

Catchment Partnership Agreements

Working better together in our catchments

Our Catchments
Our Communities

Catchment Partnership Agreements outline how regional catchment partners will work together to strengthen coordination, collaboration and accountability for integrated catchment management across Victoria.

The agreements apply to the 10 catchment management regions which are Corangamite, East Gippsland, Glenelg Hopkins, Goulburn Broken, Mallee, North Central, North East, Port Phillip and Westernport, West Gippsland and Wimmera.

The formation of Catchment Partnerships and the implementation of the agreements are key Victorian Government initiatives under the *Our Catchments Our Communities* strategy (Goal 4) and supports implementation of *Water for Victoria* (Chapter 3 Waterway and Catchment Health).

The agreements provide an overarching mechanism to support accountability for the delivery of Victorian Government policies for water, land and biodiversity and Regional Catchment Strategies without duplicating other processes.

Signatories to the Catchment Partnership Agreements reflect regional circumstances and may include:

- Catchment Management Authorities
- Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
- Environment Protection Authority
- Parks Victoria
- Water Corporations
- Trust for Nature
- Traditional Owner Corporations
- Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources
- Local Government
- Community organisations
- Industry groups

Catchment Management Authorities coordinate implementation of the agreements through the development of annual priorities and work plans.

Role of the Catchment Partnerships

Catchment Partnerships recognise that to achieve long term natural resource management outcomes, key state and regional partners must understand and be involved in regional priority-setting and decision-making processes. Specifically, each Partnership's role is to:

- identify regional priorities that need cross-organisational collaboration
- clarify roles and responsibilities of partners for regional communities
- support the development and implementation of each Regional Catchment Strategy
- identify relevant regional issues and options for resolving them
- review new relevant government policies to identify those requiring regional cross-organisational cooperation and collaboration
- ensure all relevant partners are signatories and are involved in relevant issues, decisions and policy implementation

Contents of the agreements

Each agreement has been prepared in accordance with the state level framework endorsed by the Minister for Water. They include:

- the purpose of the agreement
- the role of the Catchment Partnership
- state-wide principles (regional principles can also be added)
- governance arrangements – roles and responsibilities of members, meetings, sub-committees and working groups, decision-making processes, annual plan, monitoring evaluation and reporting processes, partnership agreement review, schedules
- monitoring, evaluation and reporting - partnership critical success factors
- schedule 1-4 - legislative responsibilities for natural resource management, state/regional policy responsibilities, non-signatory partners to participate in the delivery of shared objectives, other relevant partnerships and agreements.

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Success factors

Catchment Partnerships are required to report on the operation and effectiveness of the partnership to the Minister for Water. Critical success factors include:

- acting on agreed principles
- implementing an annual plan
- partners own and report on implementation of regional catchment strategies
- engaging diverse communities to participate in catchment management
- communities are involved in design *and* implementation of integrated catchment management.

Outcomes

The Catchment Partnership Agreements are outcomes focused and will contribute to:

- healthy and productive land, water, biodiversity and ecosystems
- improved regional economic wellbeing and liveability
- greater community ownership and stewardship of our natural assets
- shared understanding of the impact of our efforts to manage catchments
- better value for money from investment in natural resource management
- strengthened implementation of Regional Catchment Strategies and other key state and regionally relevant policies and plans.

Further information

To find out more contact your Catchment Management Authority.

Our Catchments Our Communities can be found on the DELWP website.



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