

# A Geography of Place for Resource Governance

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An important institution for regional resource governance is civic engagement in local affairs, including resource use issues. Local civic engagement has traditionally been structured around local government and, more recently, to catchment based decision-making bodies. If citizens are to participate in regional resource management in ways that are meaningful to them, it is important that both the landscape units being discussed and the jurisdictional boundaries are meaningful. The importance of community participation in resource management also emphasises the need to re-examine the requirements for spatial definition of resource governance regions. We have been examining how boundaries for resource governance regions might be identified and propose three principles. Firstly, the boundaries of resource governance regions should enclose areas of greatest interest and importance to local residents. Secondly, the biophysical characteristics of a resource governance region should be as homogenous as possible, which provides resource planning and management efficiencies. Thirdly, a hierarchical, multi-scaling capacity for institutional arrangements to deal with environmental externalities of resource use should determine the size and nesting of resource management regions. The paper describes a range of concepts and empirical techniques used to apply these principles to the derivation of a resource governance regionalisation of New South Wales.