WATER FOR FOOD

Draft Gascoyne Master Plan

Growing our food industry to grow our community
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This document is a draft for public consultation. It is available on the Water for Food website www.waterforfood.wa.gov.au.

You are invited to make comments and submissions before Friday 10 February 2017.

Submissions or comments should be sent to:
waterforfood@water.wa.gov.au
Gascoyne Master Plan
Department of Water
PO Box K822 PERTH WA 6842

To make an enquiry or provide comments by phone, please call Water for Food on 08 6364 7600.

The draft Gascoyne Master Plan has been prepared following a technical assessment by GHD and a stakeholder consultation process, including four meetings of a Community Reference Group. The development of the Gascoyne Master Plan was led by the Departments of Water, Agriculture and Food, and Regional Development and the Gascoyne Development Commission. The technical supporting document, including records of community consultation, will be published to accompany the release of the final Gascoyne Master Plan in early 2017.
Doubling the value of food production will drive the region’s economic development.

The Gascoyne region is known for its beautiful natural landscapes, distinctive tourism experiences and high quality local produce.

With increasing interest in the region, the Gascoyne community is poised to expand and develop, attracting residents, jobs and the investment to support the associated community services and facilities.

To support a thriving community, one of the biggest opportunities in the region is the expansion of the Gascoyne food production sector.

The timing and conditions for this growth are right. In Western Australia, and beyond, consumers are beginning to recognise and value the quality associated with Gascoyne produce, coupled with an increased demand for produce and associated export opportunities. In 2015, food production activities were valued at over $165 million, with the potential to more than double this to over $400 million, accompanied by a growth in jobs and the local population.

The potential for transformation has been recognised through major local planning and investment programs, including the Gascoyne Foodbowl Initiative and the Gascoyne Regional Investment Blueprint, that are yielding multiple benefits for local industries and residents.

To create a similar structure for the expansion of the food production sector, the State Government’s Water for Food program has worked closely with local growers, industry representatives and community members to develop the Gascoyne Master Plan.

The Gascoyne Master Plan is a comprehensive framework that maps the actions needed to double the value of the food production sector in the Gascoyne region, through targeted investment, producer innovation and more efficient use of water and land.
It empowers and provides direction to industry, investors and the community, outlining both opportunities and potential mechanisms to unite these groups for mutual benefits and growth.

The Gascoyne Master Plan:
- Provides a framework for the future economic development of the primary industries associated with food production, focussed in the Shire of Carnarvon for the period 2017-2027;
- Detailed strategies and recommendations to assist with the growth of food production in the wider region;
- Guides the identification of potential resources to support this growth; and
- Creates a structure and strategic direction to attract private investment.

It envisages a holistic approach to investment by the State and Federal Governments and industry, and the additional development of food production in the region. It also draws on emerging options for improved efficiency in both the supply and use of water on farming properties.

The Gascoyne Master Plan will support a structure that links industry with innovators and investors – the people who have the passion and creativity to lead and implement tailored, advanced approaches to expanding food production. A proposed centre of excellence model will unite government agencies and the education sector to ensure the latest research and scientific data is applied to drive efficiency and productivity for primary producers.

This strategic, interconnected approach will create education, training and employment opportunities for the region, showcasing viable career paths to inspire Gascoyne’s next generation and utilise and retain local talent and know-how.

The Gascoyne Master Plan is designed to complement and build on the existing regional planning and strategic initiatives in the Gascoyne. It will leverage the considerable investment the region has already been able to attract.

The Gascoyne community and industries have proven their resilience when faced with the most challenging of circumstances.

The Gascoyne Master Plan is a unique chance to harness this passion and energy to drive the future of the food production sector in the region, and support the growth of the Gascoyne community.
Achieving the vision

2015
$165 million
Value of food production

2030
$400 million
Value of food production

Significant rise in employment
Scope and development

Developing a sustainable economic future for food production in the Gascoyne will support long-term prosperity and growth for the region and its residents. Primary producers, the community, industry and State and local government agencies all have important roles to play. Success will be built upon a strategy and implementation pathways that draw on existing strengths, promote collaboration and establish clear responsibilities.

The Gascoyne Master Plan focuses on irrigated agriculture (in both horticultural and pastoral areas), and considers the growth of the aquaculture industry, to enhance productivity and achieve the growth in primary industries and the community.

It aligns with local and State government planning for the region, including the Gascoyne Regional Investment Blueprint and the State Government’s response to the Carnarvon Ministerial Advisory Committee’s final report.

The recommendations have been identified through extensive community consultation via the Community Reference Group and builds on an analysis of previous studies and initiatives. The Community Reference Group, chaired by Member for North West Central, Vince Catania MLA, comprised of representatives from the Shires of Carnarvon and Upper Gascoyne, Carnarvon Growers’ Association, Gascoyne Food Council, Gascoyne Water Cooperative, Carnarvon Chamber of Commerce and Industry, several State Government agencies, pastoralists, agronomists, regional banking, freight and logistics, food processing and growers.

Keys to success

There are four themes for the implementation of the Gascoyne Master Plan and the successful doubling of the Gascoyne’s food production sector:

- **Industry leadership**: Streamlining of industry organisations, establishment of a peak industry body and building the capacity of industry organisations and growers
- **Water and land**: Ensuring ongoing security of supply and access to cost effective water and power, facilitating the expansion of existing horticultural land and streamlining processes to facilitate pastoral diversification
- **Production and marketing**: Improving systems and markets to strengthen the region’s economic position
- **Supporting infrastructure**: Ensuring appropriate integration and alignment with wider planning and development frameworks to ensure maximisation of supply chain and value adding opportunities, maintaining cost-effective power supplies and exploring new energy sources

Investment in the Gascoyne region

Since 2008, over $343 million has been invested in the Gascoyne region, made possible by the State Government’s Royalties for Regions program, with projects including:

- $45 million towards the $60 million Carnarvon flood mitigation works
- $28.9 million towards the $34.9 million State Government investment in upgrades to Exmouth and Carnarvon health facilities
- $25 million for the Gascoyne Foodbowl Initiative
- $19.6 million to redevelop the Fascine waterfront and recreation area
- $17.6 million to amalgamate the primary and secondary public schools into the Carnarvon Community College
- $9.5 million towards the $52.5 million Carnarvon Police and Justice Complex
- $7.4 million towards the upgrade of the Gascoyne Irrigation Pipeline
- $4.6 million towards the $5.6 million Carnarvon Library and Art Gallery
Recommendation:

1. The Gascoyne Development Commission facilitates the establishment of a single peak industry body that builds primary producer business capacity and drives strategic development.

During the consultation process many stakeholders in industry and government have expressed the need for a single, dedicated peak industry body to build the capacity and scale to lead strategic agricultural development across the sector. This group would unite local knowledge, volunteers and resourcing.

A peak body would represent the Gascoyne’s primary producers, including horticulture, pastoralism and fisheries, providing the industry with a unified, active voice and advocating for their interests with government and the private sector. It would connect expert advice and research and development with grower practices for effective implementation to boost production. It would also explore options for innovative processing and packaging to create the most value for the region’s primary producers. Further, coordinating and delivering training and education could also form a valuable resource and income source.

A new peak industry body must have:

- A clear structure including sustainable governance and funding models;
- Specific objectives, to be communicated both inwardly to members and outwardly to other organisations and agencies;
- Clear roles and responsibilities defined, suitable expertise recruited, and appropriate up-skilling of members; and
- Specific teams established to coordinate and develop whole-of-industry solutions, focusing on areas such as retail, production, marketing, research and development and liaison with all levels of government on issues such as labour, backpacker employment, telecommuncations, workplace employment laws, safety, chemical use, Northern Australia Policies, transport and biosecurity.
Single bulk irrigation water service provider

Recommendations:
2a. A single bulk irrigation water service provider is established.
2b. State Government agencies provide targeted assistance to the single bulk irrigation water service provider to build capacity and governance.

To achieve economies of scale and manage the water supply on a sustainable basis, a single bulk irrigation water service provider will need to be established, to extract and distribute irrigation water. This will enable the irrigation borefields to be operated and licensed as a single system for effective and equitable management across the whole aquifer.

A single bulk irrigation water service provider will need to have rigorous governance structures and the capability to manage:
- Expanded infrastructure operation and maintenance
- New infrastructure efficiency programs
- Oversight and promotion of trading permanent and temporary water shares
- Improved member/stakeholder communications
- Appropriate financial management and controls
- A water pricing policy for long term business sustainability

Industry communication

Recommendation:
3. The peak industry body leads a coordinated and integrated communications program that improves the engagement with, and clarity of, information from state and federal government agencies, local bodies and industry to all key stakeholders.

Communications, promotional activities and events are essential to develop community, industry and government stakeholder awareness and ownership of the Gascoyne Master Plan and the implementation of recommendations.

Community and grower feedback has identified the need for improved and better coordinated communication activities, including:
- Improved engagement with industry stakeholders and community groups about the responsibilities of government agencies and service providers;
- Enhanced collaboration between key stakeholders (including government agencies) to facilitate consistency of messaging across all communications;
- Regular and accessible updates on changes to regulations, industry capacity, regional development and investment support; and
- Improved engagement with producers from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
Water and land
Water availability and supply

Recommendations:

4a. The Gascoyne Water Cooperative commences distribution of the four gigalitres of water associated with the land to be released under the Gascoyne Foodbowl Initiative prior to the establishment of the single bulk irrigation water service provider.

4b. The Department of Water makes available a portion of the town water supply reserve for existing growers and the Gascoyne Water Cooperative conducts the process for sale and distribution of this water.

4c. Water Corporation replaces the existing Southern Borefield Collector Main (including separation of the Southern Borefield into an irrigation component and a town water supply component).

4d. Gascoyne Water Cooperative finalises customer service agreements, infrastructure upgrades and operational procedures for more equitable and consistent water delivery to producers.

4e. Gascoyne Water Cooperative investigates smart metering and incentives to improve supply security for growers, including increased on-farm water storage options and off-peak water use to ‘smooth’ the load.

4f. The 2017 review of the Lower Gascoyne Water Allocation Plan to consider water resource management issues raised by the Community Reference Group.

Access to irrigation water is essential for doubling Gascoyne food production. Currently, the Lower Gascoyne Alluvial Aquifer (the water source for the current irrigation scheme) is almost fully utilised. There is an opportunity to review the Town Water Supply allocations and release any excess water for irrigation supply.

The Shire of Carnarvon is currently developing a District Water Management Strategy for urban development, the water supply for which will need to be considered in future planning decisions.

The Community Reference Group for the Gascoyne Master Plan raised a number of issues to be considered during the Department of Water’s review of the Lower Gascoyne Water Allocation Plan in 2017. These included options for increasing trading of Subarea A water, current recoup rules for Subarea A and making use of part of the town water supply reserve for temporary or permanent allocations.

There may be moderate amounts (up to 2GL/year) of additional fresh groundwater west of Rocky Pool and in the current borefields. However, this will require more detailed water investigations, which will only be undertaken when it is confirmed that this water is needed to supply town or industry. Furthermore, the brackish water from the Carnarvon Artesian Basin remains under-utilised.

Operation of the production borefields under a single bulk irrigation water service provider will present an opportunity to develop and implement a whole of aquifer operating strategy for sustainable use.

Trading of Gascoyne Water Cooperative water shares, both permanent and temporary basis, is currently allowed within the irrigation scheme under its private cooperative arrangements. The Gascoyne Water Cooperative has documented trading rules and manages a process for exchange of contact information between potential buyers and sellers.

There may be scope to increase share trading in the future. Increased trade will increase the productive use of available resources and support expansion in the longer term. A well-functioning water market should provide price signals for water users, assisting them in making decisions for economic and efficient farm water use.
The Southern Borefield Collector Main is currently operated by the Water Corporation and is proposed to be upgraded. Should a single bulk irrigation water service provider be established, separation of the Southern Borefield into an irrigation component (transferred to the single bulk irrigation water service provider) and a potable water supply component (retained by Water Corporation) would be required. Water Corporation will liaise with the Gascoyne Water Cooperative on the design and planning for the proposed upgrade to take into consideration the long term operational requirements of a single bulk irrigation water service provider.

During peak demand periods or water restrictions, if growers in the western part of the scheme take their share of the peak borefield production, then growers in the eastern part of the scheme may not receive their share. An equitable supply approach to control individual members’ daily take needs to be established by the Gascoyne Water Cooperative.

Gascoyne Water Cooperative members’ current water use practices result in borefield production being high during the day and low overnight. Smoothing borefield production by encouraging members to access their water at night will reduce the operating cost of the borefield and could be incentivised through off-peak water pricing. Improving metering (including smart meters) will deliver accurate measurements and facilitate real time water management. There are options to investigate use of off-peak power, and to improve irrigation systems for more efficient delivery and water use.

The Gascoyne Water Cooperative and growers are encouraged to explore options for funding and implementing increased on-farm water storage.

Water use efficiency

Recommendation:

5. The peak industry body, with support from the Department of Agriculture and Food WA, provides advice to growers to promote water conservation, water use efficiency and nutrient management through initiatives including, real time monitoring of soil moisture and weather.

Improved on-farm water efficiency and enhanced irrigation systems will yield water savings, reduce fertiliser costs through enhanced nutrient uptake and generate on-farm productivity.
Land

Recommendations:

6a. The Department of Lands progresses the Gascoyne Foodbowl Initiative land release.

6b. The Department of Lands establishes a process for one-on-one negotiations for prolongations and/or the amalgamation of Crown land with existing land holdings.

6c. The Department of Lands provides targeted assistance for pastoral owners to achieve streamlined conversion of suitable pastoral land to freehold via the Land Tenure Pathway for Irrigated Agriculture process, or diversification permits.

6d. The peak industry body to conduct a grower land use survey.

6e. The peak industry body encourages joint venture opportunities between pastoral lease holders and local horticultural producers.

There is currently approximately 2000 hectares of land zoned in Carnarvon for irrigated agriculture, however only about 1500 hectares is cultivated and on average, each month, only 1200 hectares of this land is under irrigation. A detailed grower survey is required to fully understand all the reasons why all the current available zoned land is not under irrigation. This would also advise on demand for new re-zoning of land.

The Gascoyne Foodbowl Initiative has identified approximately 400 hectares of crown land that is suitable for irrigated agriculture, adjacent to existing irrigated areas. The Department of Lands is leading the process for the release and development of this land, and its conversion to freehold.

To double food production, growers need to make the most efficient use of available land, and apply innovative approaches to overcome challenges associated with water and land access and development costs. This includes investigating new generation closed systems, vertical integration and other technological and science-based solutions.

The Land Tenure Pathway for Irrigated Agriculture project (LTPIA) aims to assist pastoralists to obtain a more secure land tenure to attract investment and allow diversification into higher-value irrigated agriculture. In the Lower Gascoyne horticultural region, the LTPIA process provides opportunities for Brickhouse Station and across the wider Gascoyne region to many other pastoral properties.

Diversification permits allow pastoralists to conduct certain activities on their pastoral leases, including irrigated agriculture and cultivation of crops. Diversification permits are faster and easier to obtain than tenure change via the LTPIA, however, they do not provide the same level of flexibility and security.

An additional 62 hectares of land adjoining lots in the irrigation area (prolongations and/or amalgamations) has been identified as suitable for irrigation by the Department of Agriculture and Food WA, based on soil quality.
Production and markets
Production

Recommendations:

7a. The peak industry body, with the Department of Agriculture and Food WA, investigates the development of the Carnarvon Research, Innovation and Training Facility to form a centre of excellence in primary production.

7b. The peak industry body investigates the feasibility and funding options for new generation production systems.

7c. The Gascoyne Development Commission conducts a feasibility analysis into aquaculture opportunities, in conjunction with industry.

7d. The peak industry body, with Department of Agriculture and Food WA, develops a coordinated approach to biosecurity, declared disease and pest control.

In order to remain competitive, producers will need to continue to update and refine production practices and explore new crops and enterprise opportunities.

Higher value production

Over the past 15 years, horticultural producers have increased the value of produce generated per unit of water used by an average of two percent per annum, to around $8,000 per megalitre. Additional value can be created by exploring new crop types (including native and other niche products), improved grading, quality control, packaging and cold chain management.

Horticultural production systems

Key opportunities for advancing current horticultural production systems include:

- Controlled environment production, particularly new generation shade houses given the insurance implications covering extreme weather events;
- Robotic applications to complete labour intensive tasks, such as planting, harvesting and packing;
- Improved water and nutrient management through remote sensing helping to deliver key returns in terms of water efficiency; and
- Improved crop waste management techniques to reduce biosecurity risk and add value by converting to compost or energy.
Pastoral irrigation

Irrigation development is key to future viability for a number of Gascoyne pastoralists. Pastoralists are increasingly seeking to establish areas of irrigation within stations to either produce additional fodder to help finish cattle for market and protect against drought conditions, or produce horticultural crops to supplement livestock incomes.

Aquaculture

Opportunities exist for increased aquaculture production, particularly through terrestrial aquaponics or closed reticulation systems integrated with primary produce enterprises. Such systems are likely to be small in scale, yet could be competitive in niche markets including supplying local food species, or higher value ornamental species to export markets. Opportunities may also exist in fish food production utilising horticultural waste, fishmeal and/or other novel ingredients (e.g. algae and insects), supplying the expanding Australian and International aquaculture industries particularly in the Kimberley and Mid-West.

Biosecurity

The Gascoyne has a natural advantage due to its geographic isolation in maintaining its biosecurity status as a ‘clean, green’ producer. Strong biosecurity supports production, reduces costs and increases market access. This includes addressing challenges such as preventing incursions of exotic plant pests and diseases, and control of pest plants, animals and diseases.

The Carnarvon Horticultural District faces an ongoing challenge to eradicate and/or avoid new incursions of fruit fly and other damaging plant diseases. In pastoral areas the increasing prevalence of wild dogs has impacted greatly on sheep and goat numbers.

Establishment of niche markets for high quality produce will open up export potential. It will also require close management of both biosecurity and predators and will need to be facilitated through ongoing education and awareness.

A key opportunity exists through a coordinated approach for declared disease and pest control and stronger enforcing of regulation. There are two Recognised Biosecurity Groups and a number of local government dogging programs in the region, which could benefit from a boost in resourcing and coordination. There is also the potential to establish quarantine bins for produce from both north and south of Carnarvon.

Research, development and extension

Agricultural research, development and extension is a key growth area and enabler in the region. As irrigated agriculture industries mature, private sector investments can be made based on business priorities.

Gascoyne producers have some very specific research and development needs. A peak industry body could leverage funding from government, industry and corporate partners to deliver this knowledge.

This could entail industry bodies and research organisations undertaking crop and animal husbandry trials in this relatively unique sub-tropical production area.

A centre of excellence in primary industries, with dedicated research facilities, would provide state of the art production and market development. In Carnarvon, this could be based at the Gascoyne Research Facility, covering 65 hectares close to the Gascoyne River within Carnarvon’s plantation district. It includes a number of zones from undeveloped land to plots available for covered cropping and other forms of irrigated agriculture. As well as being ideal for trialling horticultural crops for northern Australia, the Gascoyne Research Facility has the advantage of being suitable for trialling crops grown in the southern half of the State, with its irrigation facilities, safe biosecurity status and temperate climate. Capability and capacity training could be conducted for local growers.

Potential service and research areas could include investigations into intensification systems, biosecurity risk reduction testing, leaf and soil sample testing facilities and plant breeding.

By partnering with education providers and industry, the centre of excellence model could be expanded to integrate with the primary, secondary, tertiary and vocational education sectors, offering attractive learning experiences to students that deliver practical skills and can be applied to local industries.
Value adding and export opportunities

Recommendations:

8a. The peak industry body promotes improved produce processing, including quality and grading standards, packaging and portion sizes, to appeal to premium and export markets.

8b. The peak industry body identifies value add opportunities, including second grade produce.

8c. The peak industry body connects producers with opportunities for new investors and for building relationships with retailers and exporters.

8d. The peak industry body promotes better supply chain management, coordinating collaboration and delivery on supply contracts, including cooperative models.

To date, most horticultural produce from the Gascoyne region is consumed in the local WA market with only a small proportion exported interstate or overseas. Producers have long benefited from being able to supply domestic markets when produce from other growing regions is unavailable. However, this advantage is under pressure as controlled environment and hydroponic production systems allow other producers to broaden their supply window and improve quality.

To remain competitive, Gascoyne producers should strive to enhance the consistency of quality of produce supplied to the market, employing better supply chain management, improved grading standards and value adding. Opportunities also exist for the region to produce higher value crops and more value-added products that directly appeal to consumer demand for health, wellbeing, convenience, practicality and consistency.

Producers, with the support of a peak industry body should explore increased export opportunities in Asian markets, including in China as a result of Free Trade Agreements. State Government agencies such as the Department of State Development are well-positioned to provide advice and guidance on entering and supplying these export markets.

Marketing and branding

Recommendations:

9a. The peak industry body develops and implements a brand and marketing strategy for a produce brand and build brand(s) recognition.

9b. The peak industry body facilitates customer research, identifies trends, competitors and consumer preferences to inform market development.

There is the potential to increase the brand recognition for the Gascoyne region as being associated with quality produce. The Gascoyne Food Council’s ‘Fresh from Carnarvon’ brand was developed to help increase awareness of the region’s primary produce, but the brand has not been widely adopted outside of the horticultural sector. These foundations could be built upon with increased funding and coordination.

Several grower groups have achieved success in developing and promoting unique food brands and these models could be explored and adopted for other food production lines.

The Gascoyne region is also well-positioned to expand its food tourism offerings, building on unique produce, local food events and distinctive culinary experiences.
Recommendations:

10a. The Gascoyne Development Commission continues to facilitate the infrastructure, telecommunications and transport initiatives identified in the Gascoyne Regional Investment Blueprint.

10b. The Gascoyne Development Commission, the Shire of Carnarvon and the peak industry group investigate the feasibility of processing facilities and other infrastructure, including:
   - Expansion of existing facilities
   - Cooperative wholesale market models (e.g. market floor), working with existing grower groups who are already implementing an integrated supply chain approach
   - Renewable energy options
   - Gascoyne regional abattoir
   - Enhanced air transport facilities
   - Port facilities and/or access

Expanding primary industries offer the opportunity for a coordinated approach to investment in infrastructure, economies of scale and natural synergies for processing and developing ‘value-add’ products.

Roads

Most primary produce from Carnarvon is trucked approximately ten hours south to Perth before being distributed locally, interstate or exported. Located on a primary transport route, the region enjoys good access to road transport and also benefits from transporters seeking back-loading to Perth which reduces transport costs. Doubling food production will likely require an additional approximately 1,400 B-Double trucks per year. This will reduce the availability of cheap back-loading. Roads will need to be upgraded to carry triple road trains, particularly along the North West Coastal Highway, south of Northampton.

Airport upgrades

The establishment of air freight facilities and services would be of significant benefit to primary industries in the region. This could be achieved through upgrading the Carnarvon airport for cargo aircraft and associated freight handling. The Learmonth airport can handle large aircraft but would benefit from expanded cold storage and logistics facilities.

Upgrading infrastructure and air services would also be important to getting tourism and buyers into the region. The feasibility of such upgrades will rest largely on the demand for such a service from broader industries and the community.

It will be important to investigate how to make the price of regional air flights to Carnarvon more accessible, to attract and support business in the region.
Telecommunications

Improving the current internet and mobile telephone service level in the Gascoyne area will support modern production systems, which increasingly rely on critical communication, data use and technology for precision farming, resource management and marketing decisions. Remote monitoring and control systems often require mobile connectivity to send and receive data. These opportunities could be achieved by providing additional mobile phone towers and access to affordable, fit for purpose, business quality National Broadband Network services.

Energy

Current producers in the Gascoyne region incur significant energy costs, particularly when pumping water from bores. Solar or other renewable sources (e.g. waste conversion) may provide opportunities to reduce energy costs. Such opportunities could include both centralised and on-farm facilities.

Horticultural grading, packing and processing

Opportunities exist for the establishment of a centralised cold storage, grading packing facility to produce a consistent supply of quality branded, retail-ready products. This facility would lift the standards of produce leaving the region, particularly for those producers who are currently grading and packing on-farm. Opportunities may also exist for the facility to process waste and downgraded produce. The facility could be developed and managed by one of the existing packing facilities or cooperatives, or as part of a new cooperative.

Meat processing

Livestock are currently either exported live via Geraldton (480km south of Carnarvon) or processed in the Perth region (cattle and sheep). The prospect of opening a Gascoyne abattoir for multiple livestock processing is being explored by the local pastoral industry and the Gascoyne Development Commission. Work is required to determine the appropriate scale needed to support such a facility, the land, energy and water requirements, and whether further processing (e.g. butchering for branded quality cuts) would be viable.

Planning

Local development planning will need to be in place for the siting of future industrial premises. Careful planning will be required to ensure that appropriate protocols are in place to facilitate development of industrial areas and intensification of production areas which are located close to or within tourism and residential areas.
Investing in the future
State Government investment and support

The Western Australian Government has and continues to be supportive of a strong, vibrant primary produce and irrigation industry in the Gascoyne. The State and Federal Governments have spent $104.7 million into Gascoyne agricultural enhancement projects, including:

- Gascoyne Foodbowl Initiative ($25 million Royalties for Regions investment);
- Gascoyne Irrigation Pipeline Project ($6 million Royalties for Regions investment, total $17.1 million);
- Carnarvon Flood Mitigation Works ($45 million Royalties for Regions investment, total $60 million); and
- Middle Gascoyne Groundwater Investigation Project ($2.6 million Royalties for Regions investment).

The State Government is committed to seeking funding to complete the implementation of the Government’s response to the Carnarvon Ministerial Advisory Committee’s final report and priority recommendations of the Gascoyne Master Plan. This investment is aimed at supporting irrigated agriculture industries to become sustainable and self-sufficient.

Funding will be required for:

- Replacement of the first 20 km of Southern Borefield pipeline (including its separation into town and irrigation water supply components), by the Water Corporation;
- Establishment and capacity building of the single bulk irrigation water service provider;
- Transferring State Government owned assets to the single irrigation water service provider once it has achieved agreed performance criteria; and
- Support for establishing a peak industry body and for the continued and expanded marketing and promotion of Gascoyne food.

The Gascoyne Water Cooperative has committed to spend, approximately $0.5 million in upgrades to its current infrastructure to allow the taking of their full 3.6 gigalitres/year from the Northern Borefield.

Leadership and delivery

Implementation of the Gascoyne Master Plan will require specific industry-based governance arrangements to oversee implementation, guide action and provide coordinated stakeholder and State Government input into the delivery of the Master Plan. The peak industry body would be well placed to undertake this task.
### Timelines for implementation

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>1. Single peak industry body established</td>
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<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>2a. Single bulk irrigation water service provider established</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2b. Targeted assistance from State Government agencies for single bulk irrigation water service provider</td>
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<td>3. Peak industry group leads and delivers integrated communication program</td>
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<td>2021</td>
<td>4a. Gascoyne Water Cooperative commences distribution 4GL of GFI water</td>
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<td>4b. Department of Water to make available portion of town water supply reserve via GWC</td>
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<td>4f. Lower Gascoyne Water Allocation Plan review</td>
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<td>5. Peak industry body and DAFWA provide advice to growers to promote water conservation, water use efficiency and nutrient management</td>
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<td>6a. The Department of Lands progresses the Gascoyne Foodbowl Initiative land release</td>
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<td></td>
<td>6c. Targeted assistance for pastoral owners by Department of Lands through Land Tenure Pathway for Irrigated Agriculture process or diversification permits</td>
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<td>6d. The peak industry body to conduct a grower land use survey</td>
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<td>6e. The peak industry body encourages joint venture opportunities between pastoral lease holders and local horticultural producers</td>
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<tr>
<td>2030</td>
<td>7a. Peak industry body and DAFWA investigates the development of the Carnarvon Research, Innovation and Training Facility</td>
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<td>7b. Peak industry body investigates the feasibility and funding options for new generation production systems</td>
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<td></td>
<td>7c. Gascoyne Development Commission conducts a feasibility analysis into aquaculture opportunities, in conjunction with industry</td>
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<td>7d. Peak industry body with DAFWA develops a coordinated approach to biosecurity, declared disease and pest control</td>
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<td>7e. Promotion of improved produce processing, including quality and grading standards, packaging and portion sizes by peak industry body</td>
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<td>7f. Peak industry body identifies value add opportunities, including use of second grade produce</td>
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<td>8c. Peak industry body connects producers with opportunities for new investors and for building relationships with retailers and exporters</td>
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<td></td>
<td>8d. Peak industry body promotes better supply chain management, coordinating collaboration and delivery on supply contracts, including cooperative models</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9a. Peak industry body develops and implements a brand and marketing strategy for a produce brand and build brand(s) recognition</td>
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<td>9b. Peak industry body facilitates customer research, identifies trends, competitors and consumer preferences to inform market development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2030</td>
<td>10a. Gascoyne Development Commission continues to facilitate the infrastructure, telecommunications and transport initiatives identified in the Gascoyne Regional Investment Blueprint</td>
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<td>10b. The Gascoyne Development Commission, the Shire of Carnarvon and the peak industry group investigate the feasibility of processing facilities and other infrastructure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Short Term 0 – 2 years**

**Medium Term 3 – 5 years**

**Long Term 6-10 years or ongoing**