBR to achieve on-ground outcomes?

20. How do the current governance and business arrangements:

- (a) achieve on-ground change?
- (b) do they hinder it?

21. How are programs/projects

- (a) initiated
- (b) assessed?

22. How are the members of the advisory panel and research committee chosen and what is their role?

	How chosen	Role
Advisory panel		
Research Committee		

KEQ 6: To what extent do the projects already completed and currently underway support and influence each of the three functions of the MPWPBR?

23. To what extent do the programs (projects) influence the three functions of the biosphere reserve?

Conservation of landscapes, ecosystems, species and genetic variation	
Development which is socio-culturally and ecologically sustainable	
Logistic support for projects, training, research and monitoring of national and global issues of conservation and sustainable development.	

KEQ 7: To what extent has the biosphere reserve met the criteria of the original proposal?

24. Do you think that the biosphere reserve is successfully meeting the criteria set out in its nomination?

- a. The array of expertise involved? (Any gaps: indigenous, marketing,...)
- b. Does the biosphere reserve add value to existing programs?
- c. In the transition zone are sustainable resource management practices being promoted successfully?

25. What are your views about the potential expansion (Stage 2) of the biosphere reserve?

26. Do you have any other comments you would like to add about the biosphere reserve or your involvement with it?

Extra to ask the CEO:

1. Why do you feel that the less active roundtables (Casey, Cardinia and French island) are less interested? How is this affecting the functioning of the biosphere reserve given that it is divided into 6 zones?
2. Is there a hierarchy within the biosphere reserve's stakeholders? If yes how was this hierarchy decided?
3. How can people and entities participate as citizens of the biosphere reserve if there is nothing obvious for them to do? (French Island is mostly Park what more can they do?)
4. How can biosphere reserve resident feel part of an international network?
5. What has happened with the environment group? (the word disenfranchised came up)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR INSIGHTS. THEY HAVE BEEN MOST HELPFUL.

Program (project) leaders
(telephone or face-to-face interviews)

Hello, is this xxx?

I am ... from Roberts Evaluation. We have been commissioned by the Victorian Department of Sustainability and Environment to carry out a survey to find out what have been the effects of the Mornington Peninsula and Western Port biosphere reserve, established in 2002

We have been given your name by the DSE and I understand that you are.....? Is it Ok if I ask you some questions about the biosphere reserve? The interview will take about 20 minutes.

Your comments will be treated as confidential.

1. What have been the recorded environmental benefits of your projects?
2. What are the likely environmental benefits of your project?

Project	Actual benefit	Potential benefit

3. What is the level of involvement of individuals in your project?

Representatives	How many	How involved (what do they do)	Level of engagement (how often they attend, how executive positions.
Executive			
Volunteers			How many and are they already part of which other groups
Others			

4. We would like to know how the broader community has been engaged or had an opportunity to find out about your project?

What type of engagement strategy have you used to advertise your project?

How successful have those strategies been?

Have you noticed an impact on the community?

5. What have been the benefits of your project to those directly involved? Learning/skills/values?
6. What has been the value to the project leaders?

7. What benefits have gone to those not directly involved in your project? For example, what have they learnt/what skills have they developed?
8. What benefits have you experienced as a result of your involvement in the program?
Personal/professional development
Personal/professional satisfaction
9. With regard to the economic effects caused by the biosphere reserve, can you list which stakeholder groups do you feel are likely to have their costs or benefits directly or indirectly affected? [*Probe: Tourism, public relations, planning opportunities, etc; costs, time, profitability, productivity, ability to leverage, etc*]

Stakeholders	Benefits		Costs	
	Direct	Indirect	Direct	Indirect
<i>Example: Tourism Operators</i>	<i>Greater demand for tourism providers</i>	<i>Improved public image, advertising</i>	<i>N/a</i>	<i>Restricted development opportunities</i>

10. How satisfied are you with:
 - i. Your project members' level of engagement? What is the level of interest and enthusiasm?
Very satisfied Satisfied Dissatisfied Very dissatisfied
 - ii. Communication and information about the MPWPBR coming to you?
Very satisfied Satisfied Dissatisfied Very dissatisfied
 - iii. Communication and information about the MPWPBR going out from your project?
Very satisfied Satisfied Dissatisfied Very dissatisfied
11. Do you have any other comments you would like to add about the biosphere reserve or your involvement with it?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR INSIGHTS. THEY HAVE BEEN MOST HELPFUL.

Volunteers and members

Online survey: *Roberts Evaluation has been commissioned by the Victorian Department of Sustainability and Environment to carry out a survey to find out what have been the effects of the Mornington Peninsula and Western Port biosphere reserve, established in 2002*

Your comments will be treated as confidential.

1. Are you a member of the MPWPBR foundation?

Yes/No

2. Are you a volunteer?

Yes/No

3. Describe briefly how you are involved with the biosphere reserve?

4. Are you happy with this level of involvement?

5. What are your general thoughts about the biosphere?

6. Describe how your involvement with the biosphere reserve has benefitted you?

7. More specifically have you found a benefit with:

Greater Awareness	
Attitude	
Gained Knowledge	

8. One of the aims of the biosphere reserve is to build the capacity of those involved. What skills have you developed?

9. More specifically has your involvement with the biosphere reserve given you any opportunities to:

Become a leader	
Communicate with different people	
Understand other people's point of view	
Think creatively about the natural environment	
Develop your planning skills	

10. We would like to know whether your involvement with the MPWPBR has benefitted your networks, if so how:

Who you network with	
Are you part of new networks	
The influence of these networks	

11. As a result of your involvement in the biosphere reserve have you been stimulated to contribute to:

Local Government planning Government policy	
Education of the wider community	
Research projects	

12. How satisfied are you with: The communication and information you receive about the MPWPBR?

Very satisfied / Satisfied / Neutral / Dissatisfied / Very Dissatisfied

13. How has your level of commitment to the biosphere reserve changed overtime?

14. Do you have any other comments you would like to add about the biosphere reserve or your involvement with it?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR INSIGHTS. THEY HAVE BEEN MOST HELPFUL.

Stakeholders (telephone/face-to-face interviews)

Preamble

Hello, is this xxx?

I am ... from Roberts Evaluation. We have been commissioned by the Victorian Department of Sustainability and Environment to carry out a survey to find out what have been the effects of the Mornington Peninsula and Western Port biosphere reserve, established in 2002

We have been given your name by the DSE and I understand that you are.....? Is it Ok if I ask you some questions about the biosphere reserve? The interview will take about 20 minutes.

Your comments will be treated as confidential.

1. Could you describe your involvement with the biosphere reserve?

(a) Agency/Government/statutory authority

(b) Environmental group.

(c) Business

(d) Other

Agency

1. Are you familiar with the aims and functions of the biosphere reserve? How would you describe these?

2. Are you or your organisation involved with the biosphere reserve Foundation? **Prompt** : members, on the board, advisor

3. Could you describe your agency's role in relation to the biosphere reserve?

4. How does the biosphere reserve impact or potentially impact on your **organisation**? Would you say this impact is beneficial or adverse?

5. Could you comment on the impact (social, economic and environmental) of the biosphere reserve on the Mornington Peninsula and Western Port **region**?

	Beneficial	Adverse	Neutral	Don't know
Environmental				
Social				
Economic				
Other				

6. Given that the biosphere reserve is set up to reconcile conservation with land use how do you think it can add value to:

Category	Comments
Your organisation	
The region	

7. What would improve the beneficial impact of the biosphere reserve?

Interviewer prompt Would things be different in this regard if there was no biosphere reserve?

8. In your experience how would you describe the level of awareness of the general public of the biosphere reserve:

- a. Almost non-existent
- b. Low
- c. Moderate
- d. High

9. How satisfied are you with:

Your level of engagement?

Communication and information about the biosphere reserve.

What are your views about the potential expansion (Stage 2) of the biosphere reserve?

Do you have any other comments to add?

Environment group

1. Are you familiar with the aims and functions of the biosphere reserve? How would you describe these?
2. Could you describe you/ your organisation's role in relation to the biosphere reserve?

Representatives	How involved (what do they do: planning, policy input, education, research, administration of projects)	Level of engagement (how often they attend, how executive positions).
Members of the Foundation		
Reps on the board		
Reps of the advisory bodies		

Members of roundtables		
Volunteers		
Program/Project managers		
Others		

3. How does the biosphere reserve impact on your **organisation**? Is the impact adverse or beneficial?
4. Could you comment on the impact of the biosphere reserve on the Mornington Peninsula and Western Port **region**?

	Beneficial	Adverse	Neutral	Don't know
Environmental				
Social				
Economic				
Other				

5. Given that the biosphere reserve is set up to reconcile conservation with land use what do you see as its value to:

Category	Comments
Your organisation	
The region	

Interviewer prompt Would things be different in this regard if there was no biosphere reserve?

6. In your experience is the level of awareness in the general public of the biosphere reserve:
 - a. Almost non-existent
 - b. Low
 - c. Moderate
 - d. High
7. What has been the impact of environmental groups generally on the biosphere reserve?

Category	Comments
Numbers of volunteers	
Numbers of new groups formed for biosphere reserve projects	
Number of successful grants?	
Contribution to others being successful in acquiring grants	
Type of new projects	
Stakeholders involved from a different demographic from what is usual for this type of program	

8. How satisfied are you with:

- Your level of engagement?
- Communication and information about the biosphere reserve.

9. With regard to those involved with the biosphere reserve, what changes have you noted with regard to:

Change	Who
Awareness	
Attitude change	
Knowledge	
<i>Skills:</i> Leadership Communication skills e.g. negotiating grants Facilitation Critical thinking Planning <i>Networking:</i> Who they network with? Are these networks new? What influence do they have	

10. What would improve the beneficial impact of the biosphere reserve?

11. What are your views about the potential expansion (Stage 2) of the biosphere reserve?

12. Do you have any other comments to make?

Business and industry

1. Are you familiar with the aims and functions of the biosphere reserve? How would you describe these?
2. How do the aims of the biosphere reserve impact on your business?
3. Are you or your organisation involved with the biosphere reserve? **Prompt** : members, on the board, advisor
4. Could you comment on the impact (social, economic and environmental) of the biosphere reserve on the Mornington Peninsula and Western Port **region**?

	Beneficial	Adverse	Neutral	Don't know
Environmental				
Social				
Economic				
Other				

5. How do you think the biosphere reserve program has economically impacted either directly or indirectly your costs and benefits?

[Probe: Tourism, public relations, planning opportunities, etc; costs, time, profitability, productivity, ability to leverage, etc]

Stakeholders	Benefits		Costs	
	Direct	Indirect	Direct	Indirect
<i>Example: Tourism Operators</i>	<i>Greater demand for tourism producers</i>	<i>Improved public image, advertising</i>	<i>N/a</i>	<i>Restricted development opportunities</i>

6. What difference would it make to your business if the biosphere reserve did not exist?
7. How satisfied are you with:
 - a. Your level of engagement
 - b. Communication and information about the biosphere reserve.
8. What are your views about the potential expansion (Stage 2) of the biosphere reserve?
9. Do you have any other comments you would like to add about the biosphere reserve or your involvement with it?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR INSIGHTS. THEY HAVE BEEN MOST HELPFUL.

Focus group questions

Preamble

Hello, is this xxx?

*We are ... from Roberts Evaluation. We have been commissioned by the Victorian Department of Sustainability and Environment to carry out a survey to find out what progress the Mornington Peninsula and Western Port Biosphere is making towards its goals. See previous comment
We would like to ask you some questions about your involvement with the biosphere reserve and opinions you have of it. Your comments will be treated as confidential.
This discussion will take about two hours and lunch will follow.*

Local Government, Round tables and environment groups

1. At the **present** time what do you believe the overall value of the biosphere reserve with regard to finding a solution to the reconciliation of conservation with sustainable land use?
2. What is your vision for the biosphere reserve?
3. What do you see as the environmental, social and economic effects of the biosphere reserve?

	Actual	Potential
Environmental		
Social		
Economic		

4. How satisfied are you with:
 - Stakeholders' level of engagement? What is their level of interest and enthusiasm?
 - Support from the general public?
5. What do you think are barriers to the biosphere reserve's success?
6. How would you deal with those barriers?
7. Do you have any other comments?

KEQ 7: To what extent has the biosphere reserve met the criteria of the original proposal?

8. Is the biosphere reserve going beyond/adding value to existing programs?
In the transition zone are sustainable resource management practices being promoted?
9. What are your views about the possible expansion of the biosphere reserve?