



**PRESS RELEASE (December 3rd, 2007)**

## eFarmer Prototype Lives On

In 2006, the Victorian State Government, working closely with a number of Catchment Management Authorities CMAs, developed and trialed a web-based application called eFarmer, which supports the capture, viewing and sharing Natural Resource Management information across farms, landscapes and catchments.

The prototype trial was undertaken over a four month period by forty land managers and was judged to be a valuable tool. The eFarmer project trial was highly commended at the 2006 Victorian Spatial Excellence Awards and a business case is currently being developed for a production implementation of the prototype application. In the mean time, the eFarmer prototype is being used to support some further trials and projects.

As part of the Better Fertiliser Decisions project, the Victorian Department of Primary Industries had developed a software application called the Farm Nutrient Loss Index (FNLI) tool. The FNLI tool is a decision support tool to assess the risk of nutrient loss from the paddock to the off-farm environment.

Whilst the FNLI tool provided a great assistance to farmers, it included no mapping capability and thus the results were not easy to interpret without expert assistance. The data and functions from the FNLI tool were added to the eFarmer application and linked directly in with eFarmer's mapping capabilities, allowing farmers to enter and view the various factors related to nutrient loss in the context of their paddock mapping.

The FNLI enhancements to eFarmer are currently being used in a trial with dairy farmers in Gippsland being run by DPI, the Murray Goulburn Cooperative and the local Catchment Management Authority.

eFarmer is also being used to support a number of other initiatives including the capture of more accurate and complete Landcare Group boundaries in the North Central CMA area and also to support the Northern United Forestry Group, a community-based collective of farming families working to establish commercially viable and environmentally sustainable farm forestry in north central Victoria.

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