



Member for O'Connor Rick Wilson, Regional Development Australia Great Southern executive officer Simon Lyas, chairman Milton Evans and WA Senator Dean Smith with the latest regional development plan.

Regional plan discussed

■ Kendall O'Connor

Local government staff and councillors from across the Great Southern were briefed on a vision for the region at an event in Cranbrook on Wednesday.

Dignitaries and politicians gathered for the launch of the Regional Development Australia Great Southern Regional Plan for 2013-18.

The plan prioritises the need to focus on infrastructure development, education and training, natural resource management and social inclusion.

RDA Great Southern executive

officer Simon Lyas said previous regional plans had helped them and the Federal Government determine successful funding applications for projects such as the Katanning Saleyards, Albany's Centennial Park Sporting Precinct and Denmark's Riverside Project.

"The regional plan is a roadmap for the Great Southern," he said. "It gives a snapshot of the region and some of its key features. It looks at big picture issues and discusses where organisations like ours can help develop the region."

WA Senator Dean Smith officially launched the plan and highlighted challenges and opportunities facing the region. He said a growing demand from the Asian middle-class for products grown in the Great Southern was an opportunity, while the need for improved communication infrastructure, and an aging population were challenges. "These are three critical issues in my mind that deserve attention and strong input from local government associations," he said. It took six months of consultations with local government officials and organisations in the Great Southern to compile the regional plan.



Shire of Broomehill-Tambellup chief executive Joanna Trezona, Aurora Environmental's Melanie Price and Shire of Kojoonup chief executive Rick Mitchell-Collins. Pictures: Kendall O'Connor



Southern Business Centre Great Southern manager Vicki Brown and Regional Development Australia's Anne Sparrow.



GSDC chief executive Bruce Manning, Shire of Katanning chief executive Dean Taylor and Shire of Jerramungup chief executive Bill Parker.