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A national baseline of the social and institutional foundations of natural resource management programs

Mark Fenton and Arwen Rickert

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Level 1 The Phoenix

86 Northbourne Avenue

Braddon ACT 2612

Telephone: 02 6263 6035

Facsimile: 02 6257 9518

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Authors: Dr. Mark Fenton and Arwen Rickert, EBC

3 Victoria Street, Townsville, QLD, 4810 Tel (07) 4772 2544

E-mail: mark@ebc.com.au

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List of acronyms and abbreviations

ANZLIC	The Spatial Information Council of Australia and New Zealand (formerly known as the Australia New Zealand Land Information Council)
DAFF	Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
DEWHA	Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
NAP/NAPSWQ	National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality
NHT	Natural Heritage Trust
NLWRA	National Land & Water Resources Audit (the Audit)
NRM	natural resource management
National M&E Framework	National NRM Monitoring and Evaluation Framework
SENCC	Social and Economic National Coordinating Committee

Executive summary

The Natural Heritage Ministerial Board has tasked the National Land & Water Resources Audit (the Audit) with coordinating the development of national data standards and collation of data to support reporting under the National Natural Resource Management Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (National M&E Framework).

Long term improvements in the condition of land, water and biological resources are reliant upon the establishment of the social and institutional foundations of NRM programs. Natural resources are managed by people, organisations and institutions. This project assessed the level of capacity, engagement, partnerships and recognition - key factors underpinning regional NRM delivery arrangements.

The objectives of the project were to:

- refine and implement the National NRM M&E indicators and protocols¹ for assessing the social and institutional foundations of NRM – critical intermediate outcomes of NRM programs
- establish a national baseline for reporting on the intermediate outcomes of NRM programs
- contribute to an informed discussion by the NRM community on how we're going and move forward – knowing the most important factors that contribute to success.

The project focused specifically on the assessment of four core indicators which included:

1. Capacity of regional NRM bodies

The capacity of regional bodies to make NRM decisions is defined on the basis of their management and NRM program capacity and their external engagement.

2. Engagement in NRM

Engagement is defined as the purposeful and meaningful involvement of stakeholders, including community, landholders, industry and others in NRM decision making, with the intent of achieving a shared NRM vision, ownership and NRM outcomes at the regional level.

3. Partnerships in NRM

Partnerships is defined as the strength of the relationships amongst regional NRM bodies and Australian and state governments in the delivery of NRM programs and is underpinned by attributes such as trust and confidence in the relationship.

4. Recognition of the social foundations of NRM

Recognition is defined as the extent to which the social foundations (engagement, partnerships and capacity building) have been incorporated and recognised in Australian and state government policies, frameworks and guidelines and regional body activities.

¹ Fenton D M (2006) *Socio-economic indicators and protocols for the National NRM monitoring and evaluation framework: The social and institutional foundations of NRM*. NLWRA, Canberra. (www.nlwra.gov.au/Natural_Resource_Topics/Socio-economic/index.aspx)

The four indicators were assessed using several data collection procedures which included:

1. the use of panel judges (recognition)
2. interviews with regional NRM bodies (capacity, engagement, recognition, partnerships)
3. interviews with regional stakeholders (engagement)
4. interviews with Australian Government participants (partnerships)
5. interviews with state government participants (partnerships).

Structured interviews, which included retrospective questions, were undertaken with 184 senior staff, CEOs and Chairs from 46 regional NRM bodies.

Capacity of regional NRM bodies

A summary of the measures of the capacity of regional NRM bodies is shown in Table A.

Table A Summary table: Capacity of regional NRM bodies

(Based on the judgements of regional NRM bodies and regional stakeholder organisations)

Measures	Low		Mid		High
Decision making and governance					
Appropriate organisational structures					
Good decision making processes					
Inclusiveness of NRM decision making					
Organisational cohesion (staff and Board)					
Composition of decision making structures					
Capacity and support					
Staff training and development					
Board member training and development					
Job satisfaction					
Capacity to review NRM plan and investment strategy					
Effective local facilitator network					
Resources (human)					
Competency in human resource management					
Adequate staffing levels					
Leadership competency					
External leadership by the regional NRM body					
Use of NRM advisory panels					
Effectiveness of NRM advisory panels					
Knowledge of NRM and planning					
Knowledge of biophysical systems					
Knowledge of economic systems					
Knowledge of social, systems					
Knowledge of Indigenous communities					
Knowledge of corporate governance					
Resources (financial)					
Competency in financial management					
Financial management performance					
Accessing NRM investment funds outside NAP/NHT					
Capacity to prepare funding submissions					
Capacity to lever external investment					
Resources (information)					
Effective use of NRM information					
Ability to access external sources of NRM information					

Decision making and governance

Table A shows decision making and governance within regional NRM bodies is appropriate and effective. Across each of the measures, organisational cohesion, which focuses on the shared vision between staff and Board members, was found to be the lowest and showed the greatest variation amongst regional NRM bodies.

The five measures of decision making and governance show little variation between statutory and non-statutory regional NRM bodies and across states, although regional NRM bodies in South Australia generally score lower than other states. The pattern of scores in which South Australia often lags other states is most likely attributable to regional NRM bodies in this state only becoming 'operationally responsible' in 2005. In addition, all regional NRM bodies in South Australia are currently within the stage of NRM plan development.

There is evidence of developmental improvement in the effectiveness of decision making and governance within regional NRM bodies. For instance retrospective questions show that since 2005 there has been improvement in the cohesion evident within regional NRM Boards as a decision making structure.

A key issue identified in many of the findings reported is the disparity evident between the judgements of staff, the CEO and the Chair on many specific issues. Chairs often make evaluative judgements in relation to decision making, governance and other issues which are consistently higher than those of staff and CEOs. To some extent this may be expected, given the role and objectives of the Board in directing issues of governance and policy within regional NRM bodies. However, it could be argued that the disparity in judgements is a matter of concern and that many Boards may not always be making decisions on the basis of accurate information about the internal function and operation of the regional NRM body.

Regional NRM bodies and regional stakeholder organisations indicated that decision making was inclusive, with Aboriginal organisations the most likely of all stakeholder organisations to report inclusiveness in decision making. This may be a direct consequence of many regional NRM bodies employing Aboriginal facilitators and establishing Aboriginal programs to ensure inclusiveness. It may also be that Aboriginal organisations have lower expectations related to inclusiveness in decision making when compared to other regional stakeholders.

Capacity and support

As a measure of job satisfaction, 60% of regional NRM bodies had less than 11% staff turnover within the last 12 months. This compares well with other government business enterprises, however it is difficult to assess the meaningfulness of staff turnover as it is influenced by factors other than job satisfaction.

The perception of job satisfaction was moderately high (Table A), although amongst regional NRM bodies in South Australia the level of job satisfaction was lower relative to other regional NRM bodies. It is likely the case that the level of job satisfaction in South Australia will increase over the next two years as in all states there has been an increase in job satisfaction in the last two years with increasing maturity of regional NRM bodies.

Most regional NRM bodies believed they had the capacity and resources to effectively review and update their NRM plans and investment strategies, although this must be somewhat tempered by the belief amongst many regional NRM bodies that they lacked adequate staff resources.

The majority of regional NRM bodies, particularly the larger and more established, also believed they had an effective local facilitator network to assist in building partnerships, community awareness and capacity.

Human resources

Regional NRM bodies, including specifically the more established and non-statutory, believed they had adequate human resource management systems in place; they had effective internal and external leadership and made effective use of NRM advisory panels in their decision making (Table A).

Not only do regional NRM bodies believe they provide regional leadership in NRM, but this is also confirmed by independent judgements of regional stakeholder organisations. Furthermore, there is also an indication that the capacity of regional organisations in providing regional leadership increases with the increasing maturity of the organisation.

However, in relation to human resources, the majority of regional NRM bodies did not believe they have the required number of staff to meet the core business requirements of the organisation. This issue was also a core theme identified during the implementation of the project.

One important component of the human resources available to organisations is the knowledge they have of NRM and related fields. A symmetric relationship between the level of knowledge of a specific field within the organisation and the level of outsourcing was identified; those organisations with less knowledge in a specific area generally outsourced this knowledge to other organisations or individuals.

Many regional NRM bodies had relatively limited knowledge of economic and social systems, with this knowledge often being outsourced to other specialist organisations or individuals. Exceptions included Victoria, where knowledge of economic systems was relatively high and may in part be due to a focus on the implementation of market based instruments and other economic incentives programs with regional NRM bodies in this state. Regional NRM bodies in Queensland were also found to have relatively high knowledge of social systems, which may be partly due to the implementation of a state level investment project between 2004 and 2006 which focussed on developing social and economic research with regional NRM bodies.

Financial resources

Competency in financial management was relatively high (Table A) and showed significant improvement as regional NRM bodies developed greater experience and knowledge over time.

Forty-one percent of regional NRM bodies obtained more than 15% of their NRM program funds from outside of NAP/NHT funding sources. Although dependent upon funding arrangements within states, larger regional NRM bodies were most likely to obtain funding outside of NAP and NHT.

Although the capacity of staff to prepare and develop NRM funding submissions was satisfactory, the majority of regional NRM bodies did not believe they had adequate staffing and time to lever external investment, although this capacity tended to improve amongst the larger and more established regional NRM bodies.

Information resources

Regional NRM bodies were reasonably effective in their ability to access and utilise external NRM information (Table A) with the skills and abilities required in using NRM information also increasing over the last two years. The ability to access external NRM information was found to be higher amongst the larger and more established regional NRM bodies.

Engagement in NRM

A summary of the measures of engagement in NRM is shown in Table B

Table B Summary table: Engagement in NRM

(Based on the judgements of regional NRM bodies and regional stakeholder organisations)

Measures	Low		Mid		High
Community engagement strategy					
Adequate community engagement strategy					
Implementation of a community engagement strategy					
Evaluation of a community engagement strategy					
Effectiveness of community engagement					
Effectiveness of the engagement process					
Providing opportunities for engagement					
Quality and scale of engagement					
Scale of NRM engagement (level of participation)					
Scale of NRM engagement (diversity of participation)					
Effective range of engagement					
Quality of the NRM engagement					
Community knowledge of the regional NRM process					
Quality of process (trust)					
Quality of process (level of transparency)					
Quality of process (inclusiveness)					
Quality of process (level of cooperation)					
Quality of process (level of commitment)					

Community engagement strategy

Most regional NRM bodies indicated they had an adequate community engagement strategy or approach, which guided their decision making and day to day activities (Table B).

A complete evaluation of the organisation's community engagement strategy had been undertaken by 20% of regional NRM bodies, with a further 40% indicating they had completed a partial evaluation and 30% indicated they had undertaken a limited evaluation.

Effectiveness of community engagement

Regional NRM bodies and stakeholder organisations considered the community engagement process used in recent planning activities to have been effective (Table B), with there being significant improvement in the effectiveness of the community engagement process over the past two years.

Regional NRM bodies and regional stakeholder organisations also believed sufficient opportunities had been provided for community engagement.

Quality and scale of community engagement

The level of participation by stakeholders, landholders and communities in NRM activities was judged as moderate to high by most regional NRM bodies and stakeholder organisations, with the larger and more established regional NRM bodies having higher levels of participation.

A similar pattern was also evident in relation to the diversity of stakeholder engagement, with both regional NRM bodies and stakeholder organisations reporting diversity of stakeholder involvement in the engagement process.

The quality of the engagement process was assessed by examining the procedural issues of trust, transparency, inclusiveness, cooperation and commitment. Regional NRM bodies scored these attributes relatively highly as did the regional stakeholder organisations.

Partnerships in NRM

A summary of the measures of partnerships in NRM is given in Table C.

Table C Summary table: Partnerships in NRM

(Based on judgements by regional NRM bodies, Australian, state and territory government representatives)

Measures	Low		Mid		High
Quality and effectiveness of partnerships					
Australian Government view of regional NRM bodies					
Trust					
Transparency in decision making					
Flexibility in negotiation					
Effectiveness of the partnership					
Australian Government view of state governments					
Trust					
Transparency in decision making					
Flexibility in negotiation					
Effectiveness of the partnership					
State governments view of regional NRM bodies					
Trust					
Transparency in decision making					
Flexibility in negotiation					
Effectiveness of the partnership					
State governments view of Australian Government					
Trust					
Transparency in decision making					
Flexibility in negotiation					
Effectiveness of the partnership					
Regional NRM bodies view of Australian Government					
Trust					
Transparency in decision making					
Flexibility in negotiation					
Effectiveness of the partnership					
Regional NRM bodies view of state governments					
Trust					
Transparency in decision making					
Flexibility in negotiation					
Effectiveness of the partnership					
Consistency of information					
Across Australian Government agencies and departments					
Across state government agencies and departments					
Between Australian and state government					

Quality and effectiveness of partnerships

Overall regional NRM bodies indicated that the partnership arrangements that they had with Australian and state government agencies and departments were effective, although Australian Government partnership arrangements were seen as more effective than those with the states.

The quality of the partnership amongst regional NRM bodies, state and Australian Government agencies and departments was assessed through three attributes which included trust, transparency of decision making and flexibility in negotiation.

The level of trust was found to be relatively high between the Australian Government and regional NRM bodies and between the Australian Government and state governments. Conversely, state governments and regional NRM bodies also showed a relatively high level of trust in the Australian Government (Table C).

However, while state governments indicated a high level of trust in regional NRM bodies, the level of trust that regional NRM bodies had in state government agencies and departments was comparatively low (Table C).

Similar findings occurred in relation to the transparency of decision making, with 50% of regional NRM bodies indicating relatively low levels of transparency in decision making by state government agencies and departments. There was also a tendency for the Australian Government to evaluate the decision making transparency of state agencies and departments relatively lower than other partnership relationships.

Flexibility of negotiation was relatively high within partnership arrangements. However, and as occurred in relation to trust and transparency, regional NRM bodies reported relatively lower levels of flexibility in decision making amongst state agencies and departments (Table C).

The findings also show consistent improvement in the effectiveness of partnerships between regional NRM bodies and state and Australian Government agencies and departments over the past two years. The most significant improvements have occurred in New South Wales, Queensland and Western Australia, where two years ago 50% of regional NRM bodies indicated they did not have effective partnerships with state agencies and departments. In contrast, 20% of regional NRM bodies in these states now indicate that they do not have effective partnerships with state agencies and departments.

Consistency of information

While regional NRM bodies believed they received consistent policy information from most Australian Government agencies and departments, 50% believed they did not receive consistent policy information across most state government agencies and departments. Furthermore most regional NRM bodies also identified the provision of consistent policy information between state and Australian Government agencies and departments as an issue.

Recognition of the social foundations of NRM

A summary of the measures of recognition is given in Table D.

Table D Summary table: Recognition of the social foundations of NRM
(Based on document reviews by panel judges and judgements by regional NRM bodies)

Measures	Low		Mid		High
Social foundations in policy and frameworks					
Australian Government policies and frameworks					
State government policies and frameworks					
Investment guidelines and social processes					
Opportunities for investment in social processes					
Social foundations of NRM					
Social foundations embedded in management actions					
Funding the social foundations by regional NRM bodies					
Social information in decision making					
Social expertise of Board members					
Social expertise of advisory structures to regional NRM bodies					
Social expertise of regional NRM employees					
Use of external consultants/advisors with social expertise					

Social foundations in NRM policies and frameworks

Some recognition was given to the social foundations of NRM in Australian and state government policies and frameworks (Table D). Australian Government documents recognised social and economic issues influencing NRM outcomes and the role of capacity building; however less recognition was given to community engagement. In contrast state government documents and investment strategies were more likely to recognise the role of community engagement and less likely to recognise capacity building in NRM.

Investment guidelines and social processes

Investment guidelines, which include primarily state investment guidelines, recognised the social foundations of NRM to a limited extent and were more likely to recognise the role of community engagement with limited recognition being given to capacity building.

Social foundations of NRM

Regional NRM bodies indicated their management actions recognised the importance of community engagement, capacity building, partnerships and other social and economic activities associated with NRM (Table D). In addition, 26% of regional NRM bodies were found to spend in excess of 20% of their total funding on these activities.

Social information in decision making

The use of social information in informing decision making was assessed by examining the social expertise of Board members, staff and advisory committee members within regional NRM bodies. The findings indicate that 40% of regional NRM bodies have more than 50% of Board members appointed on the basis of their social expertise. In addition 29% of regional NRM bodies have appointed more than 50% of their technical and professional staff on the basis of their social expertise.

Areas for further investigation

It is important to recognise that the primary focus of this project was to establish baseline information against which future changes may be monitored and assessed. While it is not the intent of this project to develop or assess explanatory models of the measures which have been investigated, a number of potential areas requiring further consideration and investigation have been identified. These include:

- (i) **Staff resources and workloads:** A lack of staff, high workloads and the limited time available for existing staff to meet organisational objectives was an important theme identified in the process of implementing the project and in the research findings associated with organisational capacity. There is clearly a need to investigate this issue further, including a more objective assessment of workloads and staffing within regional NRM bodies, the identification of potential internal and external causes of high workloads and the impact of workloads on organisational performance.
- (ii) **Governance and knowledge:** A consistent finding throughout the project was the disparity evident amongst the judgements of senior staff, CEOs and Chairs. On the one hand it could be argued that this disparity is to be expected given the different roles these individuals fulfil within the governance structure of the organisation. However, it could equally be argued that the disparity between Chairs on the one hand and staff and CEOs on the other, may indicate that many Boards are perhaps not as well informed as they should be in making important policy decisions affecting the organisation. This issue is of sufficient importance that it requires further consideration and investigation.
- (iii) **Regional NRM body and state agency partnerships:** The findings in relation to trust, transparency, flexibility and the effectiveness of partnership arrangements between regional NRM bodies and state agencies and departments also requires further investigation. A clearer understanding of what the key partnership issues are would enable these issues to be better addressed and improve the effectiveness of regional NRM body and state government partnership arrangements.
- (iv) **Leverage of external funds:** The majority of regional NRM bodies did not believe they had adequate staff resources and time to allow the leverage of external funds beyond NAP, NHT and state in-kind contributions. Opportunities to lever external NRM funding and capacity issues within regional NRM bodies are issues which may need additional investigation.
- (v) **Self evaluation and objective assessments:** The project methodology is based on subjective assessments made by participants from regional NRM bodies, stakeholder organisations and government agencies and departments. The validity of the self assessment needs to be further investigated by examining where possible the self assessment reports against other objective measures.

I. Introduction

The Natural Heritage Ministerial Board has tasked the National Land & Water Resources Audit (the Audit) with coordinating the development of national data standards and the collation of data to support reporting under the National Natural Resource Management Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (National M&E Framework). As described in the National M&E Framework “the health of the nation’s natural resources is being assessed to provide a continuing reference point against which the appropriateness and effectiveness of national policies, strategies and programs may be judged. This assessment assists Ministerial Council to identify areas of concern and to better target the use of resources”.

The National M&E Framework aims to use nationally agreed outcomes and measures to report on the conservation, sustainable use and management of Australia’s land, water, vegetation and biological resources. The framework identifies three requirements for monitoring natural resource condition:

1. a set of resource condition indicators to measure progress toward the agreed national outcomes on a medium and long term basis
2. a set of indicators for monitoring community and social processes relevant to or affected by NRM programs, as well as measures of the adoption of sustainable development and production techniques
3. contextual data pertinent to the indicator being considered.

Three groups of stakeholders relevant to or affected by natural resource management (NRM) programs have been prioritised by the Audit for the development of socio-economic indicators: land managers, regional NRM bodies, and the broader community within an NRM region.

In developing indicators relevant to the three stakeholder groups, the Audit’s Socio-Economic Workplan² aims to identify socio-economic indicators to assess the:

1. capacity of land managers to change and adopt sustainable management practices
2. capacity of regional NRM bodies to make decisions on NRM issues and the social and institutional foundations of NRM programs
3. interlinkages between the above and their relationship to the achievement of longer term changes to the:
 - condition of the natural resource base
 - capacity of regional communities to respond and manage for effective NRM outcomes
 - economic viability of agriculture.

This project focuses on the development and assessment of indicators associated with regional NRM bodies and the capacity of these organisations to make decisions on NRM issues and the social and institutional foundations of NRM programs.

² Cody K (2004) *Socio-economic workplan*. National Land & Water Resource Audit, Canberra. (www.lwa.gov.au/downloads/publications_pdf/ER040821.pdf)

2. Project objectives

The objective of this project was to refine and implement the national NRM monitoring and evaluation protocols³ for assessing the social and institutional foundations of NRM – key intermediate outcomes of NRM programs. The project focused on the assessment of four core indicators which included:

1. **Capacity of regional NRM bodies**

The capacity of regional bodies to make NRM decisions is defined on the basis of their management and NRM program capacity and their external engagement. Management capacity focuses on maintaining the function and structures of the organisation, while program capacity focuses on the capacity to deliver NRM program outcomes.

2. **Engagement in NRM**

Engagement is defined as the purposeful and meaningful involvement of stakeholders; including community, landholders, industry and others in NRM decision making, with the intent of achieving a shared NRM vision, ownership and NRM outcomes at the regional level.

3. **Partnerships in NRM**

Partnerships is defined as the strength of the relationships amongst regional NRM bodies and Australian and state governments in the delivery of NRM programs and is underpinned by attributes such as trust and confidence in the relationship.

4. **Recognition of the social foundations of NRM**

Recognition is defined as the extent to which the social foundations (engagement, partnerships and capacity building) have been incorporated and recognised in Australian and state government policies, frameworks and guidelines and regional body activities.

³ Fenton D M (2006) *Socio-economic indicators and protocols for the National NRM Monitoring & Evaluation Framework: The social and institutional foundations of NRM*. National Land & Water Resources Audit, Canberra. (www.nlwra.gov.au/Natural_Resource_Topics/Socio-economic/index.aspx)

3. Project background

In early 2004 the Australian Government held several workshops to identify ‘achievement statements’ associated with the ‘social dimensions’ of NAPSWQ and NHT programs. The workshops included social science experts, representatives from the Australian Government NRM team, and state and regional NRM body representatives. Through the workshop process, four vision categories or intermediate outcomes of NRM programs were identified which included (i) acknowledgement of the social dimensions of NRM (ii) engagement in NRM (iii) partnerships in NRM programs (iv) the capacity of regional NRM bodies.

In early 2004 the Audit also developed a framework document to identify initial indicators and a methodology to assess capacity, performance and change in regional NRM bodies (Fenton 2004a⁴). In late 2004, Land & Water Australia extended the work (Fenton 2004b⁵) by describing the indicators and initial framework for assessing the social dimensions of NAPSWQ and NHT programs, which was based on the outcomes of the Australian Government workshops held in early 2004 and the initial framework developed by the Audit (Fenton, 2004a).

Given the development of an initial framework and methodology for the assessment of indicators associated with the four vision categories, the Capacity Building Section in the Natural Resource Management Team of DAFF and DEH, implemented a project to refine and pilot test the methodology (Fenton and Rickert 2006a⁶). This project was undertaken in 2005 and included workshops in each state, with participants from state government agencies and regional NRM bodies directly involved in refining the methodology and developing interview questions. On the basis of the workshop outcomes, the methodology was pilot tested with three regional NRM bodies in Queensland, Victoria and Western Australia.

A further opportunity for pilot testing the methodology also occurred in 2006 and involved six NAPSWQ regional NRM bodies in Queensland (Fenton and Rickert 2006b⁷). The pilot project, which was funded by the Queensland State Investment Project of NAPSWQ and the Audit, further refined the methodology associated with the indicators of engagement and the capacity of regional NRM bodies.

Given the development and pilot testing of the project methodology that had occurred over a two year period, the Audit in 2006 undertook a review of the project methodology which addressed issues associated with data validity and reliability, project products, data confidentiality, data access and storage, data interpretation and the coordination of the project and other activities

⁴ Fenton D M (2004a) *Framework development: Indicators of capacity, performance and change in regional NRM bodies*. National Land & Water Resource Audit, Canberra.

⁵ Fenton D M (2004b) *Monitoring and evaluation process for the social dimensions of NHT and NAP*. Land & Water Australia, Canberra.

⁶ Fenton, D M and Rickert A (2006a) *Refining indicators for monitoring and evaluating the social and institutional foundations of regional NRM programs*. Capacity Building Section, NRM Team, DEH/DAFF.

⁷ Fenton D M and Rickert A (2006b) *Monitoring and evaluating the performance of NAPSWQ regional bodies in Queensland*. SIP project, Queensland.

(Fenton 2006c⁸). Position papers were developed on each of these issues and were reviewed by external experts and members of the Social and Economic National Coordinating Committee (SENCC).

On the basis of this review, protocols were developed for each of the indicators which clearly defined the indicators and measures, the methodology and reporting frameworks (Fenton 2006d⁹).

National implementation of the project commenced in late 2006 with the establishment of a Project Advisory Committee consisting of Australian and state government and regional NRM body representatives. Over a five month period prior to data collection, project presentations were made to regional NRM bodies and Australian and state government agencies and departments.

Data collection was undertaken over five months, commencing in early April 2007 and completed at the end of August 2007.

⁸ Fenton D M (2006c) *Socio-economic workplan: Pre-implementation review of the methodology to assess the capacity of regional organisations and the social and institutional foundations of NRM*. National Land & Water Resources Audit, Canberra.

⁹ Fenton D M (2006) *Socio-economic indicators and protocols for the National NRM Monitoring & Evaluation Framework: The social and institutional foundations of NRM*. National Land & Water Resources Audit, Canberra. (www.nlwra.gov.au/Natural_Resource_Topics/Socio-economic/index.aspx)

4. Project methodology

The four indicators which included capacity, engagement, recognition and partnerships were assessed using several data collection procedures which included:

1. the use of panel judges (recognition)
2. interviews with regional NRM bodies (capacity, engagement, recognition, partnerships)
3. interviews with regional stakeholders (engagement)
4. interviews with Australian Government participants (partnerships)
5. interviews with state government participants (partnerships).

All data collection which included the use of panel judges and interviews with regional NRM bodies, regional stakeholders and Australian and state government participants was undertaken between the 9th of April 2007 and the 31st of August 2007.

4.1 Panel judges

Panel judges were used to independently assess selected Australian and state government NRM documents in terms of the extent to which each document recognised the importance of key social foundations and social process in NRM.

4.1.1 Documentation for panel judge assessment

As identified in the instructions to panel judges (Appendix A), three types of documents were reviewed and scored. Australian Government documents were identified through previous pilot projects and project reviews. Specific state and territory documents were identified and supplied through jurisdictional representatives on the Social and Economic National Coordinating Committee (SENCC). The documents included:

Australian Government NRM documents

1. A National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality. November 2000
<http://www.napswq.gov.au/publications/vital-resources.html>
2. Framework for the Extension of the Natural Heritage Trust
<http://www.nht.gov.au/publications/framework/index.html#framework>
3. Intergovernmental Agreement on the National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality
<http://www.napswq.gov.au/publications/iga.html>
4. National Framework for NRM Standards and Targets. April 2003
<http://www.nrm.gov.au/publications/standards/index.html>
5. National Heritage Trust of Australia Act 1997
<http://www.comlaw.gov.au/ComLaw/Legislation/ActCompilation1.nsf/0/D6613E7D95644C08CA256FC1001497AE?OpenDocument>
6. National NRM Monitoring and Evaluation Framework . May, 2002
<http://www.nrm.gov.au/publications/evaluation/index.html>

State and territory documents

1. *New South Wales* Recommendations on state-wide standards and targets, NRC, September 2005
Recommendations for Northern Rivers catchment action plans
2. *South Australia* State Natural Resources Management Plan (2006)
Natural Resources Management Act 2004, Section 75
3. *Queensland* Guidelines for regional NRM planning in Queensland, June 2004
4. *Tasmania* Accreditation criteria for regional strategies in Tasmania approved under the NRM Act (2002).
5. *Western Australia* Guidelines for the assessment of regional strategies for accreditation. State Investment Committee, September 2004
6. *ACT* Accreditation criteria for accreditation of integrated catchment/regional management plans (Attachment 3)
7. *NT* An agreement between the Commonwealth of Australia and the Northern Territory of Australia for the implementation of the intergovernmental agreement on a national action plan for salinity and water quality

Australian Government and state/territory investment guidelines

1. *National* National Accreditation Criteria for Regional NRM Plans
<http://www.nrm.gov.au/national/accredcriteria.html>
2. *Queensland* Three-year NAPSWQ/Trust Regional Investment Strategy guidelines: A guide for Queensland regional bodies, August 2004
3. *Tasmania* Guidelines for the development of Tasmanian regional investment proposals, November 2005
4. *Western Australia* Guidelines for the assessment of regional investment plans. State Investment Committee, February 2006
5. *Victoria* Regional Catchment Investment Plan Guidelines

4.1.2 Panel judge assessments

Seven graduate students (Masters and PhD students in Environmental Science) were selected to act as panel judges. The use of graduate students ensured each judge had some prior knowledge of NRM and at the same time were relatively unbiased in their knowledge and attitudes towards regional NRM arrangements at either regional, state or Australian Government levels.

As a group, all seven panel judges were instructed on the methodology and scoring procedures. Panel judges were instructed that they would be required to independently review the documentation presented to them and make judgements in relation to the documentation using the instructions and specific rating scales (Appendix A and B).

4.2 Interviews with regional NRM bodies

Interview procedures used with regional NRM bodies had been developed and pre-tested in previous studies (Fenton and Rickert 2006a; 2006b).

4.2.1 Selection of regional NRM bodies

Regional NRM bodies included all regional NRM bodies in Australia with the exception of the Cape York Peninsula Development Association (CYPDA) and the Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA). These two organisations were not included as their structure and operation were significantly different from that of all other regional NRM bodies in Australia. As such the project was based on 54 regional NRM bodies throughout Australia.

4.2.2 Initial contact with regional NRM bodies

In the first instance the CEO¹⁰ of the regional NRM body was contacted and informed of the project. The CEO was informed that four participants were required from the regional NRM body who would be asked to participate in a structured telephone interview. Participants were to include the CEO, the Chair of the Board and two staff members who had a reasonable knowledge of the regional NRM body and its operations.

In addition, each regional NRM body was also asked to identify a contact person for up to eight regional stakeholder organisations who would be asked to participate in a telephone interview to better understand the community engagement process used by the regional NRM body. They were specifically asked to nominate contact persons from:

- (i) a local government authority
- (ii) an agricultural industry
- (iii) a non-agricultural industry
- (iv) a conservation or environment group
- (v) an Indigenous, Aboriginal or Traditional Owner group
- (vi) a state agency
- (vii) two additional stakeholder organisations which may include organisations that should be engaged but who have not been well engaged by the regional NRM body.

The CEO, or the nominated project liaison person, was also informed that there were additional ‘contextual’ questions about the regional NRM body that needed to be completed to assist the interpretation of the interview findings (Appendix C). The contextual questions were completed as either part of the interview with the CEO; through return facsimile or through the submission of a web form.

¹⁰ *The term CEO is used throughout this report and is synonymous with the term General Manager which is also used in some states and territories.*

4.2.3 Interviews with regional NRM bodies

In undertaking telephone interviews with the CEO, Chair and two staff members; each participant was again informed of the project and that no participating individuals or regional NRM bodies would be identified in the project products.

After identifying a suitable time for the telephone interview, each participant was emailed the interview schedule (Appendix D) prior to the interview. Each participant was therefore able to review the questions prior to the interview and the interviewer was able to refer to the interview schedule during the telephone interview. The interview schedule not only included questions which referred to the previous 12 months, but also included 'retrospective questions' which asked participants to respond to the question as they believe they would have done if the question were asked two years ago.

Table 1 shows the total number of regional NRM bodies in each state and territory and the number of participating regional NRM bodies. The overall response rate was 85%.

Table 1 Response Rates for regional NRM bodies

State or territory	Regional NRM Bodies	Participating NRM Bodies	Response Rate (%)
New South Wales	13	12	92.3
Queensland	12	11	92.3
Victoria	10	6	60.0
South Australia	8	8	100.0
Western Australia	6	4	66.7
Tasmania	3	3	100.0
Australian Capital Territory	1	1	100.0
Northern Territory	1	1	100.0
National	54	46	85.2

Note: The population of regional NRM bodies does not include the Cape York Peninsula Development Association and the Torres Strait Regional Authority.

Source: EBC (2007)

4.2.4 Interviews with regional stakeholder organisations

Up to eight regional NRM stakeholder organisations were identified by the regional NRM body. Ensuring the confidentiality of responses from stakeholder organisations was an important issue for many participants and for that reason no analysis of stakeholder organisations at the regional level is presented.

Given the short interview schedule (Appendix E), the questions were not forwarded to participants prior to the interview.

Table 2 shows the number of participating regional stakeholder organisations within each state and territory.

Table 2 Participating regional stakeholder organisations

States and Territories	Count	Percent
New South Wales	93	30.5
Queensland	71	23.3
South Australia	53	17.4
Victoria	43	14.1
Western Australia	25	8.2
Tasmania	7	2.3
Northern Territory	7	2.3
Australian Capital Territory	6	2.0
National	305	100.0

Source: EBC (2007)

4.3 Interviews with Australian Government participants

Interviews with Australian Government participants were required in order to assess the 'partnership' indicator which specifically focused on the quality of the partnership between the Australian Government, state and territory governments and regional NRM bodies (Appendix F).

Australian Government participants included all members of the state and territory teams within the Joint NRM Team, which as of April 2007 consisted of 77 members.

Participants within each of the state teams only made judgements in relation to those regional NRM bodies and state and territory agencies and departments which were within the responsibility of the state Team of which they were apart. For instance, a member of the NSW state Team would only be asked to make judgements in relation to NSW regional NRM bodies and NSW state agencies and departments.

Seventy-three or 94% of all state Team members participated in the interviews.

4.3.1 Interviews with state and territory government participants

Interviews with state and territory government participants were required in order to assess the 'partnership' indicator which specifically focused on the quality of the partnership between the state and territory government, the Australian Government and regional NRM bodies (Appendix G).

Six participants were selected from each state and territory. In relation to state participants, representatives on the Social and Economic National Coordinating Committee (SENCC) identified potential participants within each state. territory participants on the other hand were identified by the territory teams within the Joint NRM Team.

In order to maintain some comparability of respondents between Australian Government and state and territory government participants, the selection criteria for state and territory participants was also based the position of the participant within salary bands. For instance, within each state and

territory, two participants were selected from the lower, middle and upper salary bands. This ensured some comparability with participants from the state teams within the Joint NRM Team¹¹.

¹¹ *Specific instructions to SENCC members for the selection of state representatives stated that “In selecting participants, and in order to ensure a similar range of people to those being selected at the Australian Government level, could you please identify two participants from each of the following three levels (or comparable state levels)...(i) Senior executive services (SES Band 1) (\$100 000 - \$120 000) - most likely JSC representatives (2) Executive level 2 (\$84 000 - \$101 000) (3) Executive level 1 (\$69 800 - \$84 400)*

5. Data analysis and presentation

The primary objective of the data analysis and presentation was to benchmark the indicators for the current time period, with the intent of monitoring change over time. While the findings do indicate areas for policy and program improvement and further research, the analyses that have been undertaken are not explanatory in so far as the underlying determinants or causes of variation in the measures are not being quantitatively assessed.

Additional conceptual and contextual information in relation to governance and engagement amongst regional NRM bodies is also to be found in several research projects undertaken within the ‘*Pathways to Good Practice in Regional NRM Governance*’ undertaken by the School of Geography and Environmental Studies at the University of Tasmania¹².

The reporting structure for the analyses that have been undertaken reflects the structure of the component trees developed for each of the indicators (Fenton and Rickert 2006a). Each component tree defines the indicator and the specific success statements and measures associated with the indicator.

5.1 Presentation of findings

Figure 1 shows an example of the graphic that is commonly used to display results throughout the report. The caption associated with each graphic shows the question that was used in the interview, with the question number also given in parentheses. Question numbers may refer to questions used with regional NRM bodies (Q5); regional stakeholder organisations (SQ5); or the contextual questions completed by regional NRM bodies (CQ5).

On the horizontal axis of the histogram at the bottom of Figure 1 is shown the response scale for the question, along with the numeric code for each value which has been used to derive the mean scores. The histogram shows the distribution of all regional NRM bodies in relation to the scale values.

The response given to any one question will be dependent upon the specific individual, environmental, social and institutional context of the respondent. The importance of contextual variables is shown in the example in Figure 1, where the six horizontal scatterplots provide an analysis of the variation in responses by:

1. **State:** This graphic shows the mean scores for each state across regional NRM bodies within each state. Tasmania, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory

¹² Davidson J, Lockwood M, Curtis A & Stratford E, Griffith R (2006) *Governance principles for regional natural resource management*, University of Tasmania, Hobart.
Davidson J, Lockwood M, Curtis A & Stratford E, Griffith R (2007) *NRM governance in Australia: NRM programs and governance structures*, University of Tasmania, Hobart.
Stratford E, Davidson J, Lockwood M, Griffith R & Curtis A (2007) *Sustainable development and good governance: The ‘big ideas’ influencing Australian NRM*, University of Tasmania, Hobart.
Lockwood M, Davidson J, Curtis A, Griffith R & Stratford E (2007) *Strengths and challenges of regional NRM governance: Interviews with key players and insights from the literature*, University of Tasmania, Hobart.

have been excluded from this analysis in order to ensure confidentiality of data obtained from regional NRM bodies; however information from these regional NRM bodies is included in all other analyses.

2. **Type of respondent:** Within each regional NRM body there were three types of respondents which included Chairs of Boards, CEOs and staff members. This graphic shows the mean scores for each of the three types of respondents.
3. **Legal standing:** This graphic shows the mean scores for statutory and non-statutory regional NRM bodies. Statutory regional NRM bodies include those in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia. Regional NRM bodies in all other states and Territories were considered non-statutory.
4. **Board members:** This graphic provides a comparison of regional NRM bodies with fewer than eight Board members and those with nine or more Board members.
5. **Employees:** This graphic provides an analysis of variation in responses across regional NRM bodies of different sizes as defined in terms of the total number of employees within the regional NRM body.
6. **Plan implementation:** This graphic provides an analysis of regional NRM bodies in terms of the time that had elapsed since the developed their current NRM plan. The four categories of regional NRM bodies included:
 - i. **Development:** All regional NRM bodies currently developing an NRM plan
 - ii. **Recent:** NRM plan accredited in 2007
 - iii. **Mid term:** NRM plan accredited in 2005 or 2006
 - iv. **Mature:** NRM plan accredited prior to 2004

Each scatterplot shows the mean score (denoted by a dot) and the upper and lower bounds of the interquartile range (denoted by the whiskers). The interquartile range provides a measure of the dispersion of responses. Within the upper and lower bounds of the interquartile range will be found 50% of the responses. Below the lower bound of the interquartile range will be found 25% of responses and above the upper bound of the interquartile range a further 25% of responses.

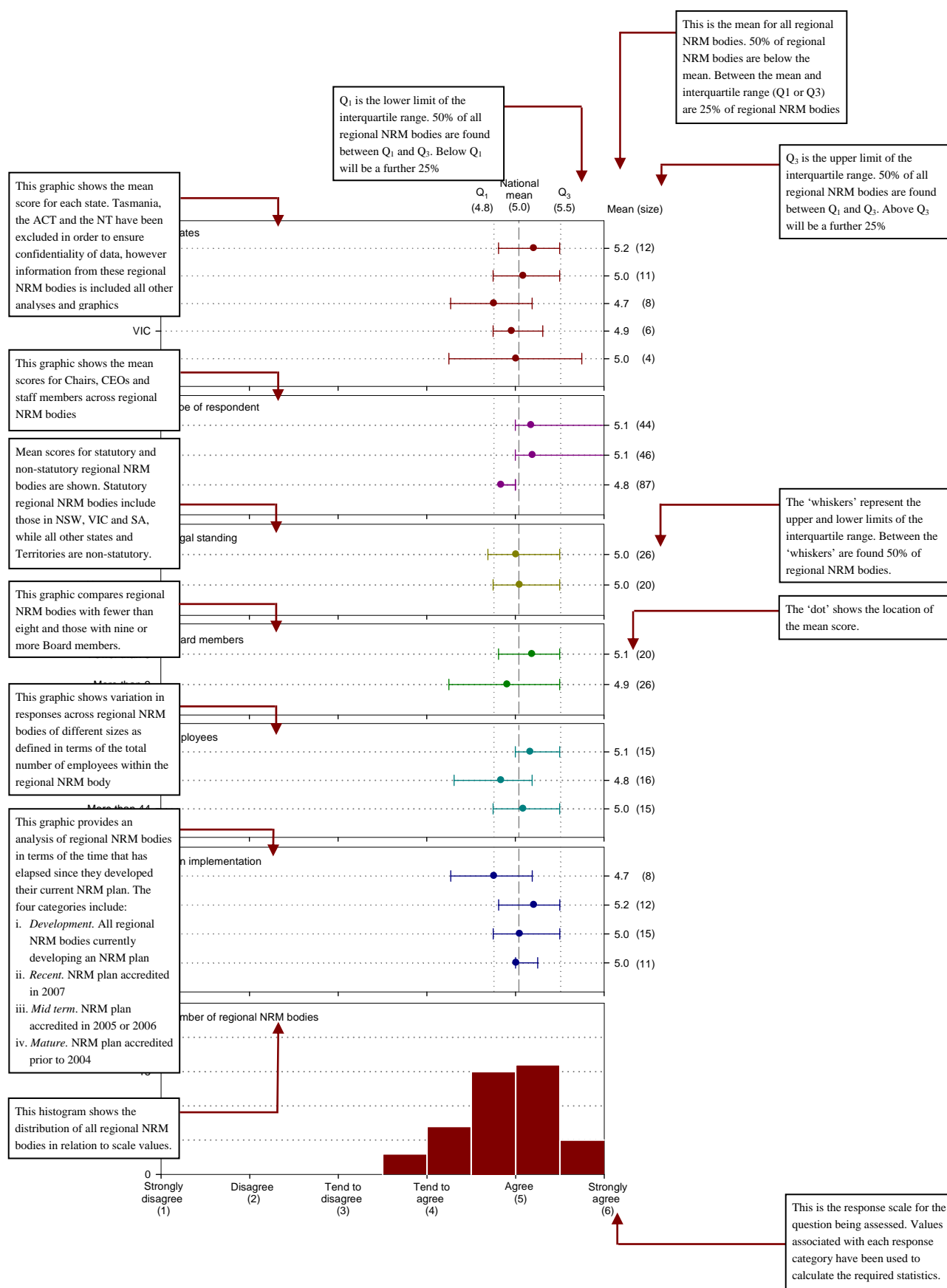
On the left axis of each of the six scatterplots is shown the mean score and in parentheses the number of responses on which the mean score is based.

Shown across all six scatterplots and as labelled at the top of the uppermost scatterplot is the national mean and interquartile range across all regional NRM bodies.

There are other similar scatterplots in the report which show the variation in responses between regional NRM bodies and regional stakeholders; the variation in responses between 2005 and 2007 and variation in responses across different types of stakeholder groups. These scatterplots can be interpreted in a similar way to that illustrated in Figure 1.

Several scatterplots show an analysis by type of stakeholder, with stakeholders classified into six groups which include (i) Aboriginal organisations (ii) agricultural industries (iii) conservation organisations (iv) local governments (v) non-agricultural industries (vi) state agencies. The classification of stakeholders into the category of non-agricultural industries includes a wide range of stakeholders including those drawn from the tourism, education, research and mining sectors.

Figure 1 Example: (Q5) “A shared NRM vision is held by most staff within the regional body”

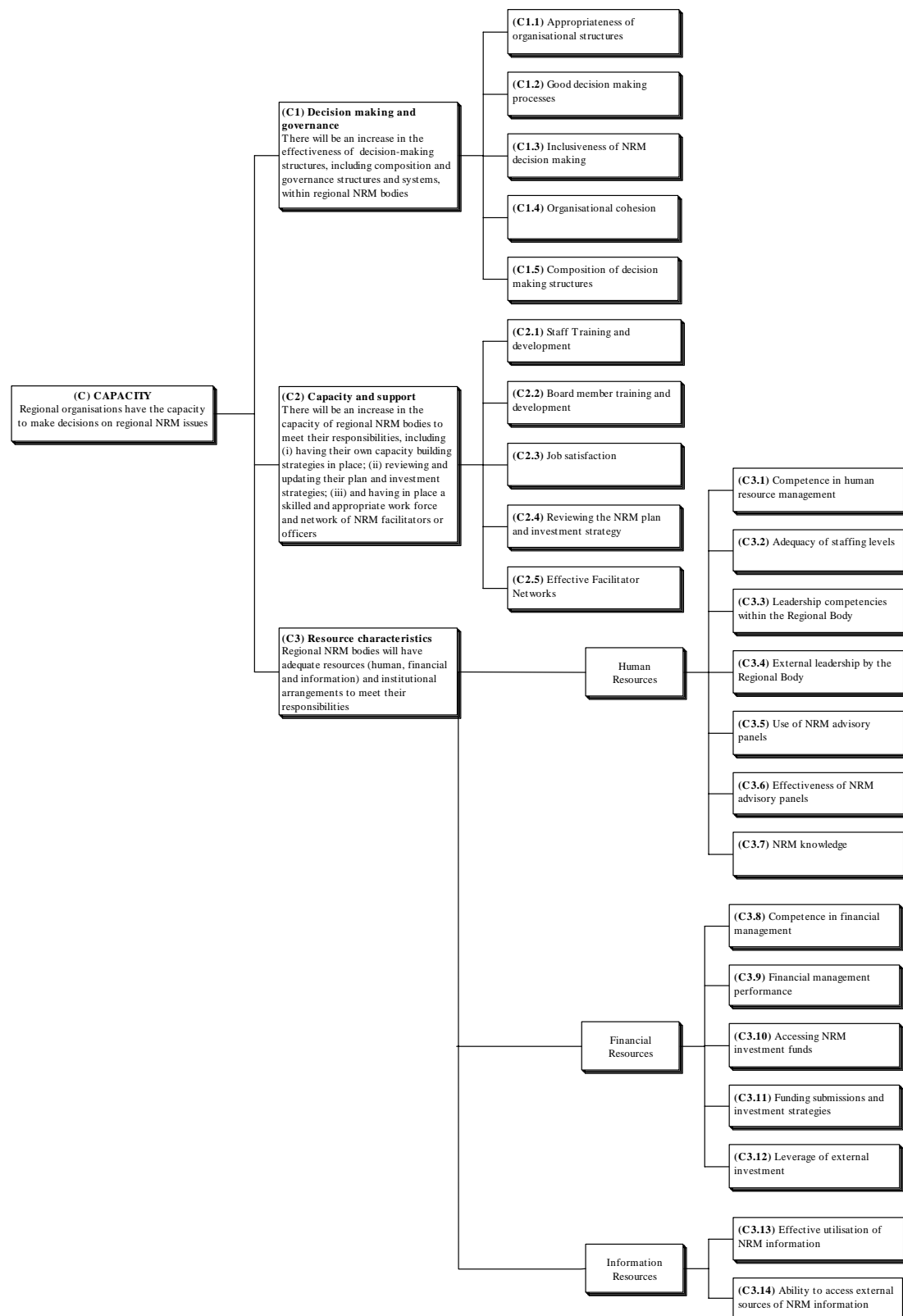


6. Capacity of regional NRM bodies

Figure 2 shows, within the context of a component tree, the success statements and measures that were used to assess the capacity of regional NRM bodies. The component tree includes three core success statements which are:

- (i) **Decision making and governance:** There will be an increase in the effectiveness of decision-making structures, including composition and governance structures and systems, within regional NRM bodies.
- (ii) **Capacity and support:** There will be an increase in the capacity of regional NRM bodies to meet their responsibilities, including (i) having their own capacity building strategies in place (ii) reviewing and updating their plan and investment strategies (iii) having in place a skilled and appropriate work force and network of NRM facilitators or officers.
- (iii) **Resource characteristics:** Regional NRM bodies will have adequate resources (human, financial and information) and institutional arrangements to meet their responsibilities.

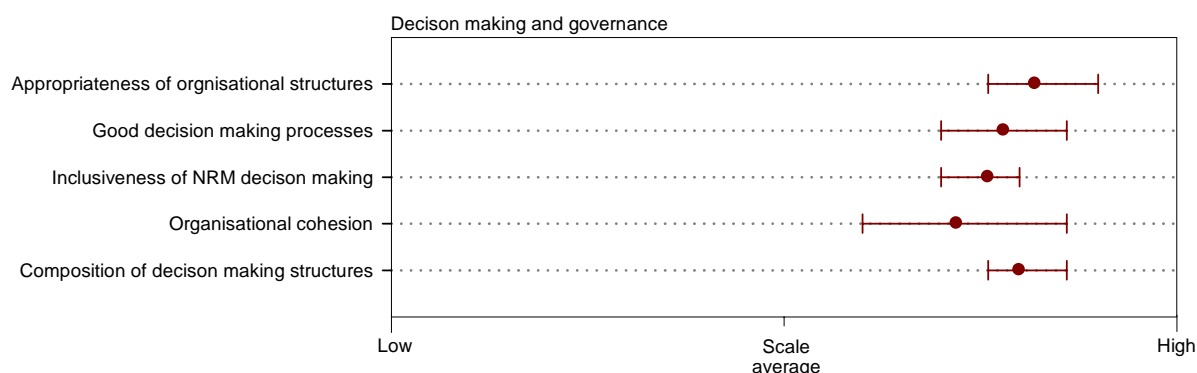
Figure 2 Component tree: Capacity of regional NRM bodies



Decision making and governance

Figure 3 indicates that at a national level, decision making and governance within regional NRM bodies is appropriate and effective. Across each of the five measures, organisational cohesion is the lowest and shows the greatest variation amongst regional NRM bodies. This specific measure focuses on the shared vision between staff and Board members and as such the lower score for this measure is perhaps not unexpected.

Figure 3 Summary measures: Decision making and governance (National means)



The five measures of decision making and governance show little variation across states, although regional NRM bodies in South Australia generally score lower than other states. The pattern of scores in which South Australia often lags other states is most likely attributable to regional NRM bodies in this state only becoming 'operationally responsible' in 2005. In addition, all regional NRM bodies in South Australia are also currently within the stage of NRM plan development.

There is certainly evidence that there has been developmental improvement and growth in the effectiveness of decision making and governance amongst regional NRM bodies. For instance, Figure 16 shows that since 2005 there has been consistent improvement across all states in the cohesion evident within Boards as a decision making structure within regional NRM bodies

A key issue which has been identified in many of the findings reported in this project is the disparity that is evident between the judgements of staff, the CEO and the Chair on many specific issues. As is evident in many of the graphics, Chairs of regional NRM Boards will often make evaluative judgements in relation to decision making, governance and other issues which are consistently higher than those of staff and in many cases the CEO. To a large extent this may be as expected, given the role and objectives of the Board in directing issues of governance and policy within regional NRM bodies. However, it could also be argued that the differences in judgements amongst staff, CEO and Chairs, which is consistently evident in the findings of this report, is a matter of concern and that many Boards may not always be making decisions on the basis of accurate information about the internal function and operation of the regional NRM body.

Both regional NRM bodies and regional stakeholder organisations indicated that decision making within regional NRM bodies was inclusive. Interestingly, and as shown in Figure 13, Aboriginal organisations in comparison to all other regional stakeholder organisations are most likely to judge

the decision making as being inclusive within regional NRM bodies. This may be a direct consequence of many regional NRM bodies employing local Aboriginal facilitators and establishing Aboriginal programs to ensure inclusiveness. It may also be that Aboriginal organisations have significantly lower expectations related to inclusiveness in decision making when compared to other regional stakeholders.

Capacity and support

There were two measures of job satisfaction. The first measure, as shown in Figure 4 focused on staff turnover and is reported as the percentage of regional NRM Bodies with over 11% of staff leaving within the last 12 months. The second measure, which is also shown in Figure 4 is a measure of the perceived level of job satisfaction amongst staff.

It is difficult to assess the meaningfulness of staff turnover as it may well be influenced by a range of factors other than job satisfaction, including for instance the use of short term contracts which in turn is dependent upon funding cycles and the developmental stage of the regional NRM body. However, Figure 4 shows that 60% of regional NRM bodies had less than 11% staff turnover within the last 12 months. This compares well with comparative information which is available, which shows a staff turnover rate of 19.3% amongst government business enterprises¹³.

The level of job satisfaction within regional NRM bodies was moderately high, however some caution is required in this interpretation as judgements of job satisfaction amongst staff has only been made by senior management within the organisation.

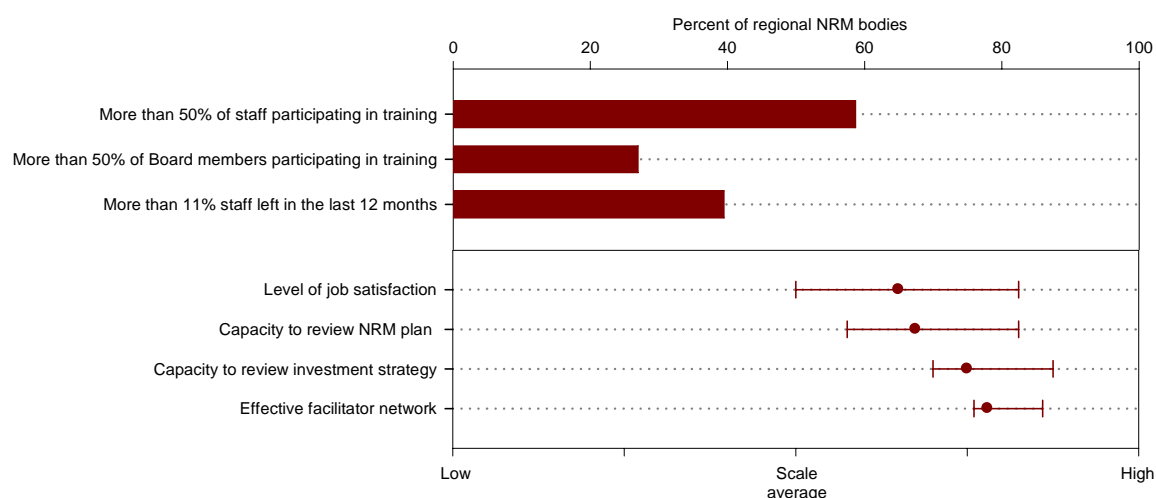
Amongst regional NRM bodies in South Australia the level of job satisfaction amongst staff was lower relative to other regional NRM bodies in other states. As indicated previously, the scores for South Australia are most likely attributable to regional NRM bodies in South Australia being in the early stages of development and only becoming operational in 2005. It is most certainly the case that the level of job satisfaction in South Australia will increase over the next two years. As shown in Figure 22, across all states there has been a significant increase in job satisfaction in the last two years and with increasing maturity of the regional NRM bodies (Figure 21).

Most regional NRM bodies also believe they have the capacity in time and resources to effectively review and update their NRM plans and investment strategies, although as is shown in Section 6.3.2 and Figure 28, this must be somewhat tempered by the belief amongst many regional NRM bodies that they lack adequate staff resources.

Figure 4 also shows that the majority of regional NRM bodies do believe they have an effective local facilitator network in place to assist in building partnerships, community awareness and capacity. Local NRM facilitator networks also tend to become more effective amongst larger organisations and amongst those organisations that have become more established (Figure 26).

¹³ Mercer Human Resource Consulting. *Human Resources Effectiveness Monitor*, August 2007.

Figure 4 Summary measures: Capacity and support



Resource characteristics: Human resources

The resources of regional NRM bodies include human, financial and information resources and have been assessed and considered separately in this report.

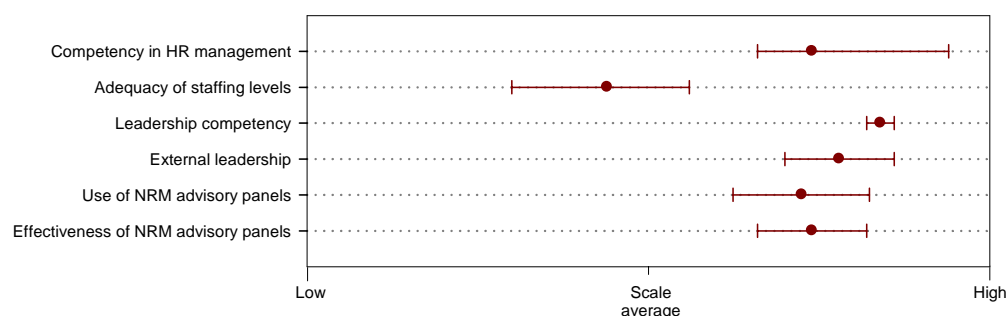
Figure 5 shows that regional NRM bodies believe they have adequate human resource management systems, policies and process in place. As also shown in Figure 27, this appears to increase amongst the more established regional NRM bodies and is generally higher amongst non-statutory regional NRM bodies.

Figure 5 also shows regional NRM bodies have developed effective internal and external leadership and make effective use of NRM advisory panels in their decision making. It should of course be recognised that while there is a belief that internal leadership competencies are relatively high; the majority of judgements are being made by those in leadership positions within the organisation.

In relation to the regional NRM body providing external leadership in NRM within the region, not only do regional NRM bodies believe this to be the case, but these judgements are also confirmed by the independent judgements of regional stakeholder organisations (Figure 32). Furthermore, there is also some indication that the capacity of the regional NRM organisation to provide external leadership develops with the greater maturity of the regional NRM body (Figure 31).

What is clearly evident in Figure 5 and is shown in greater detail in Figure 28 is that regional NRM bodies do not believe they have the required number of staff to meet the core business requirements of the organisation. While this issue requires further investigation, it should also be recognised that the availability of staff resources was also a core theme identified during the implementation of the project and which also often created delays in project implementation.

Figure 5 Summary measures: Human resources

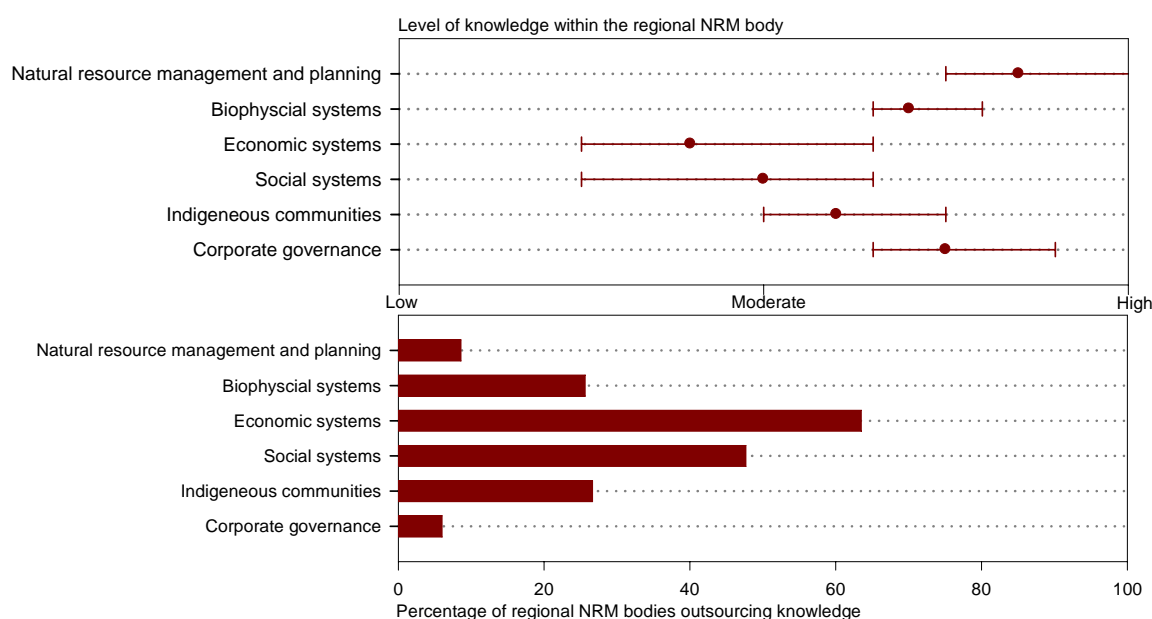


One important component of the human resources available to organisations is the knowledge of NRM and related fields amongst technical and professional staff. Five areas of knowledge were assessed, which included knowledge of (i) natural resource management and planning; (ii) biophysical systems; (iii) economic systems; (iv) social systems (v) Indigenous communities. As shown in Figure 6, there is a clear symmetric relationship between the level of knowledge of a specific field within the organisation and the level of outsourcing. Regional NRM bodies with less knowledge in a specific area will generally outsource this knowledge to other organisations or individuals.

As might be expected there was significant knowledge of natural resource management and planning amongst regional NRM bodies, with this generally increasing with the size and maturity of the organisation (Figure 36).

In contrast the majority of regional NRM bodies had only low to moderate knowledge of economic and social systems with this knowledge often being outsourced to other specialist organisations or individuals. Exceptions included Victoria, where knowledge of economic systems was relatively high (Figure 40) and may in part be due to a focus on the implementation of market based instruments and other economic incentives programs with regional NRM bodies in this state. Regional NRM bodies in Queensland were also found to have relatively high knowledge of social systems (Figure 42), which may be partly due to the implementation of a state level investment project between 2004 and 2006 which focussed on developing social and economic research with regional NRM bodies.

Figure 6 Summary measures: Knowledge of NRM and related fields



Resource characteristics: Financial resources

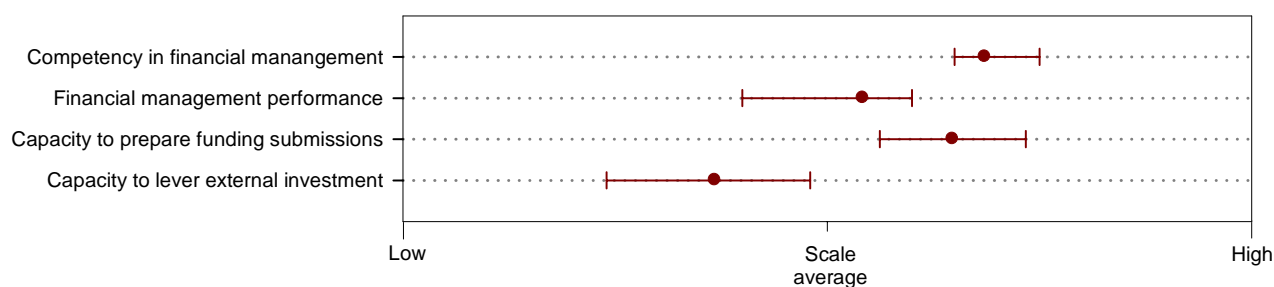
Competency in financial management amongst regional NRM bodies was relatively high as shown in Figure 7 and showed very significant improvement as regional NRM bodies developed greater experience and knowledge over time (Figure 48 and Figure 49).

Although there was significant variation across regional NRM bodies, 41% obtained more than 15% of their NRM program funds from outside of NAP and NHT funding sources (Figure 51). This was primarily a function of funding arrangements within state jurisdictions, with 55% of statutory regional NRM bodies obtaining more than 15% of their funding outside of NAP and NHT and only 13% of non-statutory regional NRM bodies obtaining more than 15% of their funding from outside of NAP and NHT. Although dependent upon funding arrangements within states, Figure 51 also shows that larger regional NRM bodies were most likely to obtain funding outside of NAP and NHT.

Although the capacity of staff to prepare and develop NRM funding submissions was above average (Figure 7 and Figure 52), the majority of regional NRM bodies did not believe they had adequate staffing and time to lever external investment (Figure 7), although this capacity tended to improve amongst larger and more established regional NRM bodies (Figure 52).

Concerns about adequate staffing were not only reflected in the ability of the regional NRM body to attract external funding, but have arisen as a consistent theme in relation to the ability of the organisation to meet its core business requirements (see for example Figure 28).

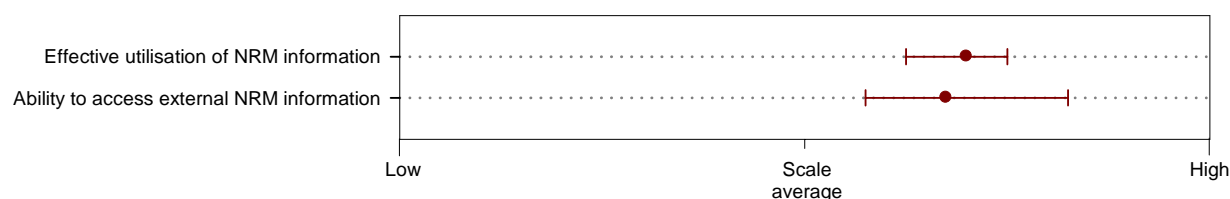
Figure 7 Summary measures: Financial resources



Resource characteristics: Information resources

The information resources of regional NRM bodies was assessed in relation to how effective they were in utilising NRM information and their ability to access external NRM information from both government and non-government sources. As shown in Figure 8 regional NRM bodies were reasonably effective in their ability to access and utilise external NRM information. The skills and abilities required in using NRM information has also increased over the last two years (Figure 55). In addition, the ability to access external NRM information is higher amongst larger and more established regional NRM bodies (Figure 56).

Figure 8 Summary measures: Information resources



Research and further investigation

It is important to recognise that the primary focus for this research is to establish baseline information against which future changes may be monitored and assessed. While it is not the intent of this research to develop or assess explanatory models of the measures which have been investigated, a number of important research questions and areas of inquiry have been identified. These include:

- (i) **Staff resources and workloads:** A lack of staff, high workloads and the limited time available for existing staff to meet organisational objectives was an important theme identified in the process of implementing the project and in the research findings associated with organisational capacity. There is clearly a need to investigate this issue further, including a more objective assessment of workloads and staffing within regional NRM bodies, the identification of potential internal and external causes of high workloads and the impact of workloads on organisational performance.

- (ii) **Governance and knowledge:** A consistent finding throughout this project was the disparity evident amongst the judgements of senior staff, CEOs and Chairs. On the one hand it could be argued that this disparity is to be expected given the different roles these individuals fulfil within the governance structure of the organisation. However, it could equally be argued that the disparity between Chairs on the one hand and staff and CEOs on the other, may indicate that many Boards are perhaps not as well informed as they should be in making important policy decisions affecting the organisation. This issue is of sufficient importance that it requires further investigation and research.
- (iii) **Leverage of external funds:** The majority of regional NRM bodies did not believe they had adequate staff resources and time to allow the leverage of external funds beyond NAP, NHT and state in-kind contributions. Opportunities to lever external NRM funding and capacity issues within regional NRM bodies are issues which may need additional investigation.

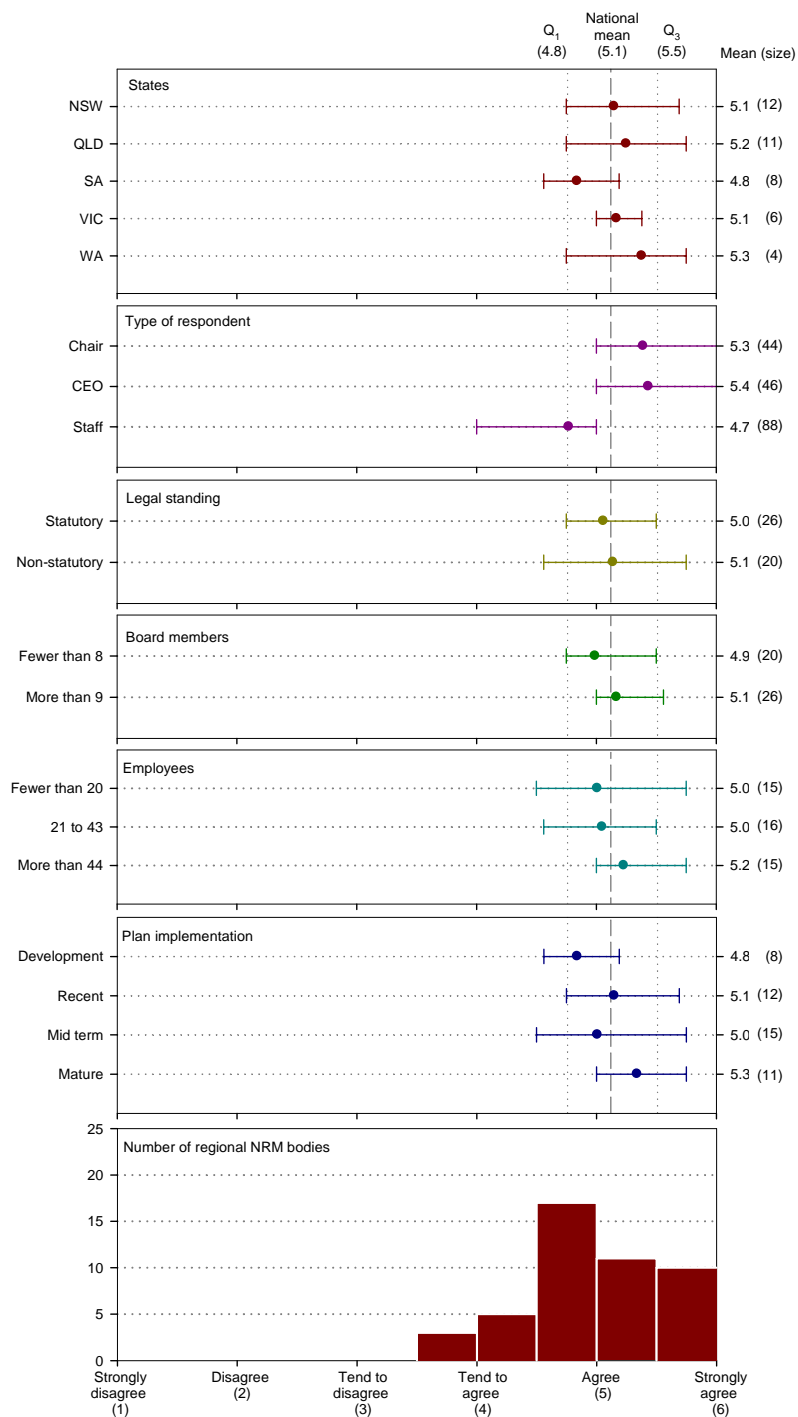
6.1 Decision making and governance (C1)

The success statement associated with decision making and governance stated:

There will be an increase in the effectiveness of decision-making structures, including composition and governance structures and systems, within regional NRM bodies.

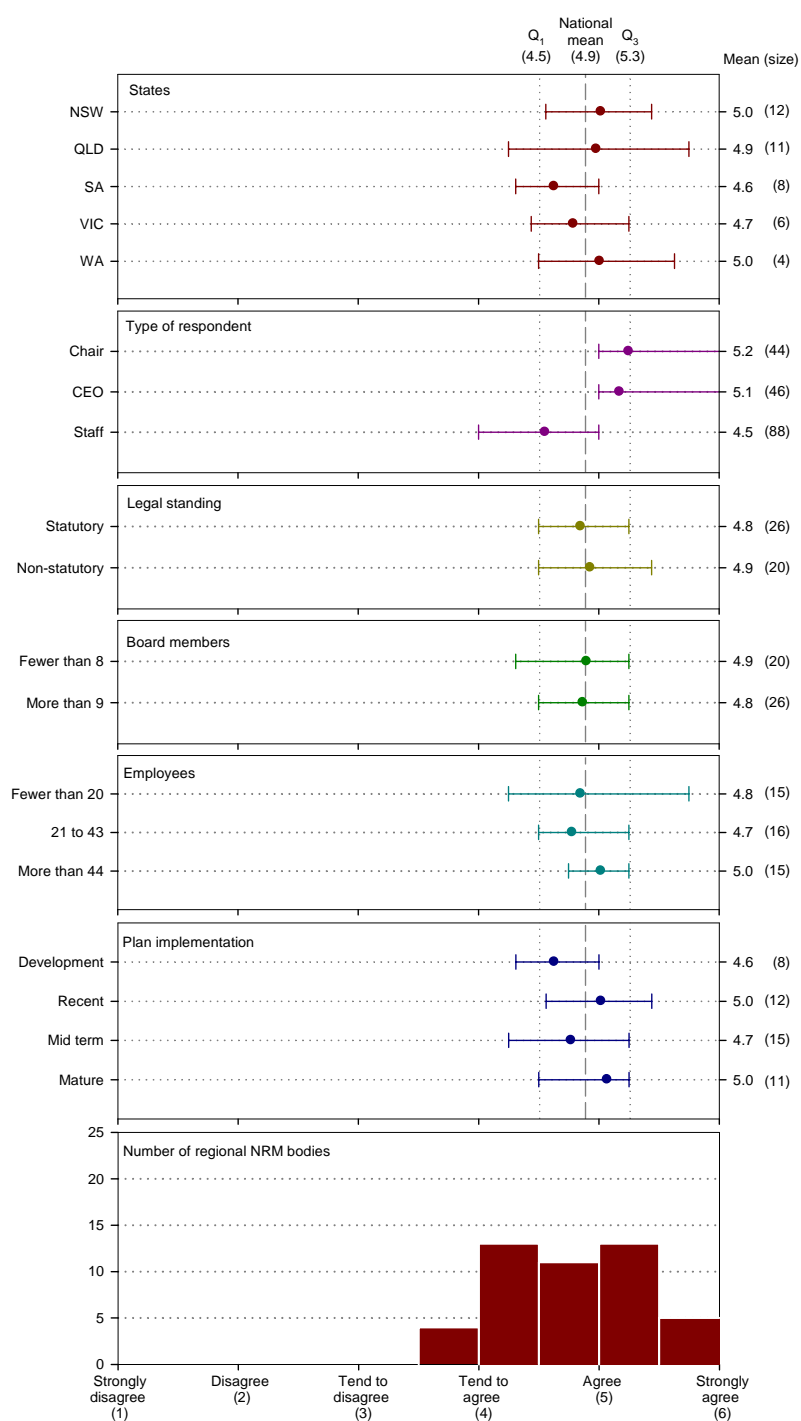
6.1.1 Appropriateness of organisational structures (C1.1)

Figure 9 (Q1) “This regional body has the appropriate organisational and decision making processes in place to achieve its objectives”



6.1.2 Good decision making processes (C1.2)

Figure 10 (Q3) “The decision making processes within this regional body are working well”



6.1.3 Inclusiveness of NRM decision making (C1.3)

Figure 11 (Q4) “When the regional body makes important NRM planning and investment decisions, it is adequately informed by different sectors, stakeholders and interest groups”

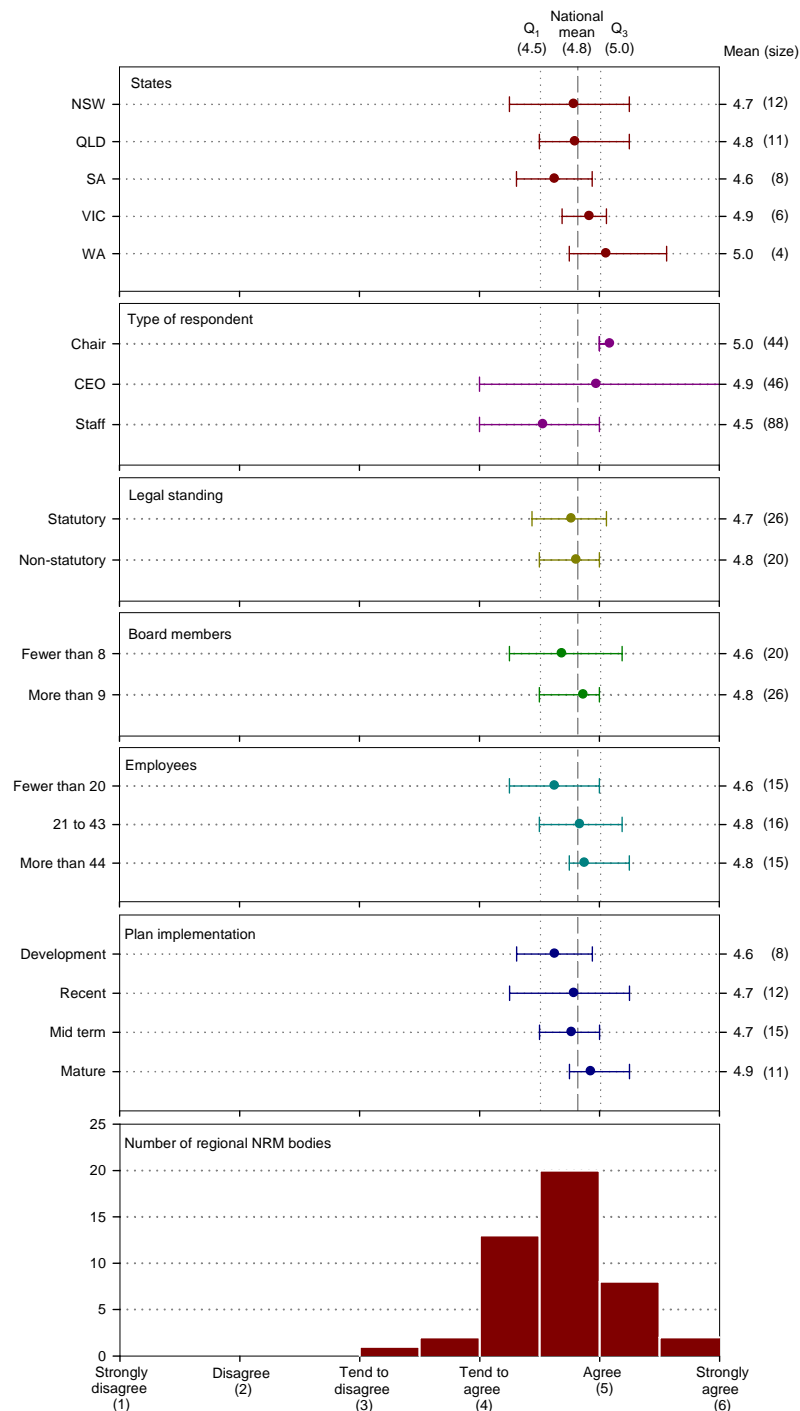


Figure 12 (Q4) “When the regional body makes important NRM planning and investment decisions, it is adequately informed by different sectors, stakeholders and interest groups”

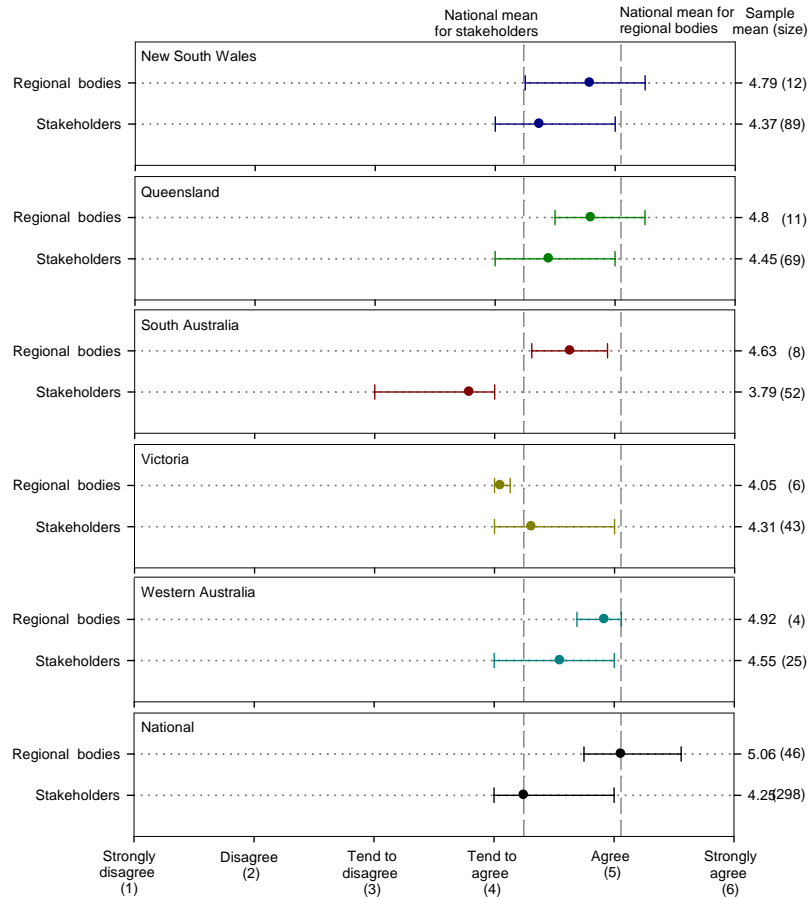
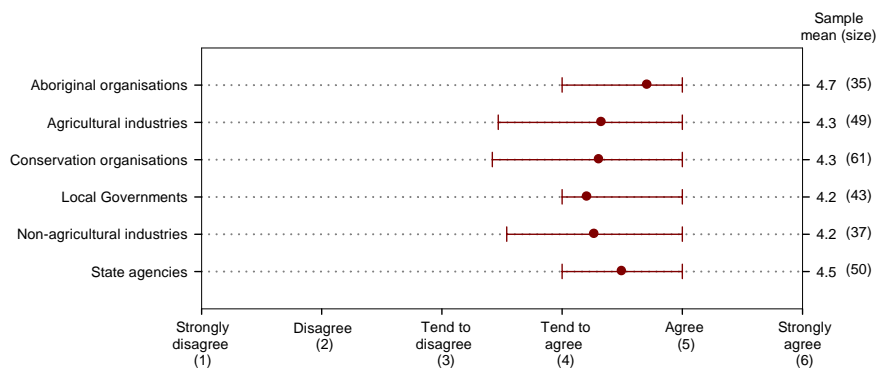


Figure 13 (SQ5) “When the regional body makes important NRM planning and investment decisions, it is adequately informed by different sectors, stakeholders and interest groups”



6.1.4 Organisational cohesion (C1.4)

Figure 14 (Q5) “A shared NRM vision is held by most staff within the regional body”

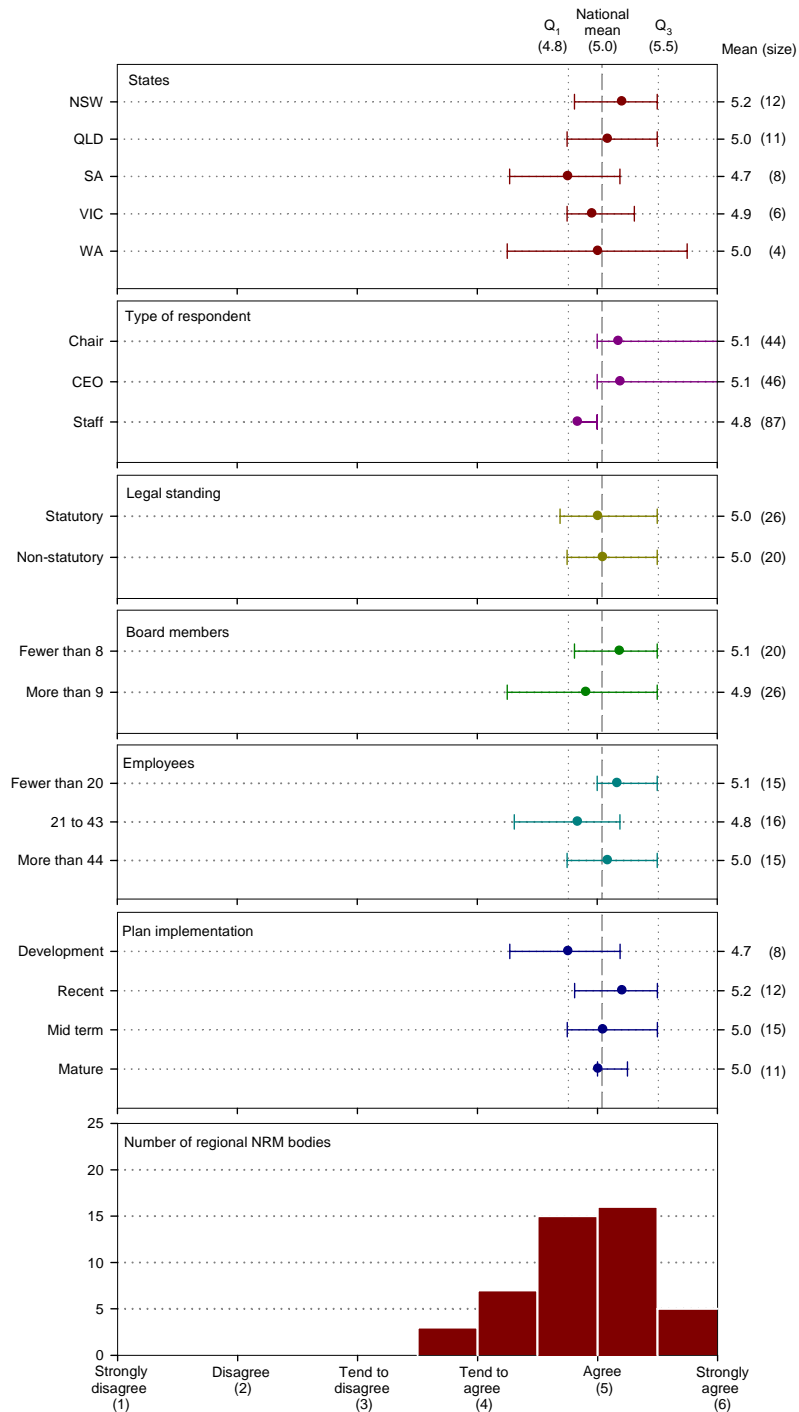


Figure 15 (Q6) “A shared NRM vision is held by most Board Members...”

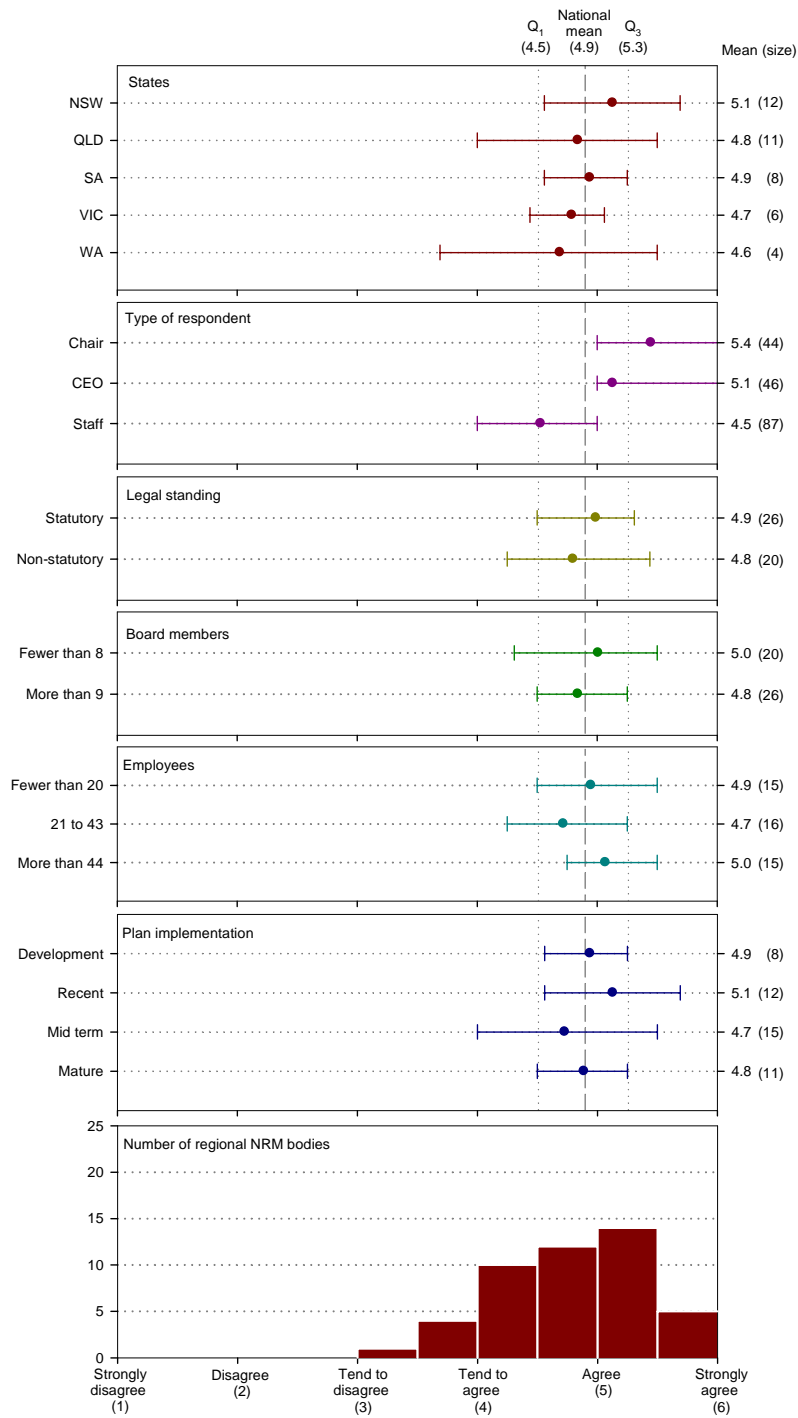


Figure 16 (Q7) “A shared NRM vision is held by most Board Members.. If you were asked this last question two years ago how would you have answered it?”

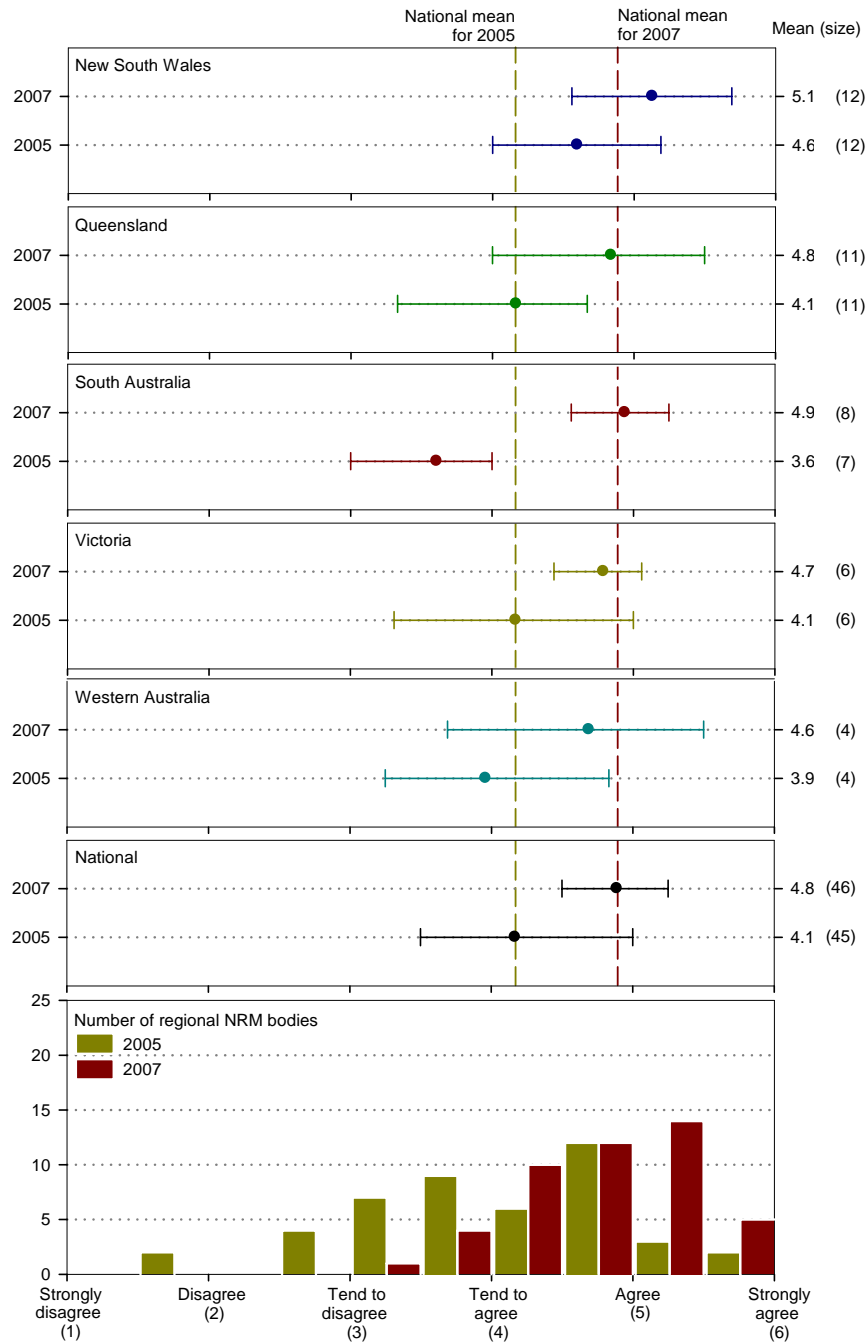
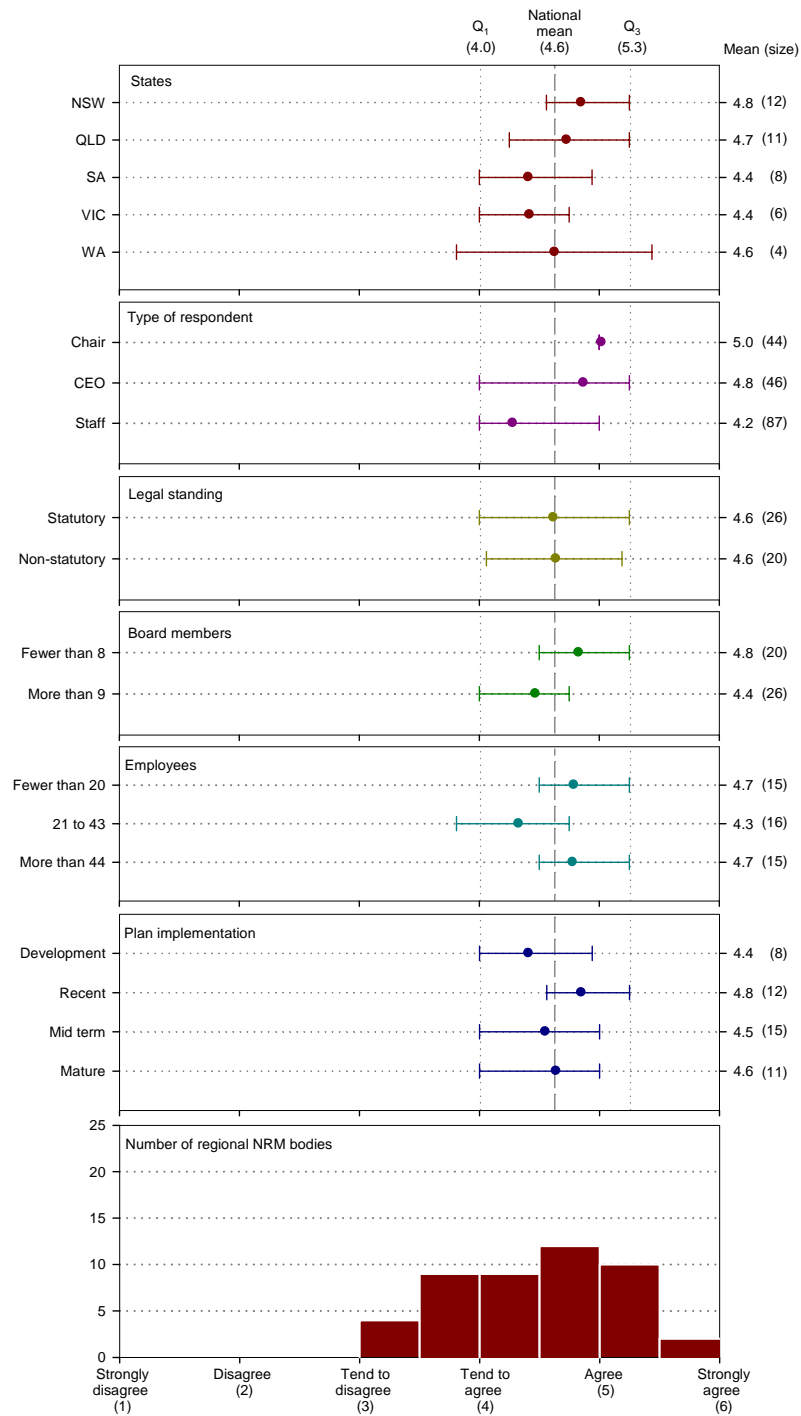
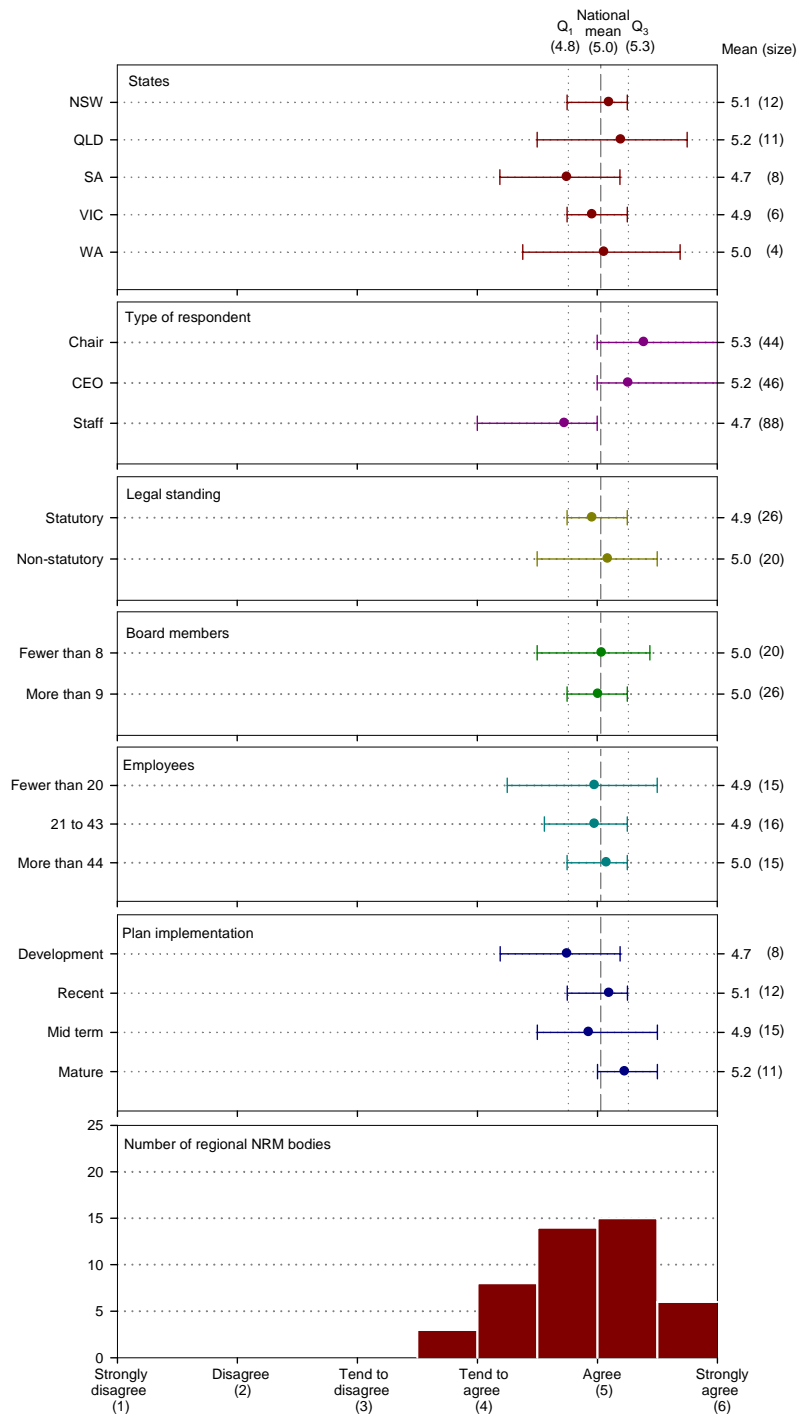


Figure 17 (Q8) “To what extent do you agree with the statement that, “Within the last 12 months Staff and Board Members have had the same shared NRM vision?”



6.1.5 Composition of decision making structures (C1.5)

Figure 18 (Q2) *“An appropriate mix of people are involved in the decision making within this regional body”*



6.2 Capacity and support (C2)

The success statement associated with capacity and support stated:

“There will be an increase in the capacity of regional bodies to meet their responsibilities, including (i) having their own capacity building strategies in place (ii) reviewing and updating their plan and investment strategies (iii) having in place a skilled and appropriate work force and network of NRM facilitators or officers”

6.2.1 Staff training and development (C2.1)

Figure 19 (Q9) *“Within the last 12 month period, what percentage of staff within the regional body participated in structured or formal training programs for professional development? Was it...”*

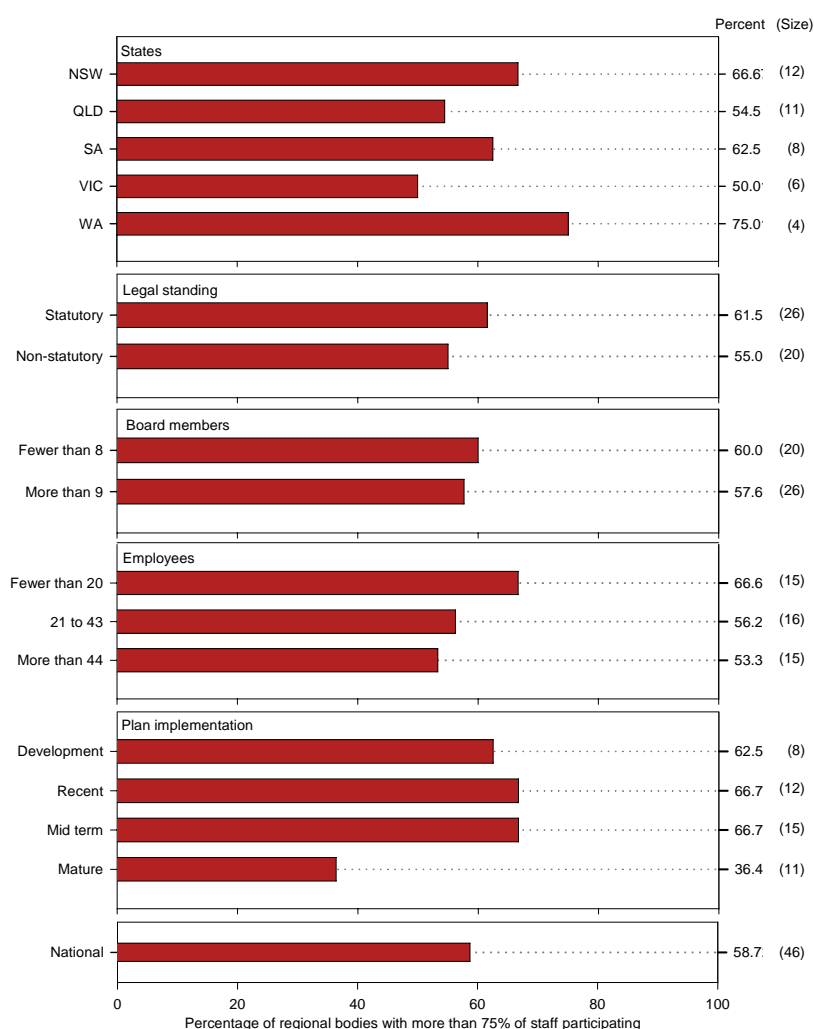


Figure 19 is based only on the responses of CEOs within regional NRM bodies.

6.2.2 Board member training and development (C2.2)

Figure 20 (Q10) "Within the last 12 month period, what percentage of Board Members participated in structured and formalised training programs which were specific to positions on the Board? Was it...."

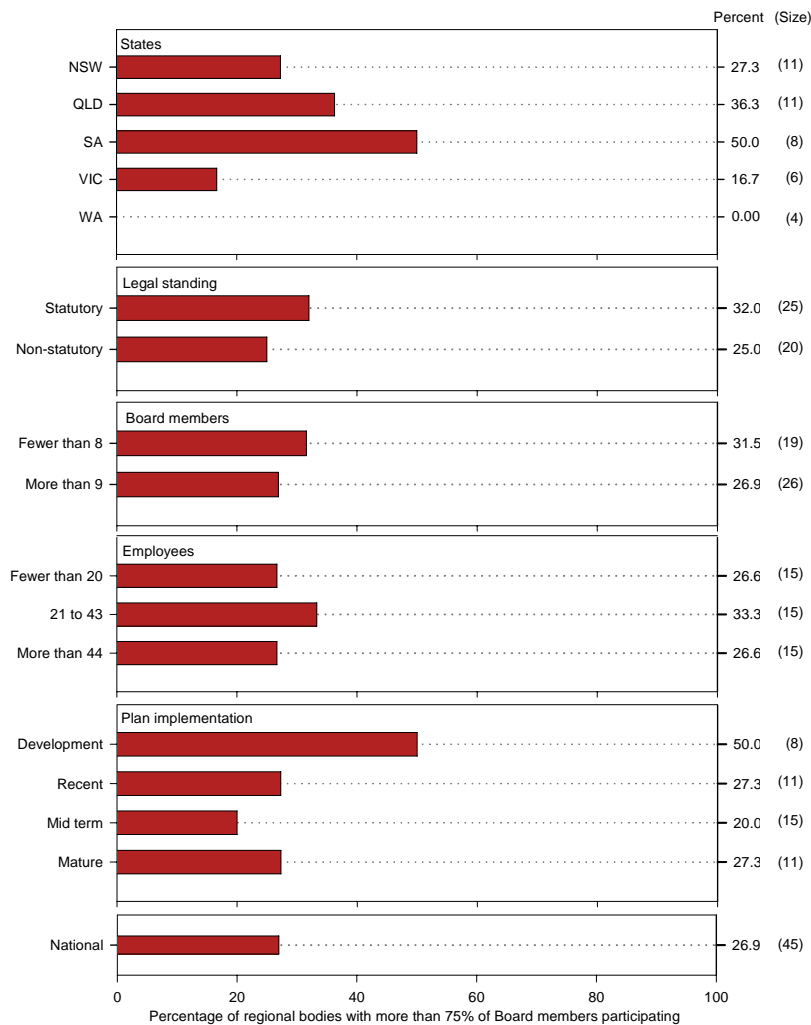


Figure 20 is based only on the responses of CEOs within regional NRM bodies.

6.2.3 Job satisfaction (C2.3)

Figure 21 (Q11) “Over the last 12 months do you think the level of job satisfaction amongst staff in the regional body has been...”

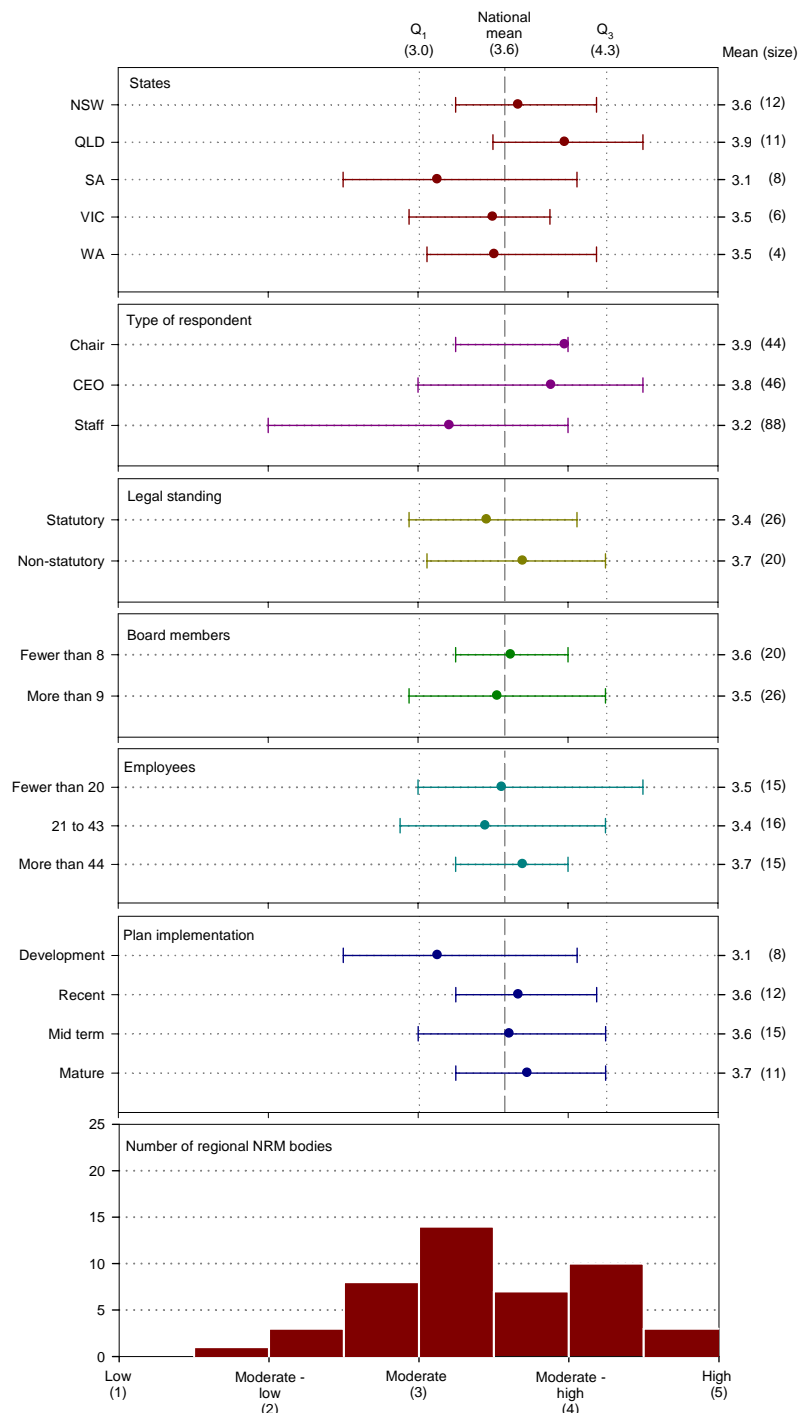


Figure 22 (Q12) “Over the last 12 months do you think the level of job satisfaction amongst staff in the regional body has been... If you were asked this last question two years ago how would you have answered it?”

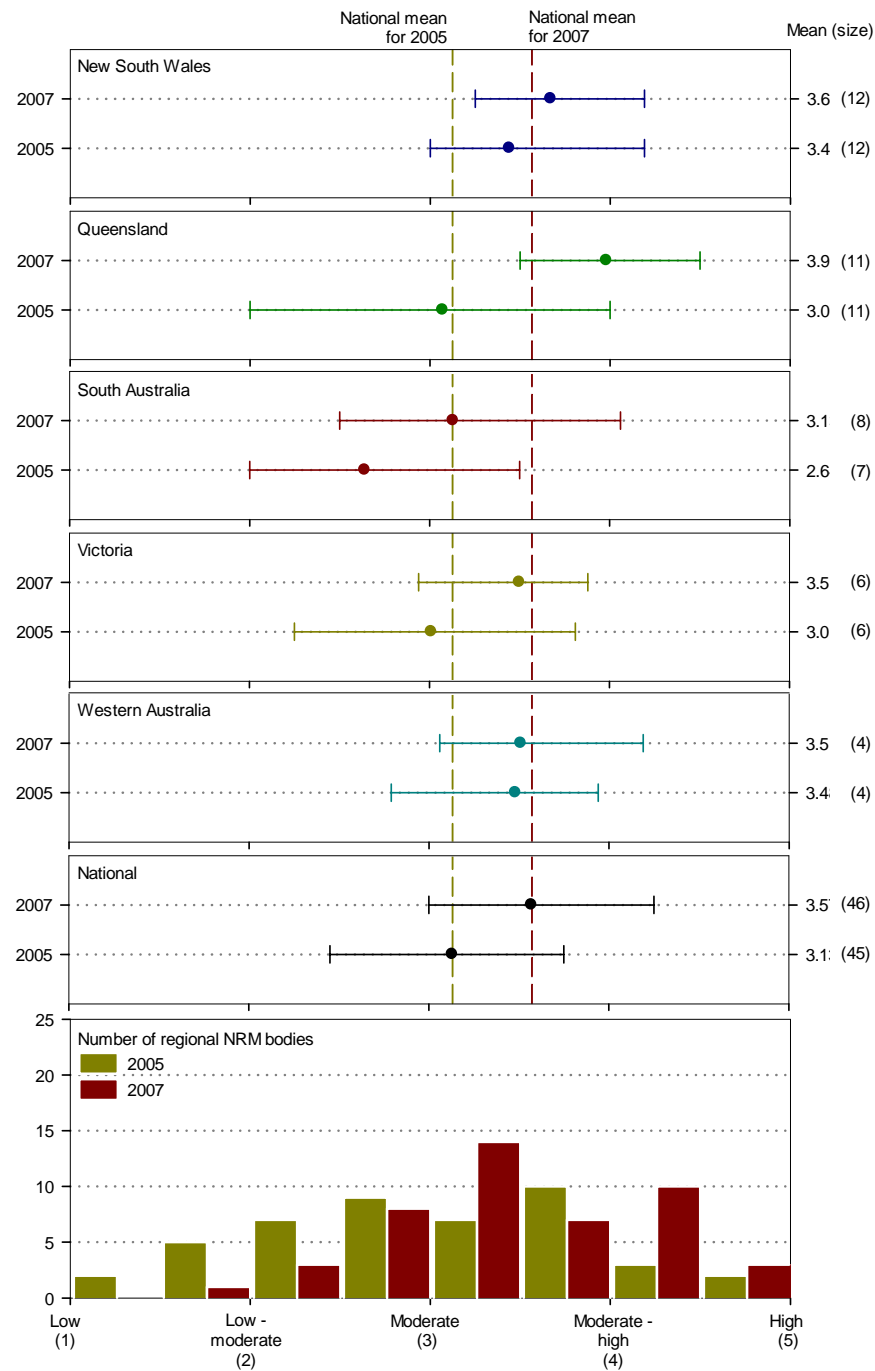


Figure 23 (Q13) As a percentage of the total number of employees in the organisation, how many employees would you say have left or resigned from the regional body in the last 12 months?

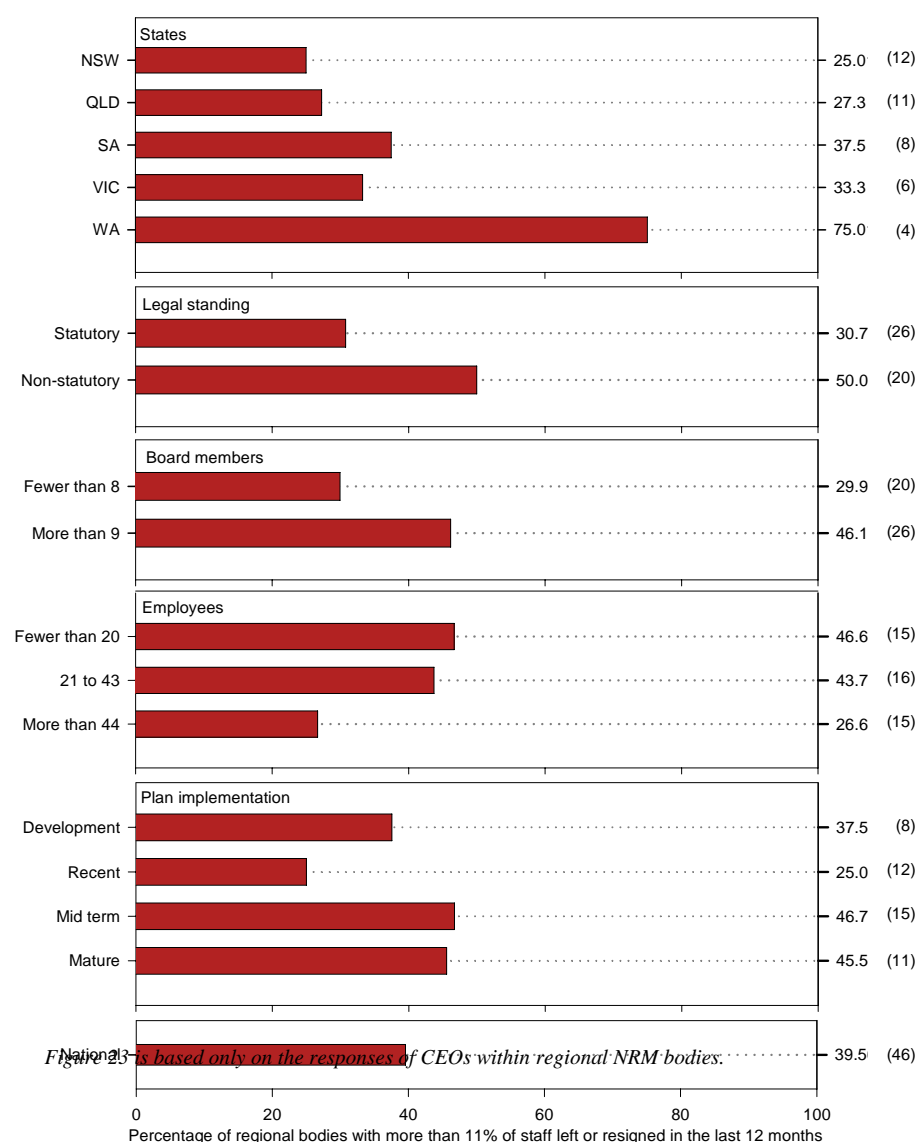


Figure 23 is based only on the responses of CEOs within regional NRM bodies.

6.2.4 Reviewing the NRM plan and investment strategy (C2.4)

Figure 24 (Q14) “If required to do so now, would the regional body have the capacity in time, resources and expertise to effectively review and update the Regional/Catchment Plan or Strategy?”

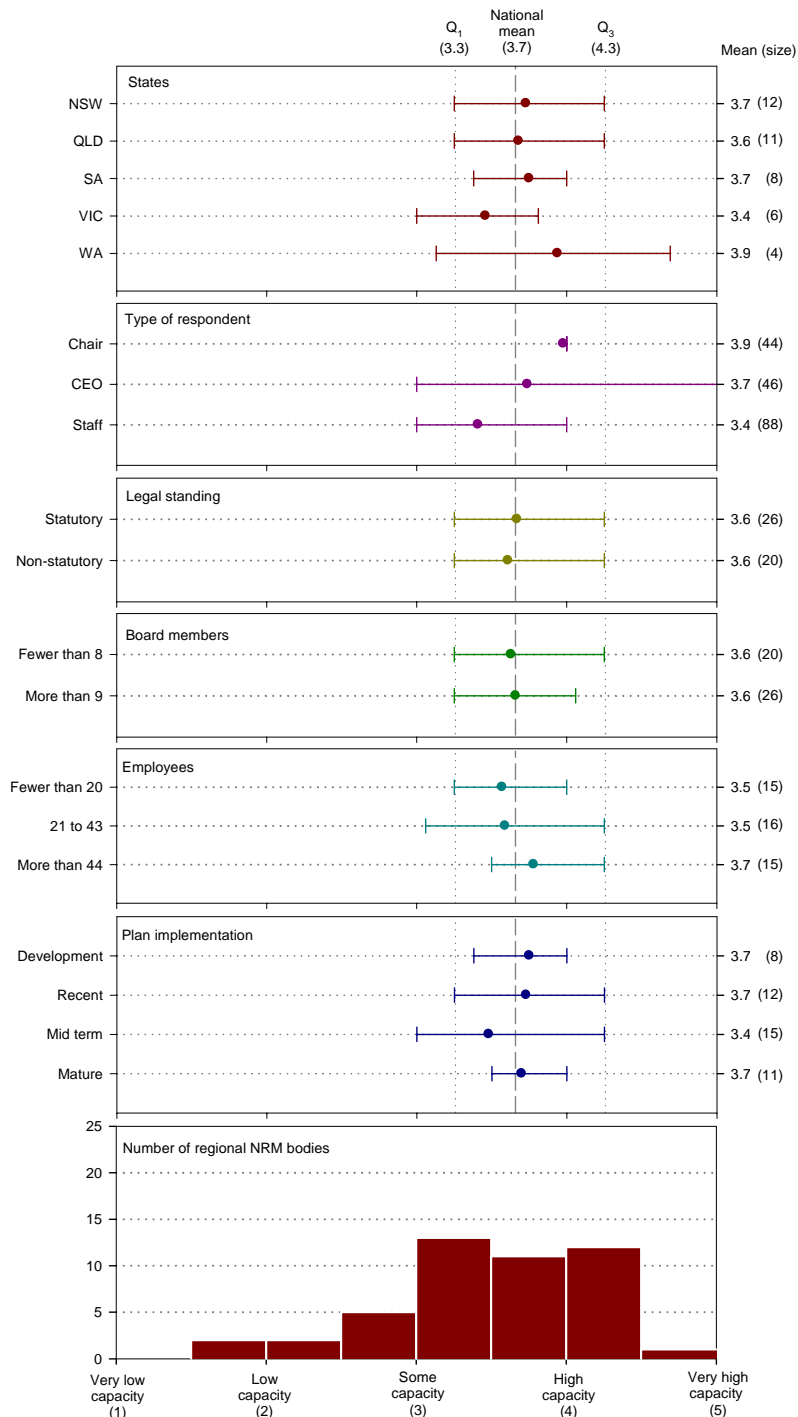
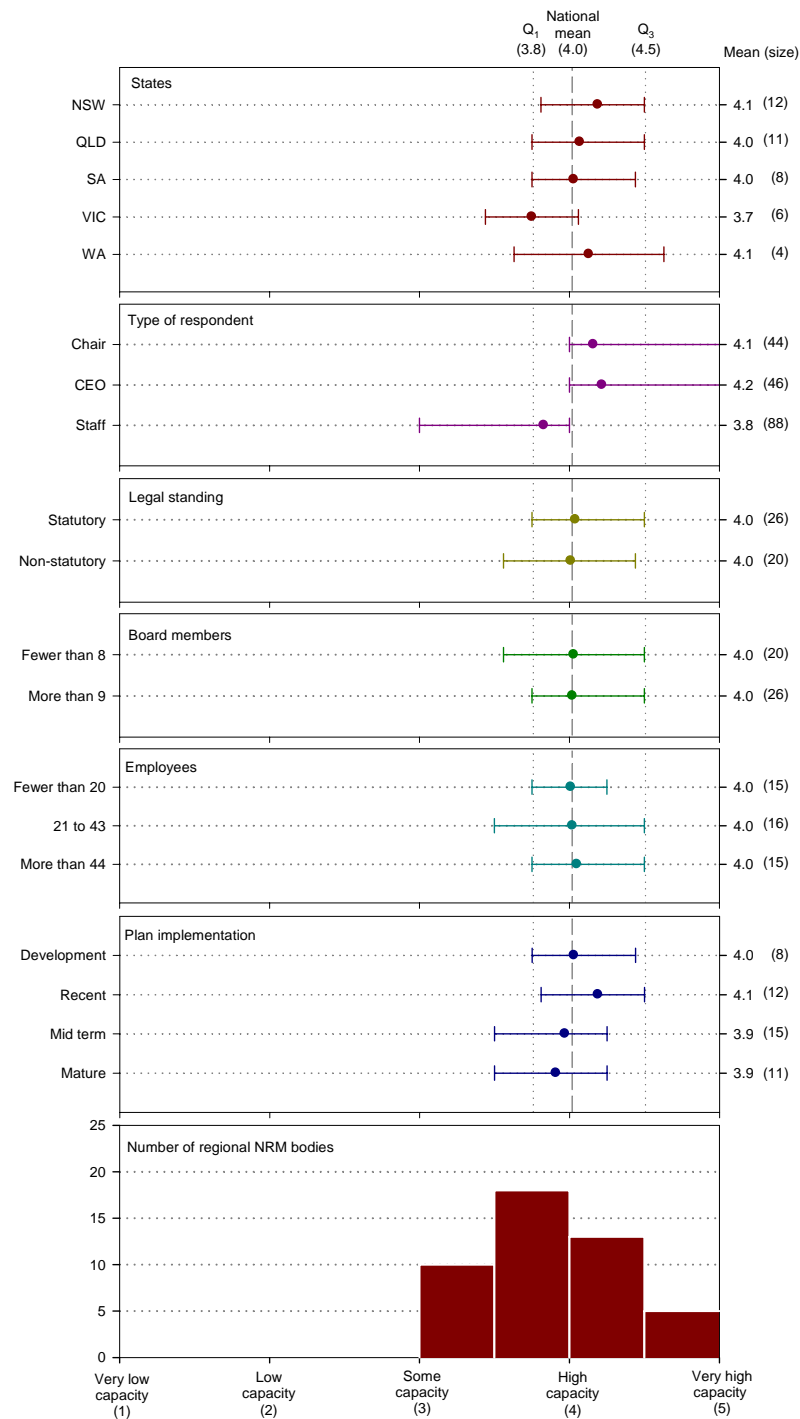


Figure 25 (Q15) “Would the regional body have the capacity in time and resources to effectively review, update and improve the investment plan or strategy?”

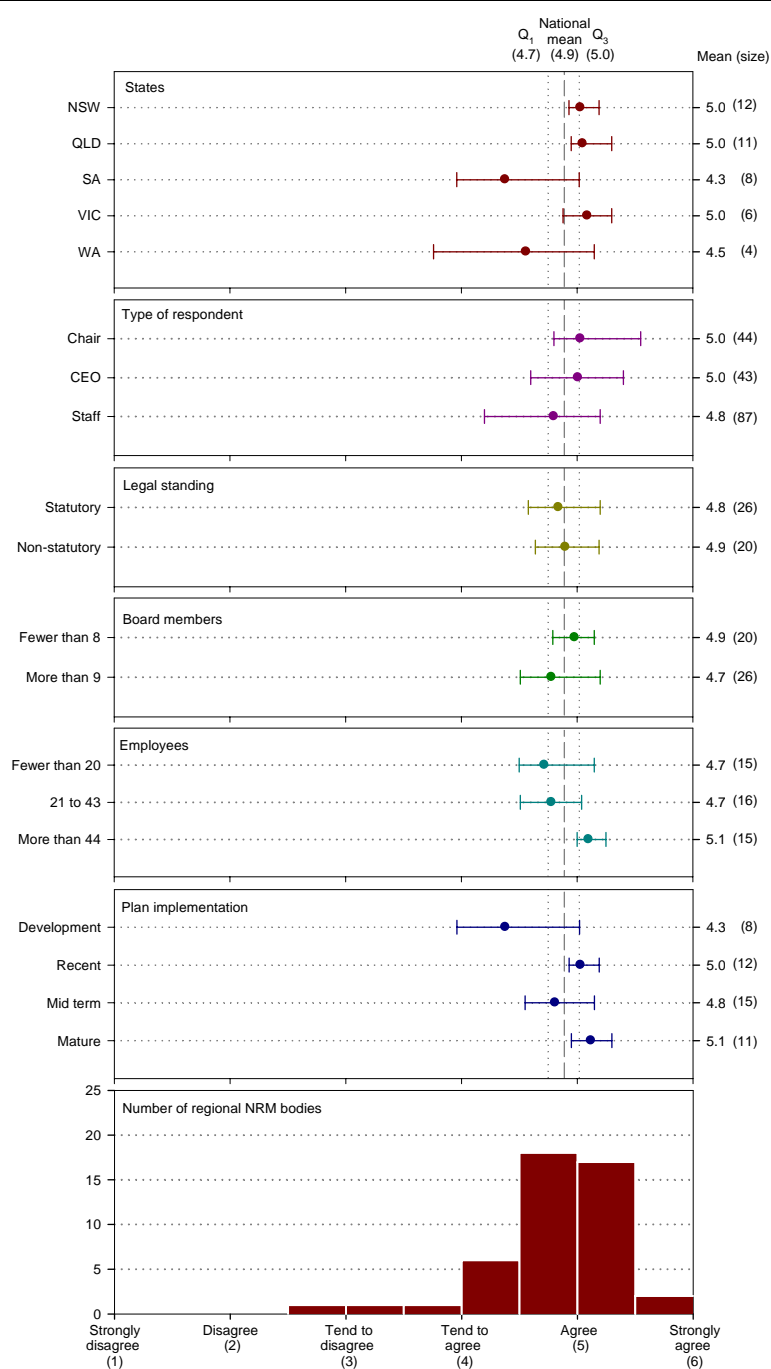


6.2.5 Effective facilitator networks (C2.5)

Figure 26 is a composite measure based on the average of several measures which assessed the effectiveness of the local NRM facilitator network. These measures included, “During the last 12 months, how effective have your local NRM coordinators been in...

- (i) ...increasing awareness of NRM
- (ii) ...increasing community participation in NRM
- (iii) ...facilitating NRM project development.
- (iv) ...increasing community capacity in NRM
- (v) ...increasing partnership and investment in on-ground actions.

Figure 26 (Q16-Q20) Effective facilitator networks (composite measure)



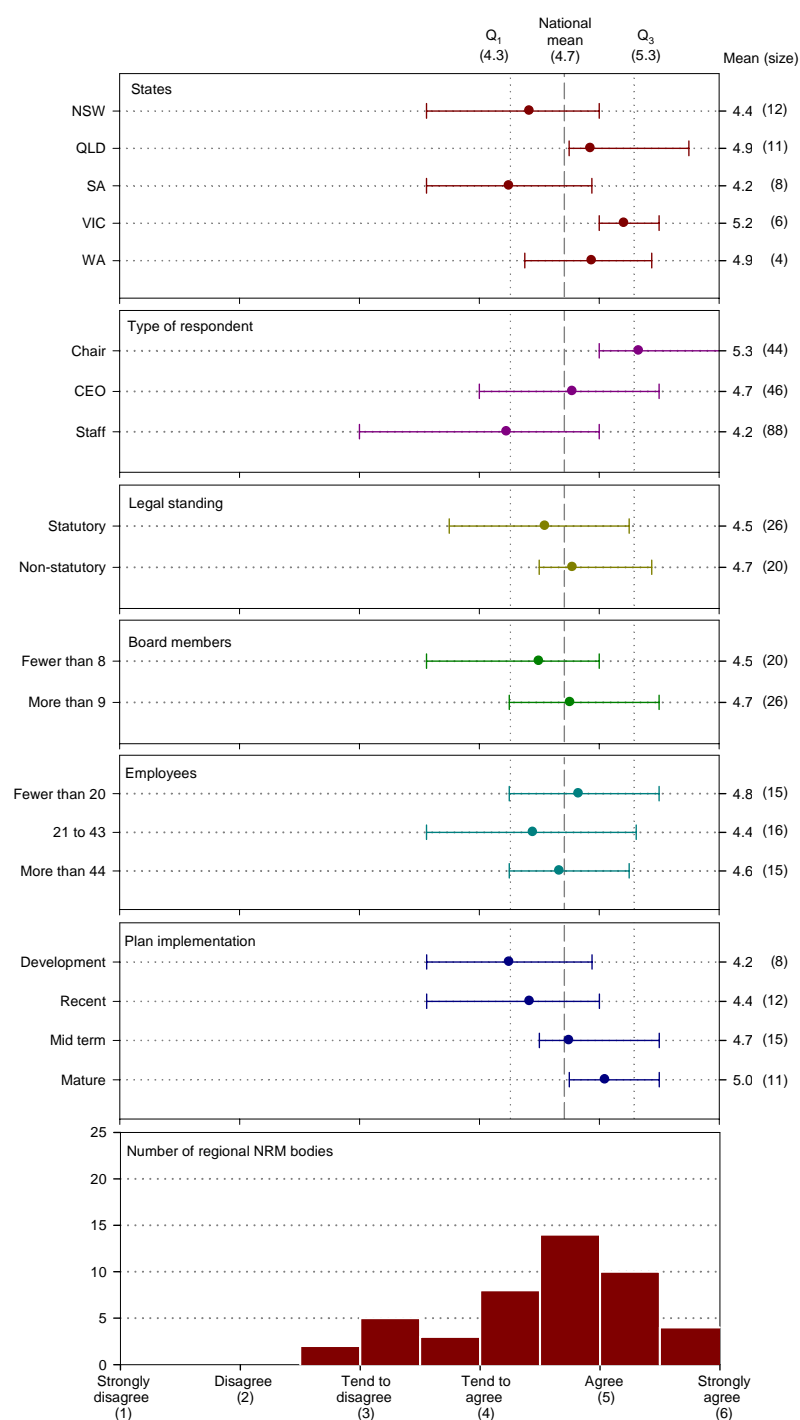
6.3 Human, financial and information resources (C3)

The success statement associated with human, financial and information resource stated:

“Regional bodies consider they have adequate resources (human, financial and information) and institutional arrangements to meet their responsibilities.”

6.3.1 Human resources: Human resource management (C3.1)

Figure 27 (Q21) *“I am confident that the regional body has adequate human resource management systems, policies and processes in place to achieve good human resource management practices.”*



6.3.2 Human resources: Adequacy of staffing levels (C3.2)

Figure 28 (Q22) “The number of staff in the regional body is adequate to meet the current core business of the regional body without staff working excess hours.”

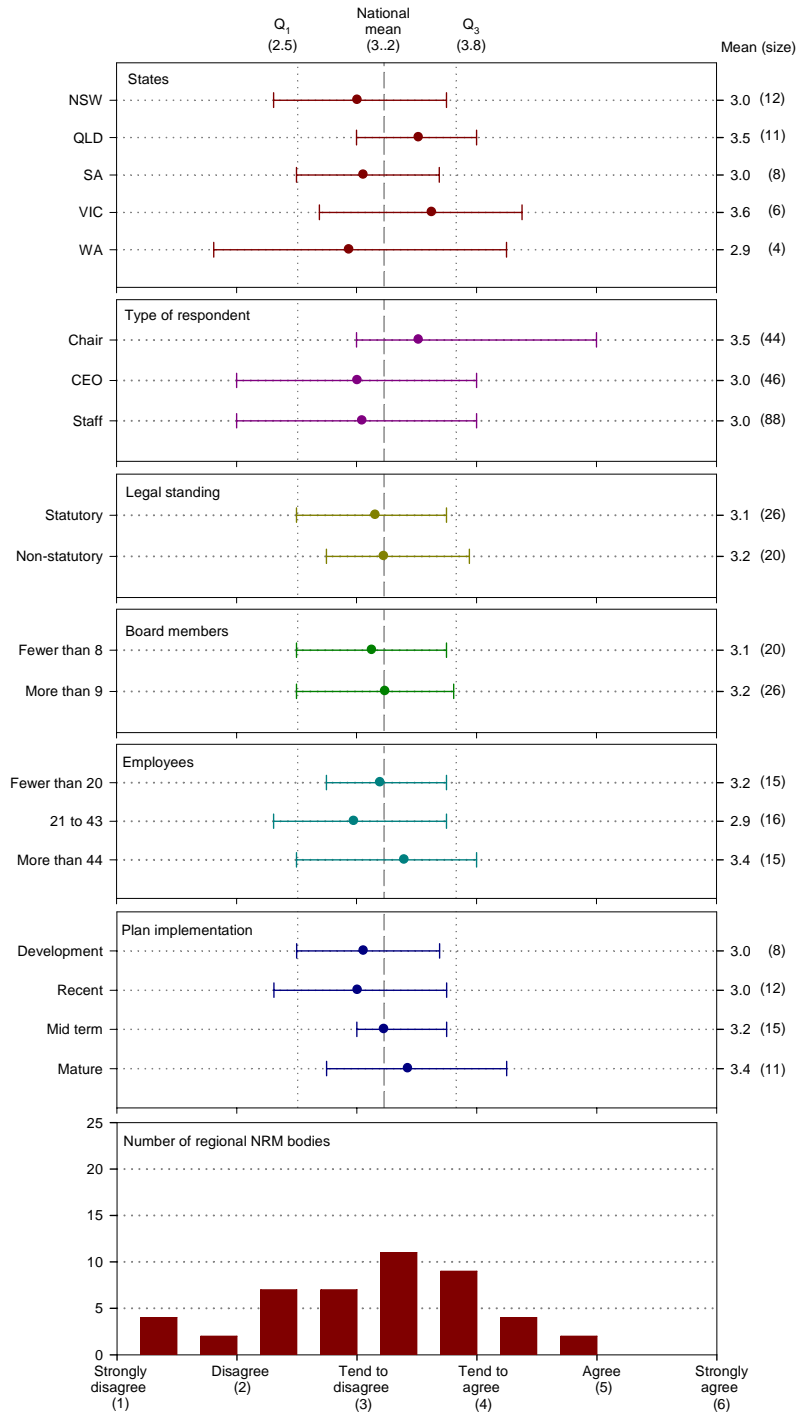
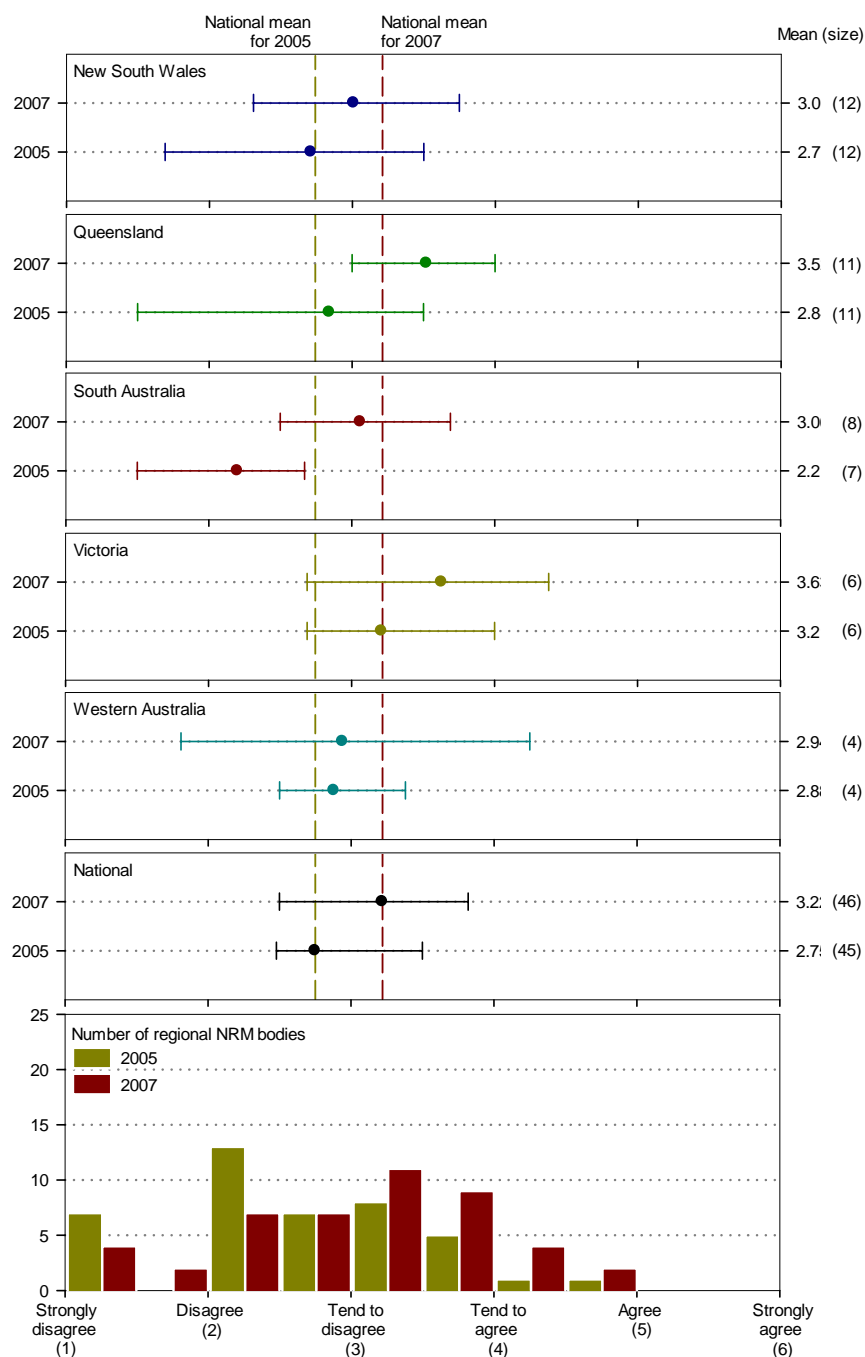


Figure 29 (Q23) “The number of staff in the regional body is adequate to meet the current core business of the regional body without staff working excess hours. If you were asked this last question two years ago how would you have answered it?”

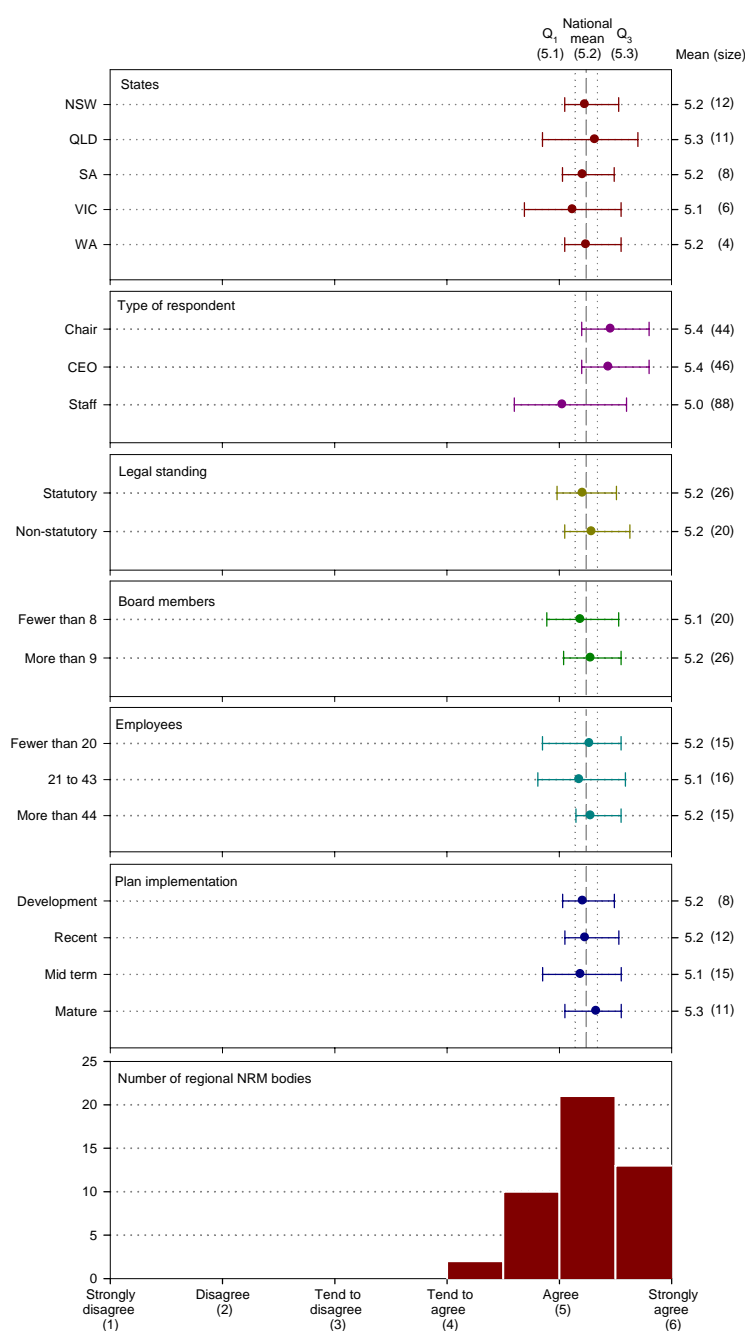


6.3.3 Human resources: Leadership competencies within the regional NRM body (C3.3)

Figure 30 is a composite measure based on the average of several measures which assessed leadership competencies within regional NRM body. These measures included, “Most senior staff within the regional body...

- (i) ...work to achieve the objectives of the organisation
- (ii) ...develop productive working relationships within and outside the organisation
- (iii) ...contribute to the strategic thinking of the organisation
- (iv) ...communicate well with others inside and outside the organisation
- (v) ...have personal motivation and drive.

Figure 30 (Q25-Q29) Leadership competencies (composite measure)



6.3.4 Human resources: External leadership by regional NRM bodies (C3.4)

Figure 31 (Q24) *“In this region over the last 12 months, this regional body has provided effective leadership in relation to NRM.”*

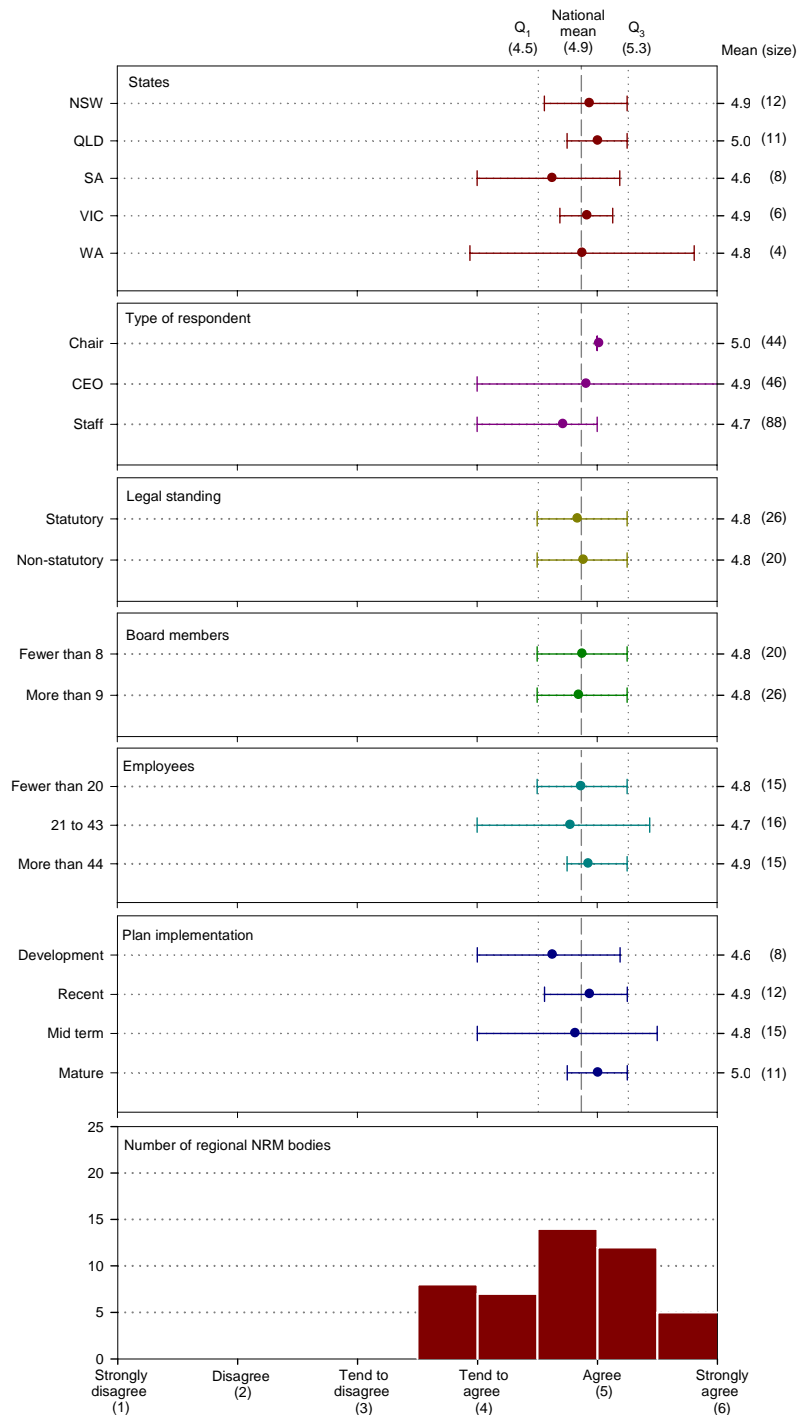


Figure 32 (Q24) “In this region over the last 12 months, this regional body has provided effective leadership in relation to NRM” and (SQ14) “To what extent do you agree with the statement that ‘Within this region, the regional body provides leadership in relation to NRM”

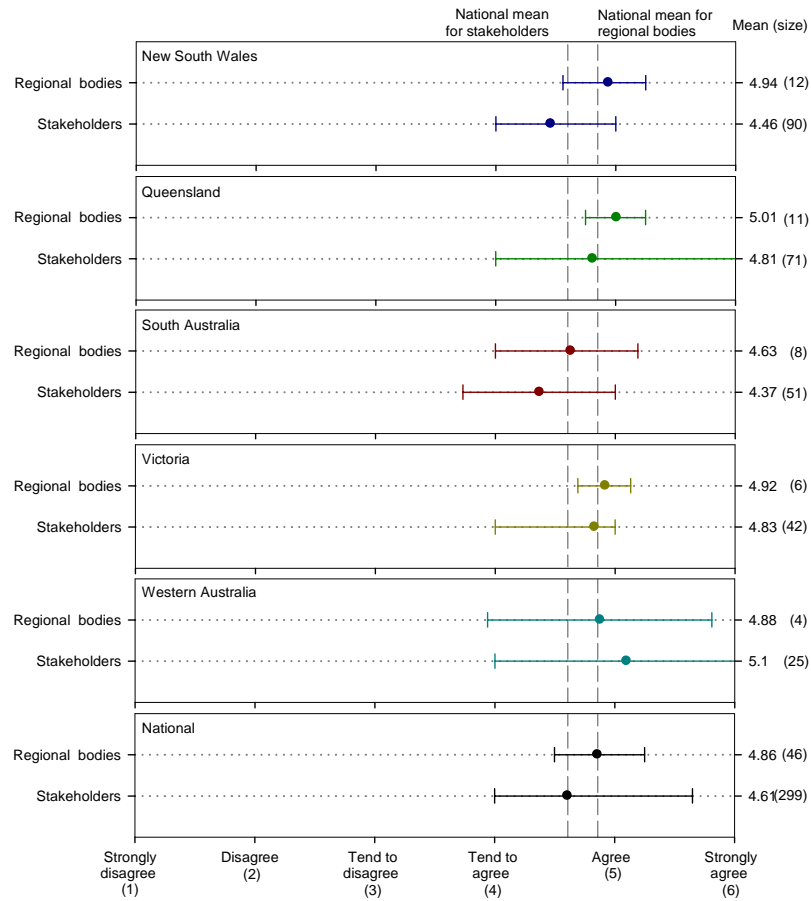
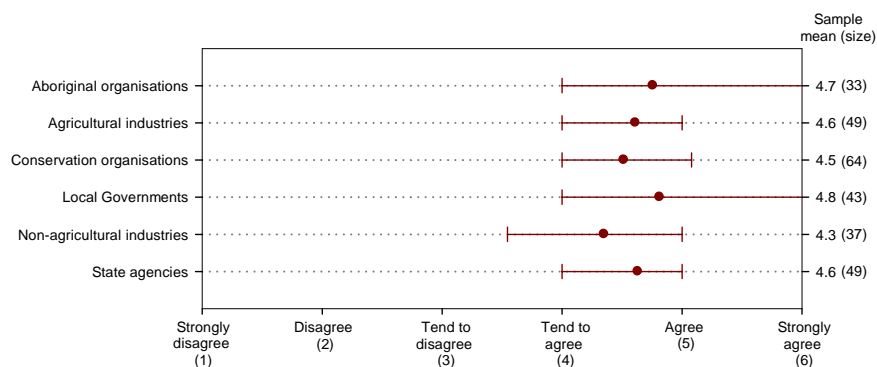
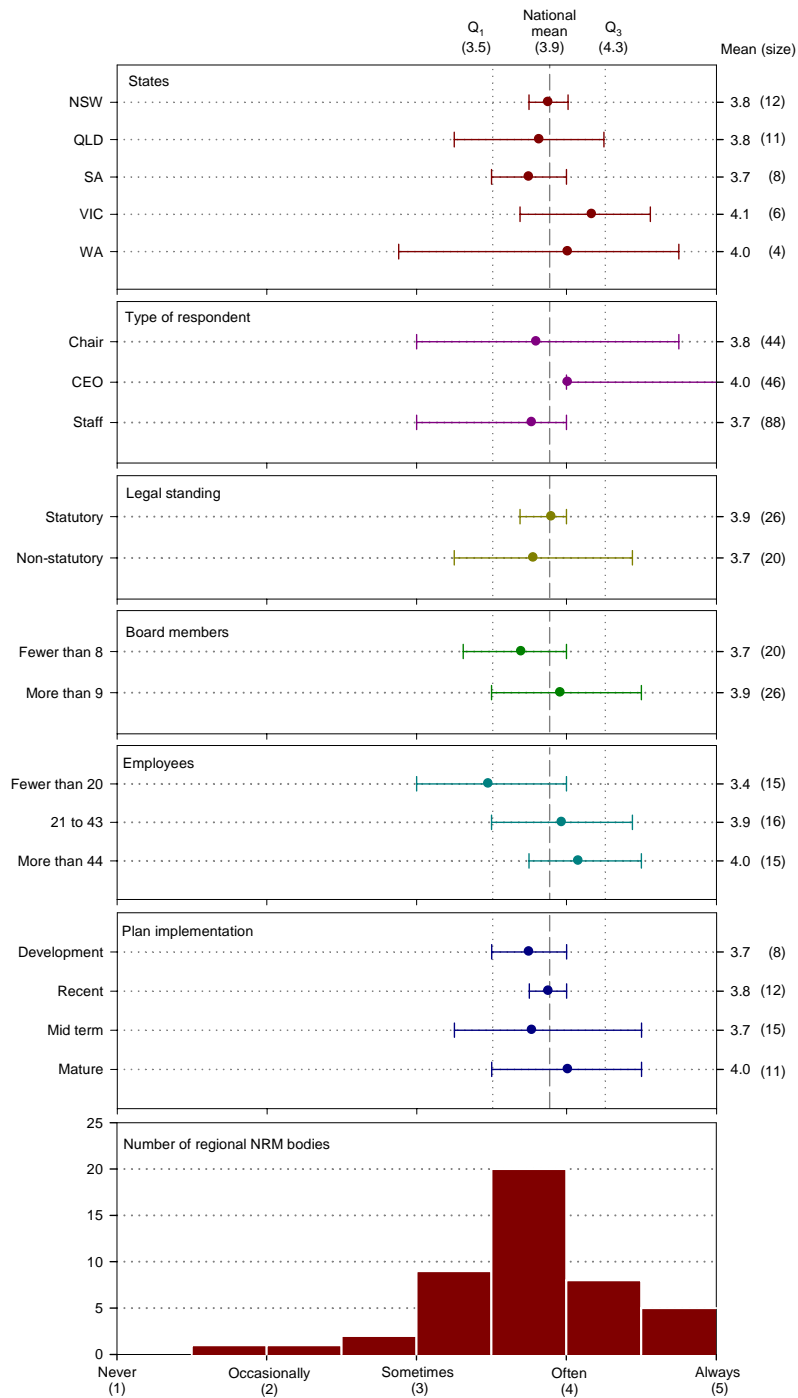


Figure 33 (SQ14) “To what extent do you agree with the statement that ‘Within this region, the regional body provides leadership in relation to NRM”



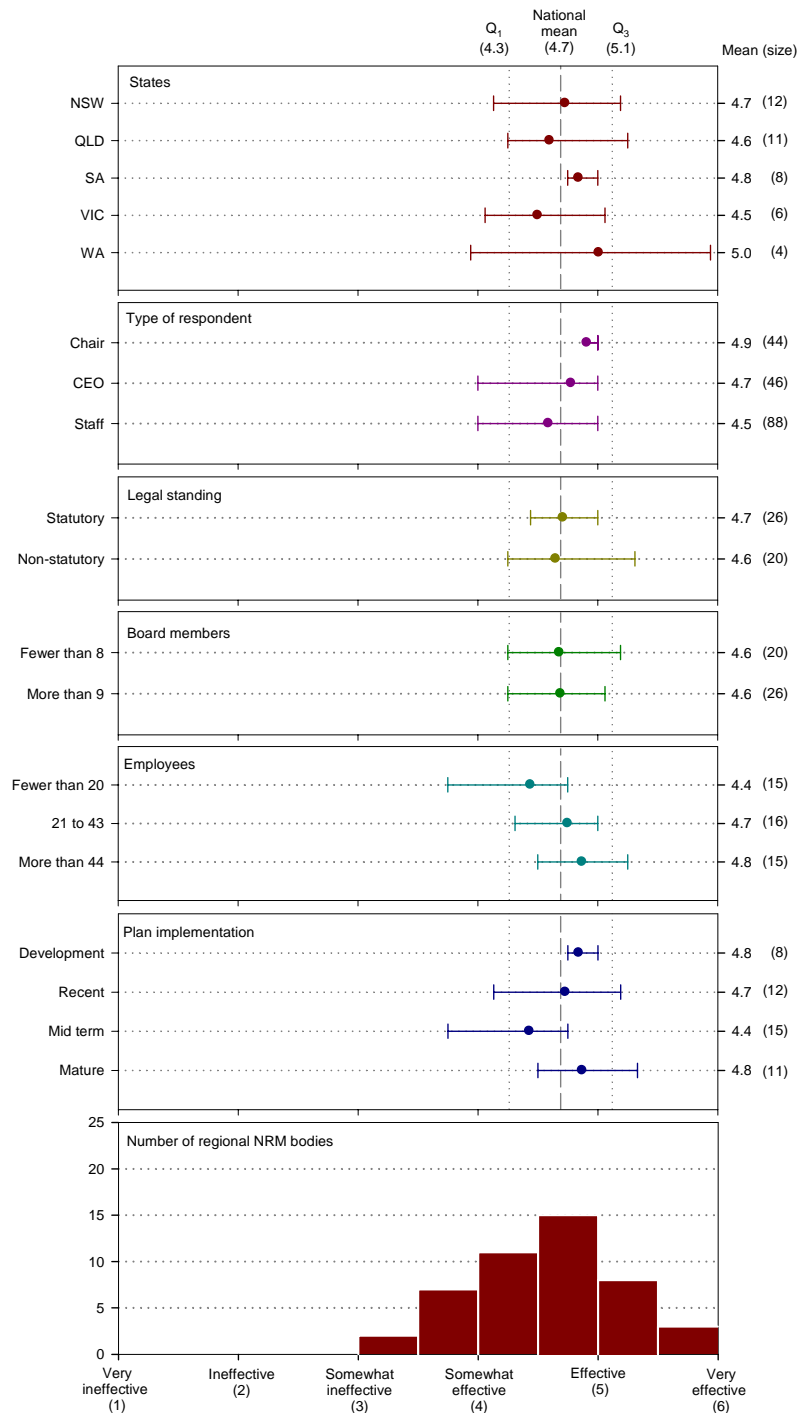
6.3.5 Human resources: Use of NRM advisory panels (C3.5)

Figure 34 (Q30) “Over the last 12 months regional NRM advisory panels, which may include expert panels, committees or other formal groups, have been used to inform decision making within the regional body in relation to NRM issues...”



6.3.6 Human resources: Effectiveness of NRM advisory panels (C3.6)

Figure 35 (Q31) “How effective are NRM advisory panels, which may include expert panels, committees or other formal groups, in informing decision making within the regional body?”



6.3.7 Human resources: NRM knowledge (C3.7)

Knowledge of natural resource management and planning

Figure 36 (Q32) “Amongst technical and professional staff within the regional body would you say knowledge of natural resource management and planning is...”

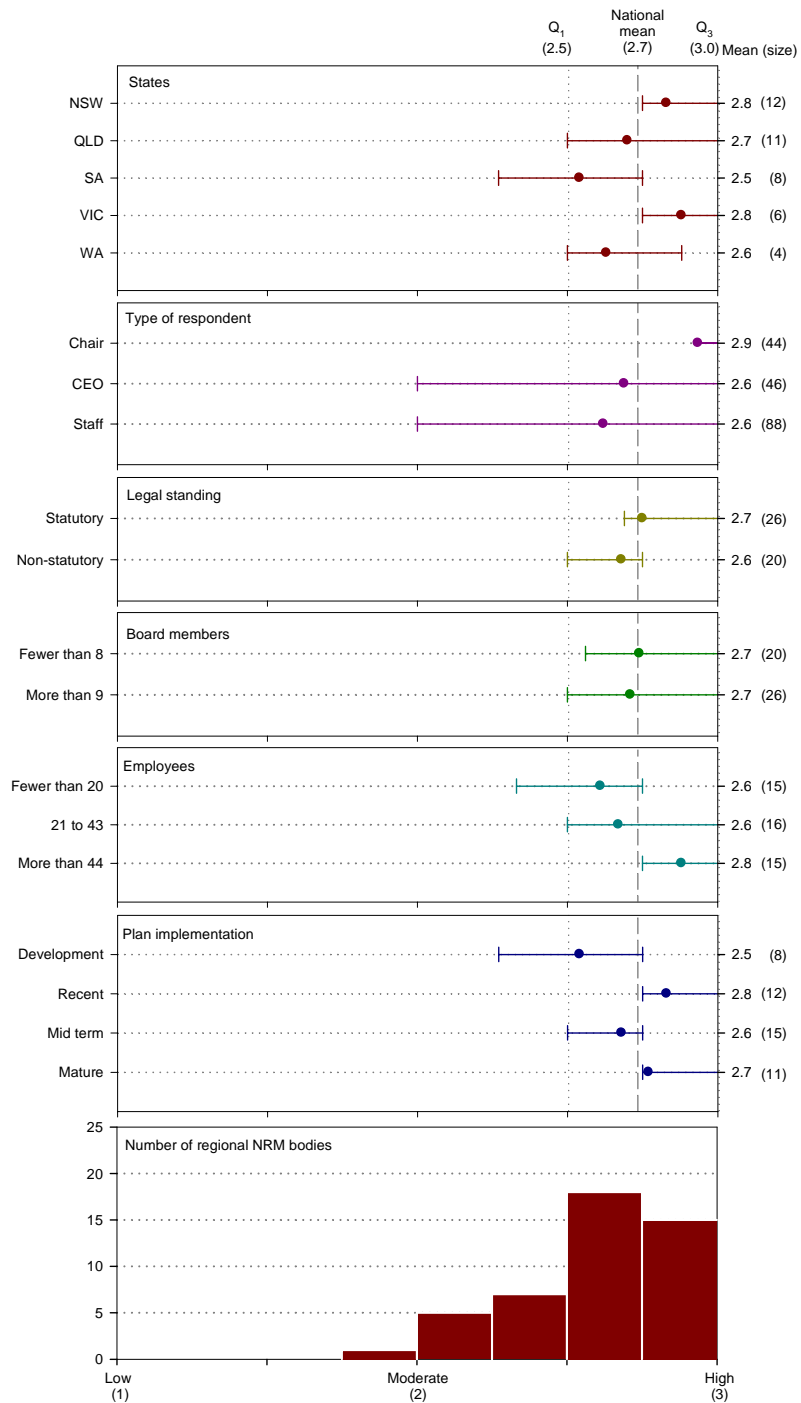
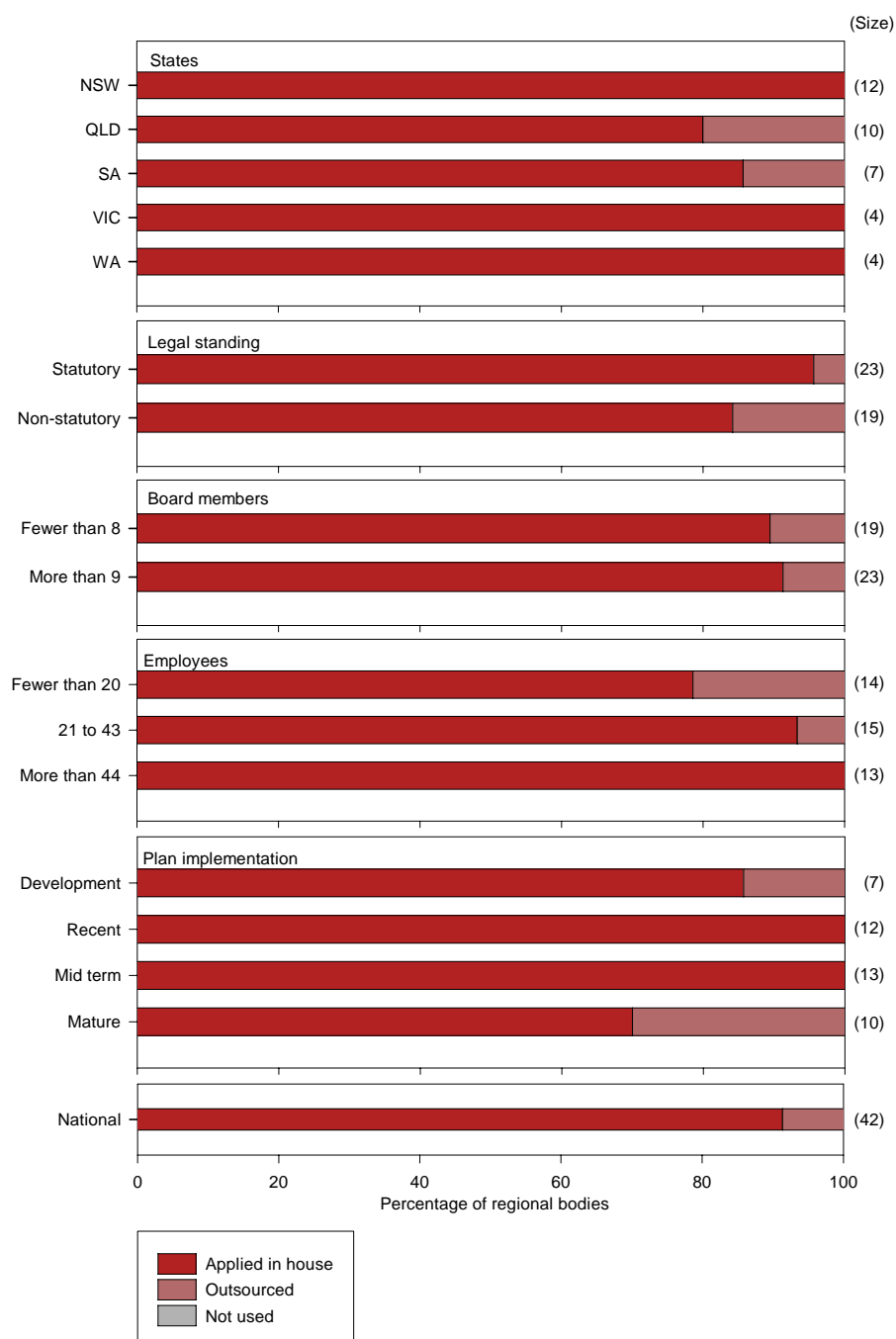


Figure 37(Q32a) “...in most cases this knowledge [natural resource management and planning] would be...”



Knowledge of biophysical systems

Figure 38 (Q33) “Amongst technical and professional staff within the regional body, knowledge of biophysical systems is...”

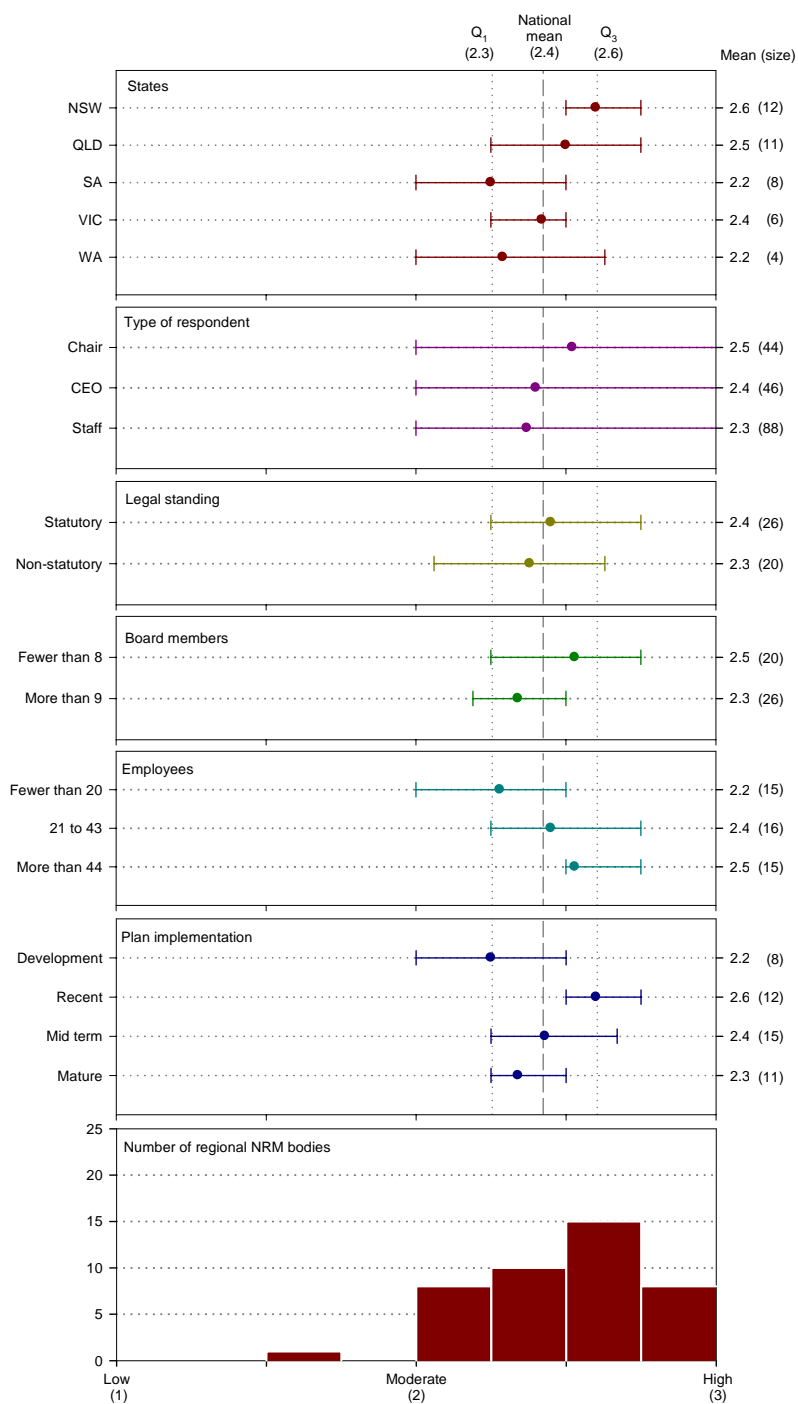
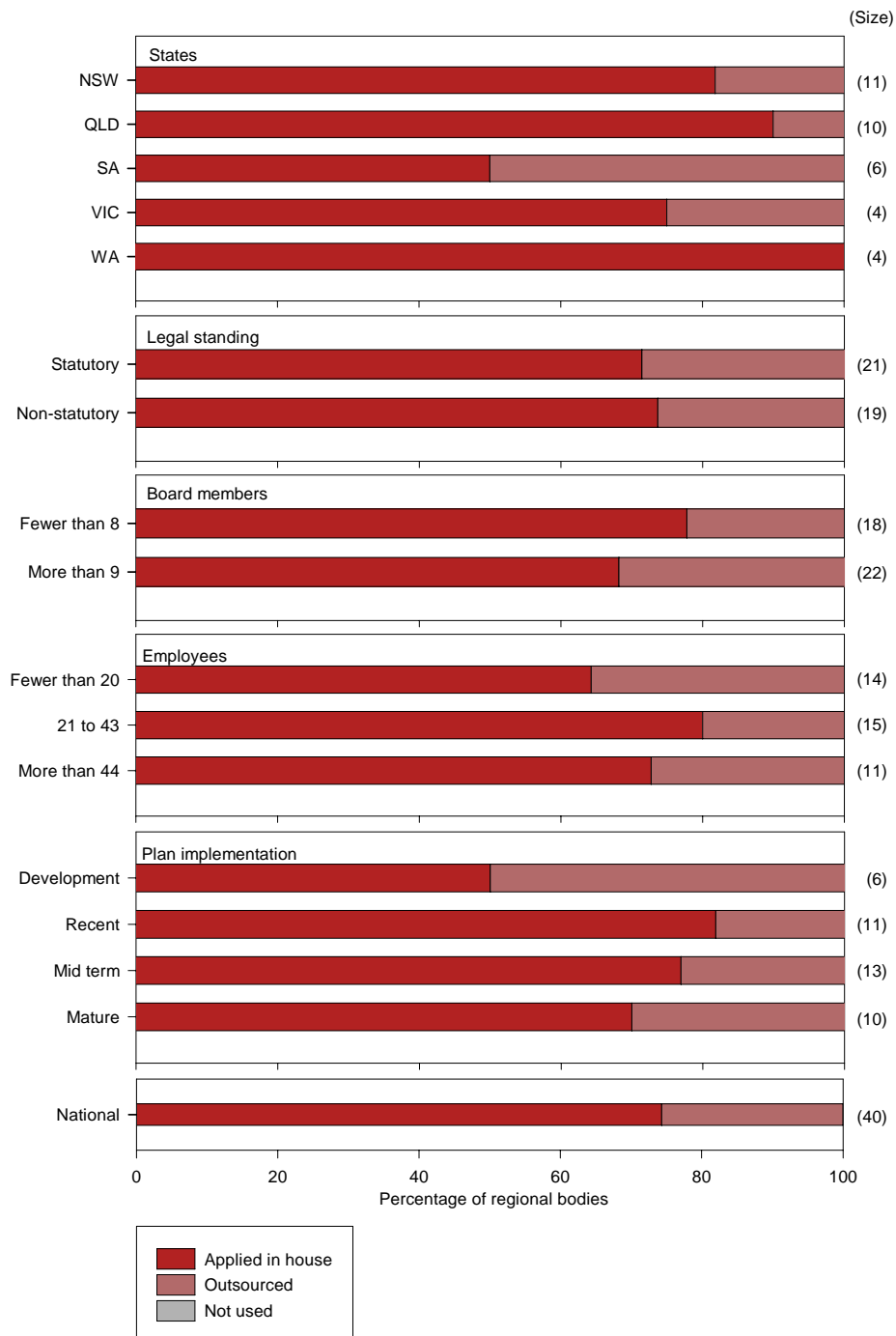


Figure 39 (Q33a) "...in most cases this knowledge [biophysical systems] would be..."



Knowledge of economic systems

Figure 40 (Q34) “Amongst technical and professional staff within the regional body, knowledge of economic systems is...”

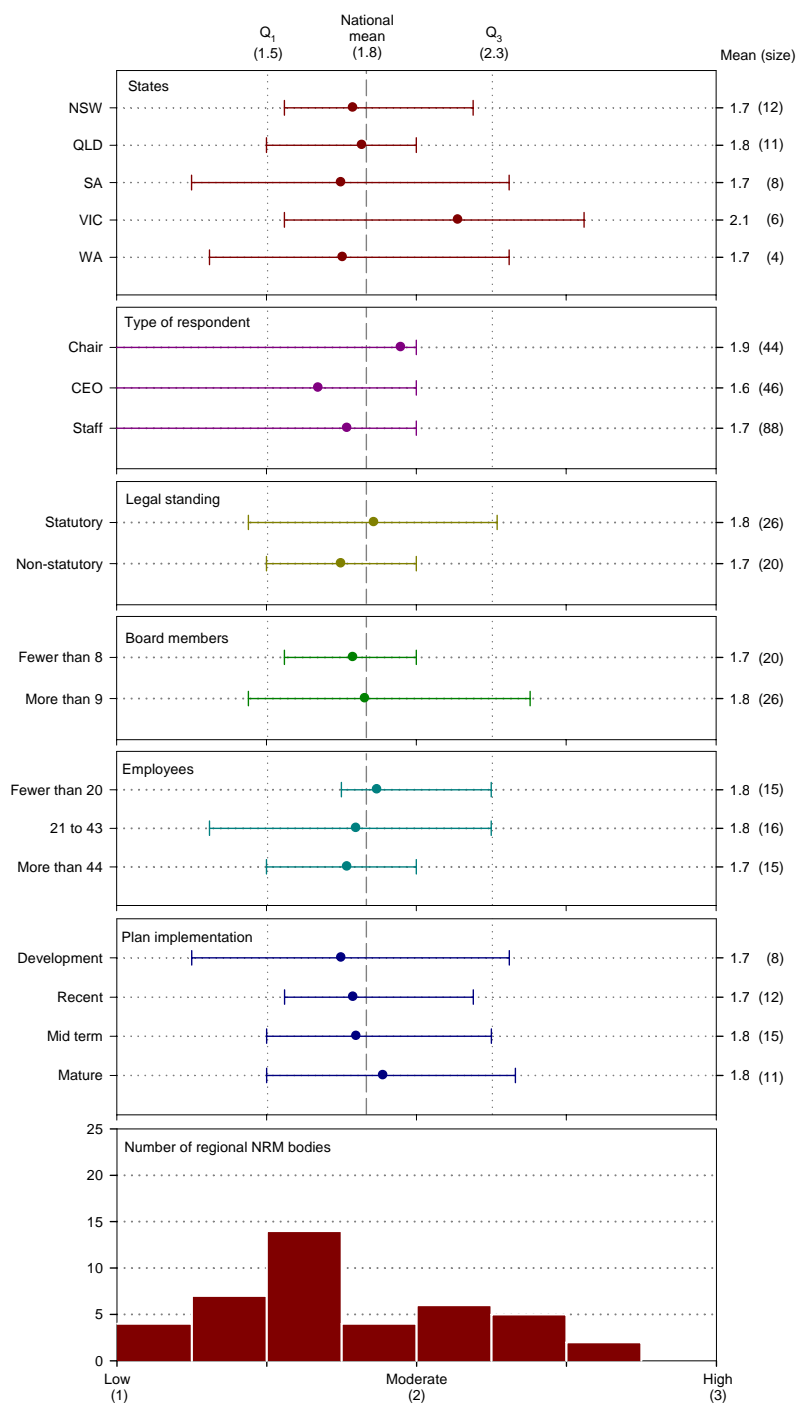
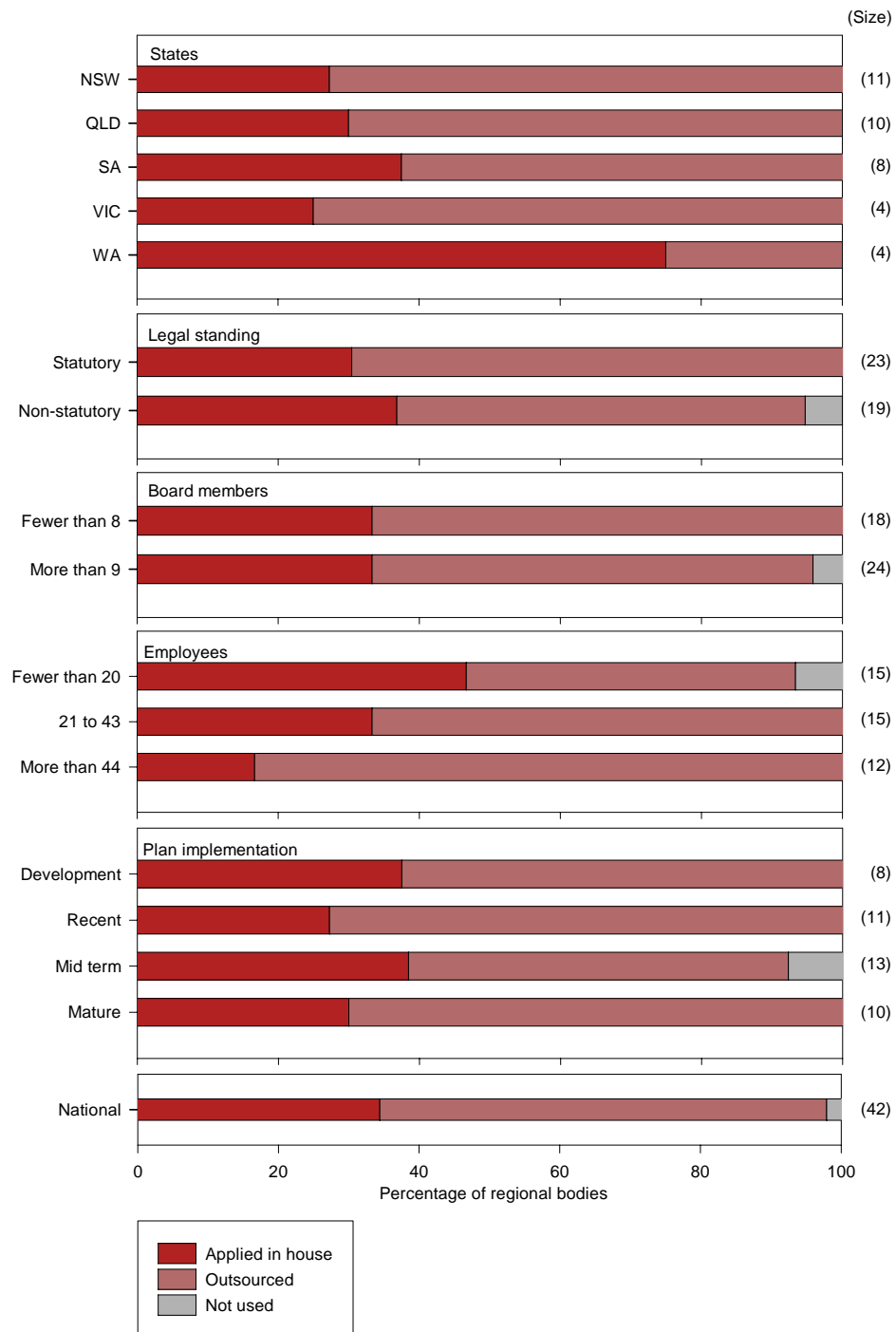


Figure 41(Q34a) “...in most cases this knowledge [economic systems] would be...”



Knowledge of social systems

Figure 42 (Q35) “Amongst technical and professional staff within the regional body, knowledge of social systems is...”

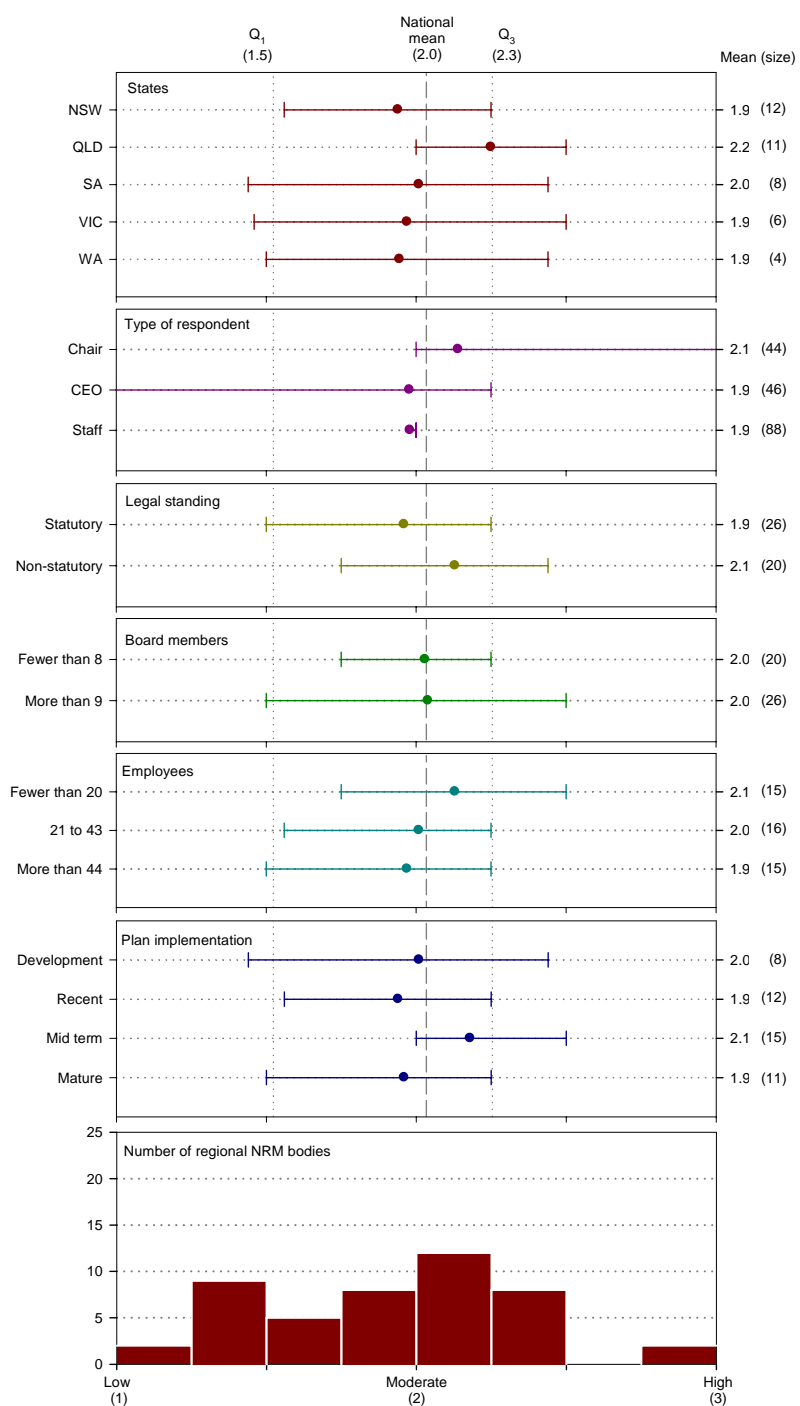
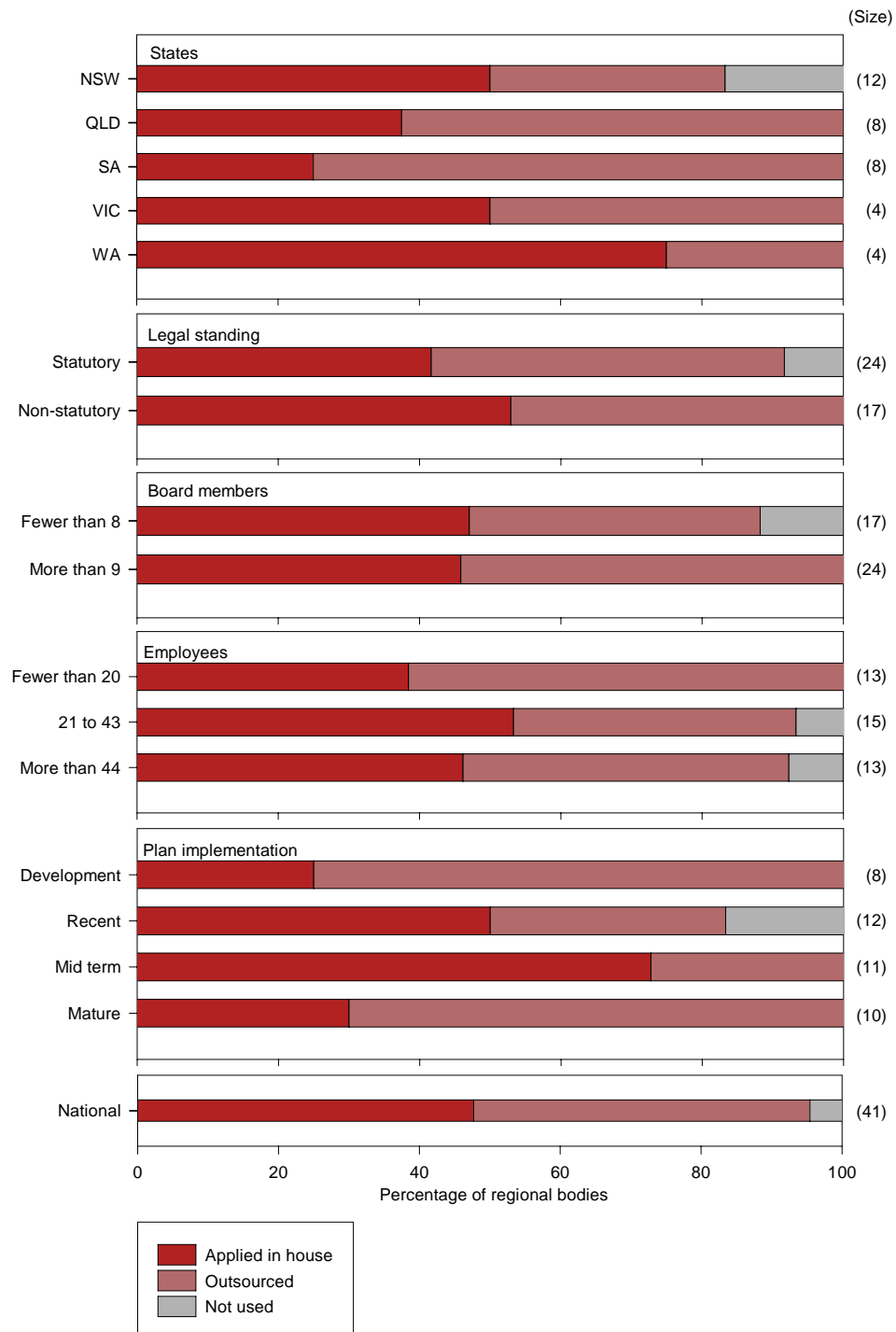


Figure 43(Q35a) "...in most cases this knowledge [social systems] would be..."



Knowledge of Indigenous communities

Figure 44 (Q36) "Amongst technical and professional staff within the regional body, knowledge of indigenous communities in the region is..."

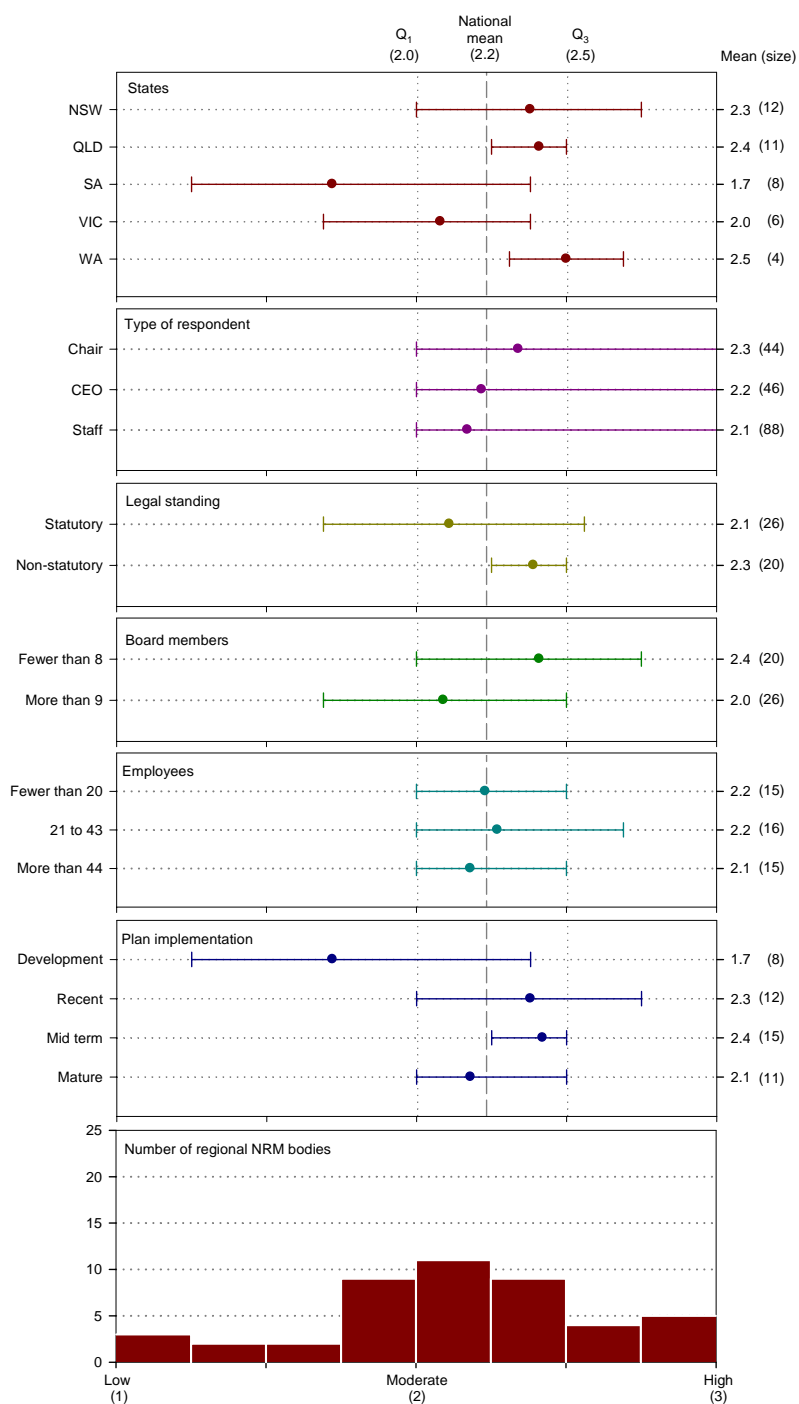
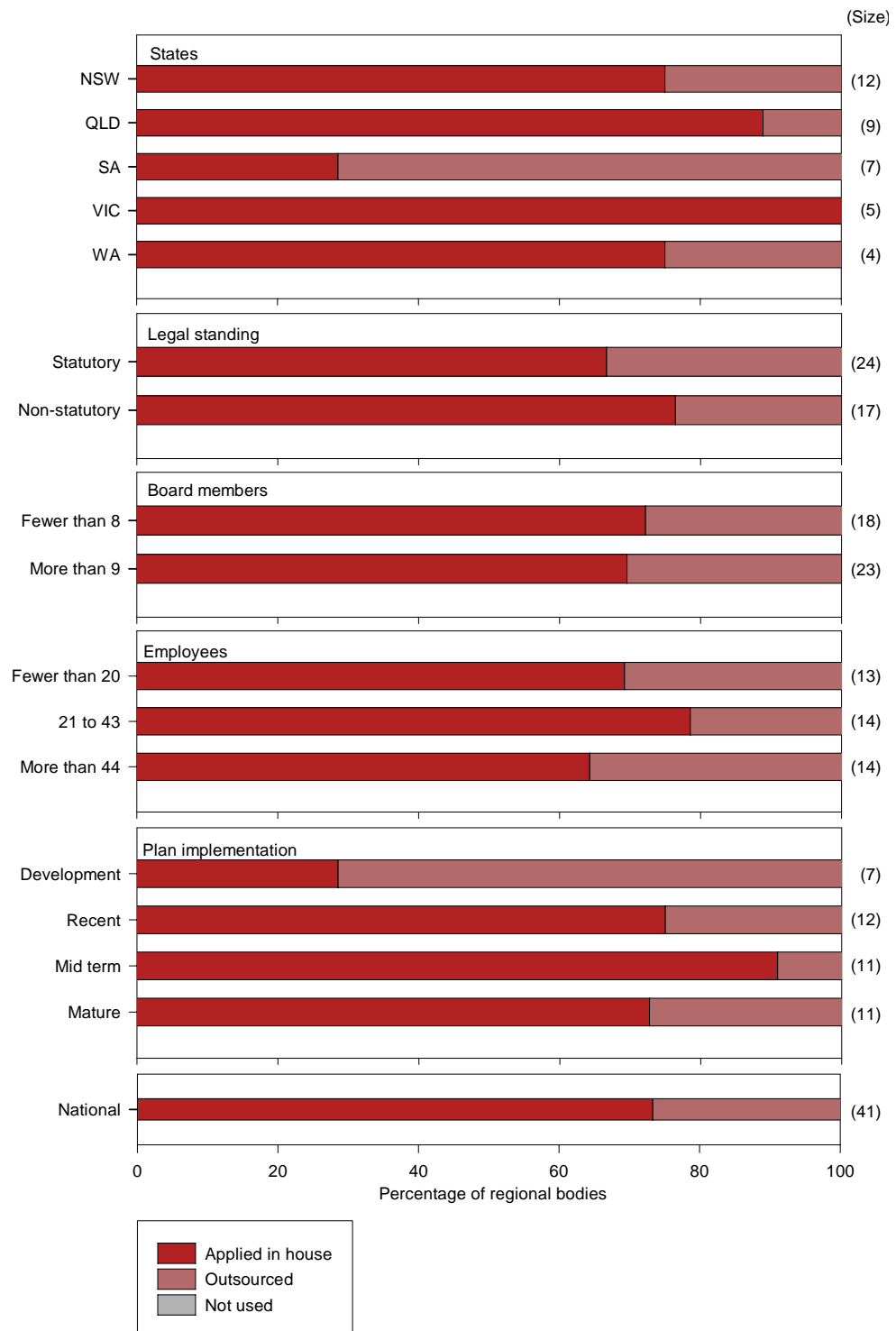


Figure 45 (Q36a) "...in most cases this knowledge [indigenous knowledge] would be..."



Knowledge of corporate governance, contract management and performance reporting

Figure 46 (Q37) “Amongst technical and professional staff within the regional body, knowledge of corporate governance, grants and contract management, monitoring, evaluation and performance reporting is...”

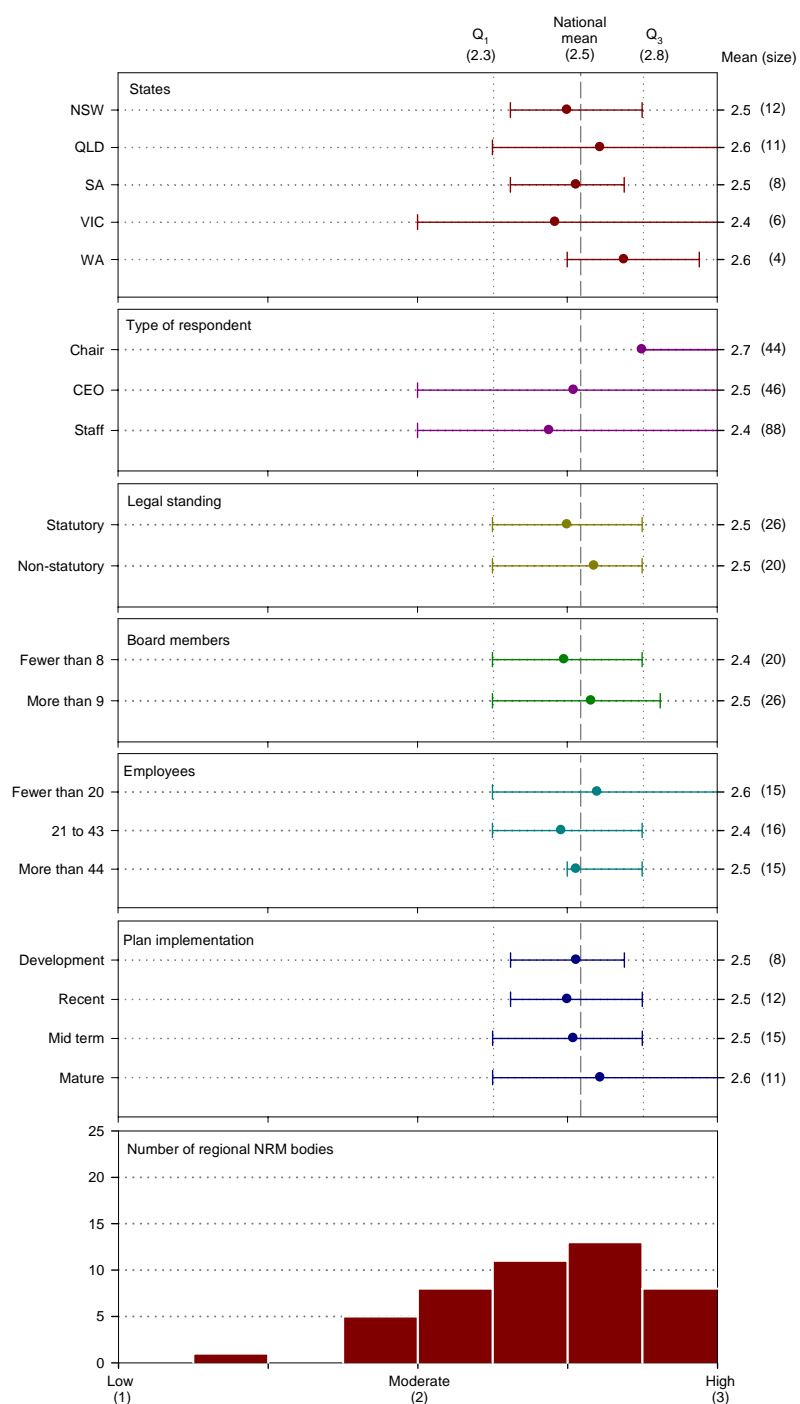
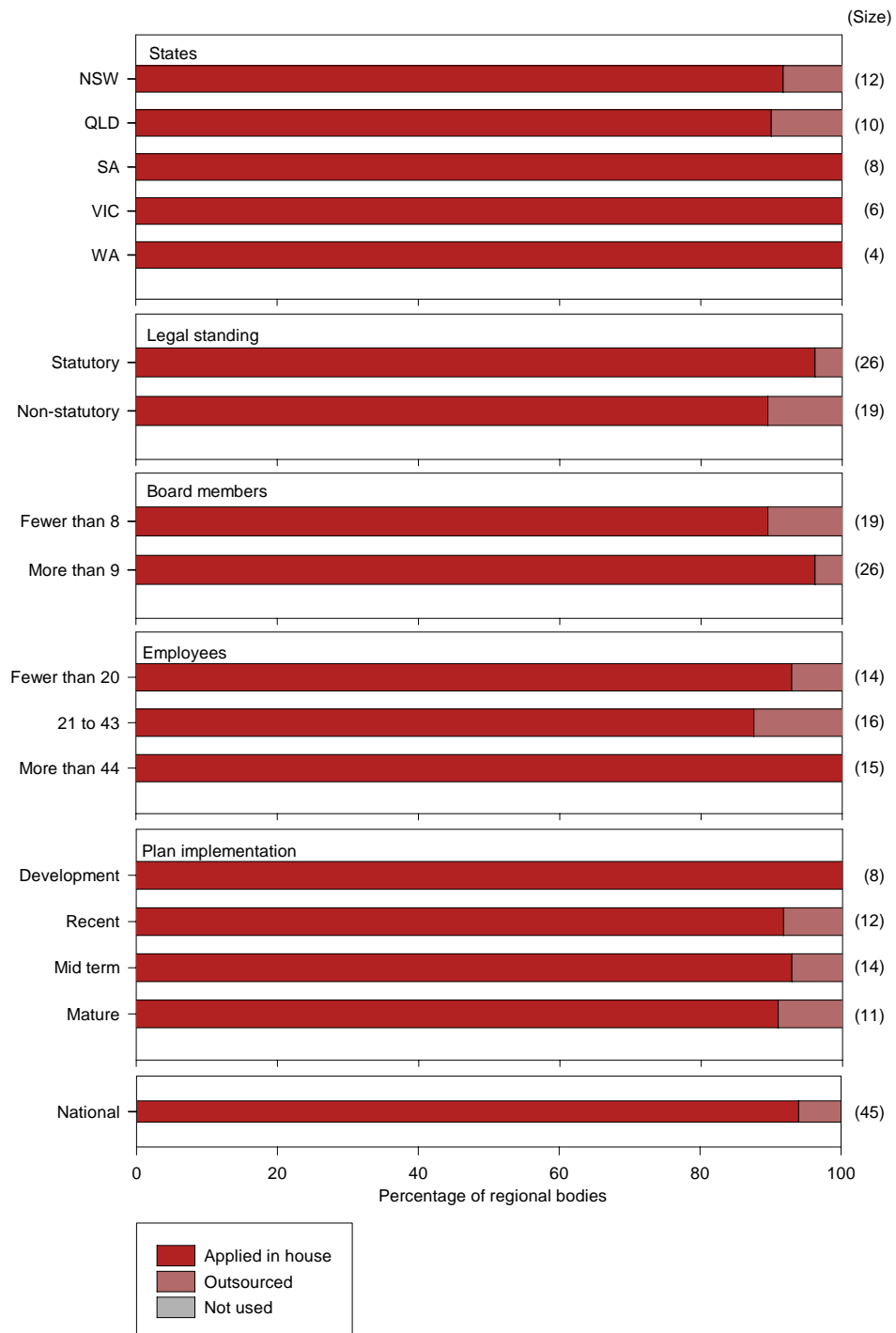


Figure 47 (Q37a) ...in most cases this knowledge [corporate governance, contract management and performance reporting] would be...



6.3.8 Financial resources: Competence in financial management (C3.8)

Figure 48 (Q38) “What level of confidence do you currently have that the regional body has adequate financial management systems, policies and processes in place to effectively achieve good financial management outcomes?”

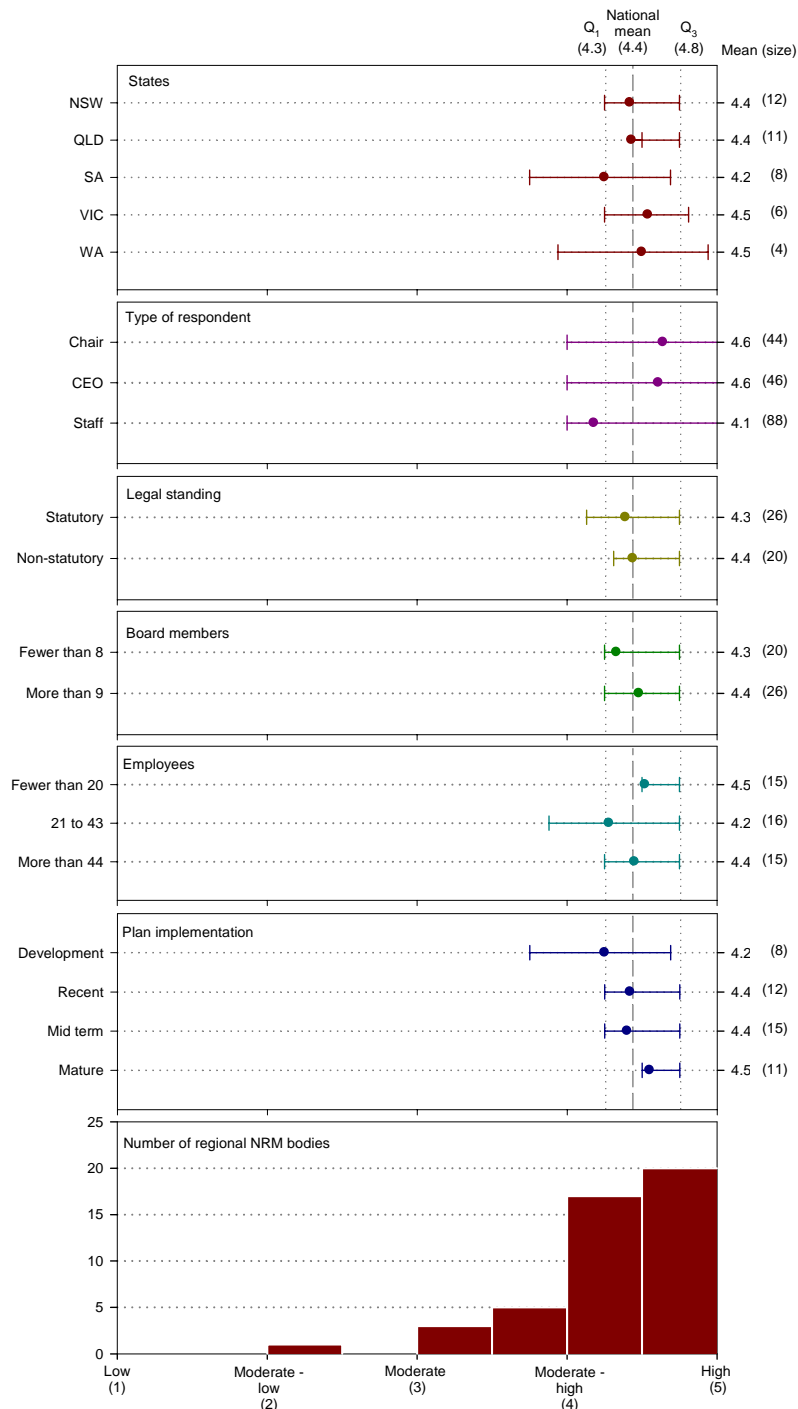
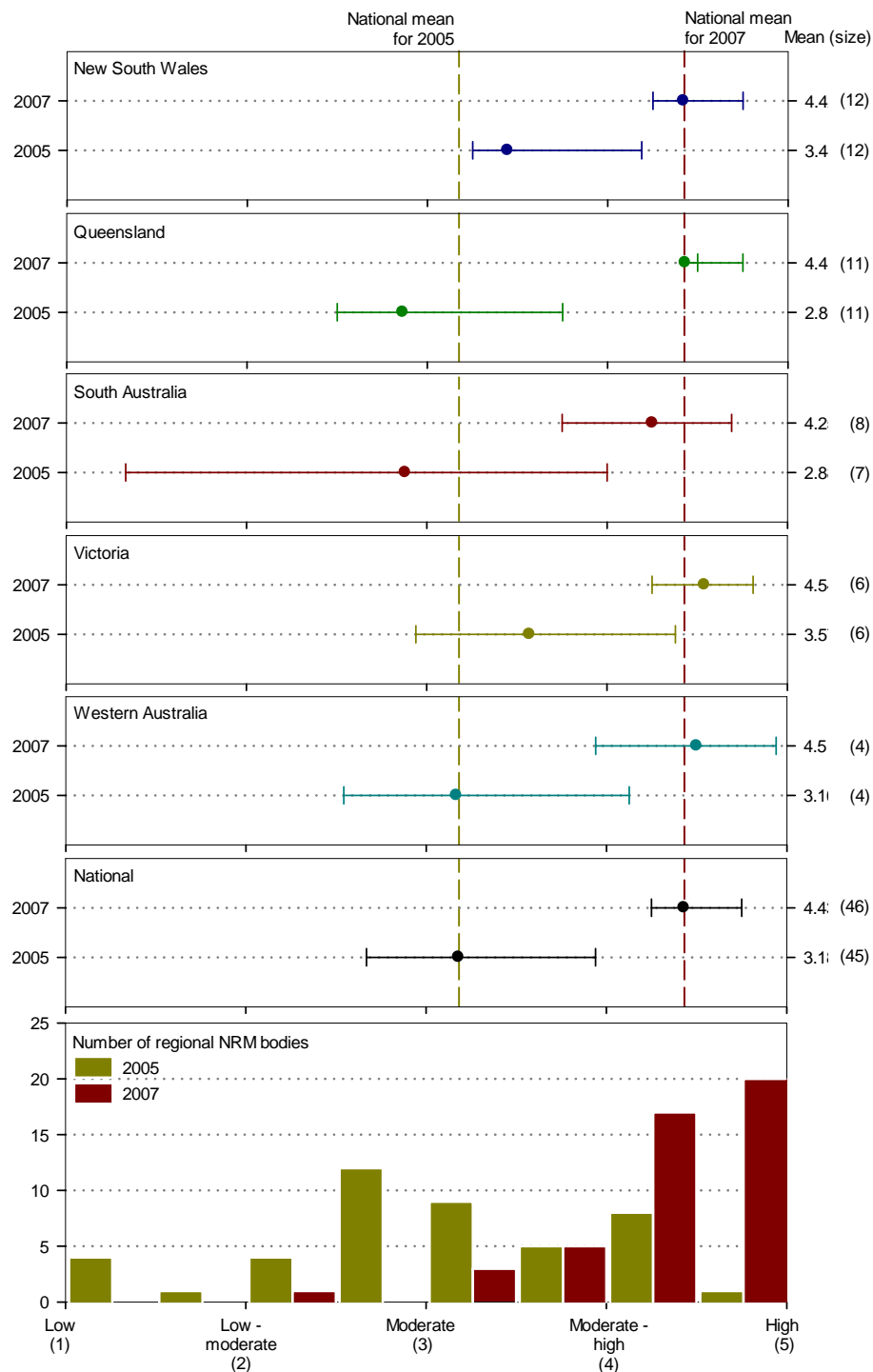
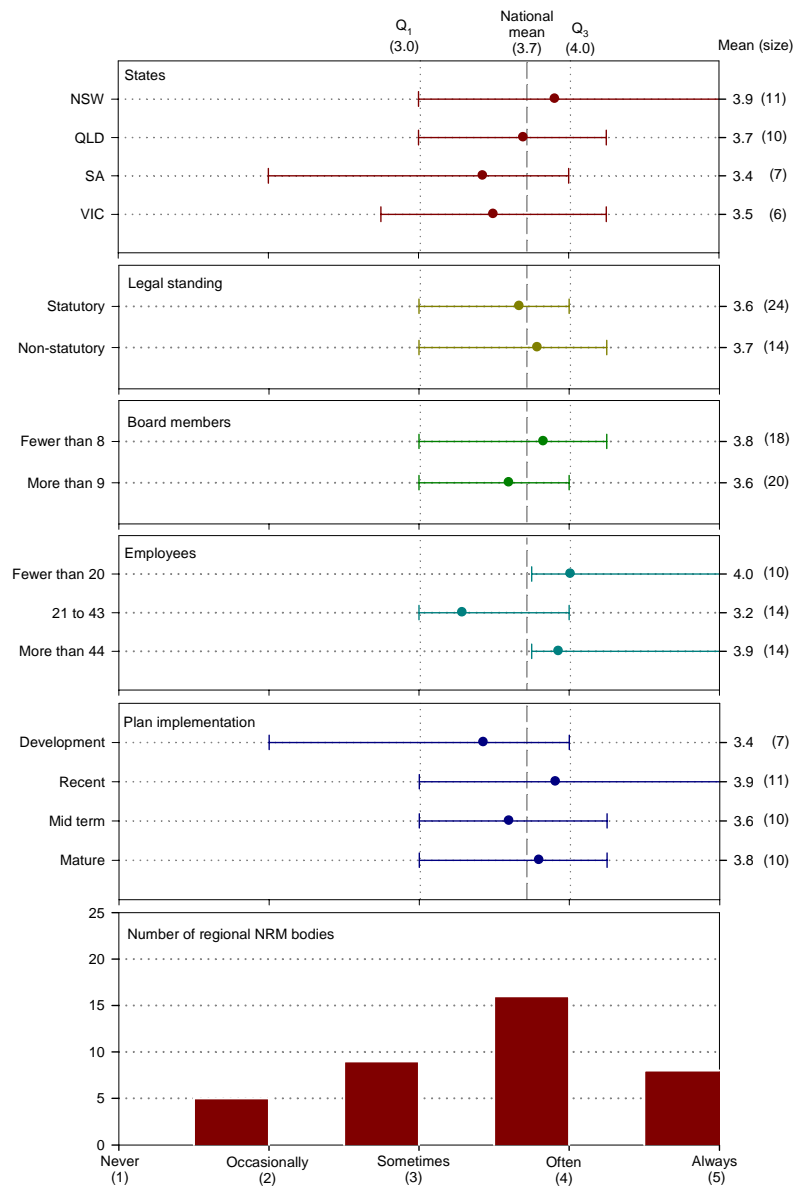


Figure 49 (Q39) “What level of confidence do you currently have that the regional body has adequate financial management systems, policies and processes in place to effectively achieve good financial management outcomes? If you were asked this last question two years ago how would you have answered it?”



6.3.9 Financial resources: Financial management performance (C3.9)

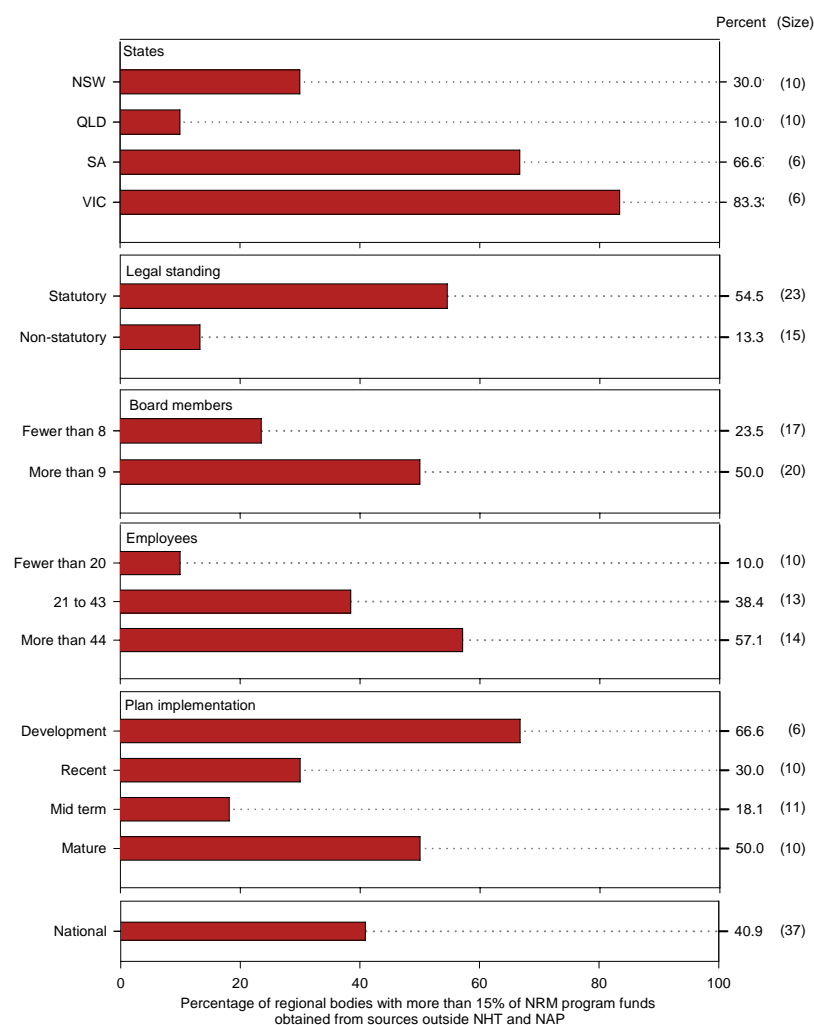
Figure 50 (CQ13) “In the last 12 months would you say the regional body has met its quarterly expenditure and revenue targets...”



Note: Figure 50 is based only on the responses of CEOs within regional NRM bodies. Western Australia has not been included in the State level analysis as there was insufficient data provided by regional NRM bodies from this State.

6.3.10 Financial resources: Accessing NRM investment funds (C3.10)

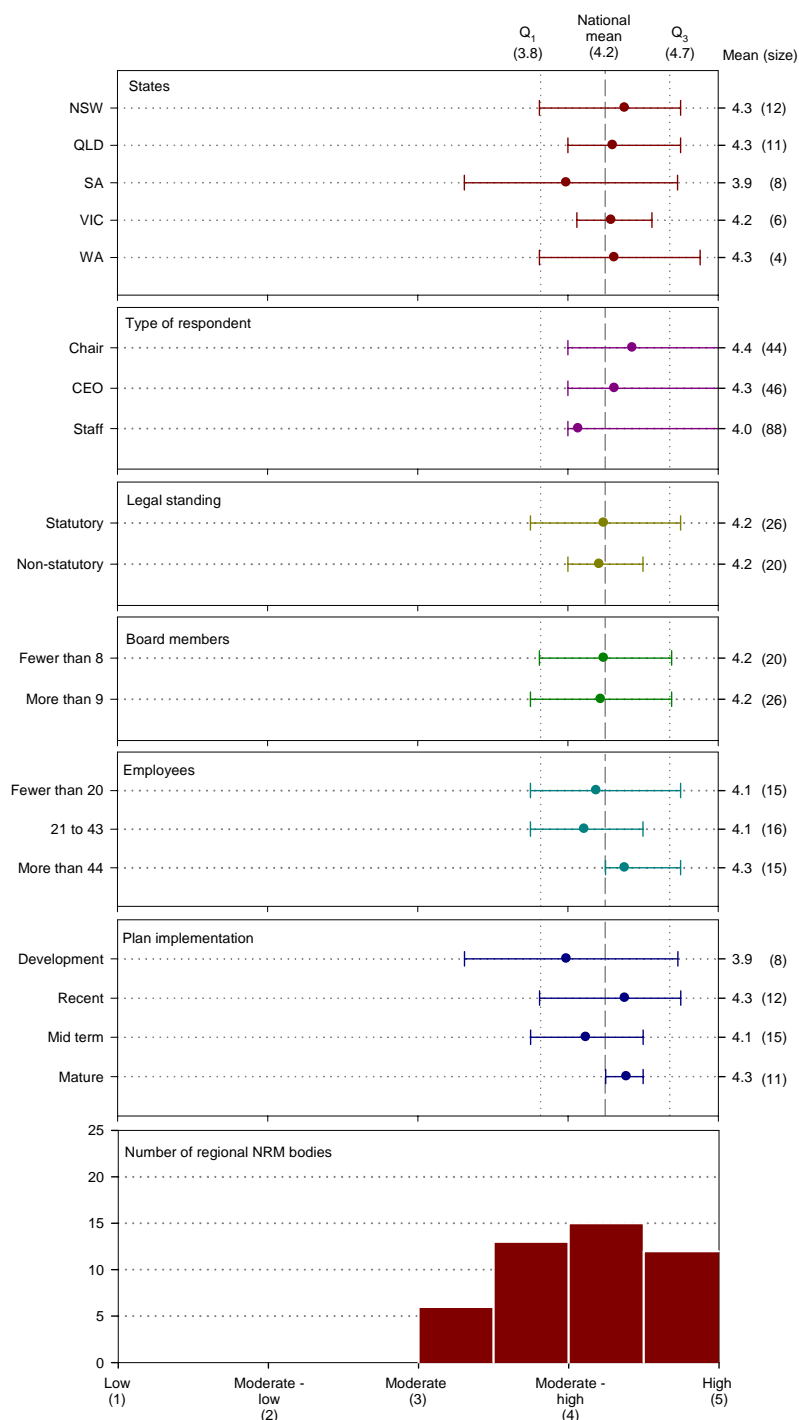
Figure 51 (CQ14) *In the last 12 months, and excluding in kind contributions, what percentage of NRM program funds would have been obtained from sources outside of NHT and NAP.*



Note: Figure 51 is based only on the responses of CEOs within regional NRM bodies. Western Australia has not been included in the state level analysis as there was insufficient data provided by regional NRM bodies from this state.

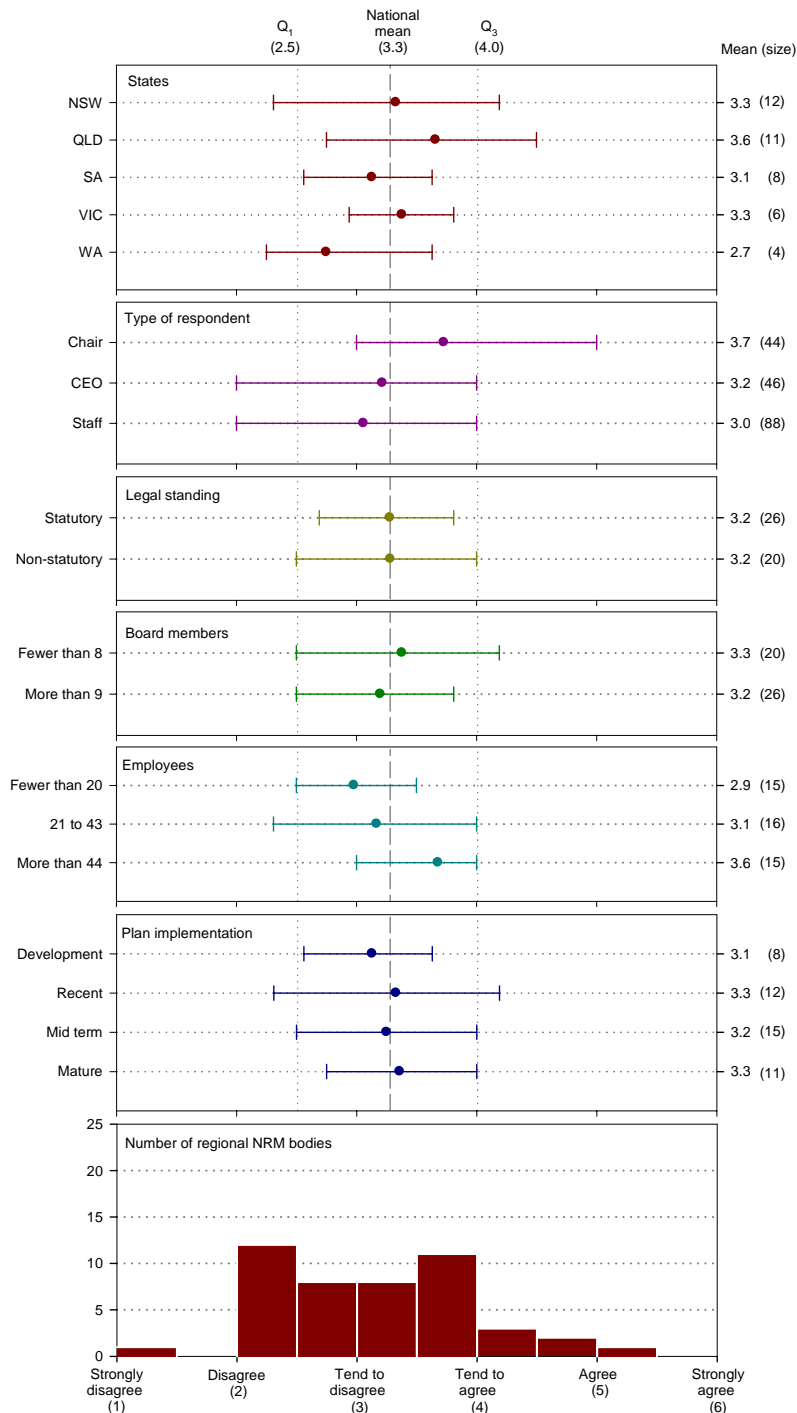
6.3.11 Financial resources: Funding submissions and investment strategies (C3.11)

Figure 52 (Q40) “What is the current capacity of staff to prepare and develop NRM funding submissions and investment strategies...”



6.3.12 Financial resources: Leverage of external investment (C3.12)

Figure 53(Q41) “To what extent do you agree with the statement, ‘that your regional body has adequate staffing and time to allow leverage of external investment beyond NAP, NHT and state in-kind contributions for NRM.’”



6.3.13 Information resources: Effective utilisation of NRM information (C3.13)

Figure 54 (Q43) “Over the last 12 month period how would you rate the level of skills and abilities within the regional body in using NRM information from these government and non-government sectors?”

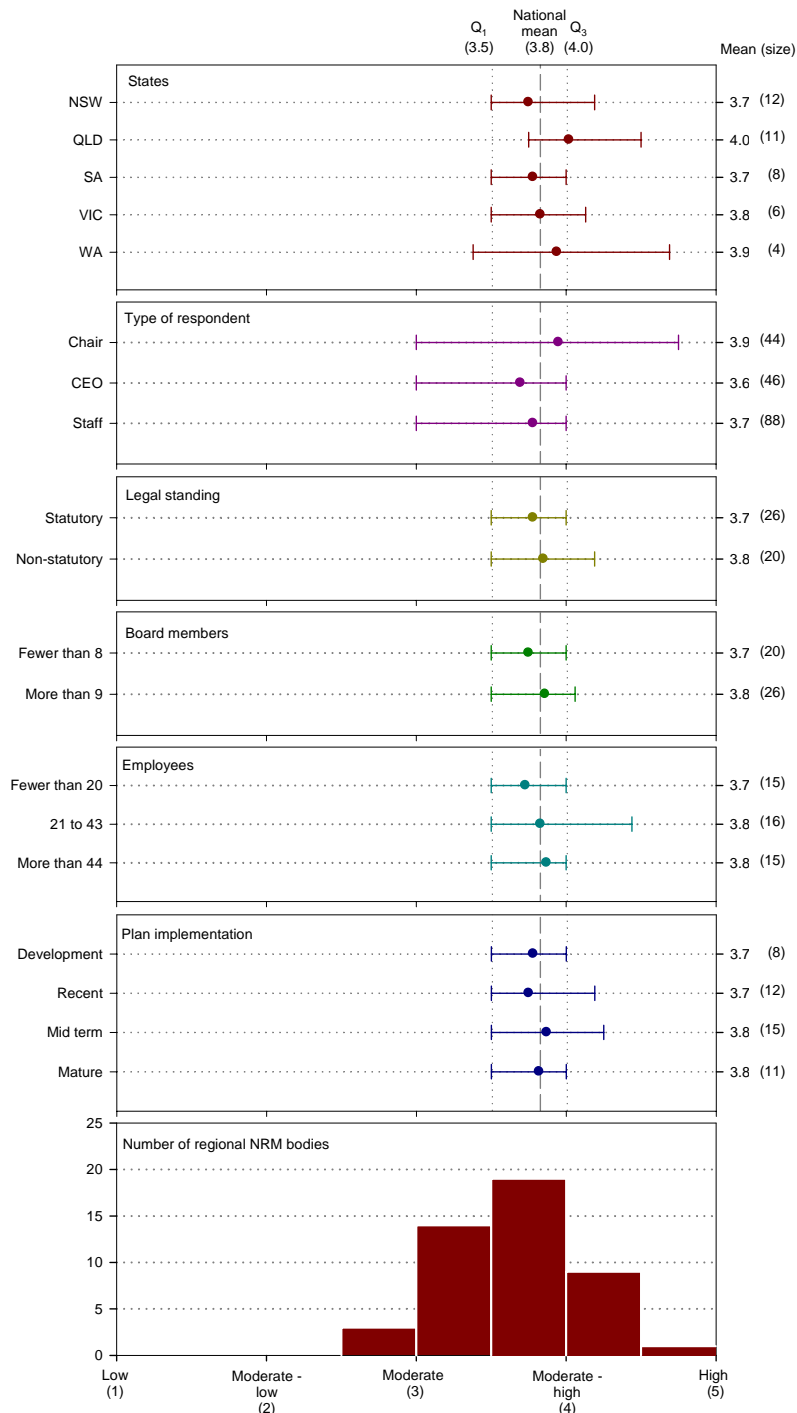
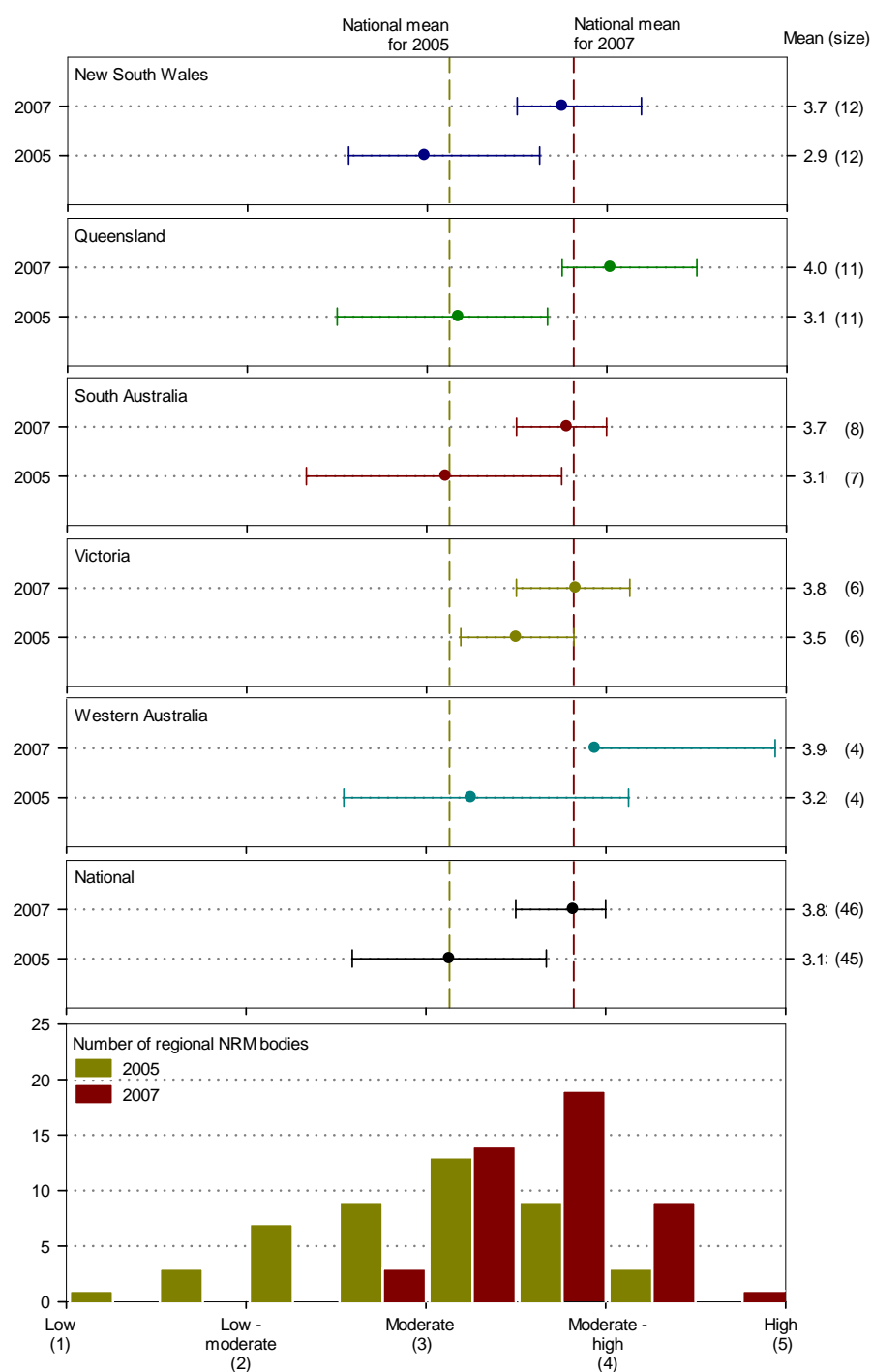
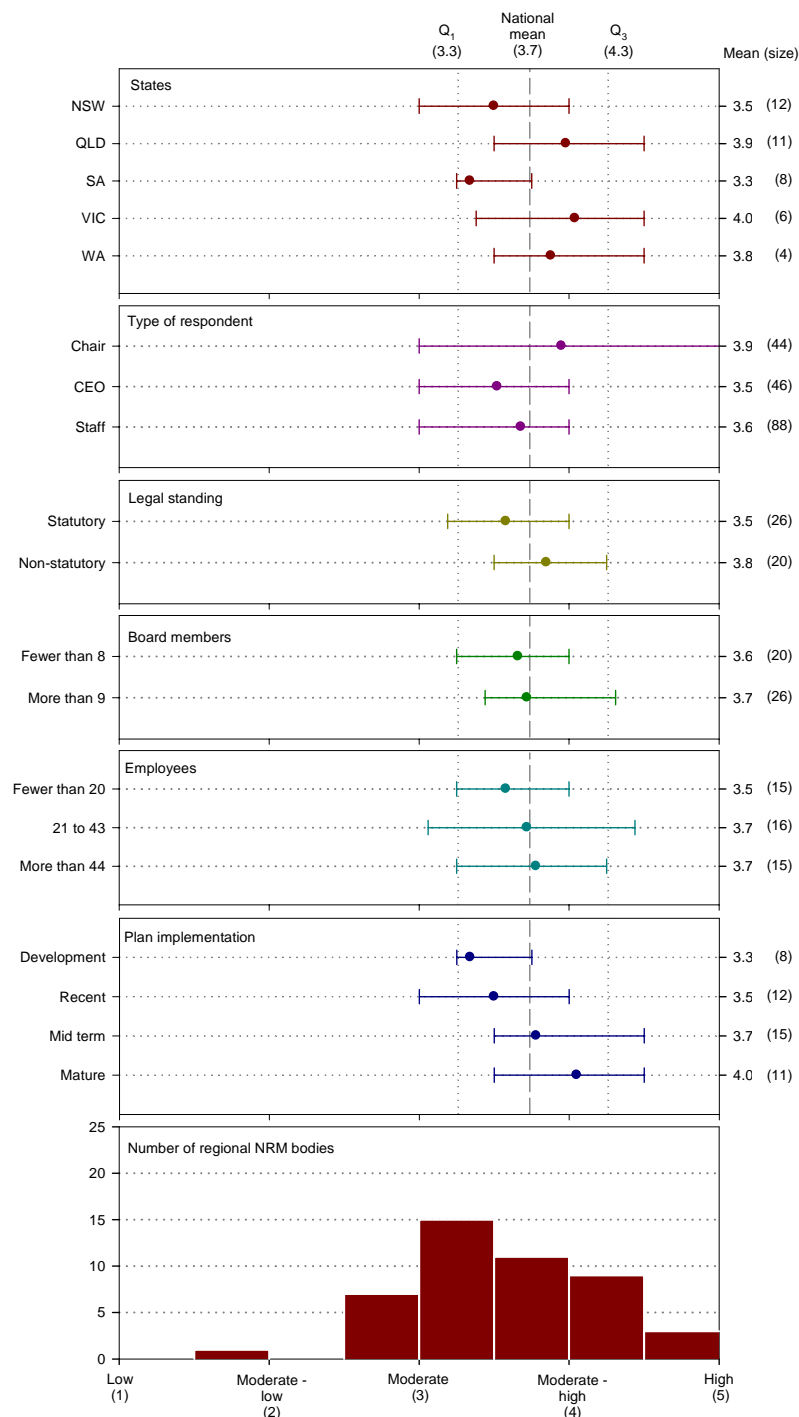


Figure 55 (Q44) “Over the last 12 month period how would you rate the level of skills and abilities within the regional body in using NRM information from these government and non-government sectors? If you were asked this last question two years ago how would you have answered it?”



6.3.14 Information resources: Ability to access external sources of NRM information (C3.14)

Figure 56 (Q42) “Over the last 12 month period how would you rate the ability of the regional body to locate and access NRM information from both the government and non-government sectors, including for example government agencies, the CSIRO and universities? Was it...

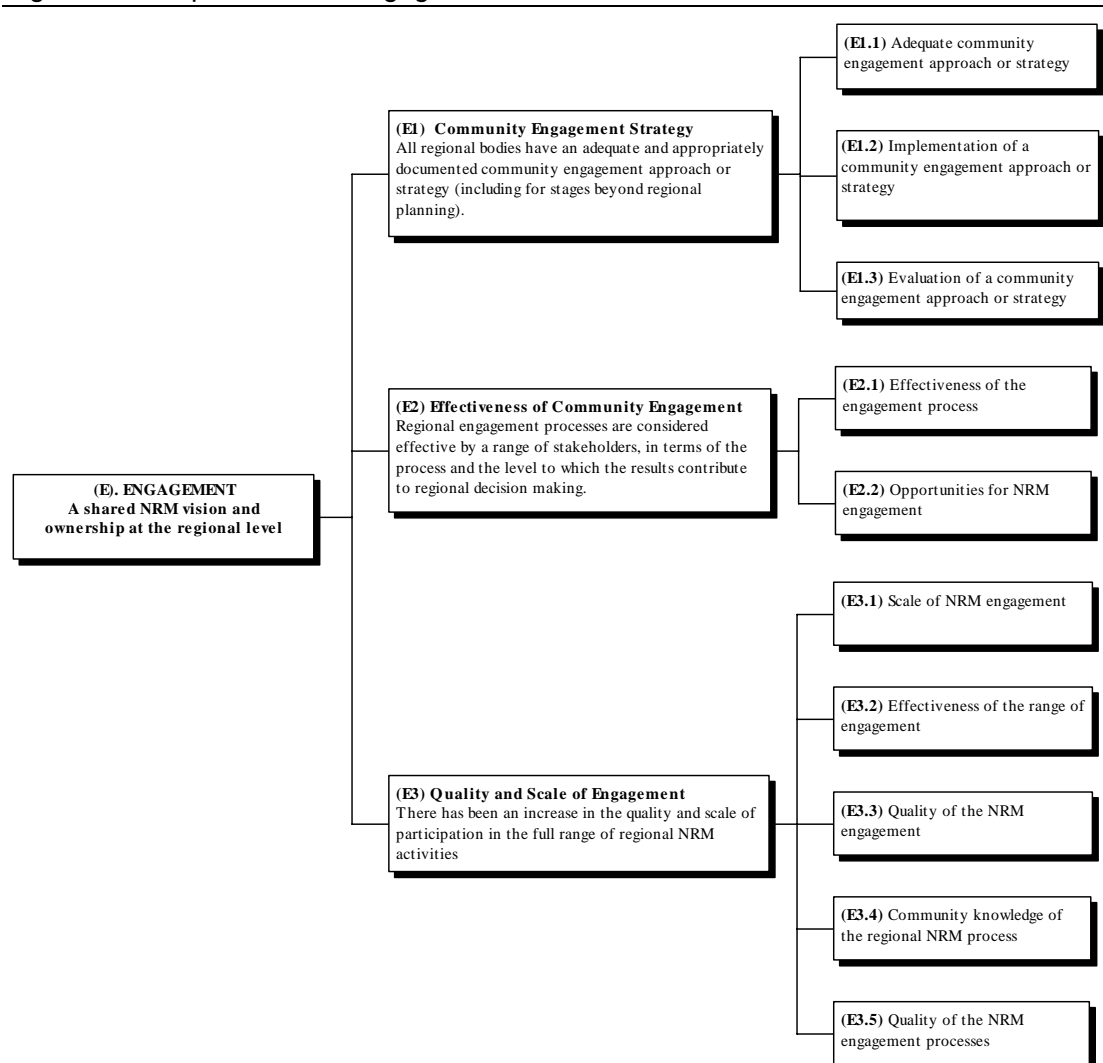


7. Engagement in NRM

Figure 57 shows the component tree for engagement in NRM, including the success statements and measures that were used to assess engagement. The component tree includes three core success statements which are:

- (i) **Community engagement strategy:** All regional bodies have an adequate and appropriately documented community engagement approach or strategy (including for stages beyond regional planning).
- (ii) **Effectiveness of community engagement:** Regional engagement processes are considered effective by a range of stakeholders, in terms of the process and the level to which the results contribute to regional decision making.
- (iii) **Quality and scale of engagement:** There has been an increase in the quality and scale of participation in the full range of regional NRM activities.

Figure 57 Component tree: Engagement in NRM



Community engagement strategy

Although not always developed as a written document, the majority of regional NRM bodies indicated they had an adequate community engagement strategy which was integrated with other NRM activities in the region; included a description of community engagement principles; profiled the community, stakeholder and community groups within the region; and described the required community engagement activities (Figure 59).

Regional NRM bodies also indicated the strategy guided their decision making and day to day activities, with this most often occurring amongst the larger and more established regional NRM bodies (Figure 60).

A complete evaluation of the organisation's community engagement strategy had been undertaken by 20% of regional NRM bodies, with this more likely to occur amongst larger regional NRM bodies. A further 40% of organisations indicated they had completed a partial evaluation; 30% indicated they had undertaken a limited evaluation; and only 9% indicated they had undertaken no evaluation of their community engagement strategy.

Effectiveness of community engagement

Most regional NRM bodies considered the community engagement process used in their most recent planning activities to have been effective (Figure 62), with there being significant improvement in the effectiveness of the community engagement process over the past two years in New South Wales, South Australia and Victoria. Not only was the engagement process considered to be effective amongst regional NRM bodies, but regional stakeholder organisations also considered the engagement process to be effective, although to a slightly lesser extent (Figure 64 and Figure 65).

In relation to providing opportunities for community engagement in NRM, regional NRM bodies (Figure 66) and regional stakeholder organisations (Figure 67 and Figure 68) believed sufficient opportunities had been provided for community engagement.

Quality and scale of community engagement

The level of participation by stakeholders, landholders and community in NRM activities was considered to be moderately to high by most regional NRM bodies (Figure 58), with generally the larger and more established organisations having higher levels of participation (Figure 69). Although there is some variation within stakeholder groups, the different stakeholder groups also considered there to be a moderate level of participation in NRM activities (Figure 70).

A similar pattern is also evident in relation to the diversity of stakeholder engagement, with both regional NRM bodies and regional stakeholder organisations reporting diversity of stakeholder involvement in the engagement process.

Regional NRM bodies considered they had been effective in engaging regional stakeholders who had limited previous involvement in NRM and both regional NRM bodies and stakeholders considered the community engagement process that had been implemented to be effective.

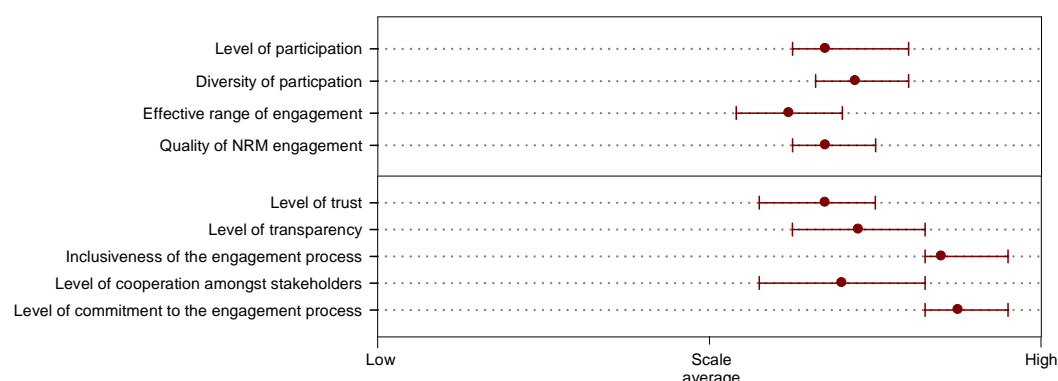
The knowledge of regional NRM processes amongst regional stakeholder organisations was moderately high (Figure 79). Non-agricultural industries tended to be relatively less informed of these processes (Figure 80), which may in part be due to agricultural industries and landholders being the primary focus for engagement within many NRM programs.

The quality of the engagement process was assessed by obtaining judgements from regional NRM bodies and regional stakeholders in relation to trust, transparency, inclusiveness, cooperation and commitment. As shown in Figure 58, regional NRM bodies scored these attributes relatively highly as did the regional stakeholder organisations. What is noteworthy is that the level of trust (Figure 81), transparency (Figure 84) and cooperation (Figure 90) in the engagement process is generally higher amongst the larger and more established regional NRM bodies.

Across the different types of stakeholder organisations judgement on the five procedural attributes of the engagement process was generally highest amongst Aboriginal organisations and lowest amongst the non-agricultural organisations. This may be a direct consequence of many organisations employing local Aboriginal facilitators and establishing Aboriginal programs to ensure procedurally appropriate engagement processes, or it may also be that Aboriginal organisations have significantly lower expectations related to engagement when compared to other regional stakeholders.

That there are low assessments of the five procedural attributes of the engagement process amongst non-agricultural organisations and groups may also be due to the diversity of stakeholders within this group and that they are not a clearly defined stakeholder group which is more difficult to target within the community engagement process.

Figure 58 Summary measures: Quality and Scale of engagement



7.1 Community engagement strategy (E1)

The success statement associated with having an adequate and effective community engagement strategy stated:

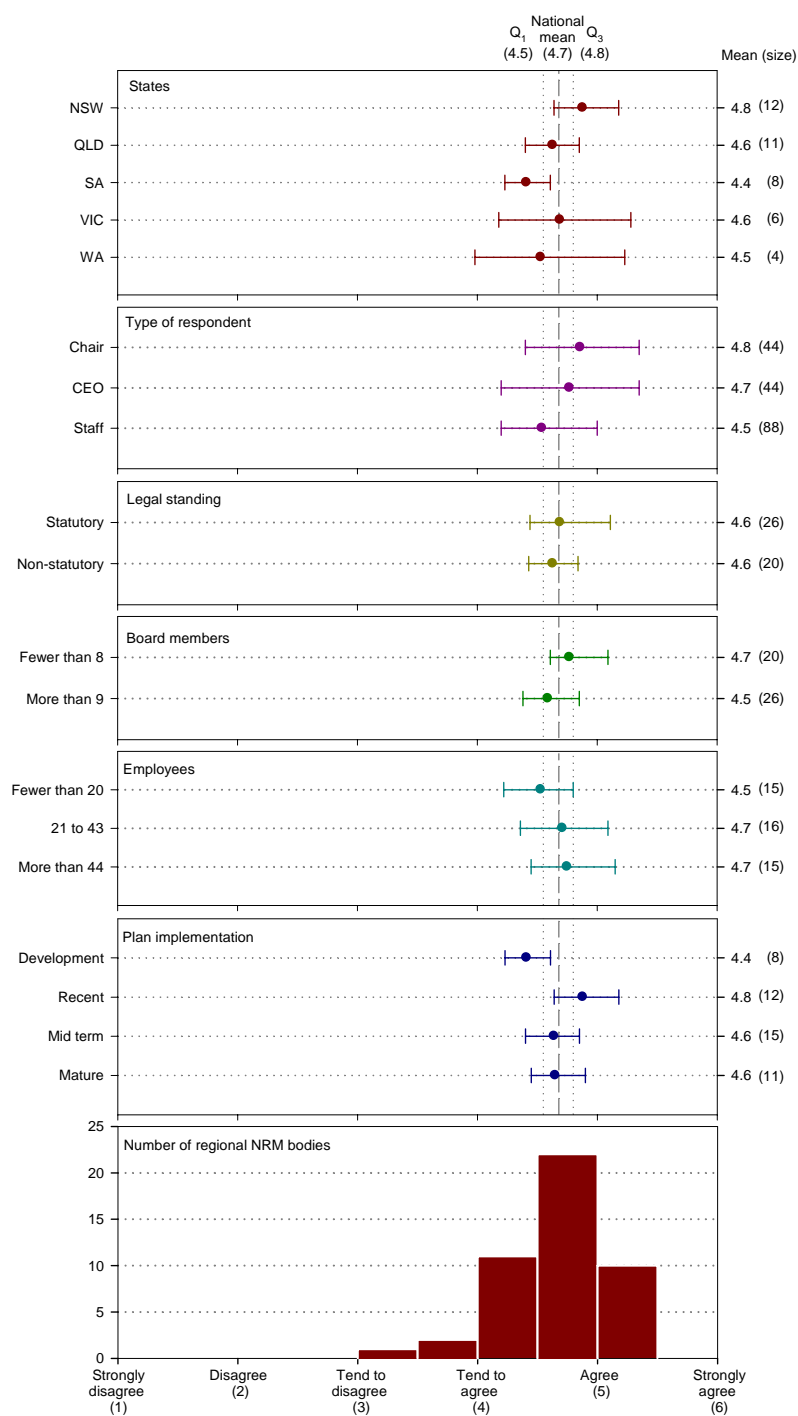
“All regional bodies have an adequate and appropriately documented community engagement approach or strategy (including for stages beyond regional planning).”

7.1.1 Adequate community engagement strategy or approach (E1.1)

Figure 59 is a composite based on the average of several measures which assessed the community engagement approach or strategy. These measures included, “This regional body’s engagement approach or strategy...

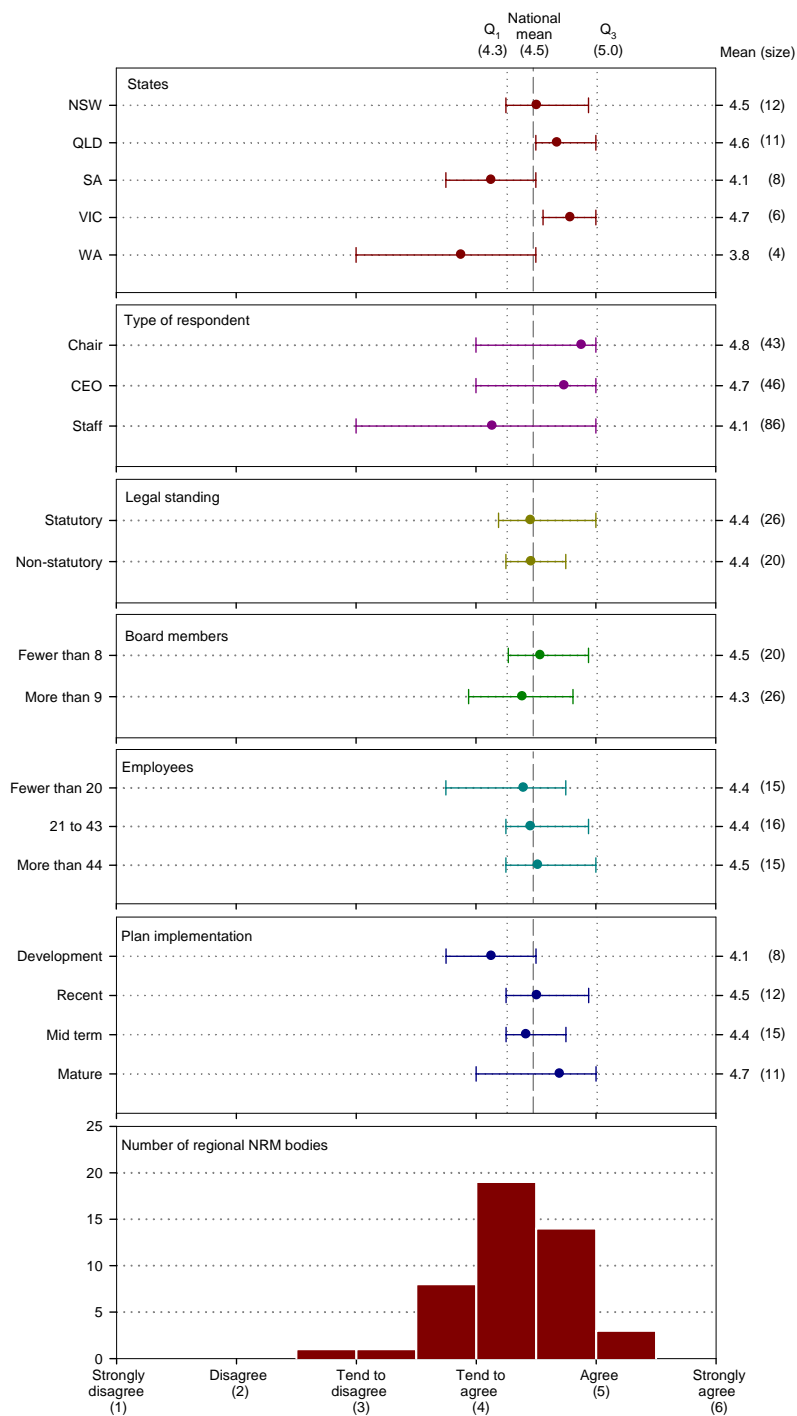
- (i) ...is integrated with the activities of other NRM stakeholder groups in the region
- (ii) ...provides a description of the principles of community engagement
- (iii) ...has a description or profile of stakeholders, community and community groups
- (iv) ...provides a description of community engagement activities
- (v) ...outlines learning and development activities to be undertaken by the regional body to support community engagement.

Figure 59 (Q58- Q62) Adequate community engagement strategy (composite)



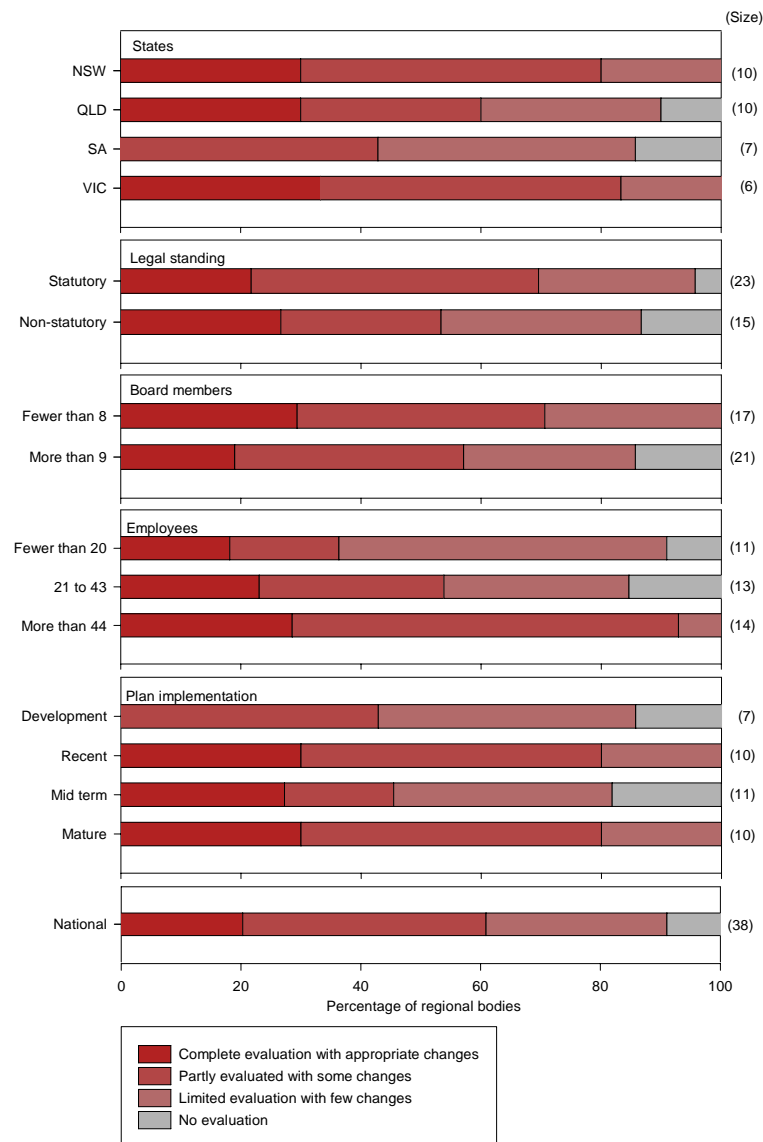
7.1.2 Implementation of a community engagement strategy or approach (E1.2)

Figure 60 (Q63) “The community engagement approach or strategy is used to guide decision making and day to day activities.”



7.1.3 Evaluation of a community engagement strategy or approach (E1.3)

Figure 61 (CQ15) “In relation to community engagement, has your process been subject to a...”



Note: Figure 61 is based only on the responses of CEOs within regional NRM bodies. Western Australia has not been included in the State level analysis as there was insufficient data provided by regional NRM bodies from this State.

7.2 Effectiveness of community engagement (E2)

The success statement associated with the effectiveness of community engagement stated:

“Regional engagement processes are considered effective by a range of stakeholders, in terms of the process and the level to which the results contribute to regional decision making.”

7.2.1 Effectiveness of community engagement (E2.1)

Figure 62 (Q64) “In relation to the most recent NRM planning activities, how effective do you think the engagement processes have been in contributing to regional decision making?”

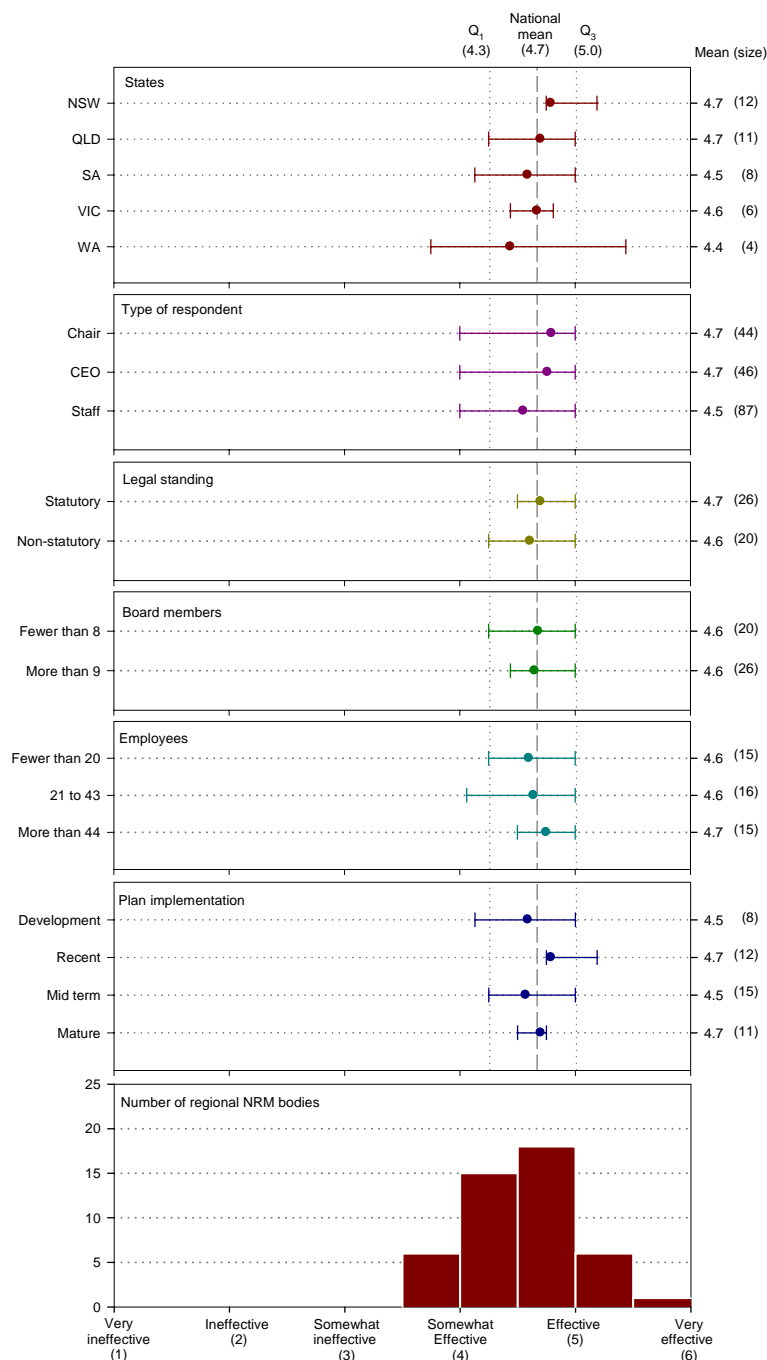


Figure 63 (Q65) *“In relation to the most recent NRM planning activities, how effective do you think the engagement processes have been in contributing to regional decision making. If you were asked this last question two years ago how would you have answered it?”*

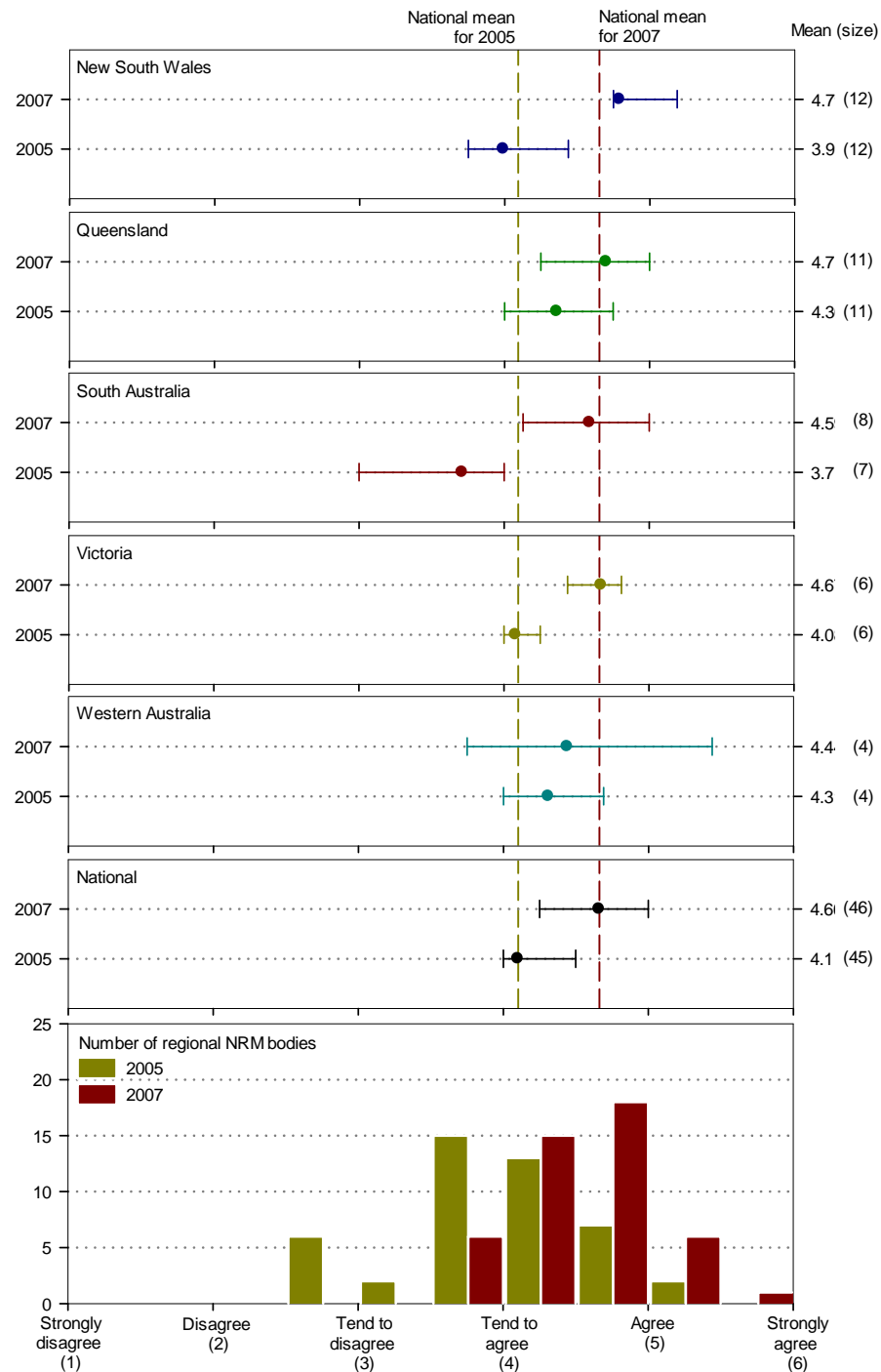


Figure 64 (Q64 and SQ1) *“In relation to the most recent NRM planning activities, how effective do you think the engagement processes have been in contributing to regional decision making?”*

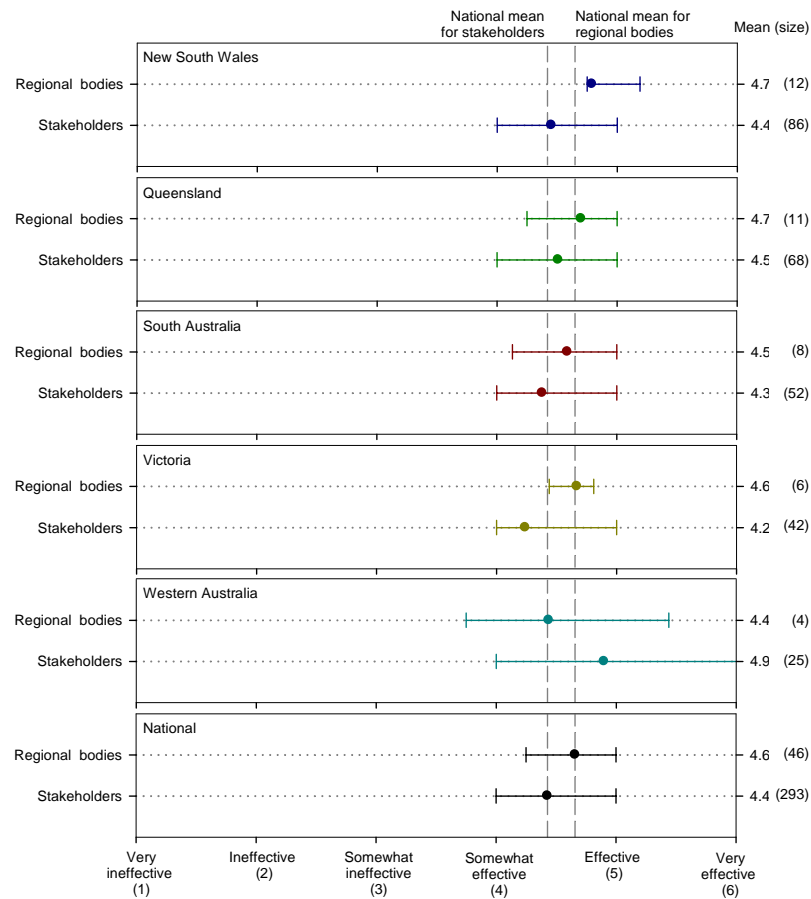
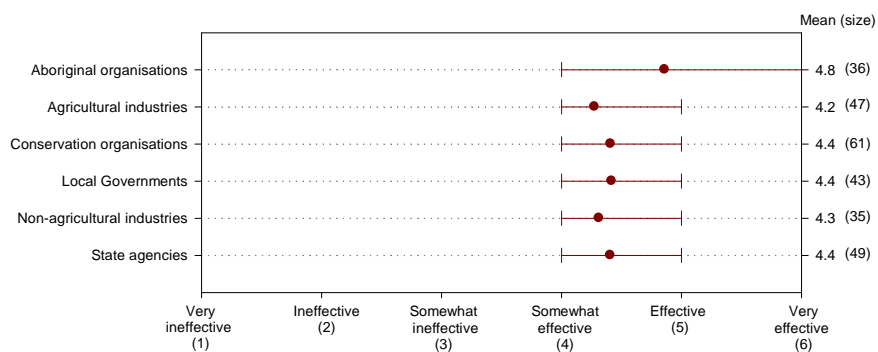


Figure 65 (SQ1) *“In relation to the most recent NRM planning activities, how effective do you think the engagement processes have been in contributing to regional decision making?”*



7.2.2 Opportunities for NRM engagement (E2.2)

Figure 66 (Q66) “In the last 12 months the regional body has initiated or supported sufficient activities for community engagement.”

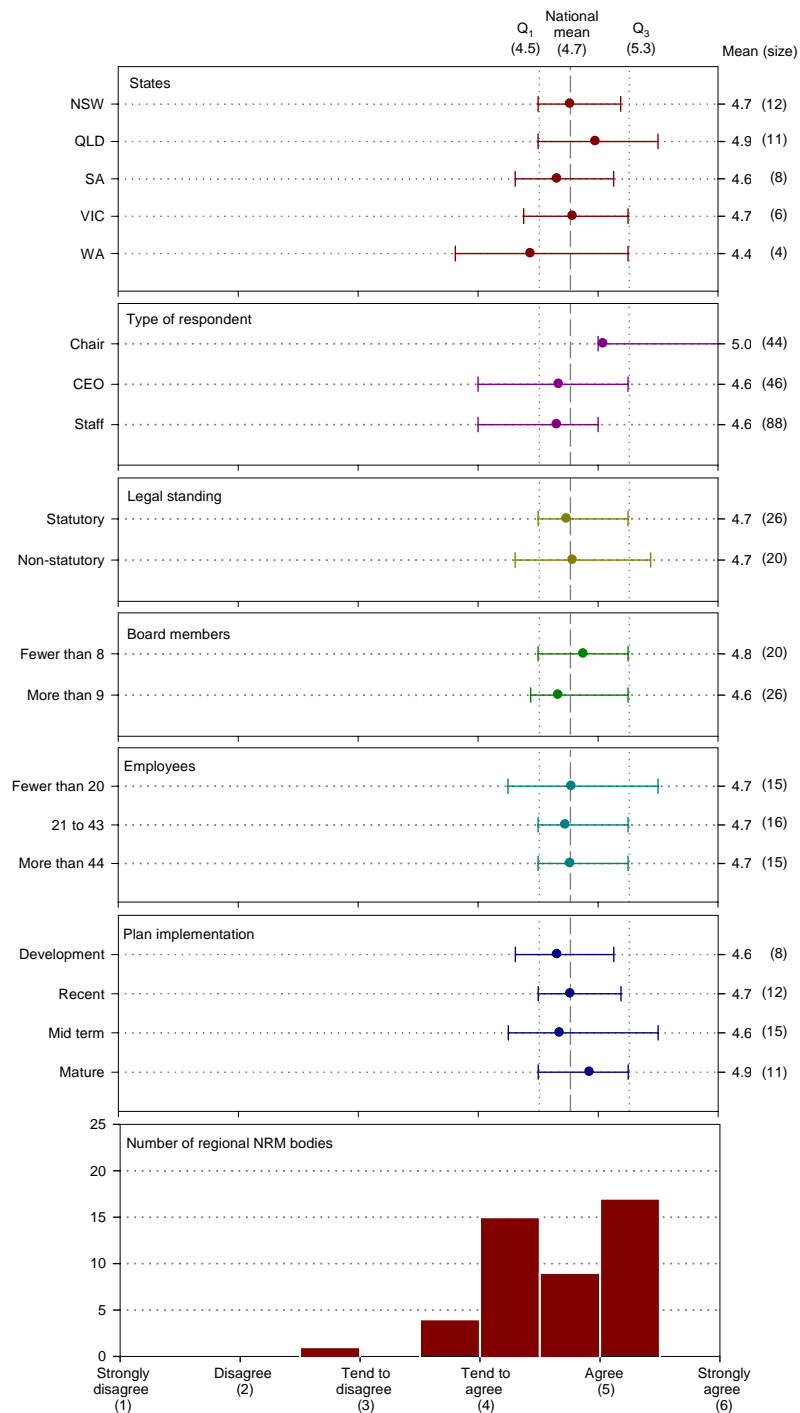


Figure 67 (Q66 and SQ3) *“In the last 12 months the regional body has initiated or supported sufficient activities for community engagement.”*

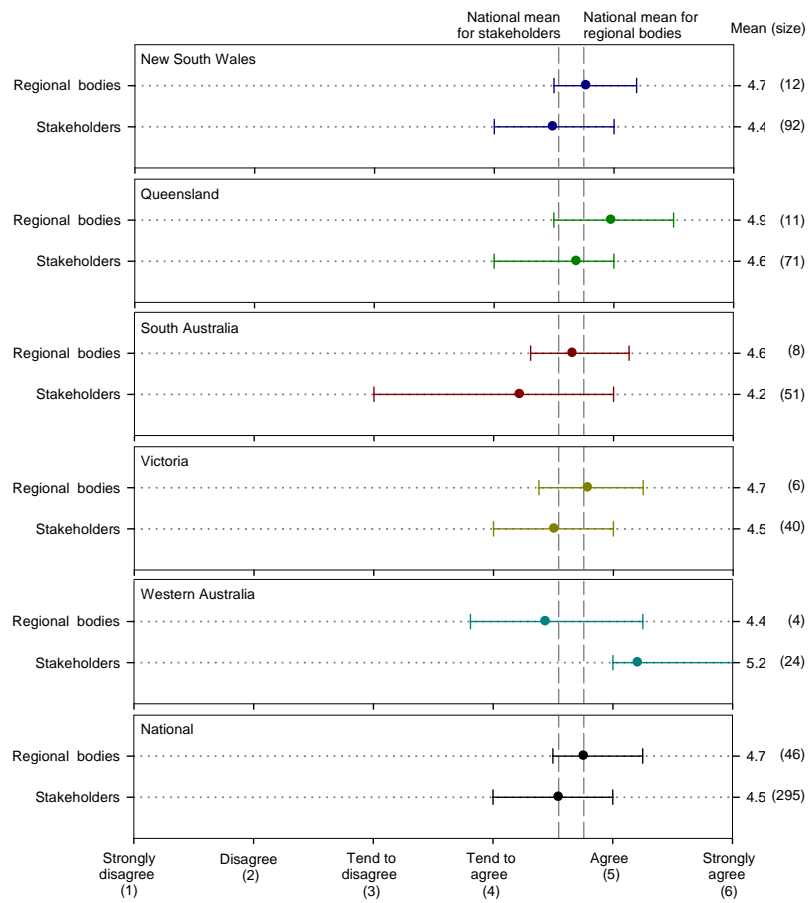
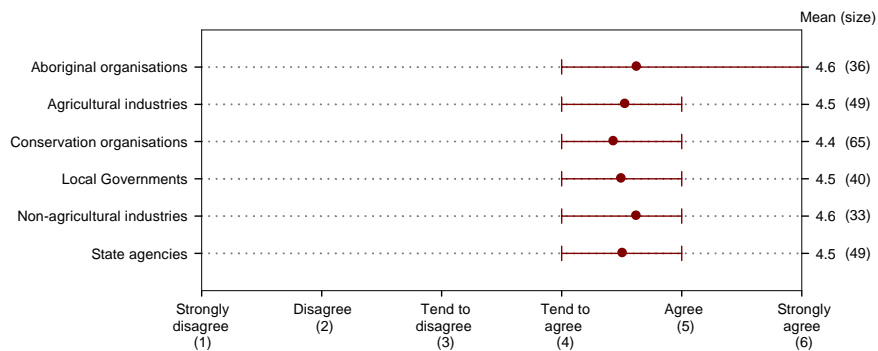


Figure 68 (SQ3) *“In the last 12 months the regional body has initiated or supported sufficient activities for community engagement.”*



7.3 Quality and scale of community engagement (E3)

The success statement associated with the quality and scale of community engagement stated:

“There has been an increase in the quality and scale of participation in the full range of regional NRM activities”

7.3.1 Scale Community Engagement (E3.1)

Level of participation

Figure 69 (Q67) “In the last 12 months the level of participation by stakeholders, landholders and the community in these activities has been...”

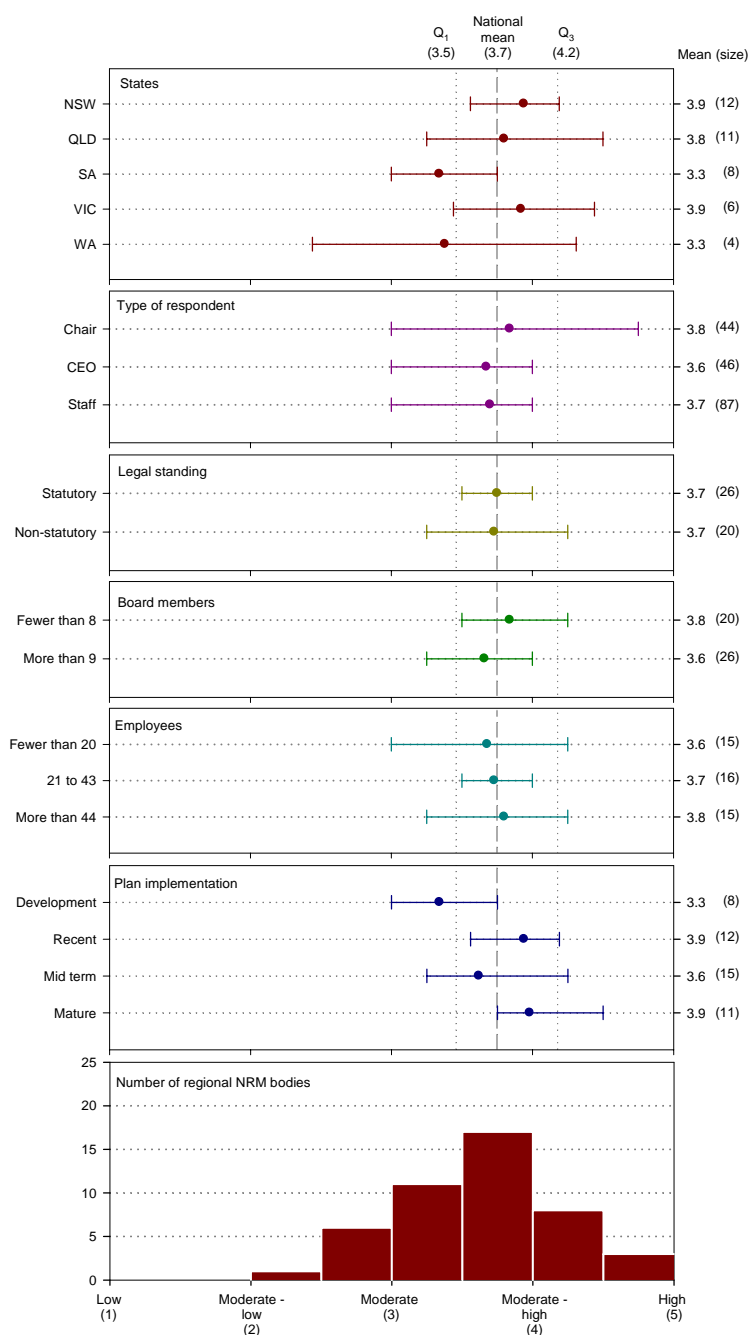


Figure 70 (Q67 and SQ4) “In the last 12 months the level of participation by stakeholders, landholders and the community in these activities has been...”

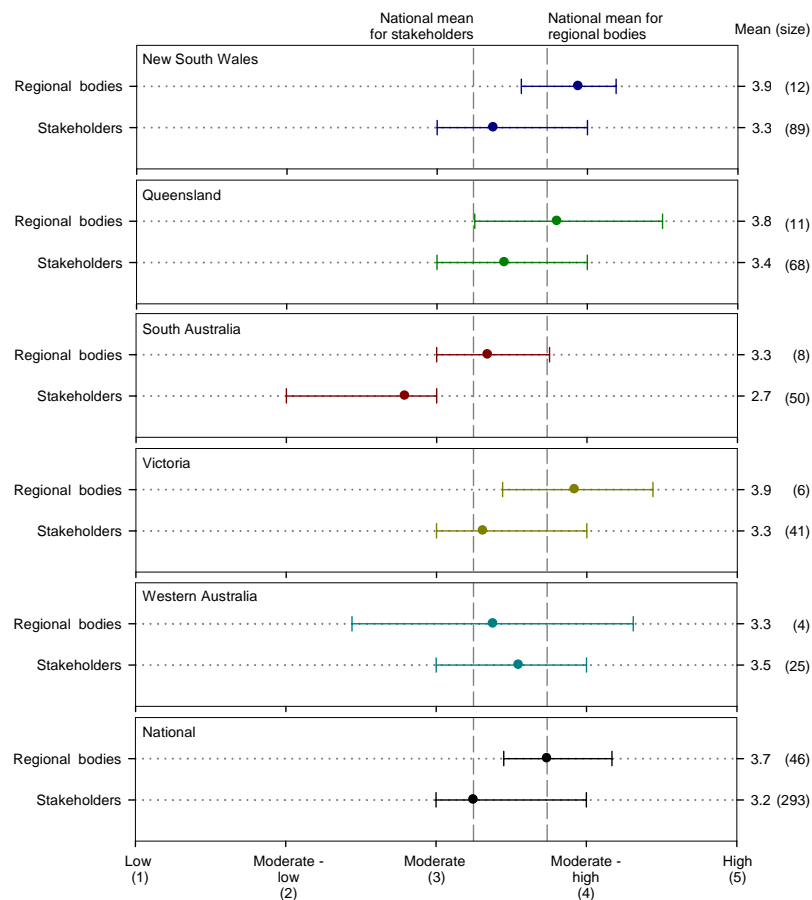
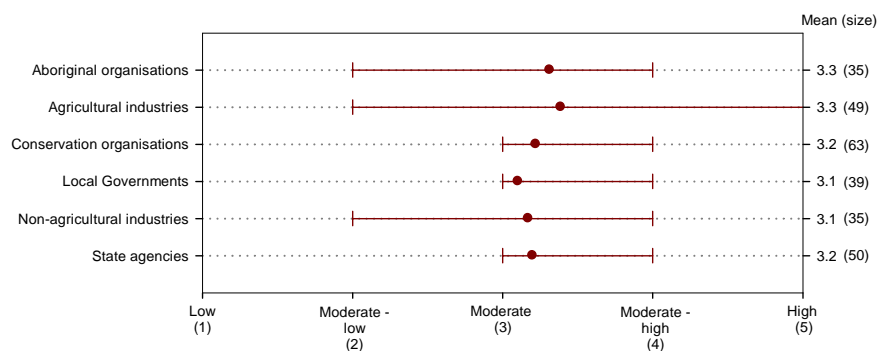


Figure 71 (SQ4) “In the last 12 months the level of participation by stakeholders, landholders and the community in these activities has been...”



Diversity of participation

Figure 72 (Q68) *"In the last two years, the diversity of stakeholder groups involved in regional body activities has been appropriate."*

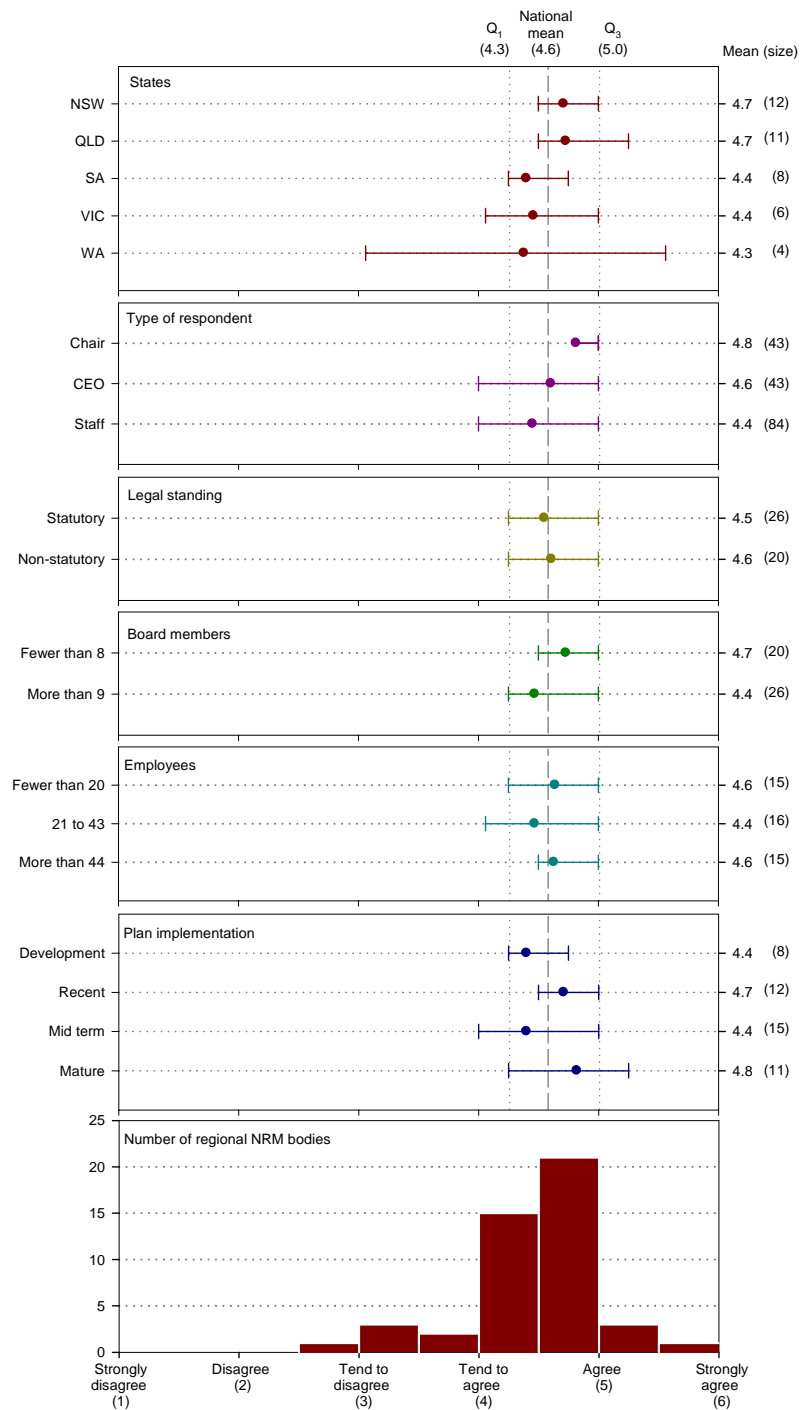


Figure 73 (Q68 and SQ6) *“In the last two years, the diversity of stakeholder groups involved in regional body activities has been appropriate.”*

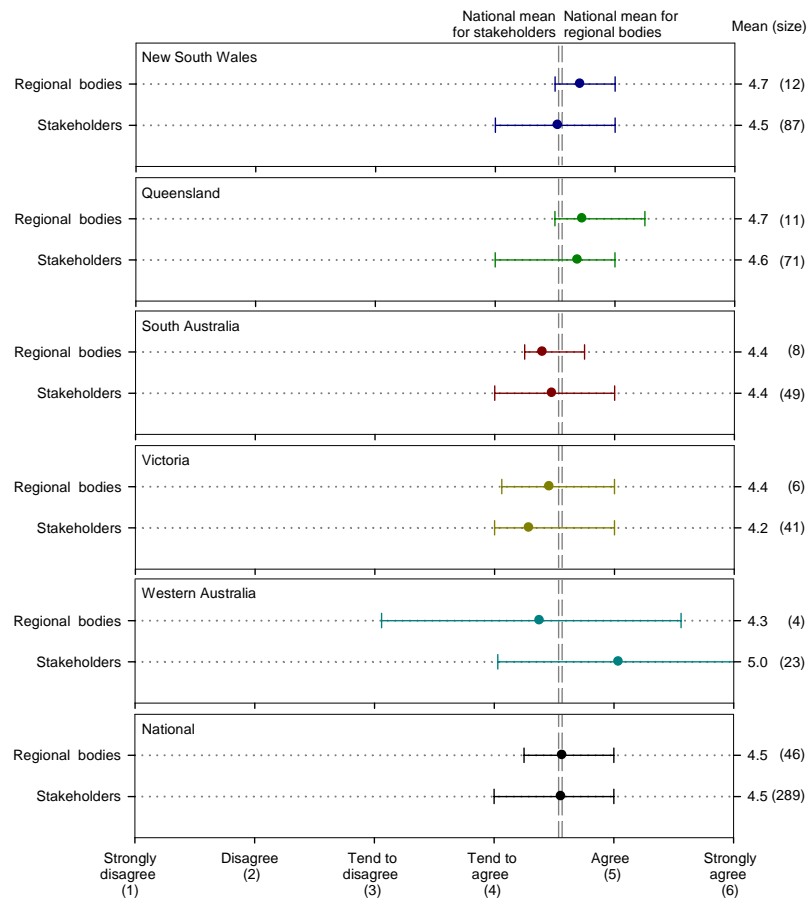
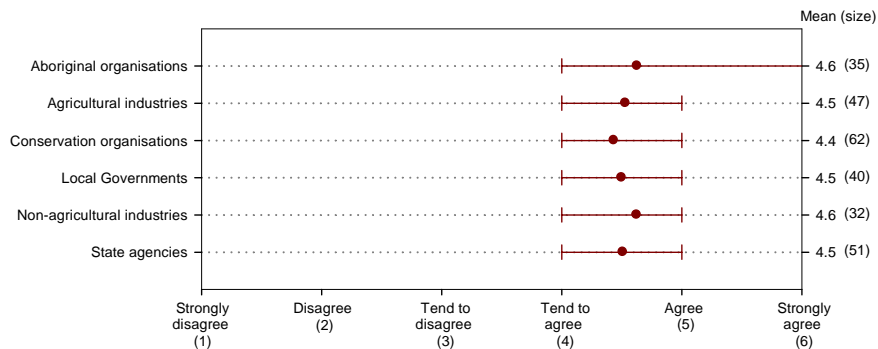


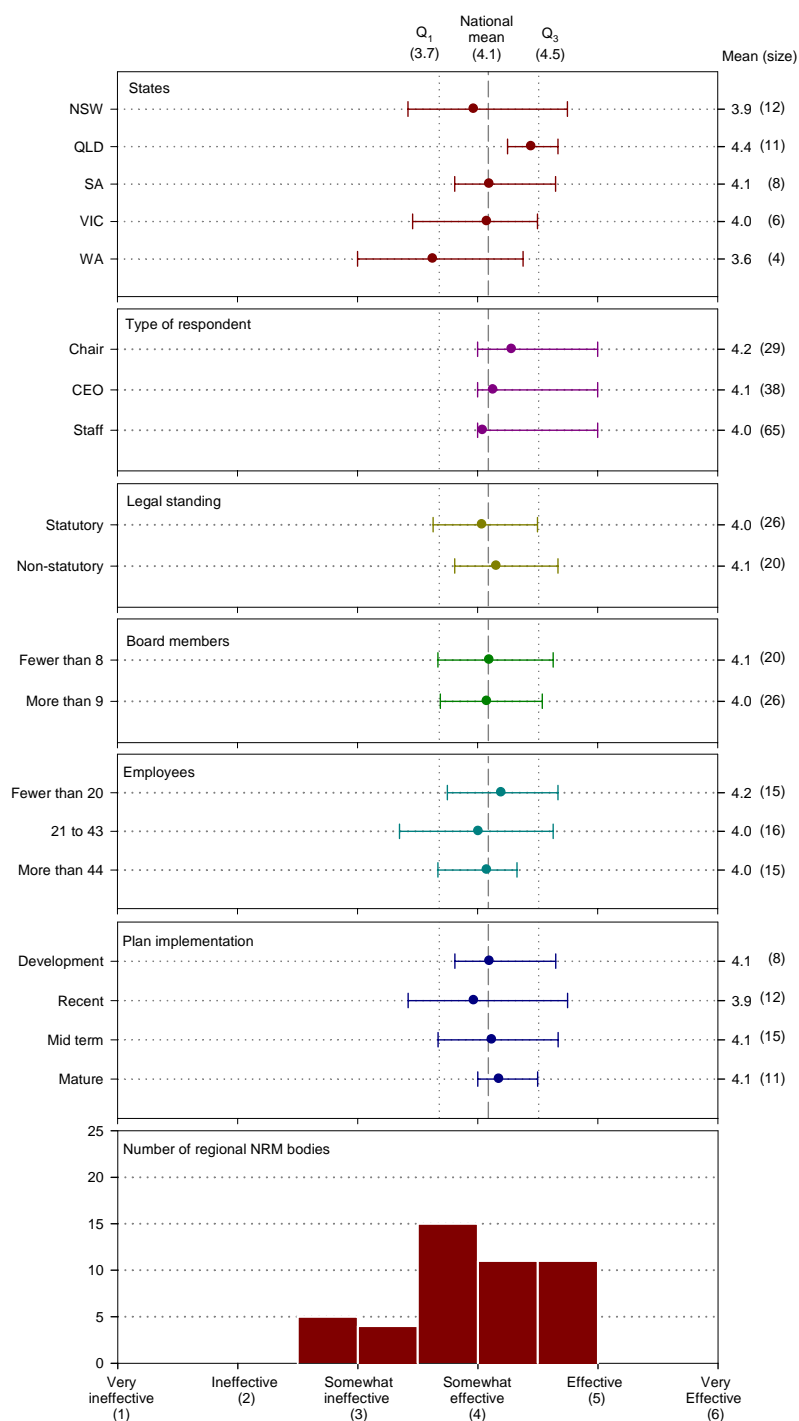
Figure 74 (SQ6) *“In the last two years, the diversity of stakeholder groups involved in regional body activities has been appropriate”*



7.3.2 Effectiveness of the range of engagement (E3.2)

The information presented in Figure 75 is based on those regional NRM bodies who indicated there were important regional stakeholders who had over the past 12 months had limited involvement with the regional NRM body.

Figure 75 (Q70) “How effective do you think the regional body has been in actively engaging those important, regional stakeholders who have had limited if any previous involvement with the regional body?”



7.3.3 Quality of the NRM Engagement (E3.3)

Figure 76 (Q71) “Overall would you say the quality of the community engagement process implemented by the regional body has been...”

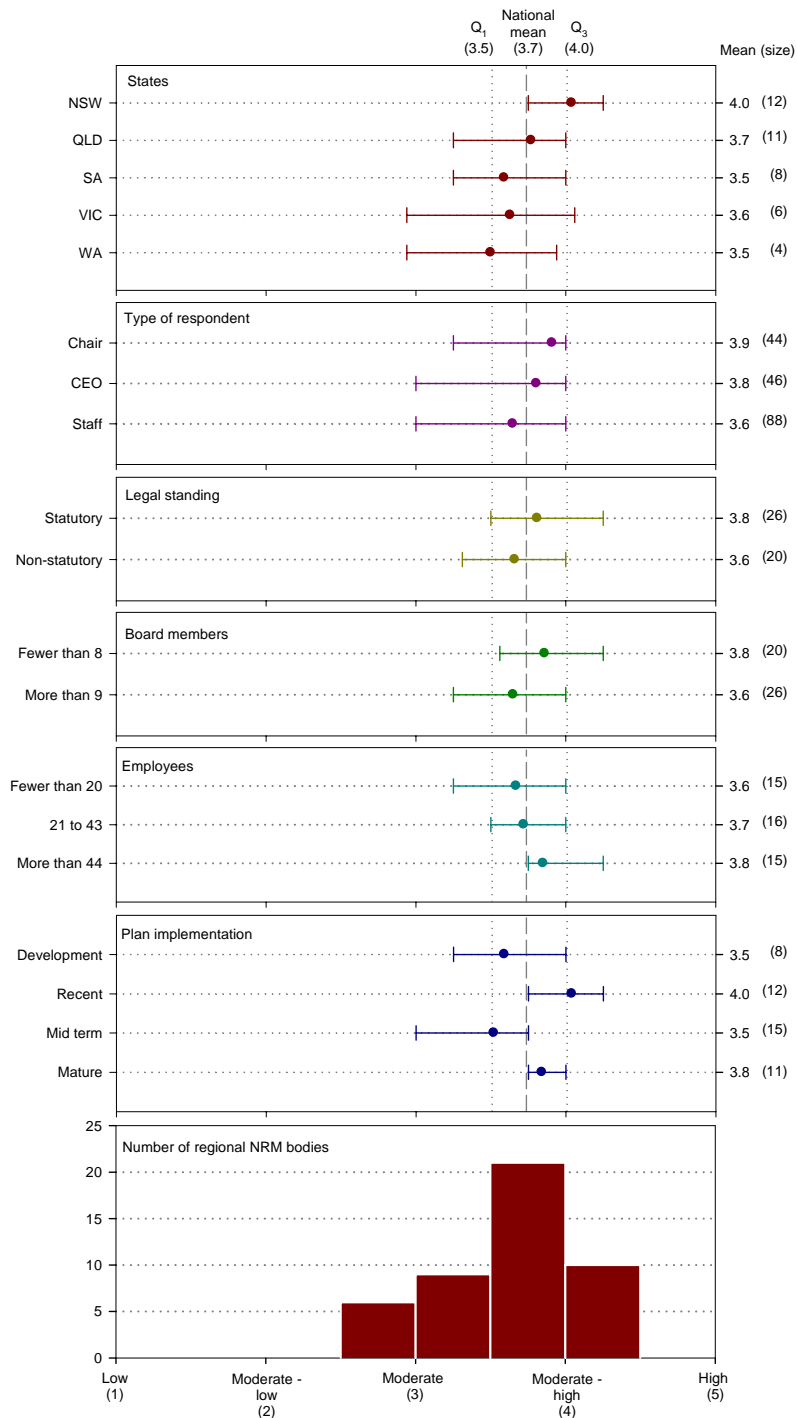


Figure 77 (Q71 and SQ7) “Overall would you say the quality of the community engagement process implemented by the regional body has been...”

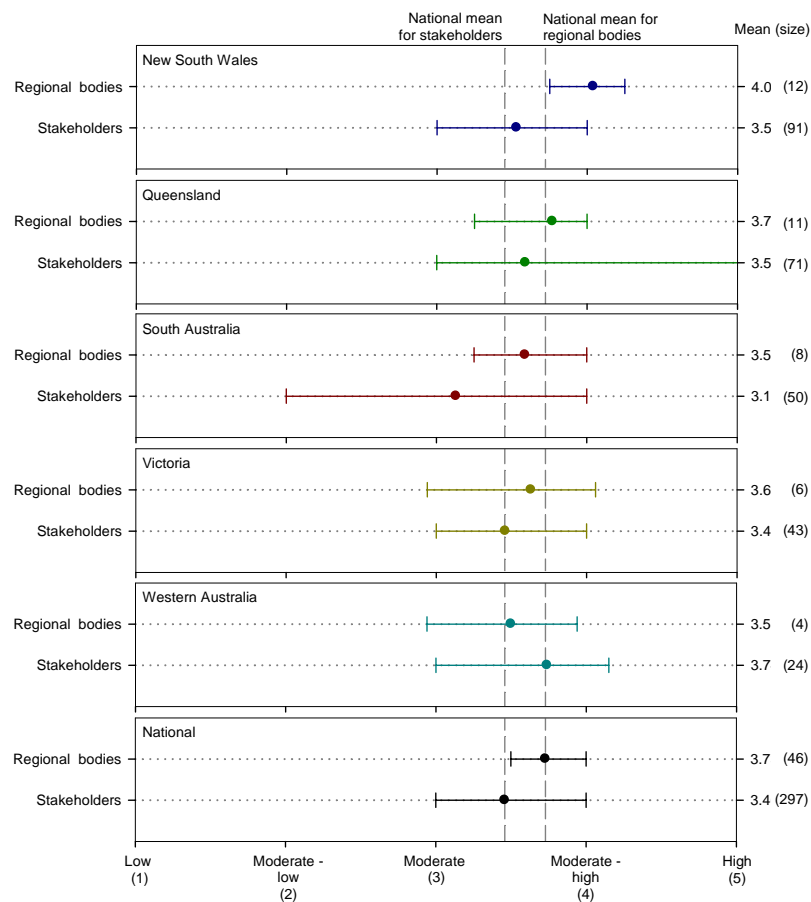
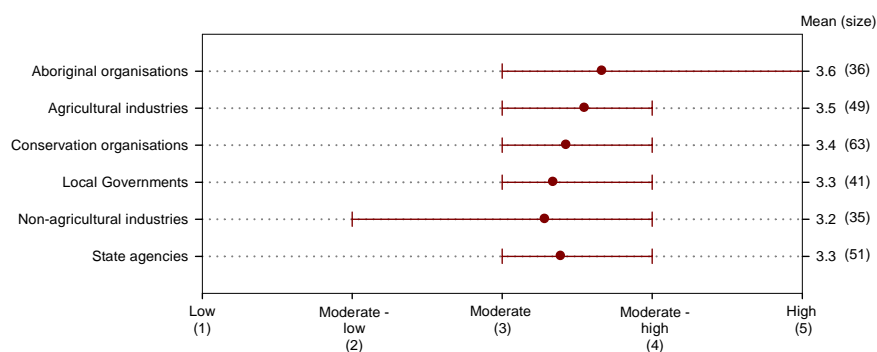


Figure 78 (SQ7) “Overall would you say the quality of the community engagement process implemented by the regional body has been...”



7.3.4 Community knowledge of the regional NRM process (E3.4)

This question was asked only of stakeholder organisations. Figure 79 shows responses for all stakeholder organisations within each state and Figure 80 shows responses for each type of stakeholder organisation.

Figure 79 (SQ8 by state) *Overall would you say...your organisation's knowledge and understanding of regional NRM processes and programs undertaken by the regional body, including plan development, investment strategies, implementation and on ground actions, has been...*

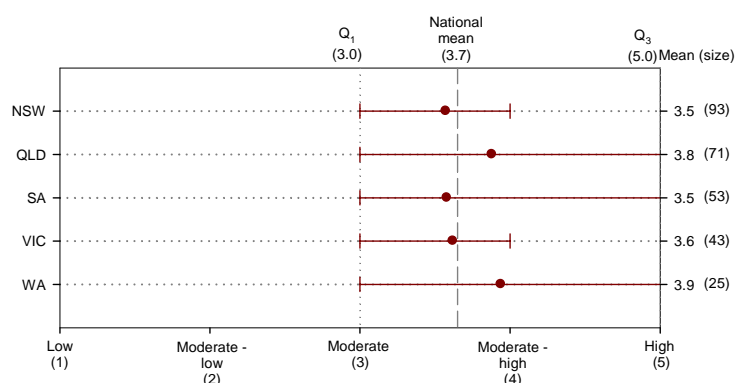
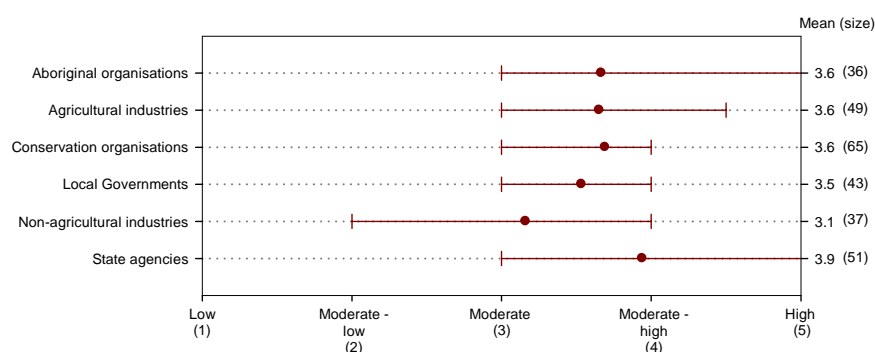


Figure 80 (SQ8 by type of stakeholder) *Overall would you say...your organisation's knowledge and understanding of regional NRM processes and programs undertaken by the regional body, including plan development, investment strategies, implementation and on ground actions, has been...*



7.3.5 Quality of the community engagement process (E3.5)

Level of trust

Figure 81 (Q72) “The level of trust between the regional body and stakeholder groups in the engagement process has been...”

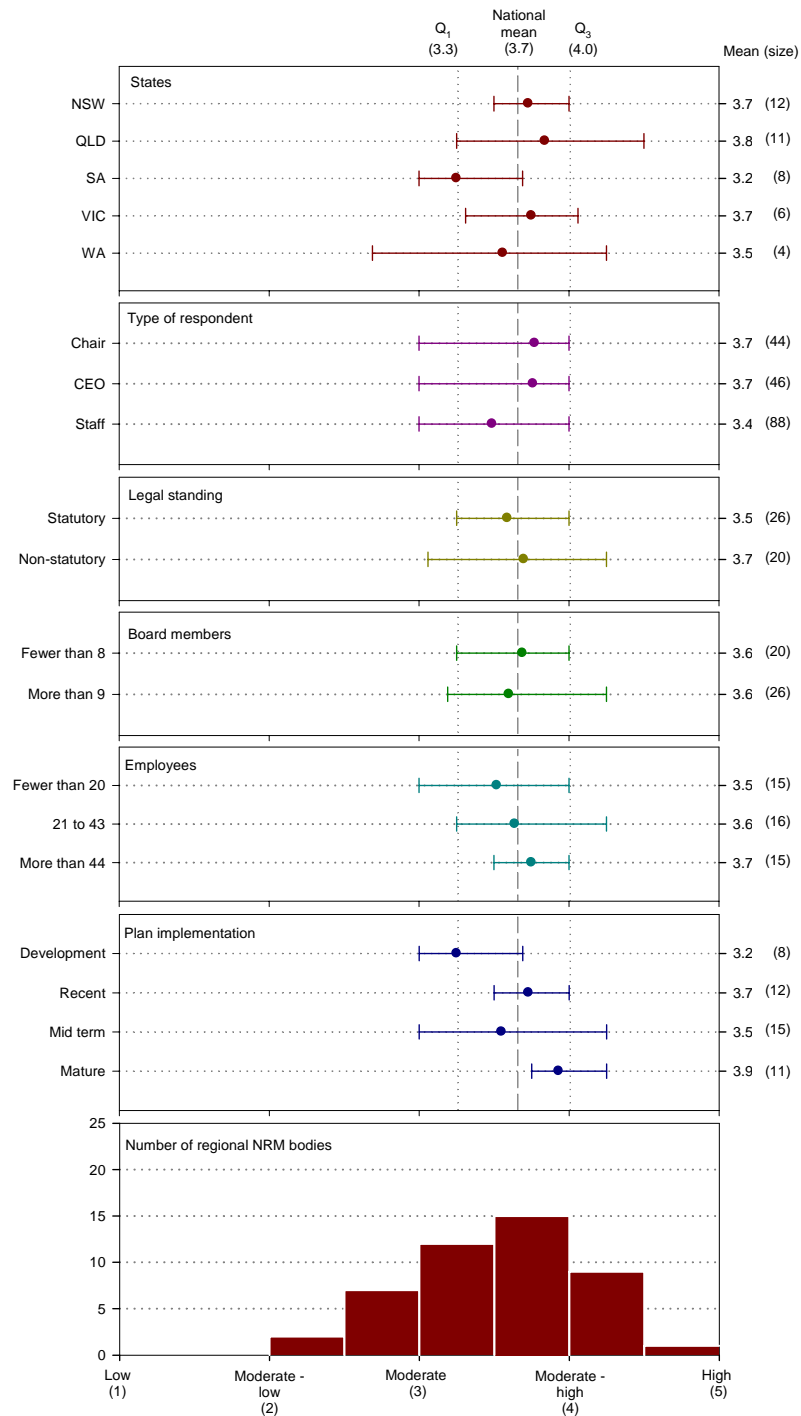


Figure 82 (Q72 and SQ9) “The level of trust between the regional body and stakeholder groups in the engagement process has been...”

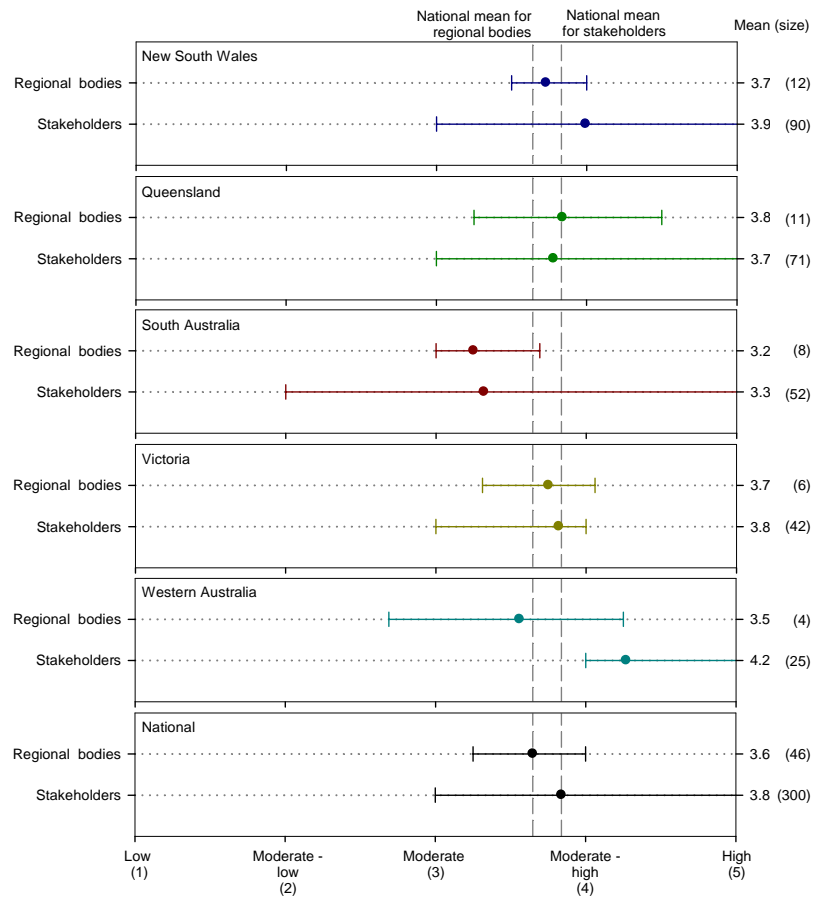
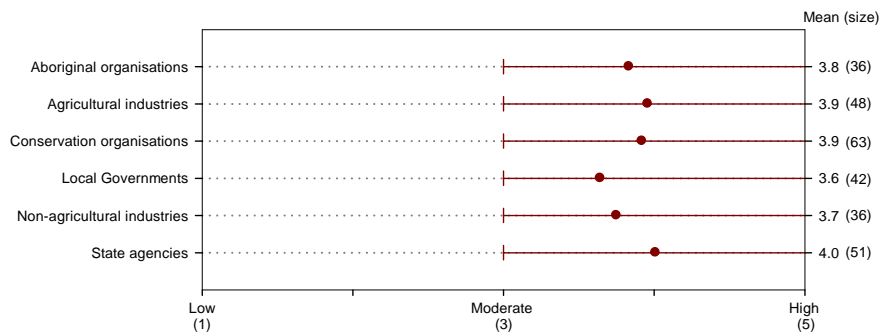


Figure 83 (SQ9) “The level of trust between the regional body and stakeholder groups in the engagement process has been...”



Level of transparency

Figure 84 (Q73) “The level of transparency in the engagement and decision making processes between stakeholder groups and the regional body has been...”

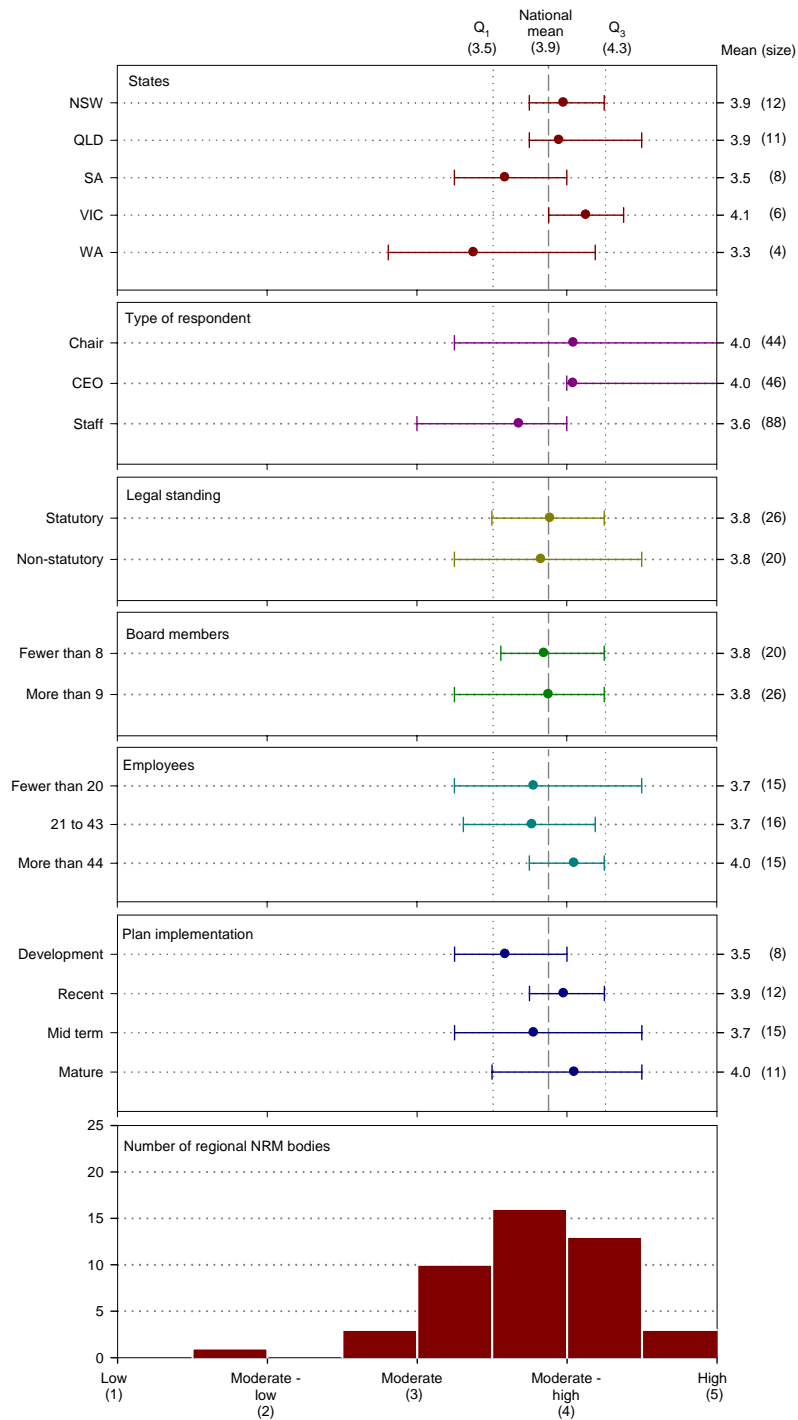


Figure 85 (Q73 and SQ10) “The level of transparency in the engagement and decision making processes between stakeholder groups and the regional body has been...”

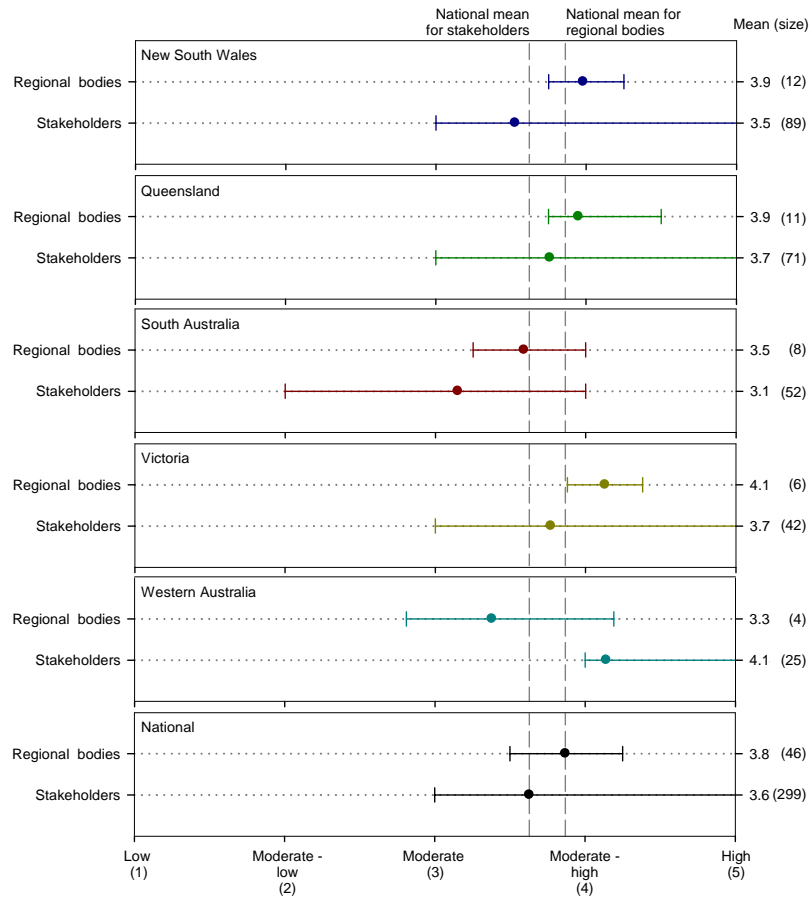
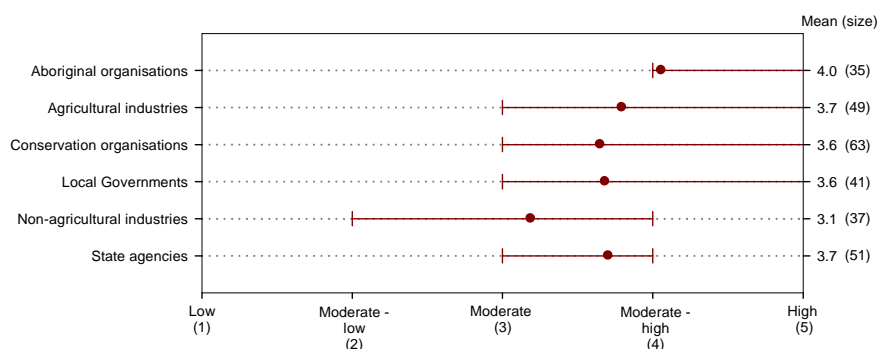


Figure 86 (SQ10) “The level of transparency in the engagement and decision making processes between stakeholder groups and the regional body has been...”



Inclusiveness of the engagement process

Figure 87 (Q74) “The willingness of the regional body to be inclusive in the engagement process has been ...”

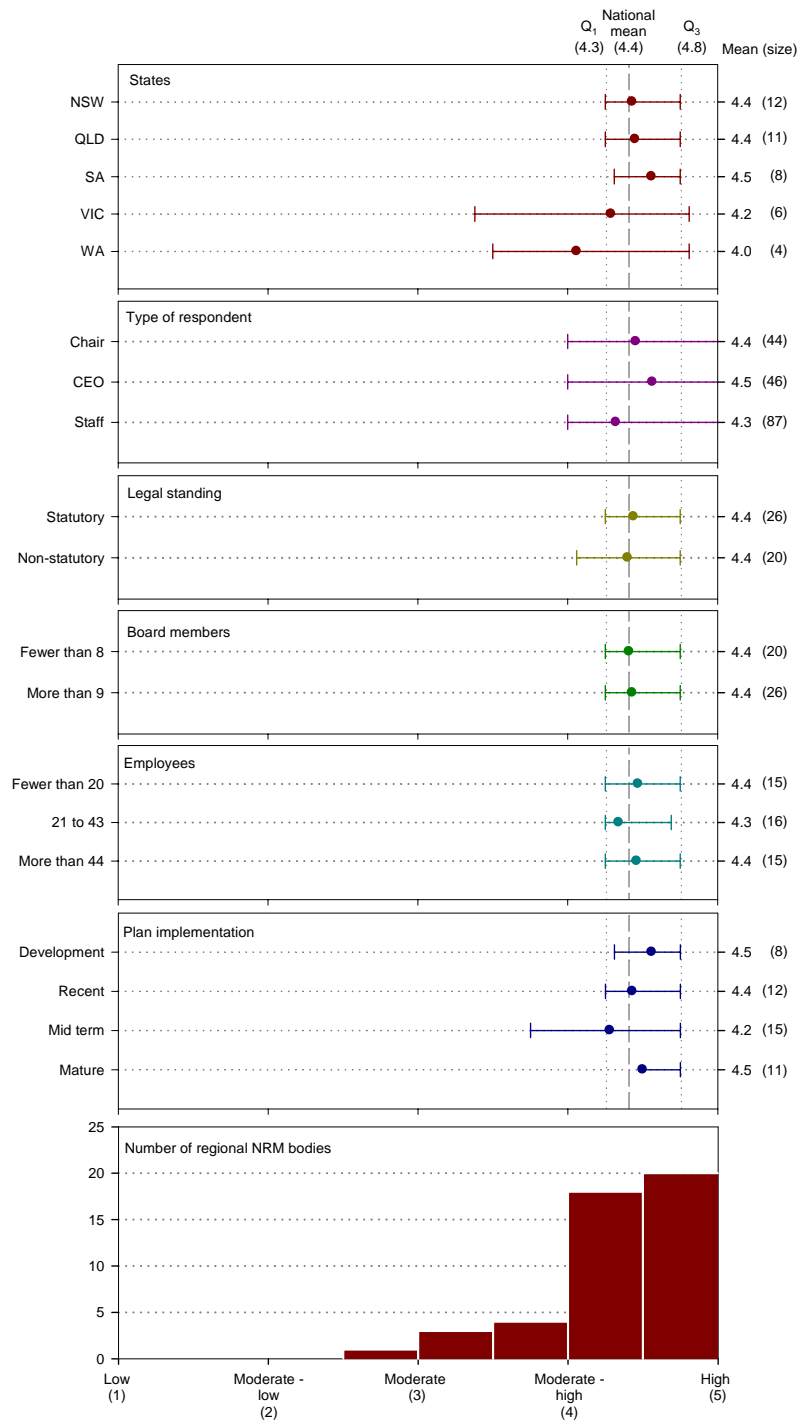


Figure 88 (Q74 and SQ11) *“The willingness of the regional body to be inclusive in the engagement process has been ...”*

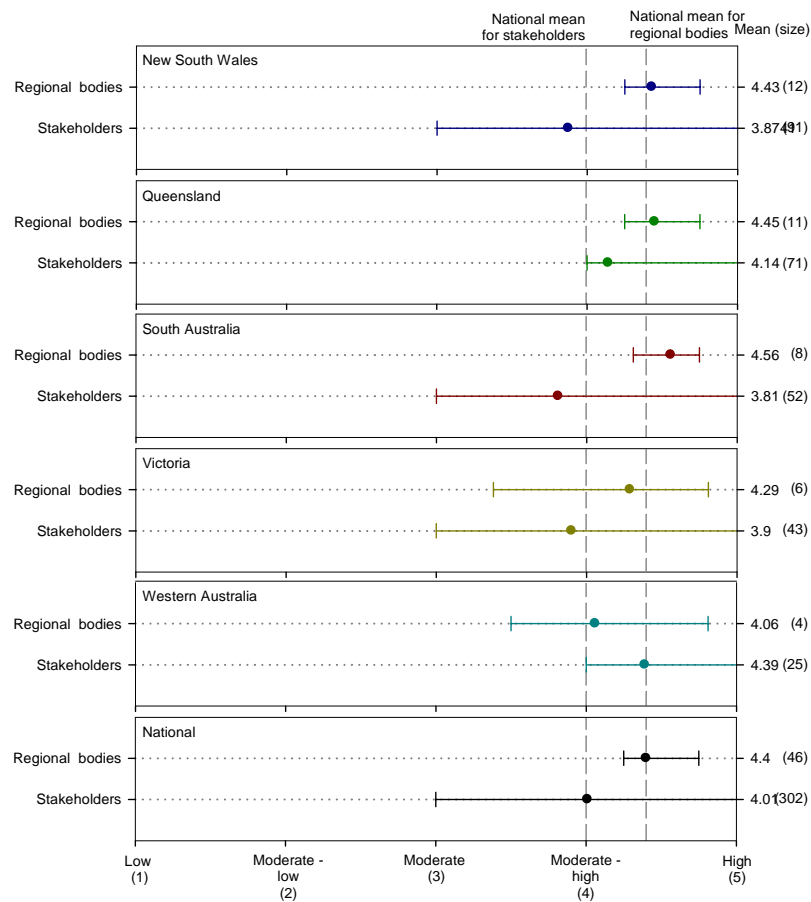
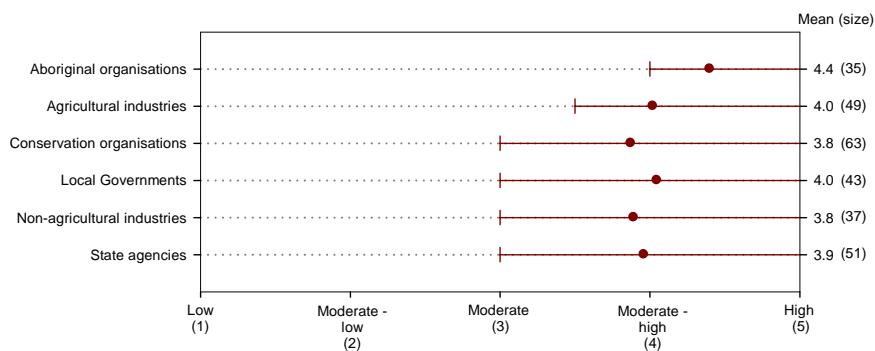


Figure 89(SQ11) *“The willingness of the regional body to be inclusive in the engagement process has been ...”*



Level of cooperation amongst stakeholders

Figure 90 (Q75) “The level of cooperation amongst stakeholders, landholders and community in the engagement process has been...”

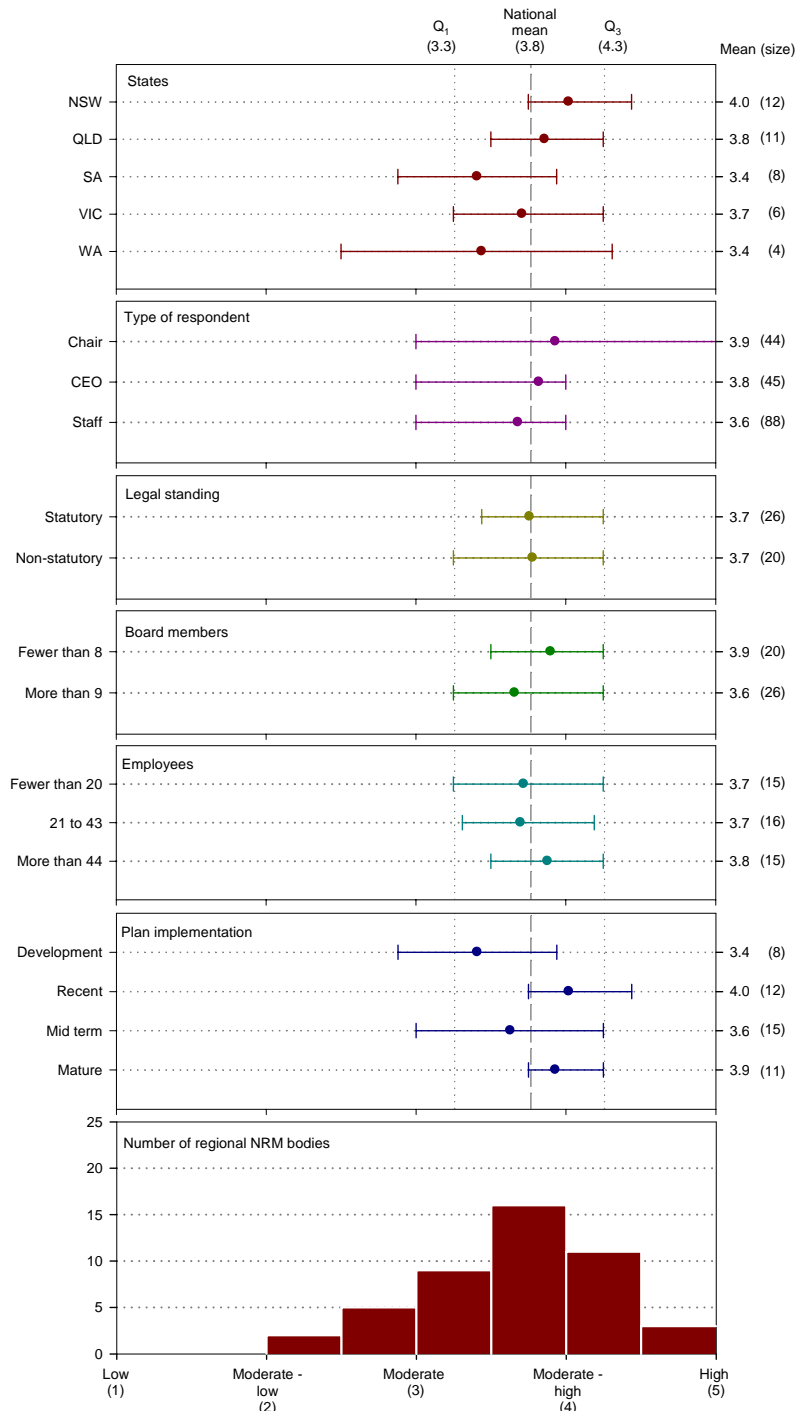


Figure 91(Q75 and SQ12) “The level of cooperation amongst stakeholders, landholders and community in the engagement process has been...”

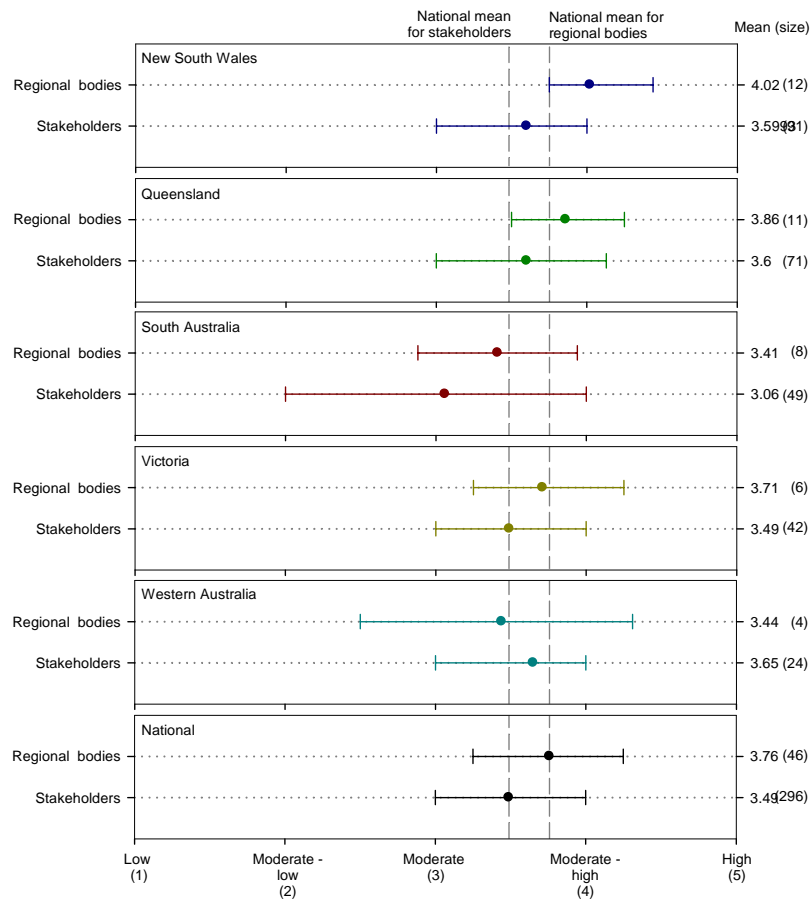
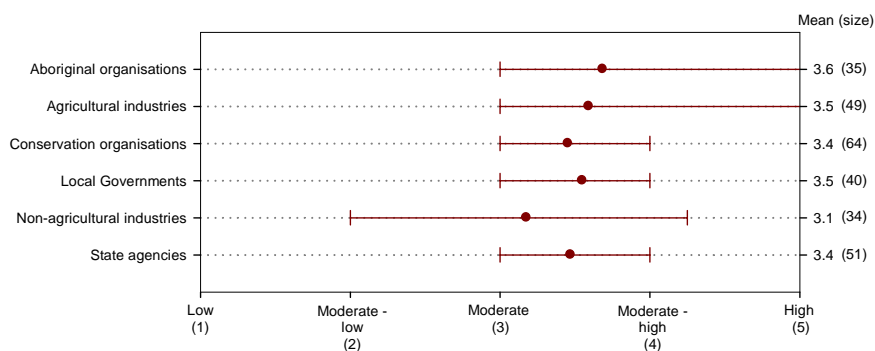


Figure 92 (SQ12) “The level of cooperation amongst stakeholders, landholders and community in the engagement process has been...”



Level of commitment to the engagement process

Figure 93 (Q76) “The level of ongoing commitment by the regional body to maintaining relationships with stakeholders, landholders and the community has been...”

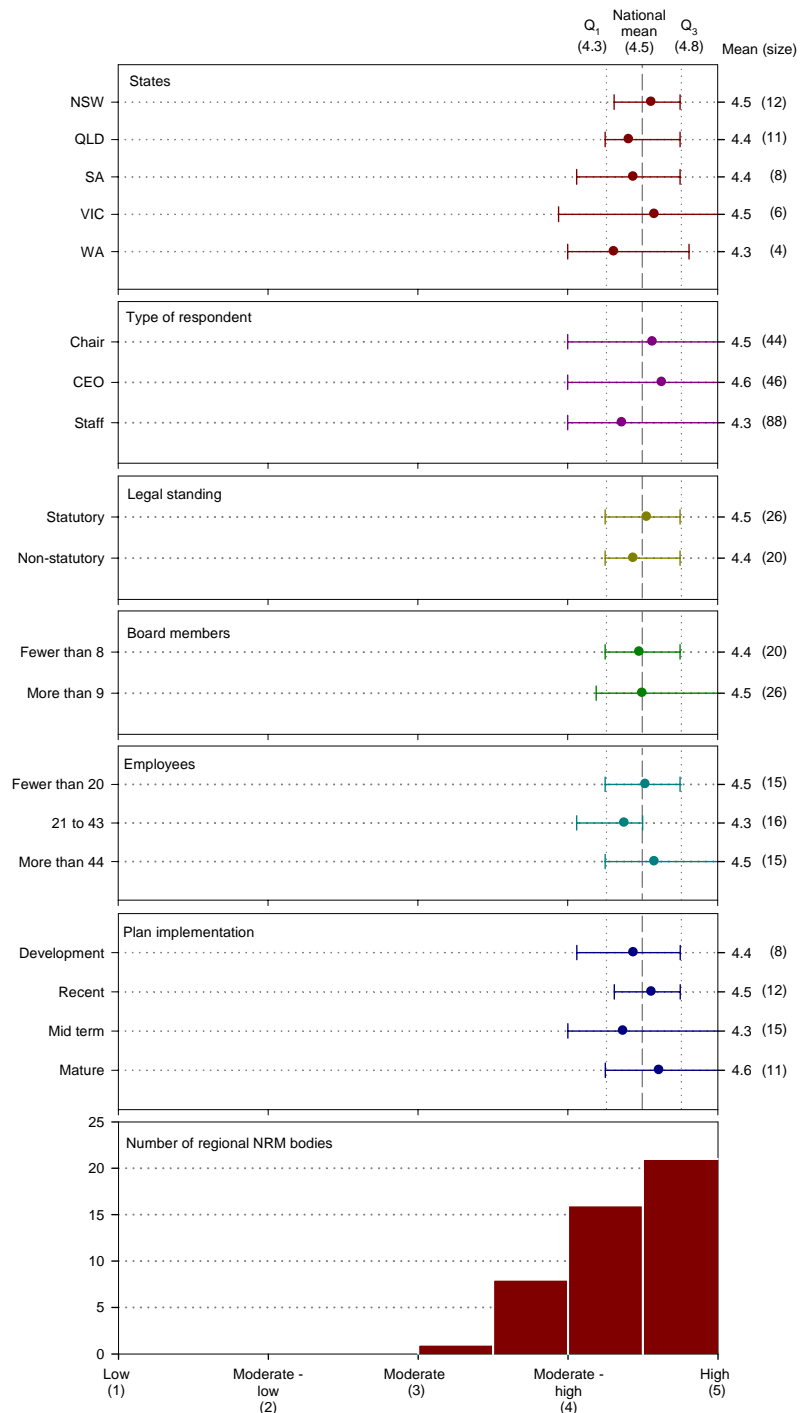


Figure 94 (Q76 and SQ13) “The level of ongoing commitment by the regional body to maintaining the relationship with this organisation has been...”

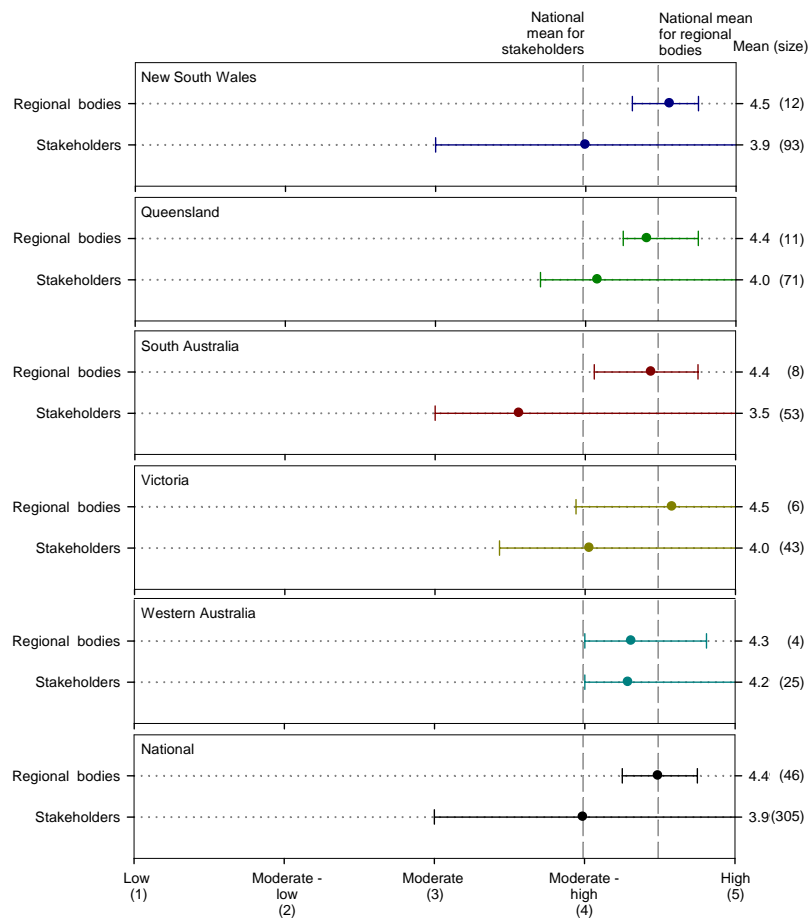
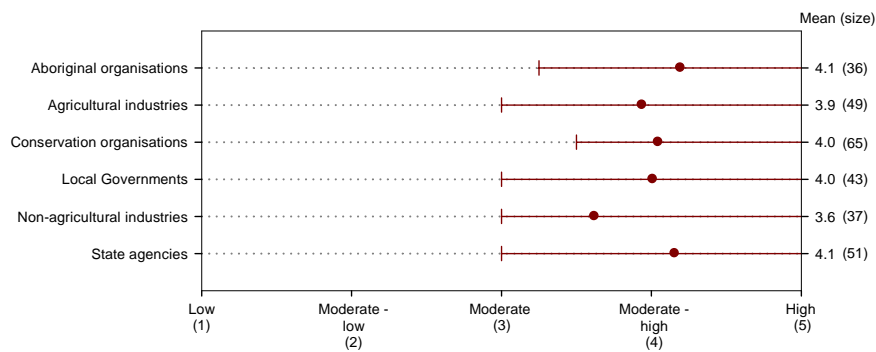


Figure 95 (SQ13) “The level of ongoing commitment by the regional body to maintaining the relationship with this organisation has been...”

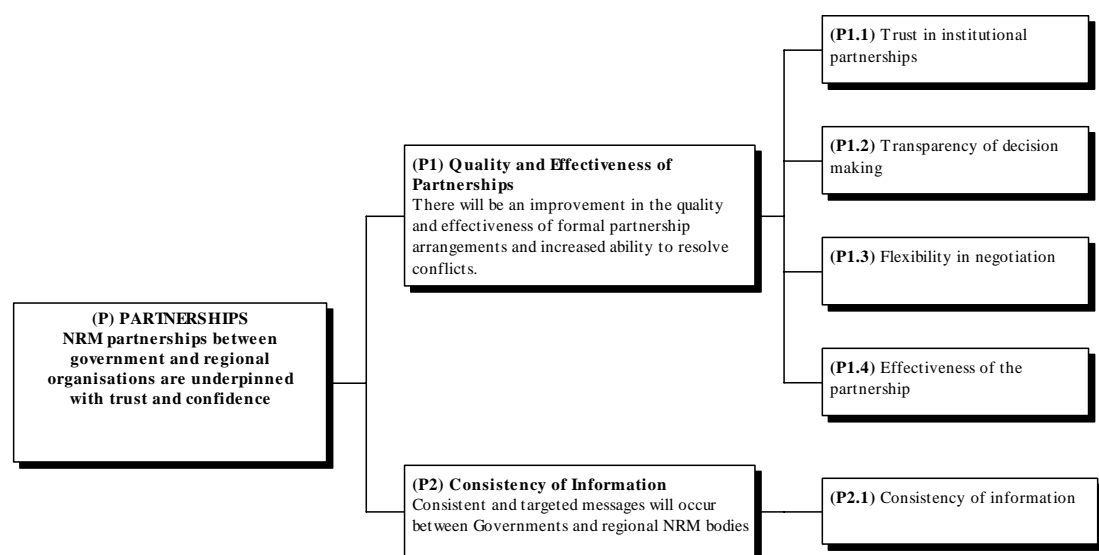


8. Partnerships in NRM

Figure 96 shows the component tree for partnerships in NRM, including the success statements and measures that were used to assess this indicator. The component tree includes two success statements which are:

- (i) **Quality and effectiveness of partnerships:** There will be an improvement in the quality and effectiveness of formal partnership arrangements and increased ability to resolve conflicts.
- (ii) **Effectiveness of community engagement:** Consistent and targeted messages will occur between governments and regional NRM bodies.

Figure 96 Component tree: Partnerships in NRM



Quality and effectiveness of partnerships

The quality of the partnership amongst regional NRM bodies, state and Australian Government agencies and departments was assessed through three attributes which included trust, transparency of decision making and flexibility in negotiation.

In relation to trust, Figure 99 shows the level of trust to be relatively high between the Australian Government and regional NRM bodies and between the Australian Government and state governments. Conversely, state governments and Regional NRM bodies also showed a relatively high level of trust in the Australian Government.

However, while state governments indicated a high level of trust in regional NRM bodies, the level of trust that regional NRM bodies had in state government agencies and departments was comparatively low (Figure 99). Relatively low levels of trust by regional NRM bodies in state agencies and departments occurred more so in New South Wales than in other states and may in

part have been associated with the restructuring of government agencies and departments which was occurring at the time in this state.

Similar findings occurred in relation to the transparency of decision making (Figure 102), with 50% of regional NRM bodies indicating relatively low levels of transparency in decision making by state government agencies and departments. A comparison of regional NRM bodies across all states also showed lower levels of decision making transparency amongst state agencies and departments in New South Wales and South Australia (Figure 100). Figure 102 also shows a tendency for the Australian Government to evaluate the decision making transparency of state agencies and departments as relatively lower than other partnership relationships.

Flexibility of negotiation was relatively high within partnership arrangements (Figure 105). However, and as occurred in relation to trust and transparency, regional NRM bodies reported relatively lower levels of flexibility in decision making amongst state agencies and departments. Low levels of state flexibility in decision making were most commonly reported amongst regional NRM bodies in New South Wales and Western Australia. In contrast regional NRM bodies in Victoria indicated state agencies and departments in Victoria were relatively more flexible in their decision making.

Overall regional NRM bodies indicated that the partnership arrangements that they have with Australian and state government agencies and departments were effective (Figure 106 and Figure 108), although Australian Government partnership arrangements were seen as more effective than those with the states. Furthermore, the least effective partnership arrangements occurred between regional NRM bodies and state agencies and departments, with regional NRM bodies in New South Wales showing relatively lower levels of effective partnerships with both state and Australian Government agencies and departments.

The findings also show there has been consistent improvement in the effectiveness of partnerships between regional NRM bodies and state and Australian Government agencies and departments over the past two years (Figure 107 and Figure 109). The most significant improvements have occurred in New South Wales, Queensland and Western Australia where two years ago 50% of regional NRM bodies indicated they did not have effective partnerships with state agencies and departments. In contrast in these states only 20% of regional NRM bodies now indicate that they do not have effective partnerships with state agencies and departments.

The findings in relation to trust, transparency, flexibility and the effectiveness of partnership arrangements between regional NRM bodies and state agencies and departments requires further investigation¹⁴. A clearer understanding of what the key partnership issues are would enable these issues to be better addressed and improve the effectiveness of regional NRM body and state government partnership arrangements.

¹⁴ For example, when predicting the effectiveness of the partnership relationship between regional NRM bodies and State government agencies and departments, a multiple regression analysis shows that it is the flexibility of negotiations, rather than trust or transparency which best explains the regional NRM bodies' judgement of effectiveness.

Consistency of information

Overall while regional NRM bodies believed they received consistent policy information from most Australian Government agencies and departments, 50% of regional NRM bodies believed they did not receive consistent policy information across most state government agencies and departments (Figure 113). The lack of consistent policy information provided to regional NRM bodies occurred primarily in New South Wales, Queensland and Western Australia and was less of an issue in South Australia and Victoria.

The provision of consistent policy information between state and Australian Government agencies and departments was also an issue for many regional NRM bodies (Figure 114), particularly amongst those regional NRM bodies in New South Wales and Western Australia.

8.1 Quality and effectiveness of partnerships (P1)

The success statement associated with the quality and effectiveness of partnerships stated:

“There will be an improvement in the quality and effectiveness of formal partnership arrangements and increased ability to resolve conflicts.”

8.1.1 Trust in institutional partnerships (P1.1)

Figure 97 (Q52) “As partners or investors in NAP and NHT programs, my regional body has a high level trust in the relationship with most **Australian Government NRM agencies and departments.**”

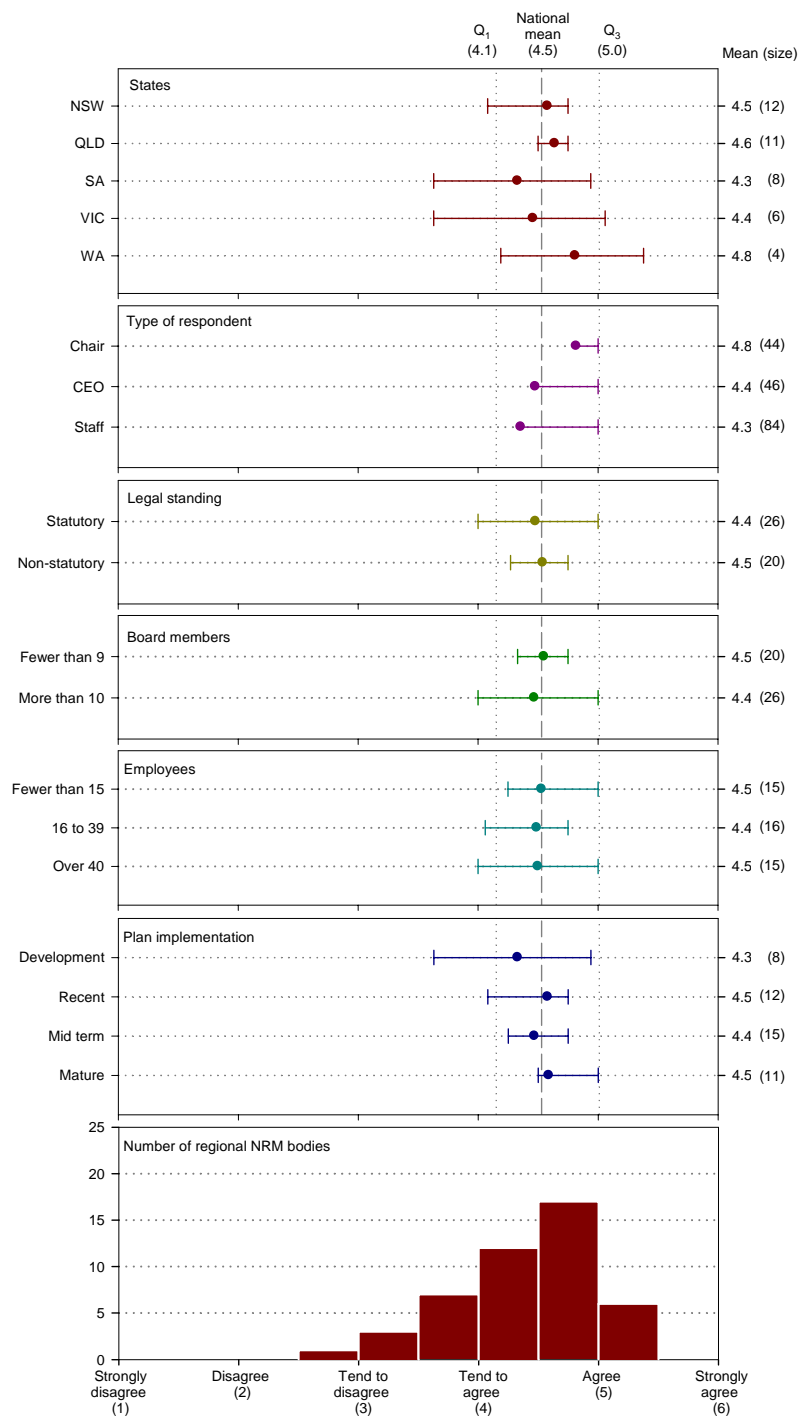


Figure 98 (Q45) “As partners or investors in NAP and NHT programs, my regional body has a high level trust in its relationship with most state government NRM agencies and departments.”

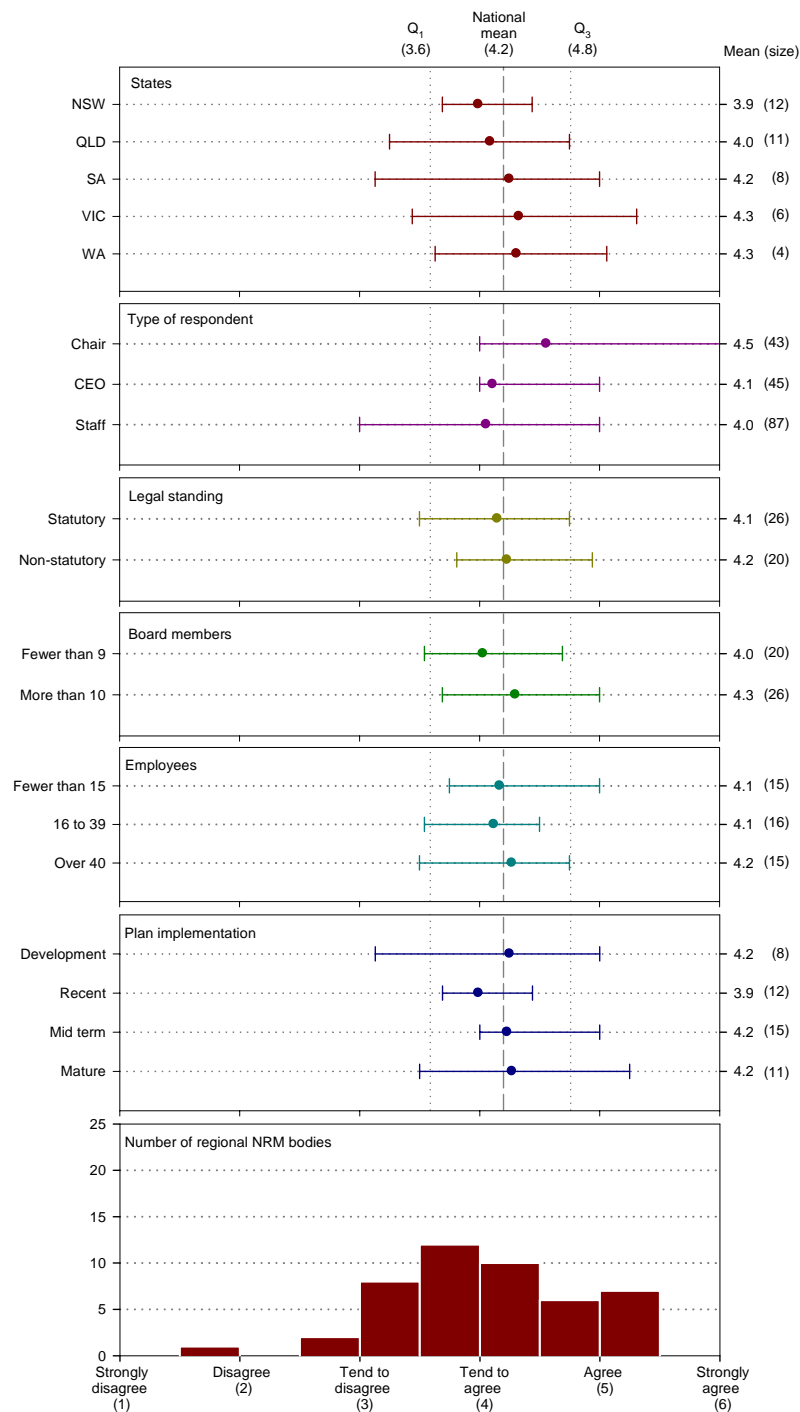
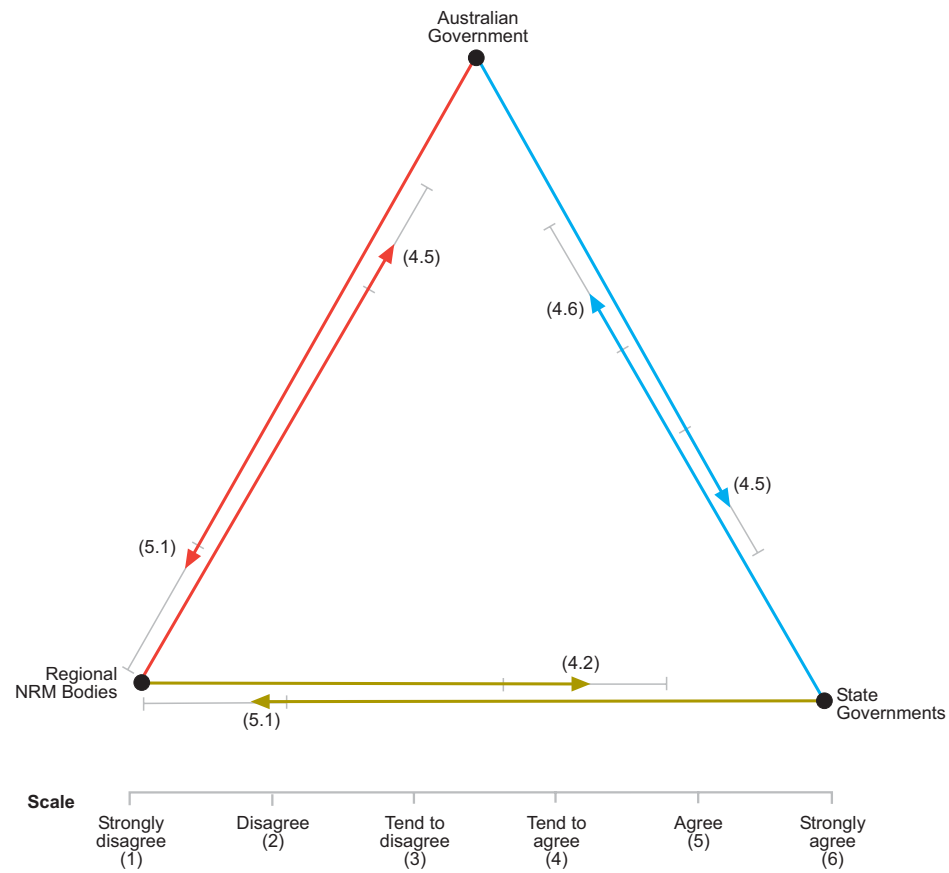


Figure 99 Level of trust in partnership arrangements



Note: Scale applies to all three axes

8.1.2 Transparency of decision making (P1.2)

Figure 100 (Q53) *“In relation to the work and funding of this regional body, there is a high level of transparency evident in the decision making processes of most Australian Government NRM agencies and departments.”*

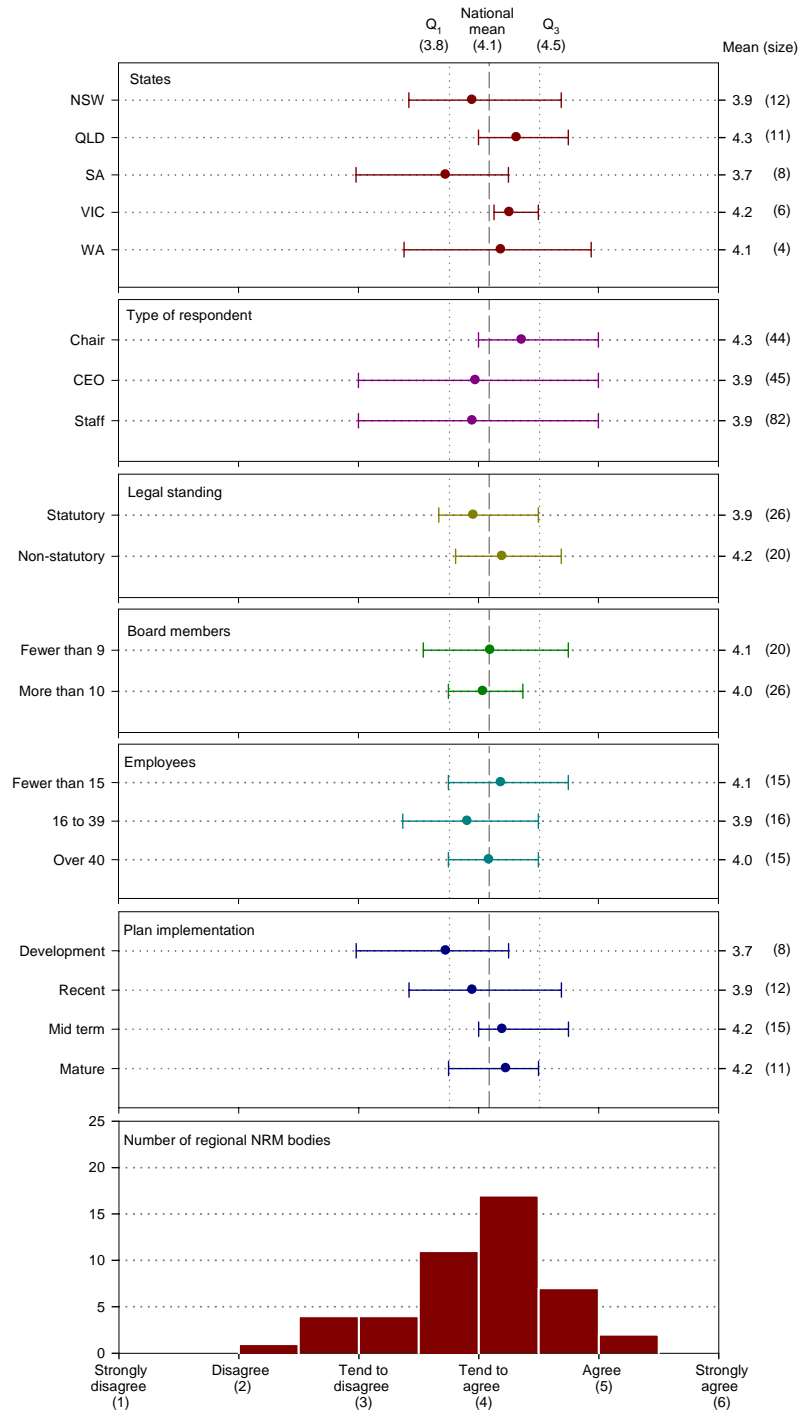


Figure 101 (Q46) "In relation to the work and funding of this regional body, there is a high level of transparency evident in the decision making processes used by most **state government agencies and departments**."

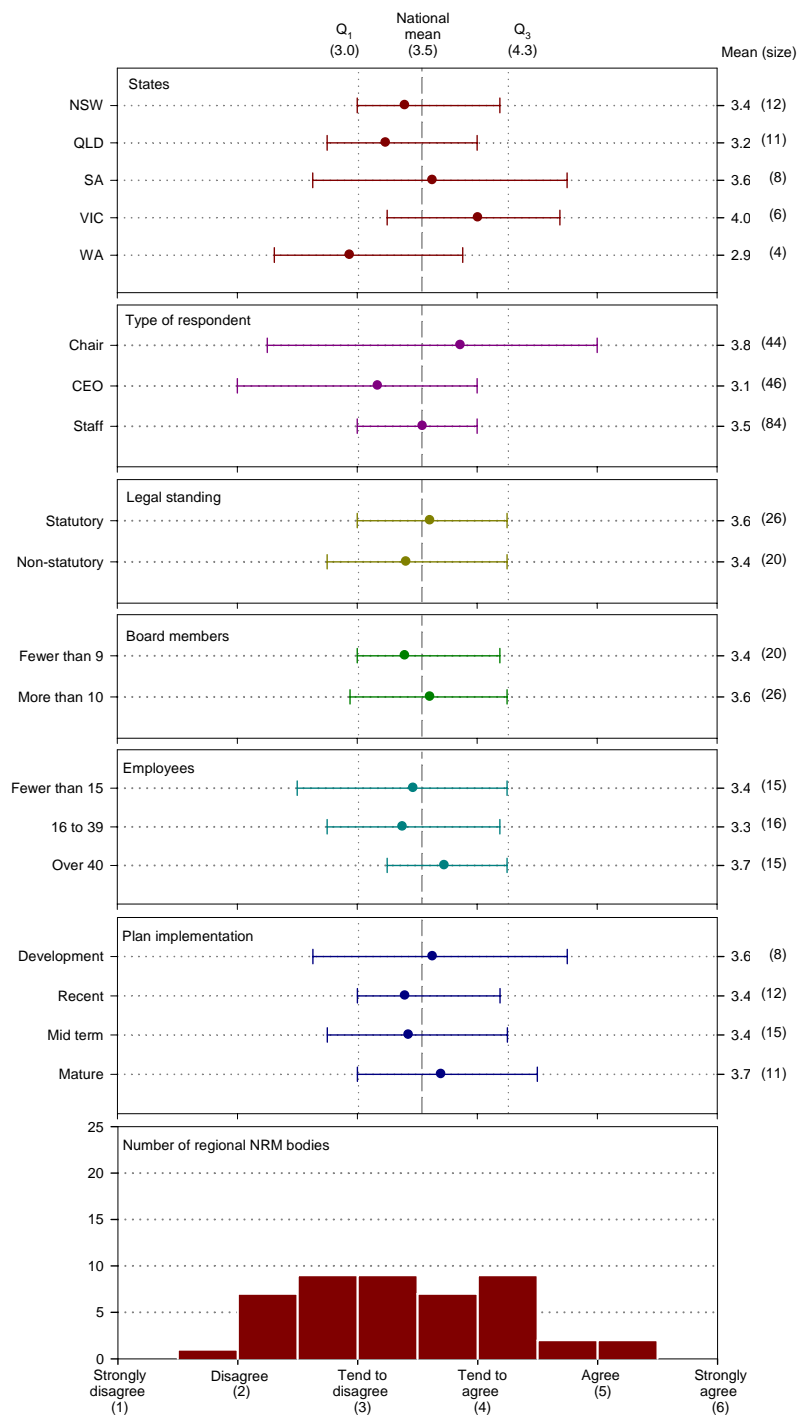
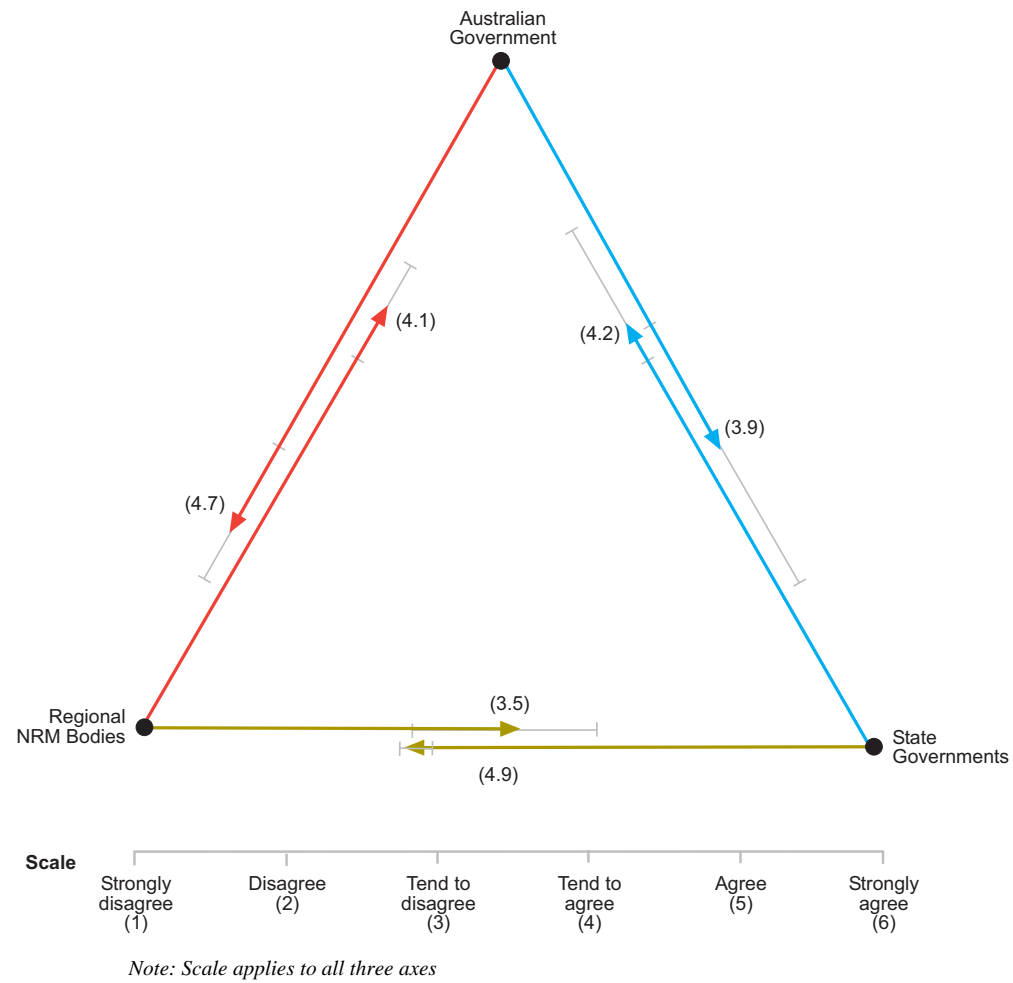


Figure 102 Level of transparency in the decision making within partnership arrangements



8.1.3 Flexibility in negotiation (P1.3)

Figure 103 (Q54) *Most **Australian Government NRM agencies and departments** have been flexible in considering the different viewpoints presented by the regional body.*

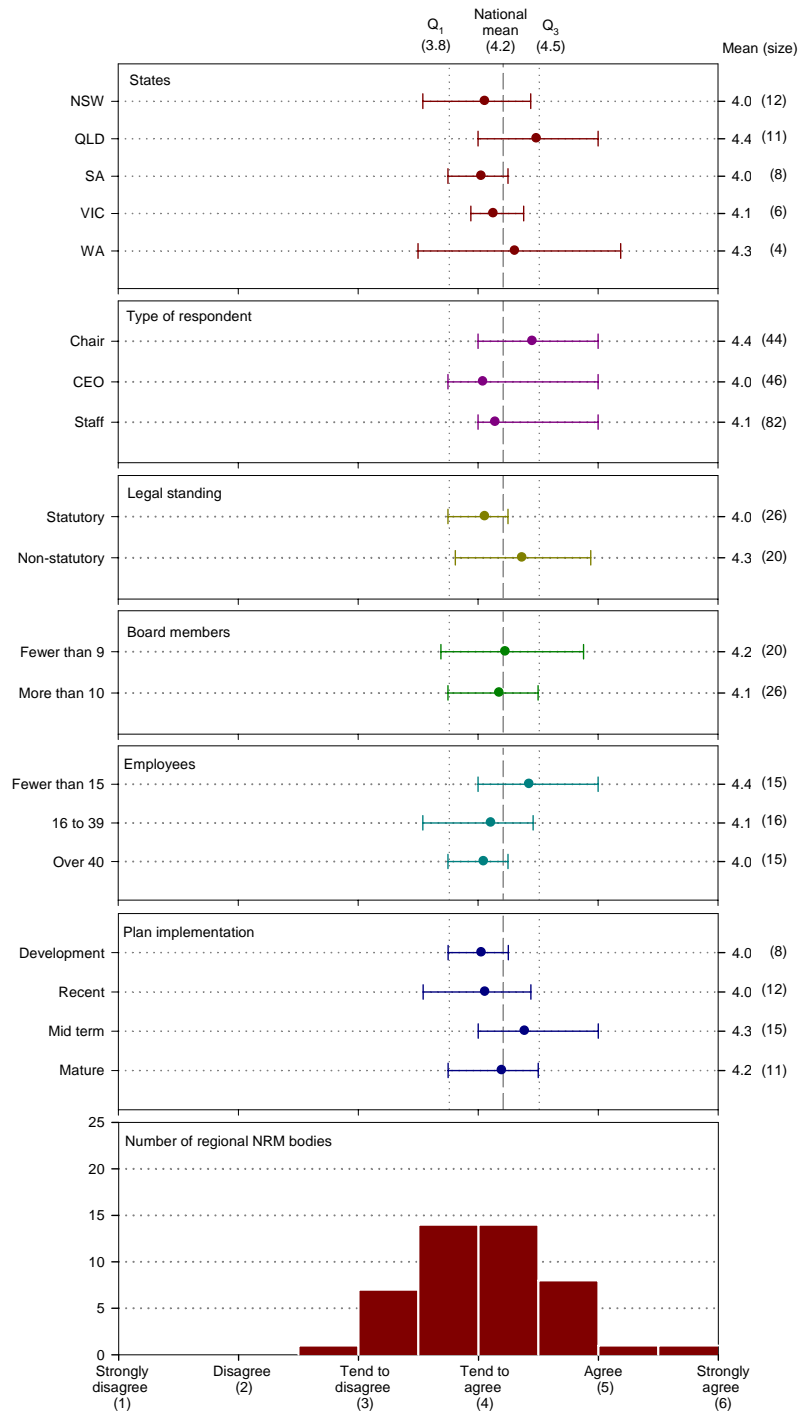


Figure 104 (Q47) *Most **state government agencies and departments** have been flexible in considering the different viewpoints presented by the regional body.*

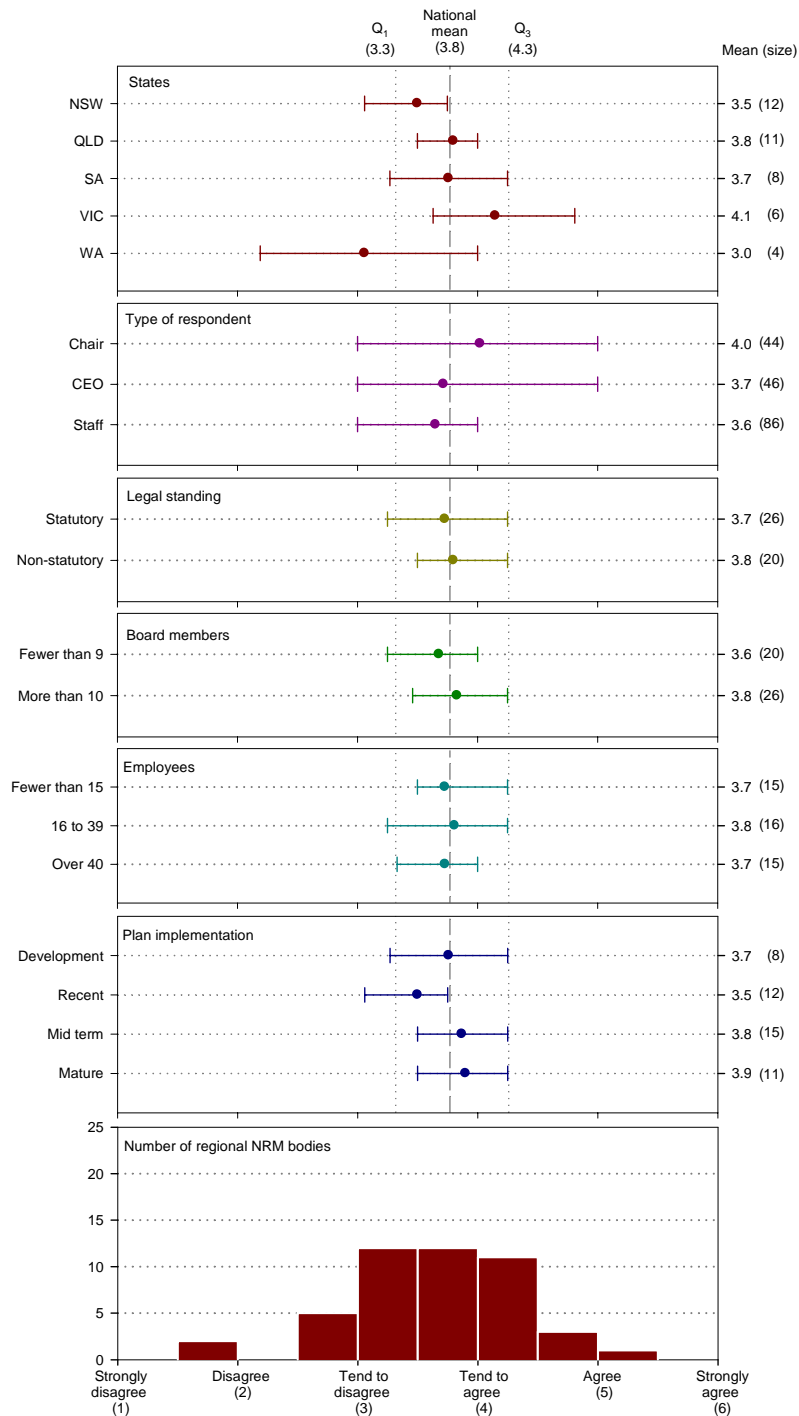
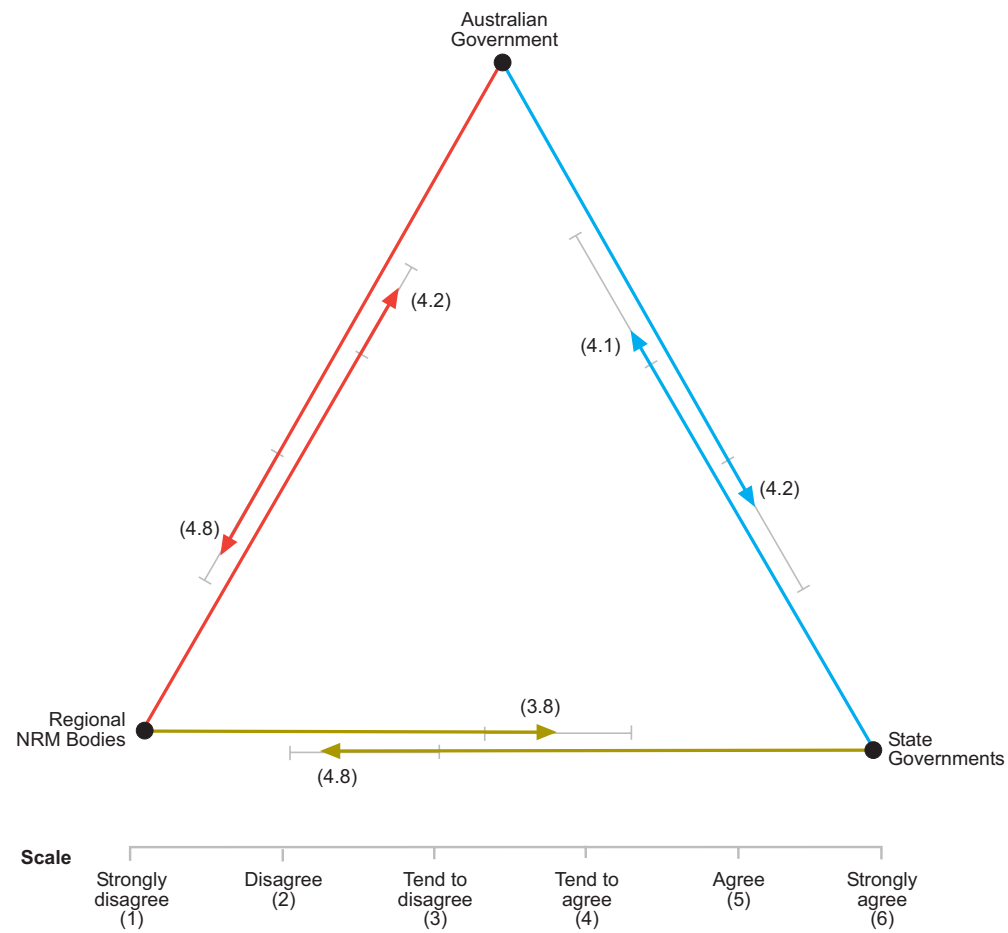


Figure 105 Level of flexibility in negotiation within partnership arrangements



Note: Scale applies to all three axes

8.1.4 Effectiveness of the partnership (P1.4)

Figure 106 (Q56) *There has been an effective partnership between this regional body and **Australian Government NRM agencies and departments.***

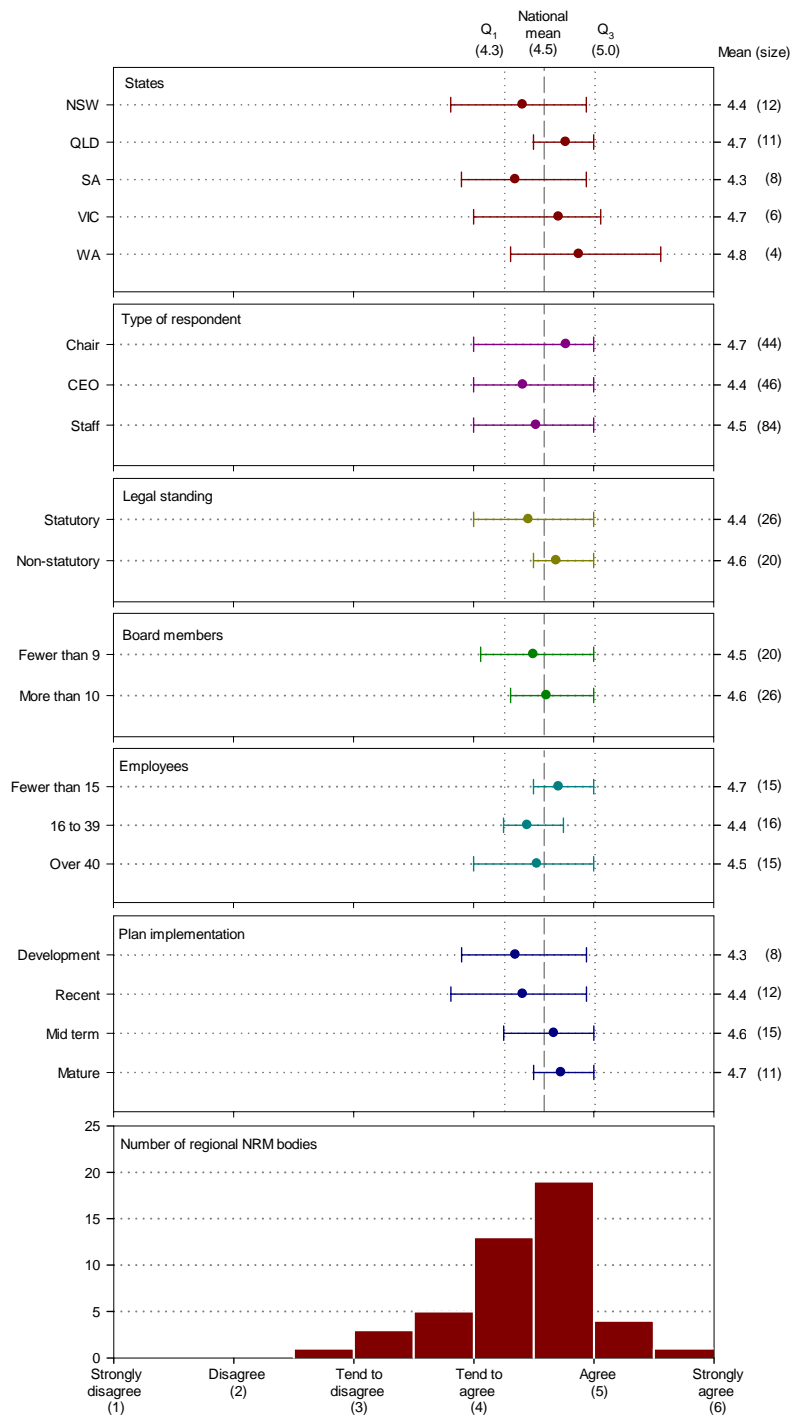


Figure 107 (Q57) *There has been an effective partnership between this regional body and **Australian Government NRM agencies and departments**. If you were asked this last question two years ago how would you have answered it?*

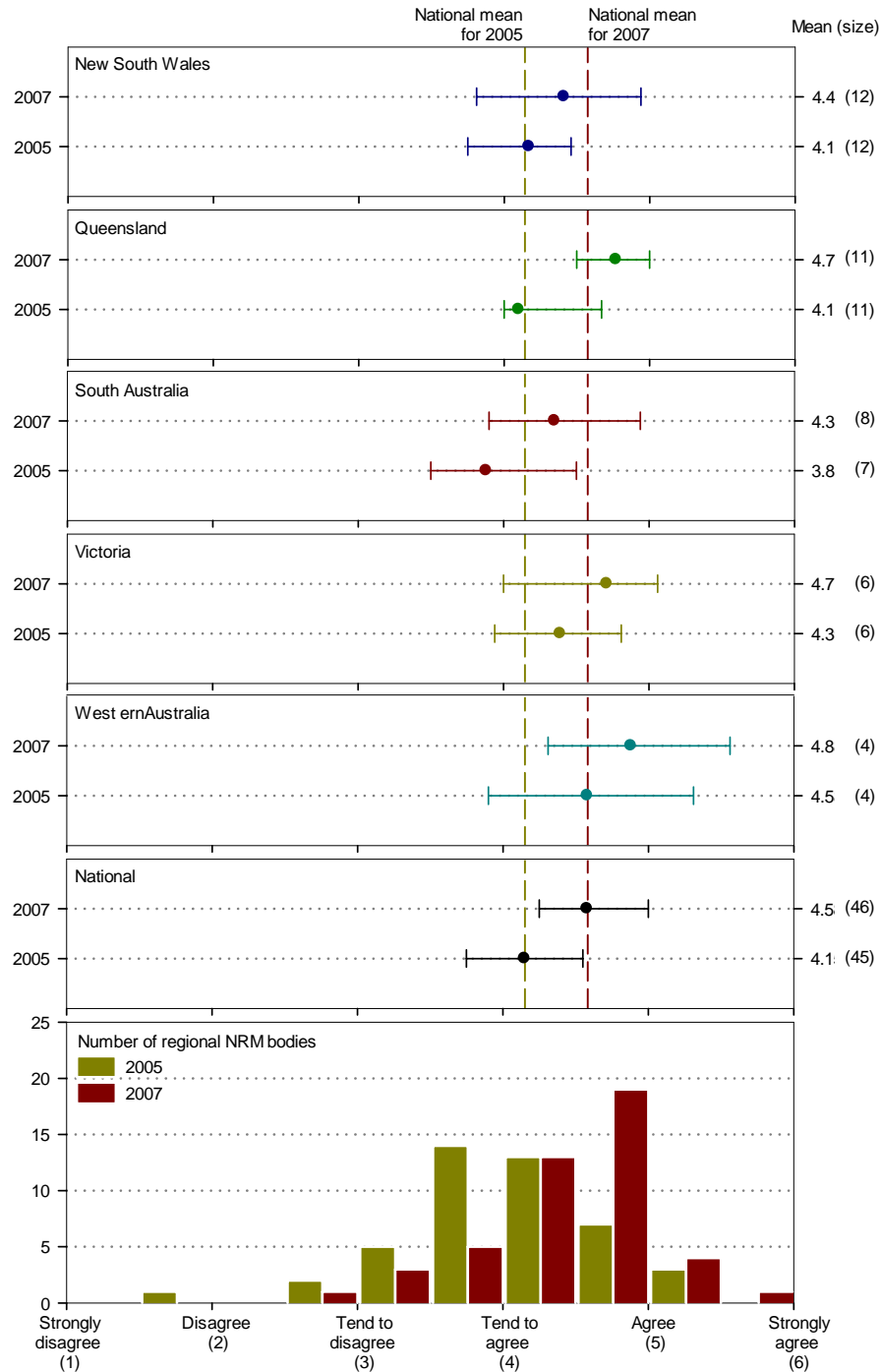


Figure 108 (Q49) *There has been an effective partnership between this regional body and most **state government agencies and departments**.*

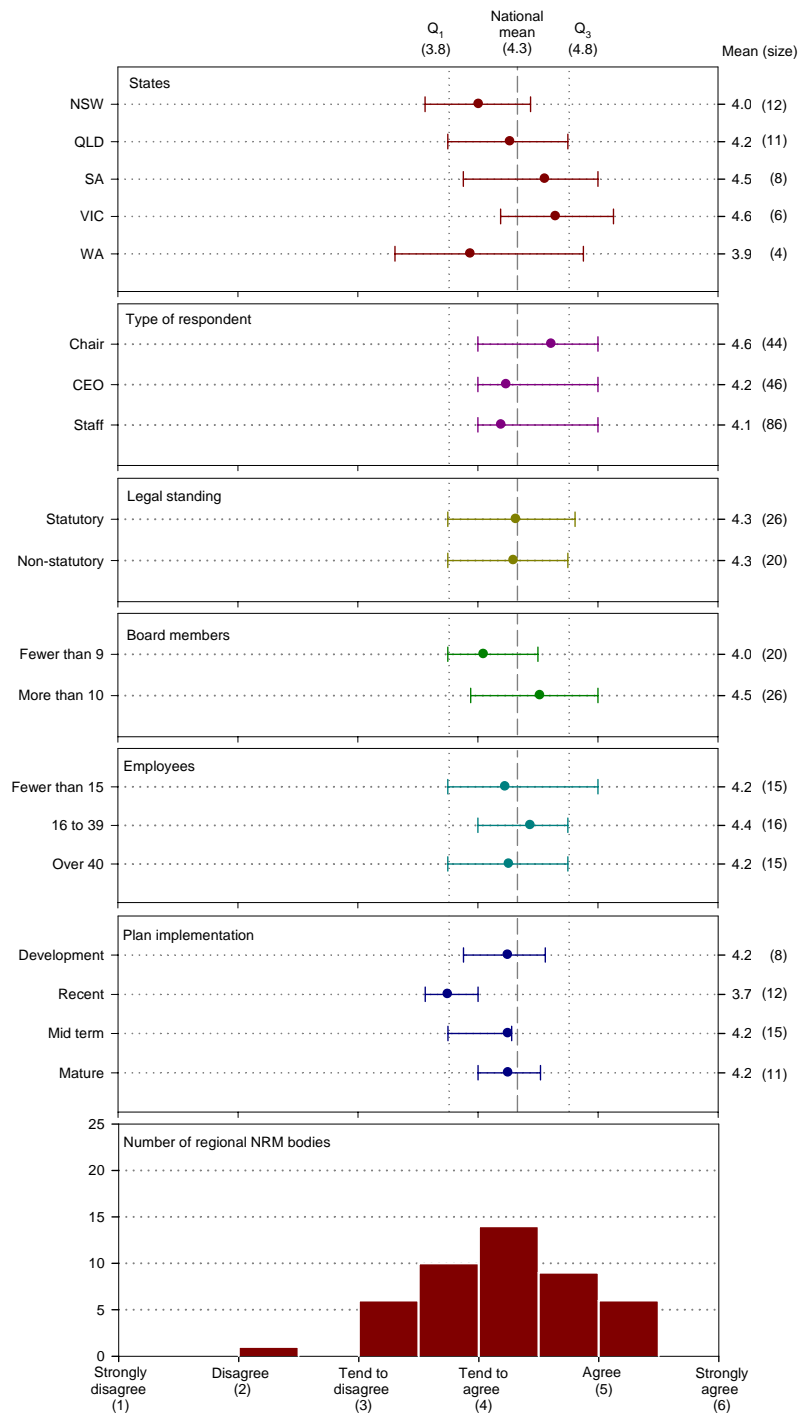


Figure 109 (Q50) *There has been an effective partnership between this regional body and most **state government agencies and departments**. If you were asked this last question two years ago how would you have answered it?*

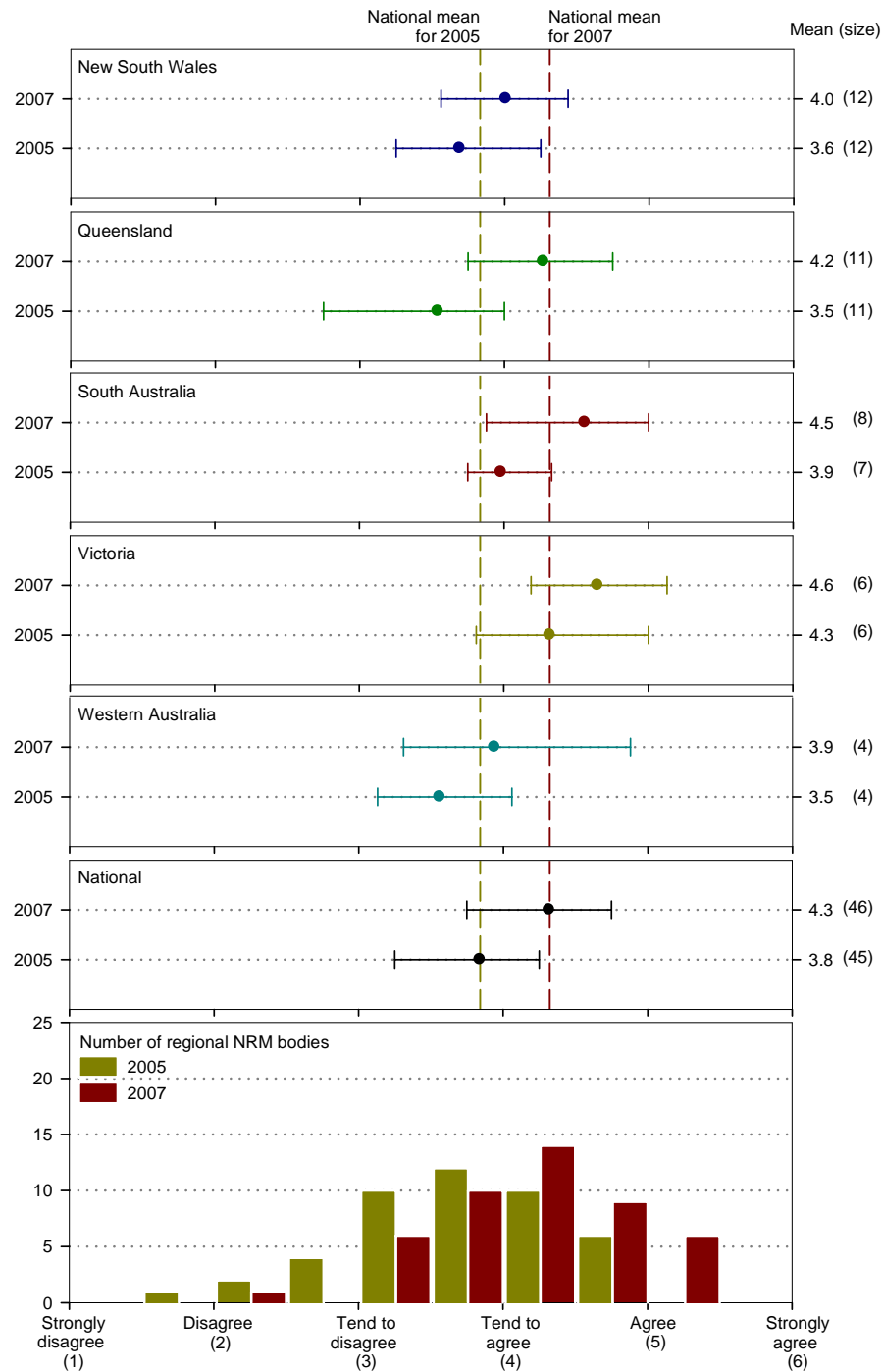


Figure 110 Effectiveness of partnership arrangements

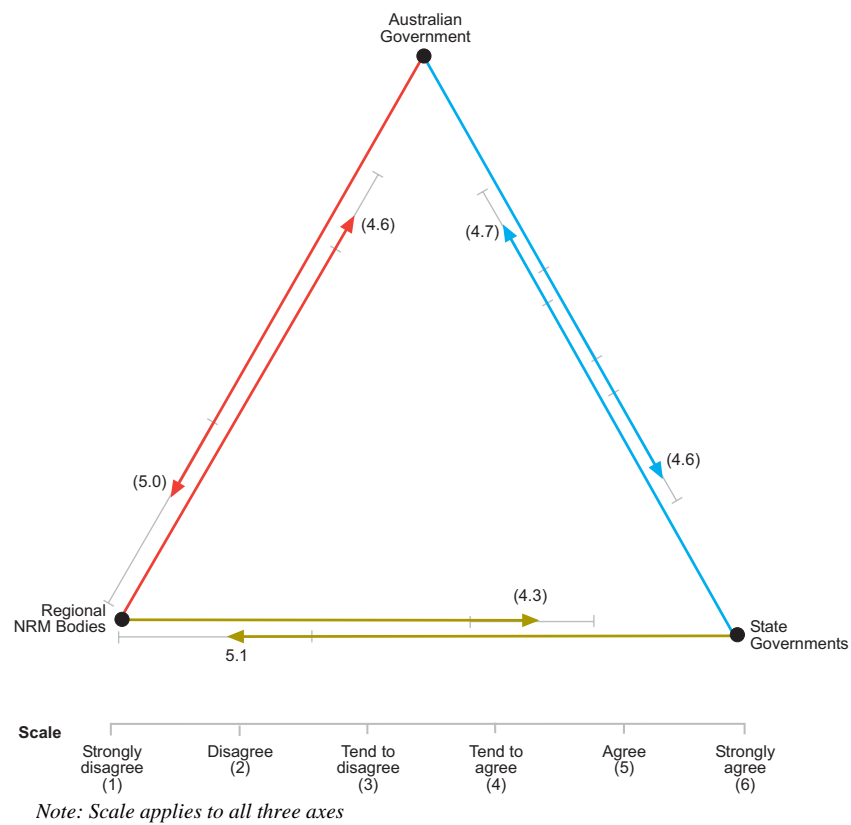
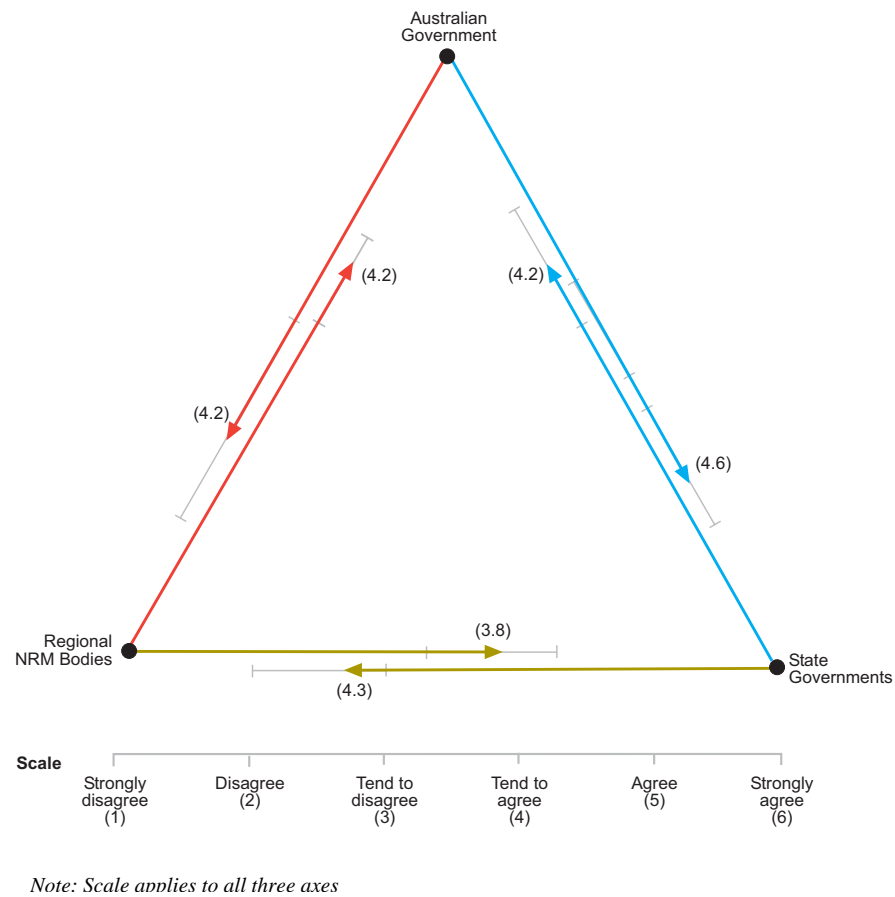


Figure 111 Effectiveness of partnership arrangements two years ago



8.2 Consistency of information (P2)

The success statement associated with the provision of consistent information stated:

“Consistent and targeted messages will occur between governments and regional NRM bodies.”

8.2.1 Consistency of information (P2.1)

Figure 112 (Q55) *There is consistent policy information provided to this regional body across most **Australian Government NRM agencies and departments.***

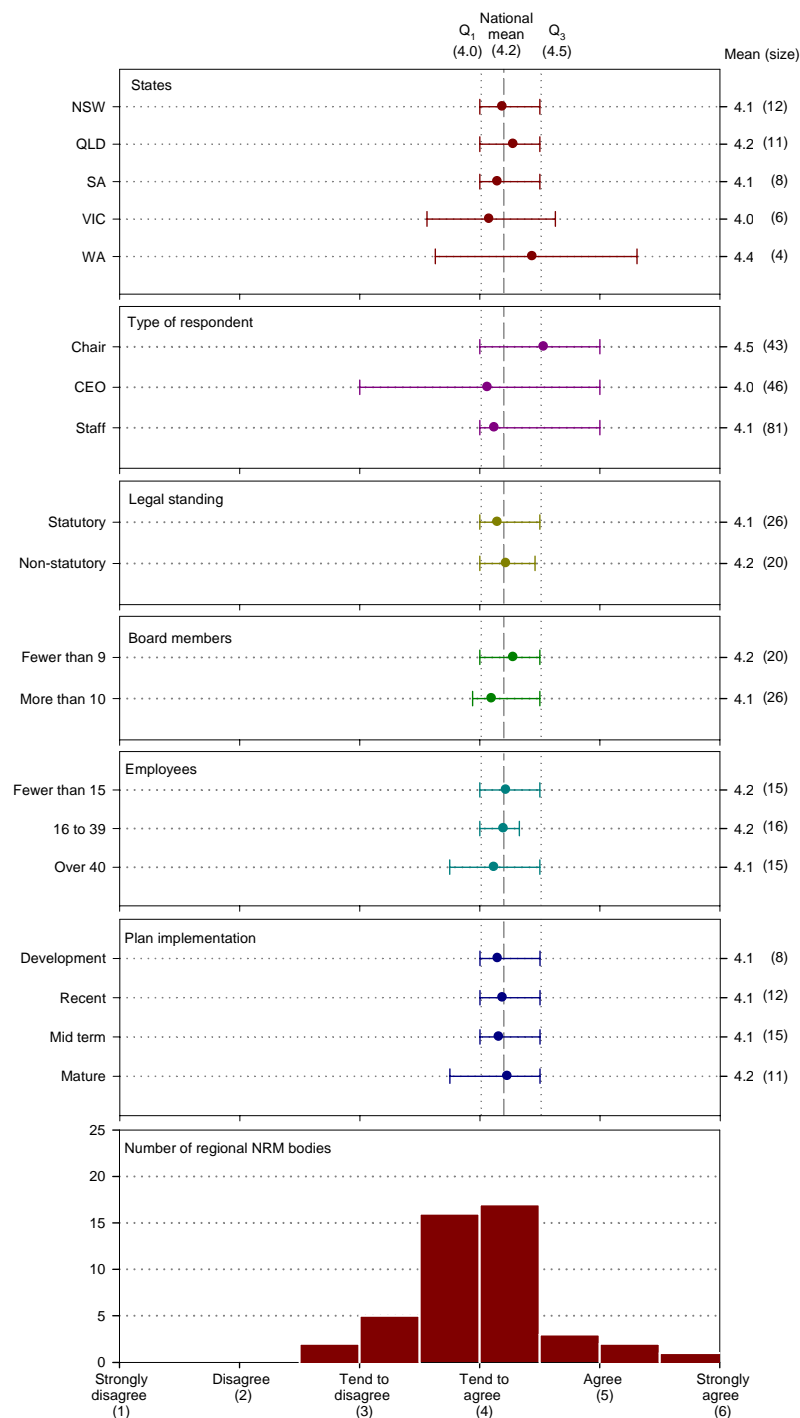


Figure 113 (Q48) “There is consistent policy information provided to this regional body across most **state government agencies and departments.**”

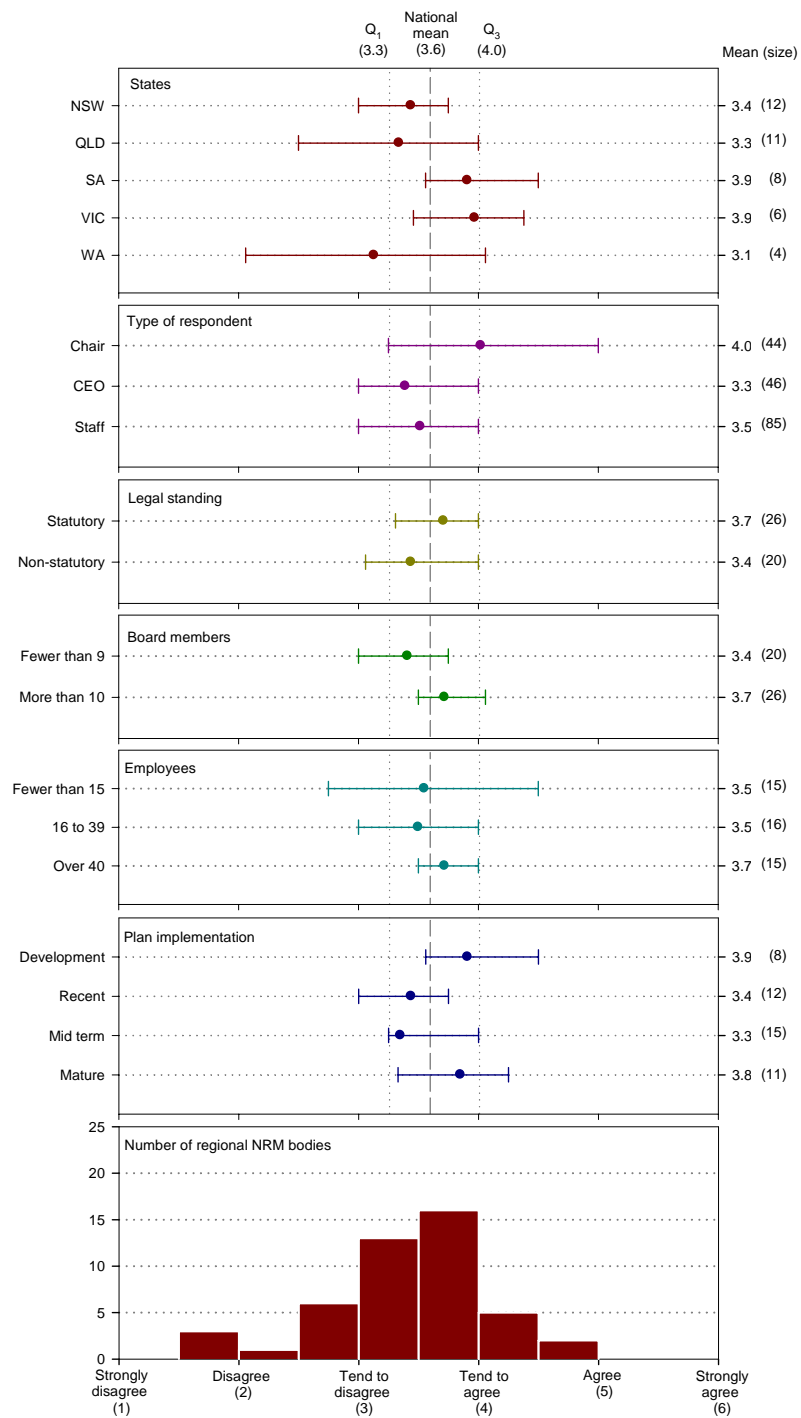
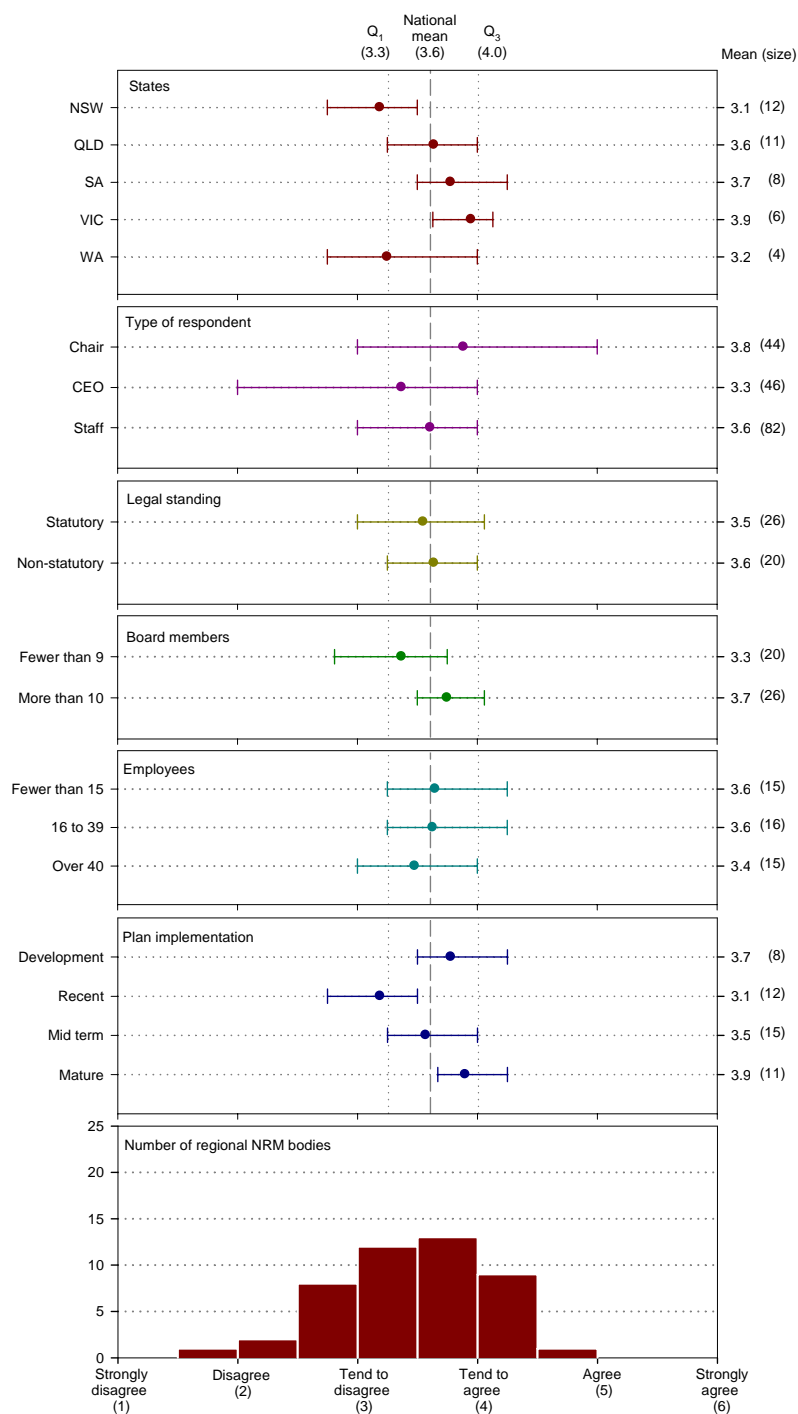


Figure 114 (Q51) Overall, my regional body receives consistent policy advice between state and Australian Government agencies and departments

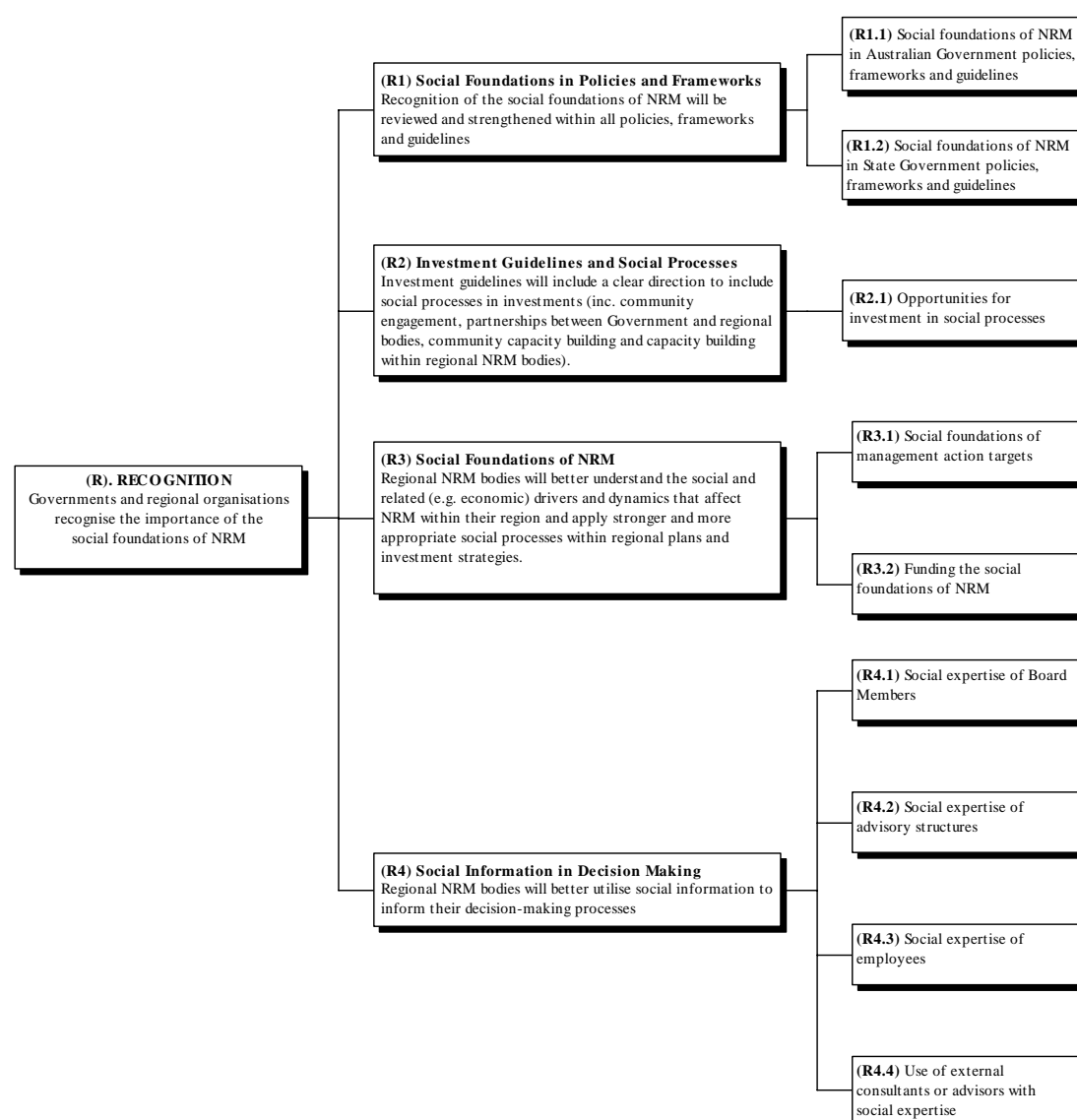


9. Recognition of the social foundations of NRM

Figure 115 shows the component tree for the indicator of recognition, including the success statements and measures that were used to assess this indicator. The component tree includes four success statements which are:

- (i) **Social foundations in policies and frameworks:** Recognition of the social foundations of NRM will be reviewed and strengthened within all policies, frameworks and guidelines.
- (ii) **Investment guidelines and social processes:** Investment guidelines will include a clear direction to include social processes in investments (inc. community engagement, partnerships between government and regional bodies, community capacity building and capacity building within regional NRM bodies).
- (iii) **Social foundations of NRM:** Regional NRM bodies will better understand the social and related (e.g. economic) drivers and dynamics that affect NRM within their region and apply stronger and more appropriate social processes within regional plans and investment strategies.
- (iv) **Social information and decision making:** Regional NRM bodies will better utilise social information to inform their decision-making processes.

Figure 115 Component tree: Recognition of the social foundations of NRM



Social foundations in NRM policies and frameworks

Seven panel judges (Section 4.1) were used to assess Australian and state government policy and framework documents (Figure 116 and Figure 117) and investment guidelines (Figure 118) in relation to the extent to which they recognised the social foundations of NRM. The social foundations of NRM were identified as capacity building, community engagement, partnerships and social and economic issues which may influence NRM outcomes (see Appendix A).

Figure 116 shows that while Australian Government policy and framework documents recognised social and economic issues influencing NRM outcomes and the role of capacity building in NRM; less recognition was given to community engagement. In contrast state government policy and framework documents (Figure 117) and investment strategies (Figure 118) were more likely to recognise the role of community engagement and less likely to recognise capacity building in NRM.

While these findings are dependent upon the range of documents used in the assessment (Section 4.1), historically the Australian Government has taken a more strategic role and placed greater emphasis on capacity building through the development of specific capacity building frameworks¹⁵ and the development of a capacity building team within the department of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry. In contrast, it could be argued that as the states are operating more so at the interface of community and NRM delivery, greater attention and recognition has been given to community engagement within state NRM frameworks, guidelines and investment strategies.

Investment guidelines and social processes

As shown in Figure 118, investment guidelines which include primarily state investment guidelines, recognised the social foundations of NRM to a limited extent. As discussed above, investment guidelines when they did recognise the core social foundations of NRM were more likely to recognise the role of community engagement. Of particular note in relation to the investment guidelines is the limited recognition given to investment in capacity building in NRM¹⁶.

Social foundations of NRM

Regional NRM bodies indicated their management actions recognised the importance of community engagement, capacity building, partnerships and other social and economic activities associated with NRM (Figure 119). Nationally, 26% of regional NRM bodies were found to spend in excess of 20% of their total funding on activities associated with the social foundations of NRM (Figure 120). Relative funding appeared to be highest amongst non-statutory regional NRM bodies and amongst the more established organisations.

Social information in decision making

The use of social information in informing decision making was assessed by examining the social expertise of Board members, staff and members on advisory committees within regional NRM bodies (Figure 121 to Figure 123). The findings indicate that 40% of regional NRM bodies have more than 50% of Board members appointed on the basis of their social expertise. In addition 29% of regional NRM bodies have appointed more than 50% of their technical and professional staff on the basis of their social expertise. Furthermore, 26% of regional NRM bodies had more than 50% of advisory group members appointed on the basis of their social expertise.

The appointment or selection of Board members, staff and advisory group members on the basis of their social expertise tended to be highest amongst non-statutory regional NRM bodies, those with smaller Boards; smaller regional NRM bodies and amongst those that were more established.

¹⁵ Australian Government (2002) *National natural resource management capacity building framework*.

¹⁶ Several states, such as NSW may place a cap on investment in capacity building within investment strategies.

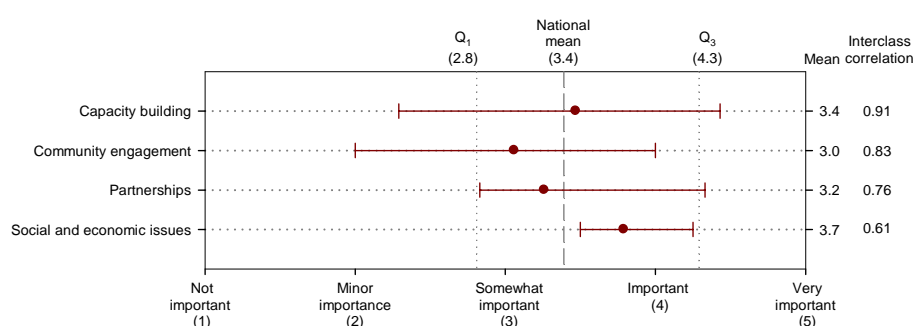
9.1 Social foundations in NRM policies and frameworks (R1)

The success statement associated with the inclusion of social foundations in NRM policies and frameworks stated:

“Recognition of the social foundations of NRM will be reviewed and strengthened within all policies, frameworks and guidelines.”

9.1.1 Social foundations of NRM recognised in Australian Government policies and frameworks (R1.1)

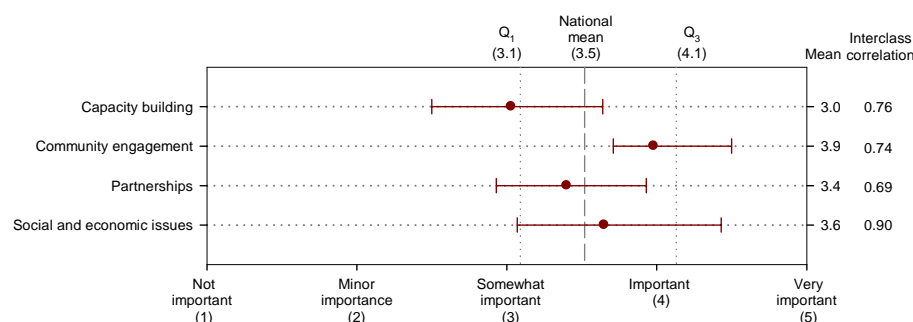
Figure 116 Social foundations of NRM recognised in Australian Government policies, frameworks and guidelines



Note: Seven panel judges were used to assess Australian Government documents and Figure 116 shows the mean scores across all documents. The interclass correlation, which varies between 0.0 and 1.0, shows the level of absolute agreement amongst the seven panel judges. An interclass correlation above 0.70 is considered acceptable.

9.1.2 Social foundations of NRM Recognised in state and territory government policies and frameworks (R1.2)

Figure 117 Social foundations of NRM recognised in state and territory government policies, frameworks and guidelines



Note: Seven panel judges were used to assess state government documents and Figure 117 shows the mean scores across all documents. The interclass correlation, which varies between 0.0 and 1.0, shows the level of absolute agreement amongst the seven panel judges. An interclass correlation above 0.70 is considered acceptable.

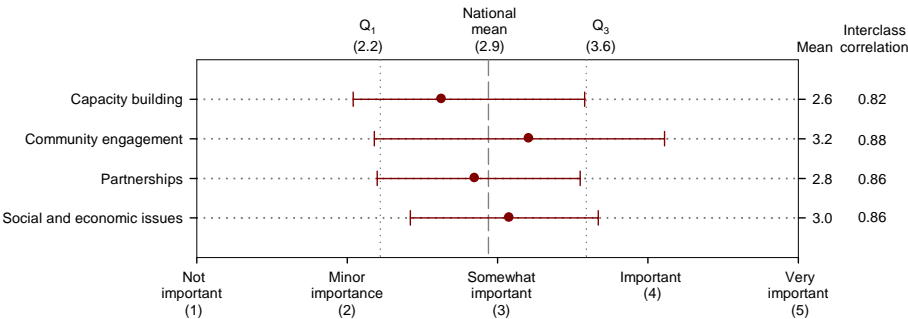
9.2 Investment guidelines and social processes (R2)

The success statement associated with investment guidelines and social processes stated:

“Investment guidelines will include a clear direction to include social processes in investments (inc. community engagement, partnerships between government and regional bodies, community capacity building and capacity building within regional bodies).”

9.2.1 Opportunities for investment in social processes (R2.1)

Figure 118 The inclusion of social processes in investment guidelines



Note: Seven panel judges were used to assess investment guidelines and Figure 118 shows the mean scores across all documents. The interclass correlation, which varies between 0.0 and 1.0, shows the level of absolute agreement amongst the seven panel judges. An interclass correlation above 0.70 is considered acceptable.

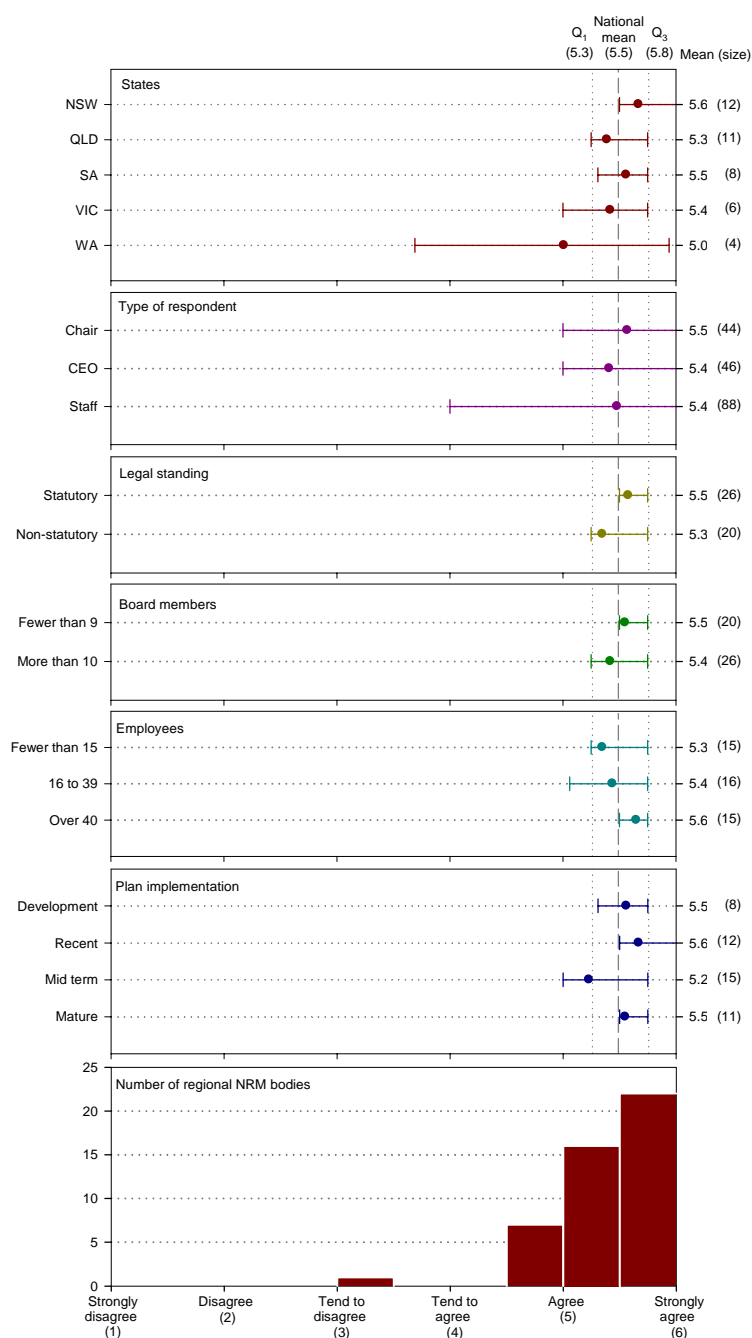
9.3 Social foundations of NRM (R3)

The success statement associated with the social foundations of NRM stated:

“Regional bodies will better understand the social and related (e.g. economic) drivers and dynamics that affect NRM within their region and apply stronger and more appropriate social processes within regional plans and investment strategies.”

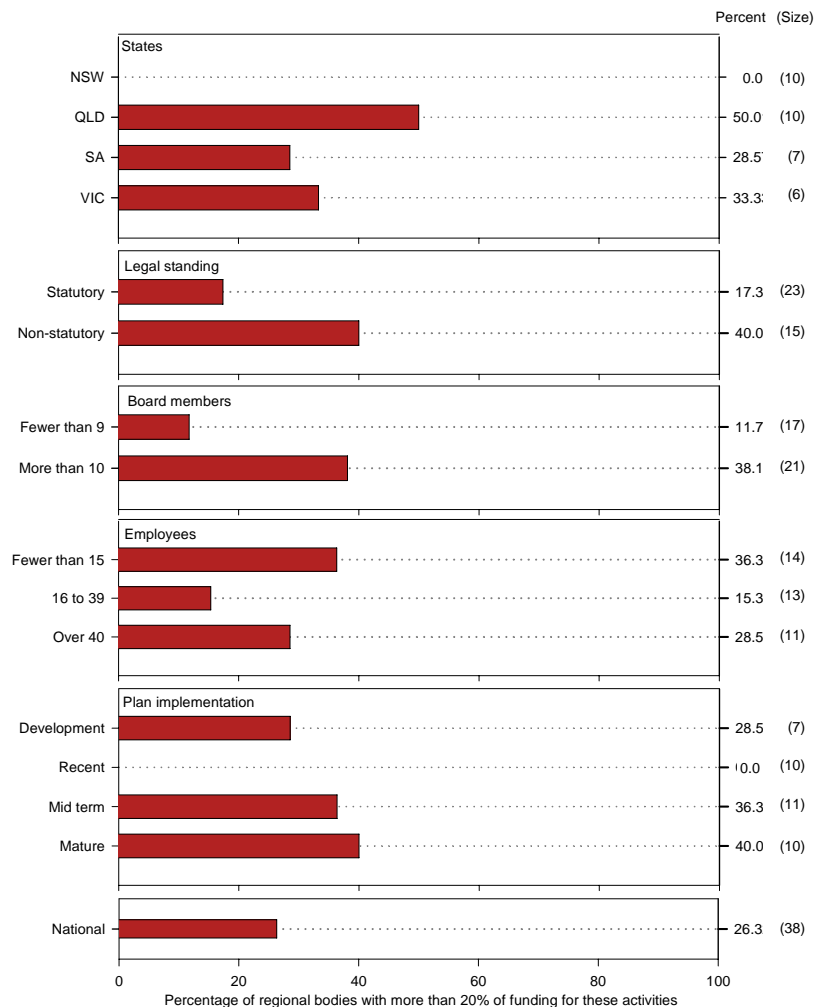
9.3.1 Social Foundations of Management Action Targets (R3.1)

Figure 119 (Q77) *The management actions in our investment strategy recognise the importance of community engagement, capacity building, partnerships or other social and economic activities associated with NRM.*



9.3.2 Funding the social foundations of NRM (R3.2)

Figure 120 (CQ16) *Within the last 12 months, what percentage of the total funding do you estimate would be for specific community engagement, capacity building, partnerships or other social and economic activities associated with NRM? Would it be...*



Note: Figure 120 is based only on the responses of CEOs within regional NRM bodies. Western Australia has not been included in the State level analysis as there was insufficient data provided by regional NRM bodies from this State.

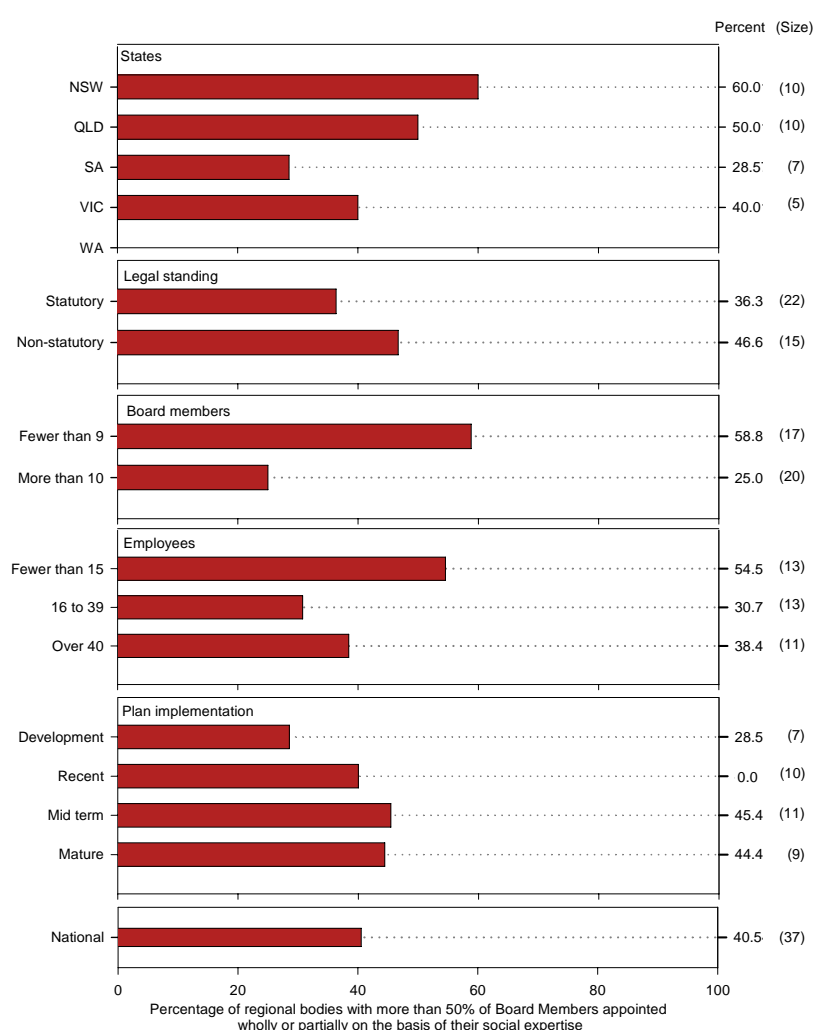
9.4 Social information in decision making (R4)

The success statement associated with the use of social information in decision making stated:

“Regional bodies will better utilise social information to inform their decision-making processes”

9.4.1 Social expertise of board members (R4.1)

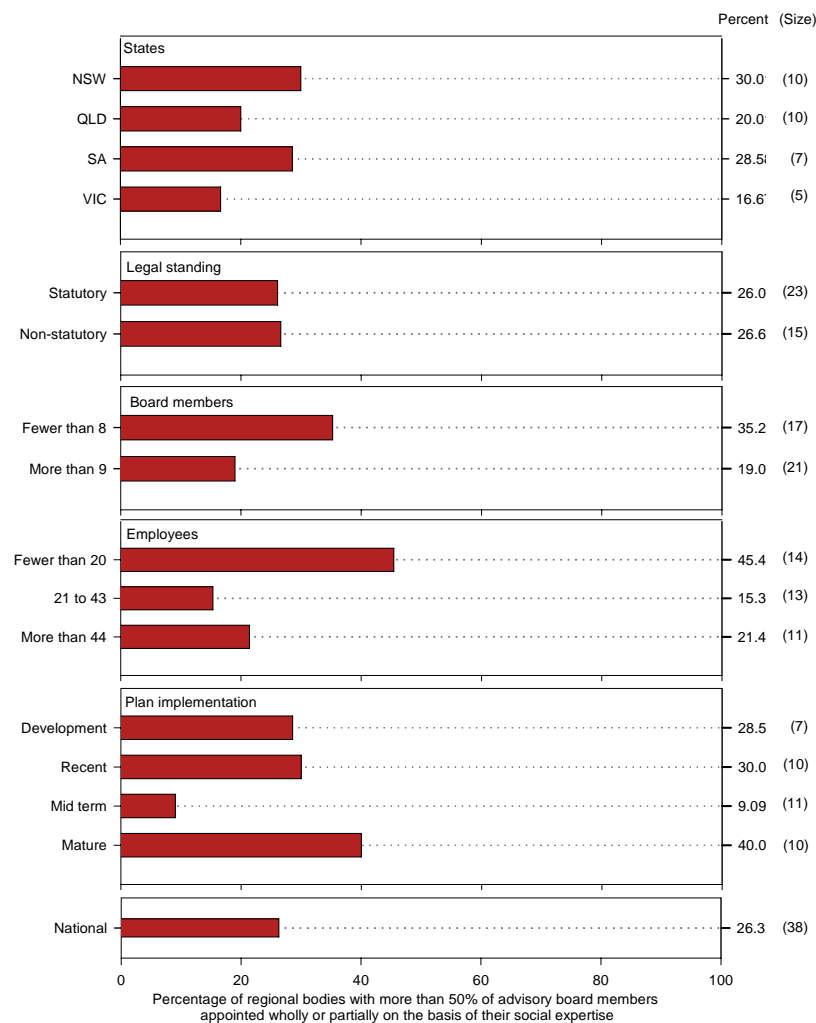
Figure 121 (CQ17) *What proportion of your Board Members do you think have been selected or appointed wholly or partially on the basis of their social expertise, including knowledge of social science, economics, community development, extension or indigenous knowledge?*



Note: Figure 121 is based only on the responses of CEOs within regional NRM bodies. Western Australia has not been included in the State level analysis as there was insufficient data provided by regional NRM bodies from this State.

9.4.2 Social expertise of advisory structures (R4.2)

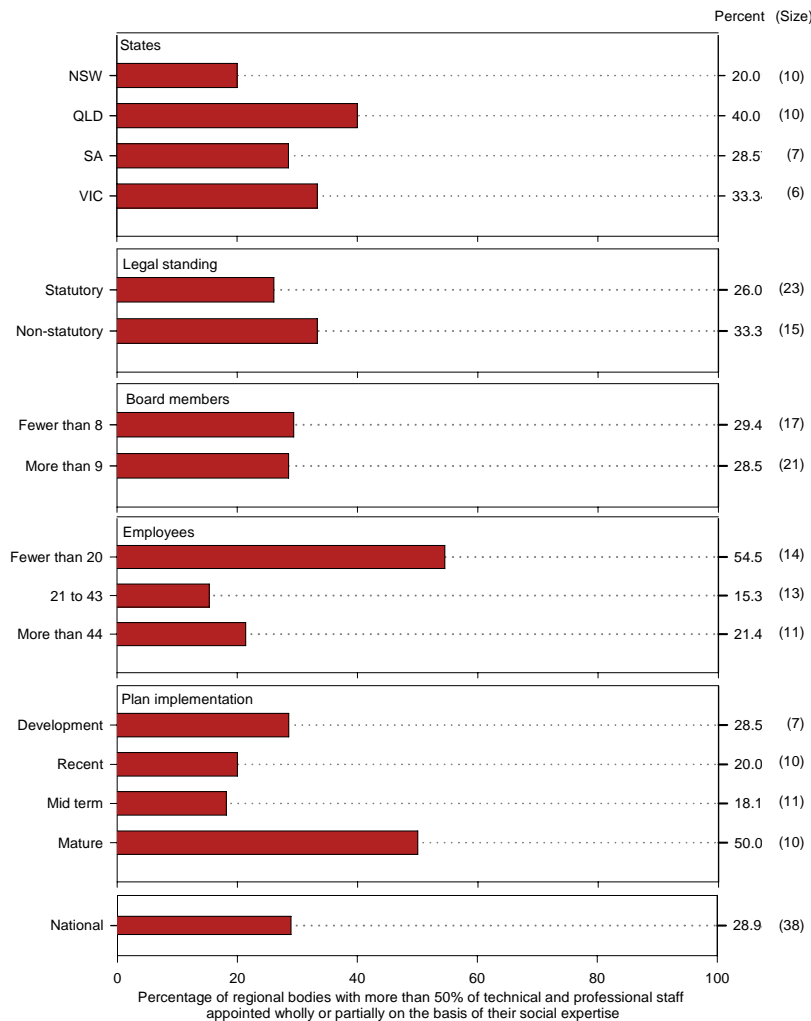
Figure 122 (CQ19) *There will be a number of advisory groups, panels and committees which provide advice to your regional body. What proportion of members of all these advisory groups would have been selected wholly or partially on the basis of their social expertise, including knowledge of social science, community development or Indigenous knowledge?*



Note: Figure 122 is based only on the responses of CEOs within regional NRM bodies. Western Australia has not been included in the state level analysis as there was insufficient data provided by regional NRM bodies from this state.

9.4.3 Social expertise of employees (R4.3)

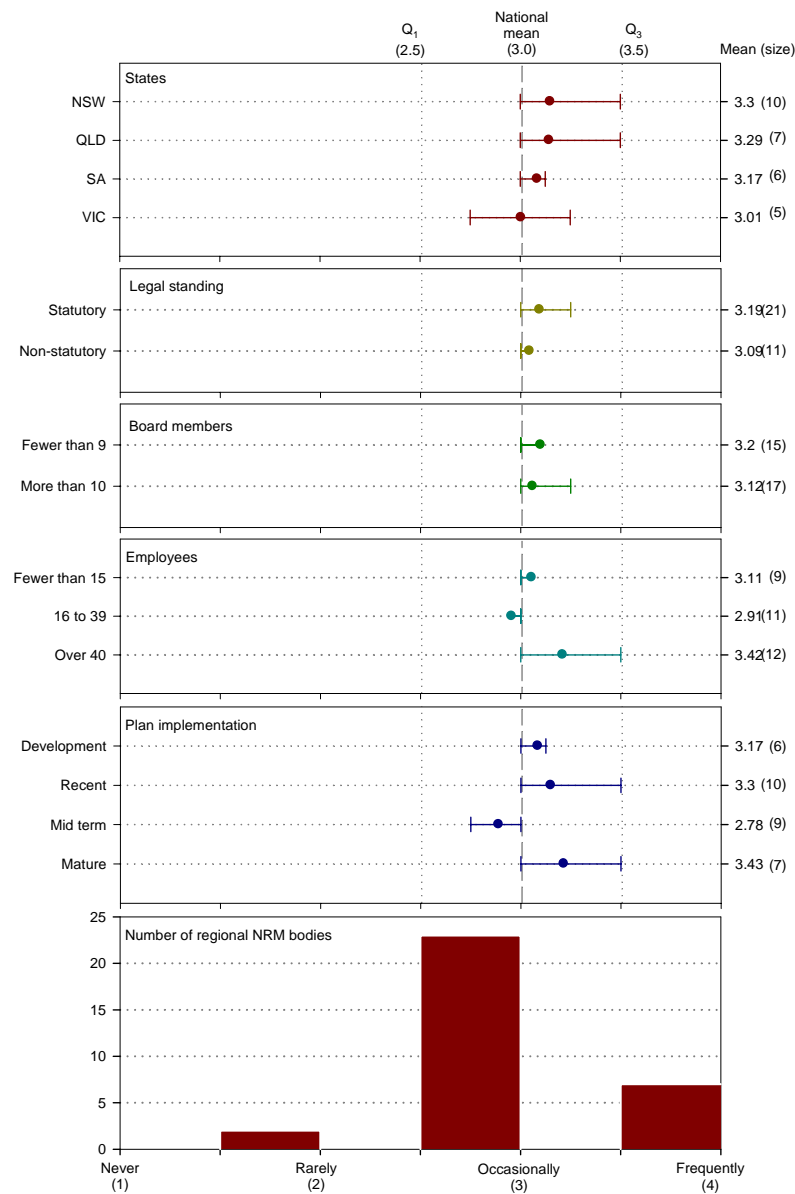
Figure 123 (CQ18) *What proportion of technical and professional staff in the regional body have been appointed partly or wholly on the basis of their social expertise, including knowledge of social science, economics, community development or Indigenous knowledge?*



Note: Figure 123 is based only on the responses of CEOs within regional NRM bodies. Western Australia has not been included in the state level analysis as there was insufficient data provided by regional NRM bodies from this state.

9.4.4 Use of external consultants or advisors with social expertise (R4.4)

Figure 124 (CQ20) *In the last 12 months, how often has the regional body used external consultants or advisors with expertise in the social sciences, economics, community development, extension or Indigenous issues?*



Note: Figure 124 is based only on the responses of CEOs within regional NRM bodies. Western Australia has not been included in the state level analysis as there was insufficient data provided by regional NRM bodies from this state.

Appendix A
Instructions to panel judges

INSTRUCTIONS TO PANEL JUDGES

You will have two folders with 20 documents in both folders. Documents are numbered with dividers from 1 to 20.

You will be required to read the documents within each folder and score each document using the scales identified on the page preceding each document.

You should follow these steps:

Step 1: Review the definition of terms below and ensure you understand the questions and scoring procedure to be used for the documents

Step 2: Read a random selection of 5 documents so you understand the type of documents you will be scoring

Step 3: Start at document 1. Read and score this document before moving onto document 2. You must undertake the reading and scoring of documents in the same order as presented in the folders. **Remember that the scales may be different for some documents**

Step 4: When you have completed all documents, transfer the scores you have given for each document to the summary score sheet

Definition of Terms:

The following definitions apply to each of the terms used in the questions:

- Community Engagement:*** Community engagement refers to those processes through which individuals, organisations and communities communicate about policy, program and project development and implementation. It may include one way information delivery or multi party collaboration, where individuals and organisations are directly involved and have a role in decision making. In an NRM context community engagement is conducted in order that those making NRM decisions do not make these decisions in isolation from individuals, organisations and communities who have an interest in developing and implementing NRM activities.
- Capacity Building:*** Capacity includes (i) awareness, (ii) information and knowledge, (iii) skills and training and (iv) facilitation and support.
- (i) Awareness.*** The development of a sound understanding of NRM issues and how they may affect the community both now and into the future requires an increase in an individual's awareness. When the level of awareness of NRM issues is raised, it is hoped that individuals will seek to understand more, and be motivated to support and participate in the assessment, planning, implementation and evaluation of NRM solutions.

(ii) *Information and Knowledge*. Effective sustainable NRM at the farm, catchment and regional level requires sound and relevant biophysical, social and economic data and information. This information can be used to build knowledge of environmental systems, facilitate the development of long-term practical models, undertake social impact assessments, evaluate alternative options and contribute to day-to-day management decisions. The provision of practical models and tools can also assist the regional planning process. All the required information for making sustainable NRM decisions may not be available, and this should be the focus of research and development (R&D) investments.

(iii) *Skills and Training*. This requires individuals to have or to have access to technical, people management, project management and planning skills to participate in the development and implementation of sustainable NRM outcomes.

(iv) *Facilitation and Support*. This requires support systems to be in place to ensure the engagement and motivation of the community, build social capital and enable skilled NRM managers and users to exercise ownership over regional NRM decision-making processes and effectively implement on ground activities. Capacity building focuses on enhancing *the ability to act* (through provision of knowledge and skills); and fostering the *motivation to act* (through awareness raising and the provision of facilitation and support). Building capacity in NRM should lead to greater and more effective community engagement in NRM and the achievement of sustainable NRM outcomes.

Capacity may be built at an individual or organisational scale. The need for capacity building in NRM is recognised within organisations, Landcare groups, indigenous communities, industry sectors, local government, state/territory and Australian Government agencies.

Partnerships:

Partnerships in an NRM context includes relationships among and within (i) State/territory government agencies and departments (ii) Australian Government agencies and departments and/or (iii) regional NRM bodies. Partnerships may be defined by formal or informal arrangements. The goal of partnerships is to achieve specific NRM outcomes.

Social and Economic Issues: In the context of this assessment, social and economic issues refer to all characteristics and attributes of individuals, organisations and communities which may (i) influence the achievement of NRM outcomes and (ii) be changed by the process of achieving or achievement of NRM outcomes.

Social and economic issues may be defined at an individual, organisational and a community scale. At an individual level they may include individuals' motivations, attitudes, values, skills, knowledge, behaviours and interactions with organisations. At an

organisational level, social and economic issues may include the institutional ‘rules’ governing behaviour, partnerships, the interactions amongst organisations and the capacity of organisations to achieve NRM outcomes. Social and economic issues within community and a larger macro context may include all those attributes described for individuals and organisations, including the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services; but applied to a group of individuals located in the same geographic location and/or who have a common interest.

Appendix B
Panel judges: Rating scales

Australian Government NRM documents

(1)	In contributing to achieving the objectives of the document, the role of <i>community engagement</i> is...	<i>Your score</i>
Score 5:	<i>Very important</i>	
Score 4:	<i>Important</i>	
Score 3:	<i>Somewhat important</i>	
Score 2:	<i>Minor importance</i>	
Score 1:	<i>Not important</i>	
(2)	In contributing to achieving the objectives of the document, <i>organisational, community or individual capacity building</i> is...	<i>Your score</i>
Score 5:	<i>Very important</i>	
Score 4:	<i>Important</i>	
Score 3:	<i>Somewhat important</i>	
Score 2:	<i>Minor importance</i>	
Score 1:	<i>Not important</i>	
(3)	In contributing to achieving the objectives of the document, <i>partnerships amongst state, Australian Government and regional bodies</i> is...	<i>Your score</i>
Score 5:	<i>Very important</i>	
Score 4:	<i>Important</i>	
Score 3:	<i>Somewhat important</i>	
Score 2:	<i>Minor importance</i>	
Score 1:	<i>Not important</i>	
(4)	In contributing to achieving the objectives of the document, <i>social and economic issues</i> are...	<i>Your score</i>
Score 5:	<i>Very important</i>	
Score 4:	<i>Important</i>	
Score 3:	<i>Somewhat important</i>	
Score 2:	<i>Minor importance</i>	
Score 1:	<i>Not important</i>	

State and territory NRM documents

(1)	In contributing to achieving the objectives of the document, the role of <i>community engagement</i> is...	<i>Your score</i>
Score 5:	<i>Very important</i>	
Score 4:	<i>Important</i>	
Score 3:	<i>Somewhat important</i>	
Score 2:	<i>Minor importance</i>	
Score 1:	<i>Not important</i>	
(2)	In contributing to achieving the objectives of the document, <i>organisational, community or individual capacity building</i> is...	<i>Your score</i>
Score 5:	<i>Very important</i>	
Score 4:	<i>Important</i>	
Score 3:	<i>Somewhat important</i>	
Score 2:	<i>Minor importance</i>	
Score 1:	<i>Not important</i>	
(3)	In contributing to achieving the objectives of the document, <i>partnerships amongst state, Australian Government and regional bodies</i> is...	<i>Your score</i>
Score 5:	<i>Very important</i>	
Score 4:	<i>Important</i>	
Score 3:	<i>Somewhat important</i>	
Score 2:	<i>Minor importance</i>	
Score 1:	<i>Not important</i>	
(4)	In contributing to achieving the objectives of the document, <i>social and economic issues</i> are...	<i>Your score</i>
Score 5:	<i>Very important</i>	
Score 4:	<i>Important</i>	
Score 3:	<i>Somewhat important</i>	
Score 2:	<i>Minor importance</i>	
Score 1:	<i>Not important</i>	

Investment guidelines (inc. state and Australian Government)

<p>(1)</p> <p>Score 5: Score 4: Score 3: Score 2: Score 1:</p>	<p>The investment guidelines provide in community engagement.</p> <p><i>Very strong direction for investment</i> <i>Strong direction for investment</i> <i>Some direction for investment</i> <i>Limited direction for investment</i> <i>No direction for investment</i></p>	<p><i>Your score</i></p>
<p>(2)</p> <p>Score 5: Score 4: Score 3: Score 2: Score 1:</p>	<p>The investment guidelines provide in organisational, community or individual capacity building.</p> <p><i>Very strong direction for investment</i> <i>Strong direction for investment</i> <i>Some direction for investment</i> <i>Limited direction for investment</i> <i>No direction for investment</i></p>	<p><i>Your score</i></p>
<p>(3)</p> <p>Score 5: Score 4: Score 3: Score 2: Score 1:</p>	<p>The investment guidelines provide in developing partnerships amongst state, Australian Government and regional bodies</p> <p><i>Very strong direction for investment</i> <i>Strong direction for investment</i> <i>Some direction for investment</i> <i>Limited direction for investment</i> <i>No direction for investment</i></p>	<p><i>Your score</i></p>
<p>(4)</p> <p>Score 5: Score 4: Score 3: Score 2: Score 1:</p>	<p>The investment guidelines provide in social and economic processes underpinning NRM outcomes</p> <p><i>Very strong direction for investment</i> <i>Strong direction for investment</i> <i>Some direction for investment</i> <i>Limited direction for investment</i> <i>No direction for investment</i></p>	<p><i>Your score</i></p>

Appendix C
Contextual questions for regional NRM bodies

CONTEXTUAL QUESTIONS FOR REGIONAL NRM BODIES

The following contextual questions will be used to assist the interpretation of information from interviews with regional NRM bodies.

1. In what town is your regional NRM body located?

2. In what year did the current regional NRM body commence operations?

3. How many years has it been since your current regional NRM plan (or catchment strategy) was developed?
_____ years
4. How many years ago was the last review of the regional NRM plan (or catchment strategy)?
_____ years
5. How many years ago was your last investment strategy or plan developed?
_____ years
6. How many current Board members does your regional body have?
_____ number of current Board Members
7. How many full-time and part-time employees does the regional body currently have?
_____ number of full-time and part-time employees
8. Do you have a documented community engagement strategy? If not what do you have?
☐ Yes
☐ No, we have... _____
9. When was the community engagement approach or strategy first developed?
19____
10. How many local NRM coordinators are employed by the regional body?
(This does not include those individuals directly funded by the Australian Government which include Australian Government NRM facilitators; regional NRM facilitators; Local government NRM facilitators; or Indigenous Land Management facilitators)
____ number of local NRM coordinators employed by the regional body
11. What percentage of your on ground activities would you estimate you regional body contracts out to other organisations?
_____ percent
12. Within your current investment cycle what amount of funds did you receive from the state government and what amount from the Australian Government?
\$_____ million from the state government
\$_____ million from the Australian Government

13. In the last 12 months would you say the regional body has met its quarterly expenditure and revenue targets...
- ☐ Always ☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Occasionally ☐ Never
14. In the last 12 months, and excluding in kind contributions, what percentage of NRM program funds would have been obtained from sources outside of NAP and NHT. Would it have been...
- ☐ Above 15% ☐ Between 10 and 15% ☐ Between 5 and 10% ☐ Less than 5%
15. In relation to community engagement, has your process been subject to...
- ☐ A complete evaluation ☐ Partly evaluated ☐ Limited evaluation ☐ No evaluation
16. Within the last 12 months, what percentage of the total funding do you estimate would be for specific community engagement, capacity building, partnerships or other social and economic activities associated with NRM? Would it be...
- ☐ Over 20% ☐ Between 10 and 20% ☐ Between 5 and 10% ☐ Less than 5%
17. What proportion of your Board Members do you think have been selected or appointed wholly or partially on the basis of their social expertise, including knowledge of social science, economics, community development, extension or indigenous knowledge?
- ☐ More than 80% ☐ Between 50 and 80% ☐ Between 20 and 50% ☐ Less than 20% ☐ None
18. What proportion of technical and professional staff in the regional body have been appointed partly or wholly on the basis of their social expertise, including knowledge of social science, economics, community development or indigenous knowledge?
- ☐ More than 80% ☐ Between 50 and 80% ☐ Between 20 and 50% ☐ Less than 20% ☐ None
19. There will be a number of advisory groups, panels and committees which provide advice to your regional body. What proportion of members of all these advisory groups do you think would have been selected wholly or partially on the basis of their social expertise, including knowledge of social science, economics, community development or indigenous knowledge?
- ☐ More than 80% ☐ Between 50 and 80% ☐ Between 20 and 50% ☐ Less than 20% ☐ None
20. In the last 12 months, how often has the regional body used external consultants or advisors with expertise in the social sciences, economics, community development, extension or indigenous issues?
- ☐ Frequently ☐ Occasionally ☐ Rarely ☐ Never

Appendix D
Interview schedule: Regional NRM bodies

THE SOCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FOUNDATIONS OF NRM:

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE WITH REGIONAL NRM BODIES

Introduction

The aim of this project is to monitor and improve the regional delivery of NRM programs through an assessment of the underlying social and institutional foundations of these programs. This phase of the project seeks to gather information through interviews with regional NRM bodies, regional stakeholders and state and Australian Government agencies and departments on several underlying social and institutional indicators

This project is funded by the National Land and Water Resource Audit and is being undertaken with all regional NRM bodies in Australia. Further information about the project and the methodology being used is available on the website at www.ebc.net.au

Confidentiality of Information

The information you provide will be confidential and the names of individuals and organisations participating in the project will not be identified.

We will provide each participating regional body with a confidential report. This report will show the indicator scores and how the regional body compares to state and National averages.

Information about specific regional NRM bodies will be confidential to each regional body and will not be disclosed to other regional bodies or to government.

Feedback

Two reporting process will be completed for this project:

1. A National report on the project will be completed. We will be holding workshops in each state with regional NRM bodies and other stakeholders to review and obtain feedback on the initial draft report.
2. Individual and confidential reports will be made available to each participating regional body, showing how they compare to other regional bodies at the state and National level.

Interview Process

When answering the questions in the telephone interview could you please have this document with you. We will work through the questions with you on the phone.

We would like to record the interview with you. Please indicate if you do not wish the interview to be recorded.

Please remember the following:

- We estimate the interview would last 45 minutes.
- This is a self evaluation and we would like you to answer the questions as objectively and accurately as possible
- There will be three others from your regional body completing the interview. Could you please avoid discussing the questions with them until after they have completed the interview.
- You may wish to provide additional information when responding to each question. There may for instance be something very specific about your regional body and the context in which you are operating which influences your answers.
- Unless otherwise stated all questions refer to the previous 12 months

Contact Details

Ms Arwen Rickert, Senior Consultant, EBC

Phone: 0427619725

Email: arwen@ebc.net.au

Web: www.ebc.net.au

ABOUT YOUR REGIONAL BODY

I am going to read out some statements. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement.
Over the last 12 months...

-
1. This regional body has the appropriate organisational and decision making processes in place to achieve its objectives.
☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
2. An appropriate mix of people are involved in the decision making within this regional body.
☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
3. The decision making processes within this regional body are working well
☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
-
4. When the regional body makes important NRM planning and investment decisions, it is adequately informed by different sectors, stakeholders and interest groups.
☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
-
5. A shared NRM vision is held by most staff within the regional body
☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
-
6. A shared NRM vision is held by most Board Members...
☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
7. If you were asked this last question two years ago how would you have answered it?
☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
-
8. To what extent do you agree with the statement that, "Within the last 12 months Staff and Board Members have had the same shared NRM vision"?
☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
-
9. Within the last 12 month period, what percentage of staff within the regional body participated in structured or formal training programs for professional development. Was it....
☐ More than 75% of staff
☐ About 50% of staff
☐ About 25% of staff
☐ Less than 10% of staff
☐ No staff participated in the last 12 months
☐ Don't know
-
10. Within the last 12 month period, what percentage of Board Members participated in structured and formalised training programs which were specific to positions on the Board. Was it....
☐ More than 75% of board members
☐ About 50% of board members
☐ About 25% of board members
☐ Less than 10% of board members
☐ No board members participated in the last 12 months
☐ Don't Know

11. Over the last 12 months do you think the level of job satisfaction amongst staff in the regional body has been...

☐ High ☐ Moderate-High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low-Moderate ☐ Low

12. If you were asked this last question two years ago how would you have answered it?

☐ High ☐ Moderate-High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low-Moderate ☐ Low

13. As a percentage of the total number of employees in the organisation, how many employees would you say have left or resigned from the regional body in the last 12 months?

☐ 51% or more ☐ Between 31-50% ☐ Between 11-30% ☐ Less than 10%

14. If required to do so now, would the regional body have the capacity in time, resources and expertise to effectively review and update the Regional/Catchment Plan or Strategy?

☐ Very high capacity ☐ High capacity ☐ Some capacity ☐ Low capacity ☐ Very Low capacity

15. Would the regional body have the capacity in time and resources to effectively review, update and improve the Investment Plan or Strategy?

☐ Very high capacity ☐ High capacity ☐ Some capacity ☐ Low capacity ☐ Very Low capacity

During the last 12 months how effective has the Regional Body's network of NRM coordinators been in...

[Interviewer note: NRM Coordinators are staff directly employed by the Regional Body to work with the broader community and stakeholders. They may also be referred to as NRM Facilitators, Project Officers or NRM Officers].

16. ...increasing awareness of NRM?

☐ Very effective ☐ Effective ☐ Somewhat effective ☐ Somewhat ineffective ☐ Ineffective ☐ Very ineffective

17. ...increasing community participation in NRM?

☐ Very effective ☐ Effective ☐ Somewhat effective ☐ Somewhat ineffective ☐ Ineffective ☐ Very ineffective

18. ...facilitating NRM project development?

☐ Very effective ☐ Effective ☐ Somewhat effective ☐ Somewhat ineffective ☐ Ineffective ☐ Very ineffective

19. ...increasing community capacity in NRM?

☐ Very effective ☐ Effective ☐ Somewhat effective ☐ Somewhat ineffective ☐ Ineffective ☐ Very ineffective

20. ...increasing partnerships and investments in on-ground actions?

☐ Very effective ☐ Effective ☐ Somewhat effective ☐ Somewhat ineffective ☐ Ineffective ☐ Very ineffective

21. I am confident that the regional body has adequate human resource management systems, policies and processes in place to achieve good human resource management practices.

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

22. The number of staff in the regional body is adequate to meet the current core business of the regional body without staff working excess hours.

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

23. If you were asked this last question two years ago how would you have answered it?

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

24. In this region over the last 12 months, this regional body has provided effective leadership in relation to NRM.

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

Over the last 12 months most senior staff within the regional body....

25. ...work to achieve the objectives of the organisation

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

26. ...develop productive working relationships within and outside the organisation

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

27. ...contribute to the strategic thinking of the organisation

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

28. ...communicate well with others inside and outside the organisation

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

29. ...have personal motivation and drive

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

30. Over the last 12 months regional NRM advisory panels, which may include expert panels, committees or other formal groups, have been used to inform decision making within the regional body in relation to NRM issues...

☐ Always ☐ Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Occasionally ☐ Never

31. How effective are NRM advisory panels, which may include expert panels, committees or other formal groups, in informing decision making within the regional body?

☐ Very effective ☐ Effective ☐ Somewhat effective ☐ Somewhat ineffective ☐ Ineffective ☐ Very ineffective

Amongst technical and professional staff within the regional body, would you say knowledge of...

32. ...natural resource management and planning is... ...in most cases this knowledge would be...

☐ High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low ☐ Applied in house ☐ Outsourced ☐ Not Used

33. ...biophysical systems is...

...in most cases this knowledge would be...

☐ High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low ☐ Applied in house ☐ Outsourced ☐ Not Used

34. ...economic systems is...

...in most cases this knowledge would be...

☐ High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low ☐ Applied in house ☐ Outsourced ☐ Not Used

35. ...social systems is...

...in most cases this knowledge would be...

☐ High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low ☐ Applied in house ☐ Outsourced ☐ Not Used

36. ...indigenous communities in the region is...

...in most cases this knowledge would be...

☐ High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low ☐ Applied in house ☐ Outsourced ☐ Not Used

37. ...corporate governance, grants and contract management monitoring, evaluation and performance reporting is...

...in most cases this knowledge would be...

☐ High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low ☐ Applied in house ☐ Outsourced ☐ Not Used

38. What level of confidence do you currently have, that the regional body has adequate financial management systems, policies and processes in place to effectively achieve good financial management outcomes?

☐ High ☐ Moderate-High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low-Moderate ☐ Low

39. If you were asked this last question two years ago how would you have answered it?

☐ High ☐ Moderate-High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low-Moderate ☐ Low

-
40. What is the current capacity of staff to prepare and develop NRM funding submissions and investment strategies...
- ☐ High ☐ Moderate-High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low-Moderate ☐ Low
-
41. To what extent do you agree with the statement, "that your regional body has adequate staffing and time to allow leverage of external investment beyond NAP, NHT and state in-kind contributions for NRM".
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
-
42. Over the last 12 month period how would you rate the ability of the regional body to locate and access NRM information from both the government and non-government sectors, including for example government agencies, the CSIRO and universities? Was it...
- ☐ High ☐ Moderate-High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low-Moderate ☐ Low
-
43. Over the last 12 month period how would you rate the level of skills and abilities within the regional body in using NRM information from these government and non-government sectors?
- ☐ High ☐ Moderate-High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low-Moderate ☐ Low
-
44. If you were asked this last question two years ago how would you have answered it?
- ☐ High ☐ Moderate-High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low-Moderate ☐ Low
-

PARTNERSHIPS WITH GOVERNMENT

I am going to read out some statements. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement.
Over the last 12 months...

-
45. As partners or investors in NAP and NHT programs, my regional body has a high level trust in its relationship with most state government NRM agencies and departments.
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
-
46. In relation to the work and funding of this regional body, there is a high level of transparency evident in the decision making processes used by most state government agencies and departments.
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
-
47. Most state government agencies and departments have been flexible in considering the different viewpoints presented by the regional body.
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
-
48. There is consistent policy information provided to this regional body across most state government agencies and departments.
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
-
49. There has been an effective partnership between this regional body and most state government agencies and departments.
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
-
50. If you were asked this last question two years ago how would you have answered it?
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
-
51. Overall, my regional body receives consistent policy advice between state and Australian Government agencies and departments
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
-

-
52. As partners or investors in NAP and NHT programs, my regional body has a high level trust in the relationship with most Australian Government NRM agencies and departments.
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
-
53. In relation to the work and funding of this regional body, there is a high level of transparency evident in the decision making processes of most Australian Government NRM agencies and departments
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
-
54. Most Australian Government NRM agencies and departments have been flexible in considering the different viewpoints presented by the regional body.
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
-
55. There is consistent policy information provided to this regional body across most Australian Government NRM agencies and departments.
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
-
56. There has been an effective partnership between this regional body and Australian Government NRM agencies and departments.
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
-
57. If you were asked this last question two years ago how would you have answered it?
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
-

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

-
58. This regional body's engagement approach or strategy is integrated with the activities of other NRM stakeholder groups in the region
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
-
59. The engagement approach or strategy provides a description of the principles of community engagement.
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
-
60. The engagement approach or strategy has a description or profile of stakeholders, community and community groups.
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
-
61. The engagement approach or strategy provides a description of community engagement activities.
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
-
62. The regional body's community engagement approach or strategy outlines learning and development activities to be undertaken by the Regional Body to support community engagement.
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
-
63. The community engagement approach or strategy is used to guide decision making and day to day activities.
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
-

-
64. In relation to the most recent NRM planning activities, how effective do you think the engagement processes have been in contributing to regional decision making?
- ☐ Very effective ☐ Effective ☐ Somewhat effective ☐ Somewhat ineffective ☐ Ineffective ☐ Very ineffective
-
65. If you were asked this last question two years ago how would you have answered it?
- ☐ Very effective ☐ Effective ☐ Somewhat effective ☐ Somewhat ineffective ☐ Ineffective ☐ Very ineffective
-
66. In the last 12 months the regional body has initiated or supported sufficient activities for community engagement.
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
-
67. In the last 12 months the level of participation by stakeholders, landholders and the community in these activities has been...
- ☐ High ☐ Moderate-High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low-Moderate ☐ Low
-
68. In the last two years, the diversity of stakeholder groups involved in regional body activities has been appropriate.
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
-
69. Over the last 12 months are there any important, regional stakeholders who have had limited if any previous involvement with the regional body?
- ☐ Yes [go to Question 70]
- ☐ No [go to Question 71]
-
70. How effective do you think the regional body has been in actively engaging those important, regional stakeholders who have had limited if any previous involvement with the regional body?
- ☐ Very effective ☐ Effective ☐ Somewhat effective ☐ Somewhat ineffective ☐ Ineffective ☐ Very ineffective
-
71. Overall would you say the quality of the community engagement process implemented by the regional body has been...
- ☐ High ☐ Moderate-High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low-Moderate ☐ Low
-
72. The level of trust between the Regional Body and stakeholder groups in the engagement process has been...
- ☐ High ☐ Moderate-High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low-Moderate ☐ Low
-
73. The level of transparency in the engagement and decision making processes between stakeholder groups and the Regional Body has been...
- ☐ High ☐ Moderate-High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low-Moderate ☐ Low
-
74. The willingness of the Regional Body to be inclusive in the engagement process has been ...
- ☐ High ☐ Moderate-High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low-Moderate ☐ Low
-
75. The level of cooperation amongst stakeholders, landholders and the community in the engagement process has been ...
- ☐ High ☐ Moderate-High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low-Moderate ☐ Low
-
76. The level of ongoing commitment by the Regional Body to maintaining relationships with stakeholders, landholders and the community has been...
- ☐ High ☐ Moderate-High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low-Moderate ☐ Low
-
77. The management actions in our investment strategy recognise the importance of community engagement, capacity building, partnerships or other social and economic activities associated with NRM.
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
-

Appendix E

Interview schedule: Regional stakeholders

THE SOCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FOUNDATIONS OF NRM:
INTERVIEW SCHEDULE WITH REGIONAL STAKEHOLDER ORGANISATIONS

(PART A: If information is requested on the interview prior to the interview process)

Introduction

The aim of this project is to monitor and improve the regional delivery of NRM programs through an assessment of the underlying social and institutional foundations of these programs. This phase of the project seeks to gather information through interviews with regional NRM organisations, regional stakeholders and state and Australian Government agencies and departments on several underlying social and institutional indicators

The project is funded by the National Land and Water Resource Audit and is being undertaken across all regions in Australia. Further information about the project and the methodology being used is available on the website at

www.ebc.net.au

Confidentiality of Information

The information you provide will be confidential and the names of individuals and organisations participating in the project will not be identified.

Feedback

Two reporting process will be completed for this project:

1. A National report on the project will be completed. We will be holding workshops in each state with regional NRM bodies and other stakeholders to review and obtain feedback on the initial draft report.
2. Individual and confidential reports will be made available to each participating regional body, showing how they compare to other regional bodies in their state and state and National averages.

Interview Process

In relation to the telephone interview:

- We estimate the interview would last 15 minutes.
- This is a evaluation based on your judgements and we would like you to answer the questions as objectively and accurately as possible
- There will be up to 9 other organisations also interviewed in your region
- Unless otherwise stated all questions refer to the previous 12 months

Contact Details

Ms Arwen Rickert, Senior Consultant, EBC

Phone: 0427619725

Email: ebcarwen@ebc.net.au

Web: www.ebc.net.au

INTERVIEWS WITH REGIONAL STAKEHOLDER ORGANISATIONS

1. In relation to the most recent NRM planning activities, how effective do you think the engagement processes have been in contributing to regional decision making?
☐ Very effective ☐ Effective ☐ Somewhat effective ☐ Somewhat ineffective ☐ Ineffective ☐ Very ineffective
2. If you were asked this last question two years ago how would you have answered it?
☐ Very effective ☐ Effective ☐ Somewhat effective ☐ Somewhat ineffective ☐ Ineffective ☐ Very ineffective
3. In the last 12 months the regional body has initiated or supported sufficient activities for community engagement.
☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
4. In the last 12 months the level of participation by stakeholders, landholders and the community in these activities has been...
☐ High ☐ Moderate-High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low-Moderate ☐ Low
5. When the regional body makes important NRM planning and investment decisions, I would you say it is adequately informed by different sectors, stakeholders and interest groups
☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
6. In the last two years, the diversity of stakeholder groups involved in regional body activities has been appropriate
☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
7. Overall would you say the quality of the community engagement process implemented by the regional body has been...
☐ High ☐ Moderate-High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low-Moderate ☐ Low

In relation to the following, would you say in the last 12 months...

8. ...your organisation's knowledge and understanding of regional NRM processes and programs undertaken by the regional body, including plan development, investment strategies, implementation and on ground actions, has been...
☐ High ☐ Moderate-High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low-Moderate ☐ Low
9. ...the level of trust between your organisation and the regional body in the engagement process has been...
☐ High ☐ Moderate-High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low-Moderate ☐ Low
10.the level of transparency in the engagement and decision making processes between your organisation and the regional body has been...
☐ High ☐ Moderate-High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low-Moderate ☐ Low
11.the willingness of the regional body to be inclusive in the engagement process has been ...
☐ High ☐ Moderate-High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low-Moderate ☐ Low
12.the level of cooperation amongst stakeholders, landholders and community in the engagement process has been ...
☐ High ☐ Moderate-High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low-Moderate ☐ Low
13. ...the level of ongoing commitment by the regional body to maintaining the relationship with this organisation has been...
☐ High ☐ Moderate-High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low-Moderate ☐ Low
14. To what extent do you agree with the statement that "Within this region, the regional body provides leadership in relation to NRM"
☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

Appendix F
Interview schedule:
Australian Government participants

INTERVIEWS WITH AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT PARTICIPANTS

1. Over the last 12 months in which state or territory have you had the most experience in working with regional NRM bodies and state NRM agencies and departments?

☐ New South Wales

☐ Queensland

☐ South Australia

☐ Victoria

☐ Tasmania

☐ Western Australia

☐ ACT

☐ Northern Territory

As you have had most experience with regional bodies in *[state/territory]*, the following questions are only about your experience with regional bodies in *[state/territory]* in the last 12 months.

RELATIONSHIP WITH REGIONAL BODIES

2. As partners or investors in NAP and NHT programs, I have a high level trust in my relationship with most Regional Bodies in *[state/territory]*.
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
3. There is a high level of transparency evident amongst most Regional Bodies in *[state/territory]* in relation to decisions involving my Australian Government agency or department.
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
4. Most Regional Bodies in *[state/territory]* have been flexible in considering the different viewpoints presented by my Australian Government agency or department.
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
5. There has been an effective partnership between my agency or department and most Regional Bodies in *[state/territory]*.
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
6. If you were asked this last question two years ago how would you have answered it?
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

RELATIONSHIP WITH STATE/TERRITORY GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND DEPARTMENTS

7. As partners or investors in NAP and NHT programs, I have a high level trust in the relationship with most *[state/territory]* government NRM agencies and departments.
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
8. There is a high level of transparency evident amongst most *[state/territory]* government NRM agencies and departments in relation to decisions involving my Australian Government agency or department.
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
9. Most *[state/territory]* government NRM agencies and departments have been flexible in considering the different viewpoints presented by my Australian Government agency or department.
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
10. There has been an effective partnership between my agency or department and most *[state/territory]* NRM agencies and departments.
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
11. If you were asked this last question two years ago how would you have answered it?
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

Appendix G
Interview schedule:
state government participants

INTERVIEWS WITH STATE AND TERRITORY GOVERNMENT PARTICIPANTS

1. In which state or territory have you had the most experience in working with regional NRM bodies?

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> New South Wales | <input type="checkbox"/> Queensland | <input type="checkbox"/> South Australia |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Victoria | <input type="checkbox"/> Tasmania | <input type="checkbox"/> Western Australia |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ACT | <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Territory | |

As you have had most experience with regional bodies in *[state/territory]*, the following questions are only about your experience with regional bodies in *[state/territory]* in the last 12 months.

RELATIONSHIP WITH REGIONAL BODIES

2. As partners or investors in NAP and NHT programs, I have a high level trust in my relationship with most Regional Bodies in *[state/territory]*.
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
3. There is a high level of transparency amongst most Regional Bodies in *[state/territory]* in relation to decisions concerning my *[state/territory]* government agency or department.
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
4. Most Regional Bodies in *[state/territory]* have been flexible in considering the different viewpoints presented by my *[state/territory]* government agency or department.
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
5. There has been an effective partnership between my agency or department and most Regional Bodies in *[state/territory]*.
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
6. If you were asked this last question two years ago how would you have answered it?
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

RELATIONSHIP WITH AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND DEPARTMENTS

7. As partners or investors in NAP and NHT programs, I have a high level trust in the relationship with most Australian Government NRM agencies and departments.
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
8. There is a high level of transparency evident amongst most Australian Government NRM agencies and departments in relation to decisions concerning my *[state/territory]* government agency or department.
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
9. Most Australian Government NRM agencies and departments have been flexible in considering the different viewpoints presented by my *[state/territory]* government agency or department.
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
10. There has been an effective partnership between my agency or department and Australian Government NRM agencies and departments.
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
11. If you were asked this last question two years ago how would you have answered it?
- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree