



# Fact Sheet

## Planning for the Gippsland Region's water future

The Gippsland Region Sustainable Water Strategy is a Victorian Government initiative to secure the region's water future for the next 50 years.

The Discussion Paper is the first step in developing the Gippsland Region Sustainable Water Strategy. It contains information on current water resources in the region, how water is used and what the challenges are that may affect water availability in the future.

## What is a sustainable water strategy?

Sustainable water strategies analyse all aspects of water management at a regional level, and together with the community, determine a fair and sustainable balance between urban, industrial, agricultural and environmental water needs.

Sustainable water strategies are an initiative of the Government's *Our Water Our Future* action plan. They complement the measures to secure water for Victoria's growing population and economy in the face of drought and the potential impacts of climate change.

## The process

The Gippsland Region Sustainable Water Strategy Discussion Paper is the first step to understanding the future challenges to water availability in the region, and identifying ways to respond.

Feedback on the Discussion Paper is invited through public submissions and stakeholder briefings and will be used to develop a Draft Strategy, expected to be released by the end of 2009.

A further period of consultation will be held before the Final Strategy is released in 2010.

The Strategy aims to:

- secure supplies for towns and industry
- encourage economically viable and sustainable agriculture
- protect and, where possible, improve the health of rivers, wetlands, estuaries and aquifers.

The Strategy is the Gippsland Region's response to future drought and the uncertainty of climate change and will secure our water resources for the next 50 years.



## Managing our water resources

Historically, the Gippsland Region has experienced relatively reliable rainfall, being one of the wettest areas in Victoria. However, as with the rest of Victoria, water resources in the Gippsland Region have been significantly impacted by the persistently dry conditions experienced over the last 12 years, with the lowest inflows on record being observed in many streams across the region in 2006. A major issue in considering the water resource outlook over the next 50 years is whether the drier conditions of the past 12 years reflect natural climatic variability, the impacts of climate change or both these factors.

As well as considering future drought, population changes, land use change and water quality issues, the Gippsland Region Sustainable Water Strategy will make projections on how climate change may impact on the region. The Strategy will ultimately develop management approaches to respond to these scenarios.

### Scenarios A to D – Potential reduction in total inflows for river systems in the Gippsland Region as a result of climate change (compared to the long-term average)

System	Inflow impact in 2055 under each CSIRO climate change scenario			D – Impact experienced over past 12 yrs <sup>a</sup>
	A – Low	B – Medium	C – High	
East Gippsland <sup>b</sup>	-2%	-5%	-18%	-33%
Snowy <sup>c</sup>	-4%	-12%	-26%	-55%
Tambo	-5%	-19%	-35%	-44%
Mitchell	-6%	-21%	-34%	-36%
Avon	-7%	-23%	-40%	-55%
Thomson	-7%	-23%	-40%	-43%
Macalister	-7%	-23%	-40%	-40%
Latrobe	-7%	-19%	-35%	-43%
South Gippsland <sup>d</sup>	-7%	-17%	-28%	-41%

#### Notes:

- Reduction of average annual inflows when comparing pre July 1997 average inflows to post July 1997 inflows
- Scenario D for Bemm, Betka and Cann Rivers only (calculated from resource allocation modelling)
- Scenario D calculated from gauged data at Jarrahmond (gauge 222200)
- Scenario D for Bass, Powlett, Tarwin, Agnes and Tarra systems only. Data sourced from resource allocation modelling.

## Who is contributing to the Strategy?

The Minister for Water has appointed a Consultative Committee to provide strategic guidance, advice and oversight. The Committee includes representatives from local water corporations, catchment management authorities, the Gippsland Coastal Board, Gippsland Lakes Task Force, local government, industry, Environment Victoria and the Victorian Farmers Federation. In addition, the strategy will seek feedback from Gippsland communities through its consultation process to ensure the strategy reflects local priorities and values.

## Key project milestones:

- Discussion Paper: released July 2009.
- Draft Strategy: expected release late 2009.
- Final Strategy: expected release first half of 2010.

## Who to contact

Further information about the Gippsland Region Sustainable Water Strategy is available from:

Department of Sustainability and Environment's customer service centre 136 186 or visit: [www.ourwater.vic.gov.au/programs/sws/gippsland](http://www.ourwater.vic.gov.au/programs/sws/gippsland)

Information regarding local water resource planning is available directly from your water corporation or catchment management authority:

East Gippsland Water  
1300 720 700  
[www.egwater.vic.gov.au](http://www.egwater.vic.gov.au)

Gippsland Water  
1800 066 401  
[www.gippswater.com.au](http://www.gippswater.com.au)

South Gippsland Water  
1300 851 636  
[www.sgwater.com.au](http://www.sgwater.com.au)

Southern Rural Water  
(03) 5139 3100  
[www.srw.com.au](http://www.srw.com.au)

East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority  
(03) 5152 0600  
[www.egcma.com.au](http://www.egcma.com.au)

West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority  
1300 094 262  
[www.wgcma.vic.gov.au](http://www.wgcma.vic.gov.au)

## Having a say

Communities, individuals and organisations are invited to make a submission on how the Gippsland Region should respond to a future with less water. Submissions may include what the Gippsland Region should strive to be in 50 years time, and look to identify or focus on regional opportunities for managing water scarcity, including:

- opportunities to save water
- opportunities with available water
- opportunities to move water
- opportunities to improve and maintain environmental values.

## Making a submission

Written submissions on the Discussion Paper are due by 5pm on Friday 18 September 2009 and can be sent or emailed to:

Department of Sustainability and Environment  
Attention: Sustainable Water Strategies Branch  
Office of Water  
PO Box 500  
East Melbourne VIC 3002

Email: [gippsland.sws@dse.vic.gov.au](mailto:gippsland.sws@dse.vic.gov.au)  
(If emailing please supply address details)