

## Chapter 4

# Challenges and success factors in undertaking integrated research

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### **ABSTRACT**

A 6-month review of current research within the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), which sought to explore the interface between science and societal change, has revealed many practical challenges for researchers, the research process and the institutional environments in which this research is managed and funded. Semi-structured interviews were used to elicit, from the experiences of individuals involved in six case study projects, the success factors, challenges and lessons to be learnt by CSIRO within an area of emerging science. The study showed that project teams were engaging and interacting with challenging community, government policy and industrial institutional settings. The process of engaging with people, their experiences and needs confronted traditional 'top-down' scientific research dissemination and the way researchers needed to think about tackling research problems.

These projects have shown CSIRO researchers how to stretch themselves across disciplinary boundaries, work cooperatively and to interact with socially complex environments and people. This has encouraged new forms of learning, brought systems understanding to research domains and, through building community consensus and participation processes, has influenced 'real world' issues.