

Building Australia's most advanced environmental decision-support system

As it approaches its half-year milestone, the National Environmental Prediction System (NEPS) Scoping Study is set to embark on a broad consultation process that will help shape a support system for Australia's research and decision-making communities.

After releasing version one of the [NEPS Scoping Study Discussion Paper](#) in late 2018, the first stage of the NEPS consultation process was undertaken in early 2019 and involved the Expert Panel consulting with an initial representative group of stakeholders to refine the Panel's consultation approach.

Both potential end-users and potential providers of environmental and supporting information were consulted during this pilot consultation. Representatives or members from the following organisations took part in the NEPS Pilot Consultation:

- Threatened Species Research Hub (NESP)
- NT Environment Protection Authority
- WA Environmental Protection Authority
- Northern Australian Research Hub
- Centre for Air Pollution, Energy and Health Research
- Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability Victoria
- EnHealth
- NRM Regions Australia
- National Earth and Environmental Science Facilities Forum

The results of these pilot consultations reaffirmed the community's desire for a NEPS. In fact, despite not being exactly sure what a NEPS will resemble, it was unanimous that a NEPS is not just desirable, but essential.

Amongst many other findings, the consultations also revealed that the Scoping Study, in its design of a future NEPS, must have strong links with the end user and decision-making communities from the beginning.

To incorporate these desires and issues, the Expert Panel is currently drafting a revised Discussion Paper. The new Discussion Paper will clearly state that the Panel is serious about interfacing with the end user community, in particular the researchers and decisions makers in the areas of environmental planning and regulation, emergency management, and State of the Environment reporting.

As part of this, it will present plans to work with a Technical Advisory Group to map and generate a detailed example of a NEPS that the community can evaluate and respond to. To achieve this, it is proposed that the TAG will conduct in-depth consultation with end user and research user communities to elicit user requirements.

Once the TAG is established and a detailed engagement strategy is developed, in-depth consultations will commence in mid-2019 and will be conducted over a 6-month period.

- For more information on the NEPS Scoping Study please visit <http://www.science.uq.edu.au/neps> or email tern.office@uq.edu.au