

SEPP Waters Manager
Level 10, 8 Nicholson Street
East Melbourne 3002

Dear Sir/Madam,

Comments on the draft State Environmental Protection Policy (Waters)

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the draft State Environmental Protection Policy (Waters).

I would like to acknowledge the significant piece of work undertaken to update the Policy to provide a contemporary suite of preventative measures that protect the beneficial uses of Victoria's surface and groundwater.

I also congratulate the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) and the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) for the comprehensive engagement of our organisation through the review and draft policy formulation stages. This engagement occurred primarily through the VicCatchments collaboration forums that operate across the Catchment Management Authority (CMA) sector and I appreciate this approach.

Through this consultation we have had the opportunity to raise and resolve issues relating to the policy itself and its implementation and following this process no material issues are outstanding.

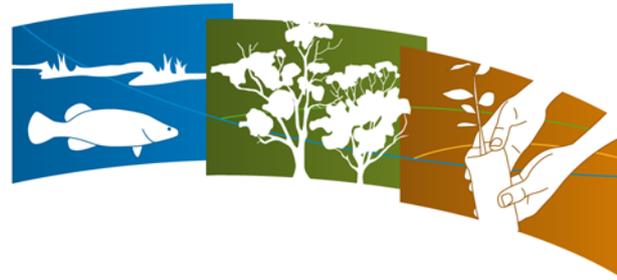
I note the proposed roles and responsibilities of CMAs, some of which are new (e.g. Clause 18. Developing interim regional targets in priority areas) and some of which align with existing functions. As a largely project-funded organisation, where these roles and responsibilities are new we will require additional resourcing to ensure that we deliver a timely and quality outcome. These requirements are identified in the Policy Impact Assessment and I assume that this represents the plan of government to manage the impacts of the proposed changes as it moves to an implementation phase.

On behalf of the North Central CMA, I look forward to supporting DELWP and EPA through the implementation phase of this important reform. It is critical that it is subject to ongoing focus and collaboration, close monitoring of the implementation plan and periodic evaluation of outcomes to ensure that improvements to the protection of the beneficial uses of Victoria's surface and groundwater are realised.

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NORTH CENTRAL
Catchment Management Authority
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Please do not hesitate to contact me on [REDACTED] if any clarification of these comments is required.

Yours sincerely,

Brad Drust
Chief Executive Officer

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