

Action Status Report

July 2022

WATER FOR VICTORIA

Overall Action Status:

Work is underway on all **69** actions



52 complete and now business as usual



10 in progress



7 in progress with revised timeframe



Complete and
now business
as usual



In progress




In progress with
revised timeframe

Action	Status	Highlight	Timeframe
--------	--------	-----------	-----------

Chapter 2: Climate change

Action 2.1 Achieve net-zero emissions in the water sector		The Minister for Water released the updated Statement of Obligations (Emission Reduction) in May 2022 committing water corporations to achieving a collective 42.4% reduction in emissions by 2025, 93.7% by 2030, and 100% (achievement of net-zero) by 2035. Water corporations are also committed to sourcing 100% of their energy needs from renewable energy sources by 2025. This puts water corporations on the pathway to achieving this action 15 years earlier than originally scheduled.	Ongoing
Action 2.2 Understand and apply climate science to water management		Research strategy developed, and investment has been made through funding agreements with research institutions to continue research into the impact of climate change on water availability, and to prepare and provide guidance for planning Victoria's future.	Ongoing
Action 2.3 Lead climate change adaptation across Victoria's water system		Following successful delivery of a pilot Water Sector Climate Change Adaptation Plan, the legislated <i>Water Cycle Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan 2022-26</i> , was released in February 2022, with 21 new actions. This latest Plan is the first prepared in accordance with the requirements of the <i>Climate Change Act 2017</i> . Under the legislation, Adaptation Action Plans are to be prepared for seven systems every five years.	Ongoing

Chapter 3: Waterway and catchment health

Action 3.1 Improving arrangements for urban waterways		<p>The Yarra Strategic Plan, <i>Burndap Birrarung burndap umarkoo</i>, was released in February 2022. This embeds as business as usual many of the objectives of the Yarra River Protection Ministerial Advisory Committee (MAC) for the river and its parklands. Other key actions from the Yarra River Action Plan (the Government's response to the MAC) have also been implemented including changes to the Victorian Planning Provisions to improve management of stormwater, release of the first State of the Yarra and its Parklands Report, watering of the Bolin Bolin billabong and stronger planning controls for the Yarra.</p> <p>The government has also applied these objectives to other major urban waterways, with the release of the Waterways of the West and Rivers of the Barwon (<i>Barre Warre Yulluk</i>) Action Plans in 2021, and implementation of the short-term actions is underway.</p>	Ongoing
---	---	---	---------



Complete and
now business
as usual



In progress



In progress with
revised timeframe

Action	Status	Highlight	Timeframe
Action 3.2 Protect water quality through the State Environment Protection Policy (SEPP)		<p>Under the <i>Environment Protection Act 2017</i> the State Environment Protection Policies (SEPP) no longer has a formal legal role. The Act introduces new duties such as the general environmental duty (GED) and new subordinate instruments.</p> <p>Some of the content in SEPP is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • replaced by the GEO • in environment reference standards or regulations • refamed as EPA guidance. <p>More information is available in the EPA publication <i>Using SEPPs and WMPs in the new environment protection framework guide</i>.</p>	Ongoing
Action 3.3 Invest in integrated catchment management		<p>A new ministerial statement has been released building on the legacy of Our Catchments, Our Communities for better stewardship. Current investment continues to support the finalisation of regional catchment strategies and delivering the next round of stewardship and partnership projects across Victoria through continuing action of DELWP, Catchment Management Authorities, sector partners, Traditional Owners and the community.</p>	Ongoing
Action 3.4 Provide long-term investment to improve waterway health		<p>New agreements with delivery partners are currently being developed to continue delivery of on-ground works to maintain and improve the health of our waterways out to 2024.</p> <p>Following the successful trial of the initial 10 flagship projects (which continue to be delivered), an additional nine flagship projects have been established, with new approaches for tracking progress and reporting being trialled at these waterways.</p>	Ongoing
Action 3.5 Improve environmental water management in a changing climate		<p>New environmental entitlements have been established for the Thomson and Barwon Rivers. Investment has been made in environmental works for priority waterways and project work is underway. An additional \$17 million capital stimulus investment in environmental waterway works projects is also being undertaken in Northern Victoria. New environmental water recovery targets have been identified through the new Central and Gippsland Region Sustainable Water Strategy.</p>	Ongoing



Complete and
now business
as usual



In progress



In progress with
revised timeframe

Action	Status	Highlight	Timeframe
Action 3.6 Better monitor and report on the benefits of environmental watering		Reporting on benefits of environmental watering is published annually in the Victorian Environmental Water Holder Reflections booklet and DELWP's annual report. Catchment Management Authorities regularly use the outcomes from statewide environmental flows monitoring programs to provide information to their partners, stakeholders and the broader community about the benefits of environmental watering. Environmental water outcomes will also be addressed in the State of the Environment report in 2023.	Ongoing
Action 3.7 Ensure clear and transparent charging arrangements		Consultation with key stakeholders is underway.	2023
Action 3.8 Support community partnerships and citizen science		Waterway citizen science programs continue to be supported across Victoria. The Angler Riparian Partnerships Program is now complete. Over four years, 156 angling clubs and community groups participated in 35 events and helped to plant 41,555 native trees and shrubs and control 174 hectares of weeds in 39 separate projects. These efforts improved 70 kilometres of riparian land along 30 waterways across Victoria.	Ongoing
Action 3.9 Improve knowledge and information about waterways and catchments		<p>Improvements to monitoring, evaluation and reporting programs have been implemented and a range of programs have been delivered, including the Riparian Intervention Monitoring Program, Wetland Intervention Monitoring Program, Native Fish Report Card, state-wide monitoring of benefits of water for the environment for rivers and wetlands, and state-wide Index of Estuary Condition.</p> <p>A waterway research hub was also established to support more coordinated strategic research and monitoring. New data on aquatic biodiversity has been acquired using eDNA methods from over 1800 locations along Victoria's rivers and streams. This data will be incorporated into state and regional strategy updates.</p>	Ongoing



Complete and
now business
as usual



In progress




In progress with
revised timeframe


Action	Status	Highlight	Timeframe
--------	--------	-----------	-----------


Chapter 4: Water for agriculture

Action 4.1 Supporting regional development and change		Water corporations are continuing to work with regional stakeholders to support regional development.	Ongoing
---	---	---	---------


Action 4.2 Invest in rural water infrastructure		Investment principles have been embedded in decision making, with six irrigation modernisation and domestic and stock pipeline projects complete, and five capital projects currently underway throughout the state. 14 feasibility studies have been completed, which may generate business cases for further government investment.	Ongoing
---	---	---	---------

In 2021, Commonwealth investment was also secured through the National Water Grid Fund Connections Funding Pathway, with the investment going towards nine construction projects.

Action 4.3 Help irrigation districts adapt		Delivery share review is complete, with actions completed or embedded as business as usual from July 2021. Rural water corporations are working with their irrigation communities to adapt through modernisation, reform and innovation projects, and continue to engage with customers and other key stakeholders to ensure irrigation districts remain affordable and attractive to new businesses.	Ongoing
--	--	---	---------

Action 4.4 Reduce barriers to change and support communities in irrigation districts		The initial four-year Sustainable Irrigation Program is complete, with a further four years now being delivered until 2024. This program will assist irrigators through decision support, whole farm planning and a range of incentives and extension programs.	Ongoing
--	---	---	---------

In the Goulburn Murray Irrigation District, a project to reduce barriers to change by establishing an Agricultural Redevelopment Coordinator to streamline irrigation redevelopment across the district is underway. In West Gippsland, the Newry Farm Planning project is providing irrigators connecting to the Newry Pipeline the opportunity to prepare or update a whole farm plan for their property, reducing barriers to plan for the future.

Action 4.5 Improve water delivery efficiency in irrigation districts		Water savings protocol and independent technical review are in place as part of a robust process to verify water savings, while work in evaluating on-farm water use efficiency continues. Funding has been provided to Agriculture Victoria for continuing work in evaluating on-farm water use efficiency.	Ongoing
--	---	--	---------



Complete and
now business
as usual



In progress



In progress with
revised timeframe

Action	Status	Highlight	Timeframe
Action 4.6 Manage salinity, waterlogging and water quality		Salinity management and monitoring programs in irrigation and dryland areas are underway and ongoing. The new Victorian Irrigation Drainage Program Strategic Direction 2021-2024 has been completed.	Ongoing
Action: 4.7 Manage irrigation developments		<p>The Mallee, Northern Victorian and Gippsland Irrigation Development Guidelines were updated in 2021 and are now being implemented. Gippsland and South West Irrigation Development Guidelines have been drafted.</p> <p>In 2021-22, a review of Irrigation Licensing Guidance Material was undertaken. Implementation of the recommendations is now underway.</p>	2016–2023
Action 4.8 Improve salinity management in the Mallee		Investment Guidelines for the Salinity Impact Charges have been implemented for 2020-21. An independent review of salinity charges is complete and two new Determinations put in place. Revised annual salinity impact charges came into effect on 1 January 2021. An interstate comparison of salinity management in the Mallee has been completed and Victoria continues to work with interstate jurisdictions on the management of salinity through the Basin Salinity Management Advisory Panel.	Ongoing
Action 4.9 Improve management of emergency water supply		<p>The Emergency Water Supply Point (EWSP) network was reviewed and works completed in 2016. Additional funding for improving access to supply points was announced in 2019 as part of drought support, and a total of 11 new EWSPs were constructed through this project.</p> <p>In 2021, an independent review was conducted which focused on identifying established infrastructure associated with emergency water supply and the consideration of where new infrastructure was required.</p> <p>In 2021-22, additional funding was announced for the extension and improvement of EWSP infrastructure across bushfire affected communities under the Victorian Government Building Works Package and the Commonwealth National Water Grid Fund.</p> <p>This will be allocated across several priority Local Government Areas identified through the 2021 review, with construction of new EWSPs and upgrades on existing infrastructure to be completed by mid-2023.</p>	2023





Complete and
now business
as usual




In progress



In progress with
revised timeframe

Action	Status	Highlight	Timeframe
Action 4.10 Develop a rural drainage strategy		Strategy finalised in late 2018. Implementation is taking place through the delivery of key actions including the development of a Rural Drainage Resource Kit for landholders and partner agencies.	Ongoing
Action 4.11 Balance water recovery for the Murray-Darling Basin		<p>In October 2020, the Minister for Water announced the Connections project had completed works to achieve the 429 GL water savings target. This major achievement reflects the project's successful delivery on time and within budget. A report on the socio-economic impacts of the Basin Plan on Victoria was released in 2018 and is being updated in 2022. Work continues with the Federal Government, other Basin jurisdictions and the Murray-Darling Basin Authority to ensure effective governance of the process to deliver environmental offsets. Through the Off-Farm Efficiency Program, DELWP will monitor project applications to ensure funded projects comply with the agreed socio-economic criteria.</p> <p>In 2021, the Commonwealth funded the \$177.5 million Goulburn-Murray Water – Water Efficiency Project to deliver off-farm infrastructure works and modernisation in the Goulburn Murray Irrigation District, and the Mitiamo Pipeline Project was completed. Commonwealth funding of \$37.9 million for the Lower Murray Water – Water Efficiency Project was also announced in 2022.</p>	Until completion of Basin Plan

Chapter 5: Resilient and liveable cities and towns

Action 5.1 Use diverse water sources to protect public spaces		<p>Through Urban Water Strategies, water corporations have identified ways to meet future demand through diversification of water supplies. On ground opportunities for increased use of diverse water sources are being identified and progressed through the state's Integrated Water Management (IWM) Forums and water corporations' Drought Preparedness Plans.</p> <p>The EPA released revised recycled water guidelines in 2021, which clarifies and improves regulatory arrangements to support the increased uptake of safe and suitable uses of recycled water. The EPA's stormwater guidance released in 2021 provides performance objectives for flow reduction volume to inform priority areas for stormwater harvesting.</p>	Ongoing
---	---	---	---------



Complete and
now business
as usual



In progress



In progress with
revised timeframe

Action	Status	Highlight	Timeframe
Action 5.2 Better urban water planning to address key challenges		All urban water strategies released in 2017, including the Melbourne System Strategy. Revised Guidelines for the development of Urban Water Strategies were released in early 2021. The five-year updates of Urban Water Strategies across Victoria are on track for completion in 2022, with a few water corporations receiving extensions into late 2022 in order to align with the final Central and Gippsland Region Sustainable Water Strategy.	Ongoing
Action 5.3 Reinvigorate water efficiency programs for Melbourne and regional Victoria		<p>Water corporations are continuing to promote Target 155 (metro) and Target Your Water Use (regional) through bills, website and social media.</p> <p>A Water Efficiency Strategy promoting collaboration has been supported by all urban water corporations and the Schools Water Efficiency Program (SWEP) has been extended to over 1,320 schools. A DELWP facilities trial with 30 sites has been completed, resulting in significant water savings.</p> <p>The Victorian government continues to fund the Community Rebate and Community Housing Retrofit Programs. These programs have provided 16,326 rebates to customers in vulnerable and hardship situations to reduce their water consumption and water bills. This is done by improving the water efficiency of appliances, fixing leaks and undertaking other efficiency upgrades, working directly with customers or through not-for-profit emergency and community housing organisations.</p> <p>The new Central and Gippsland Region Sustainable Water Strategy includes eight strong urban water efficiency actions, ranging from an ambitious behaviour change program to actions to improve council and business water efficiency.</p>	Ongoing
Action 5.4 Make the most of our investment in wastewater		Melbourne Water released its Melbourne Sewerage Strategy in 2018. Opportunities for resource recovery from wastewater are being explored through the Strategy and through IWM Forums and Intelligent Water Networks.	Ongoing



Complete and
now business
as usual




In progress



In progress with
revised timeframe

Action	Status	Highlight	Timeframe
Action 5.5 Improve stormwater management for greener environments and healthier waterways		<p>Victoria Planning Provisions changes have been implemented. The Stormwater Ministerial Advisory Council's recommendations to build technical expertise, increase awareness and improve guidance has been implemented through training, communications and an online portal.</p> <p>Stronger state building and plumbing regulations for rainwater tanks are being considered, subject to a Regulatory Impact Statement. Policy options for improving tank installation and maintenance are also being examined.</p>	Ongoing
Action 5.6 Work across government for healthy and resilient urban landscapes		Water related benefits are considered and incorporated into key government strategies on an ongoing basis. Victoria Planning Provisions have been amended to include stormwater management, and work is underway with government partners, including DELWP Planning, EPA, and VPA.	Ongoing
Action 5.7 Represent community values and local opportunities in planning		15 IWM forums have been established across Victoria, and place-based IWM Plans are being developed and implemented at a range of scales – local, precinct and catchment. Catchment scale IWM Plans have been completed for Metropolitan Melbourne's five catchments and regional IWM strategic direction statements have been refreshed to reflect community and Traditional Owner values in IWM priorities.	Ongoing
Action 5.8 Put integrated water management into practice		A collaborative prioritisation process by IWM forums has led to government co-investment and progress of 137 IWM projects, with additional projects self-funded and supported by IWM forum collaborations. Economic evaluation tools and guidance have been developed that are being used within the water sector. Targeted training and development programs have been undertaken to improve capacity and participation in IWM and planning. Further work is being undertaken to strengthen IWM in land use planning and consider more systemic funding options for IWM projects that contribute to water security.	Ongoing

Chapter 6: Recognising and managing for Aboriginal values

Action 6.1 Recognise Aboriginal values and objectives of water		Over the past four years we have invested in eight projects led by Traditional Owners to better define and document Aboriginal values, uses, and aspirations of Victoria's waterways and catchments. These projects explore cultural mapping, seasonal watering plans, water management plans, and research of cultural and environmental flows.	Ongoing
--	---	--	---------



Complete and
now business
as usual



In progress



In progress with
revised timeframe

Action	Status	Highlight	Timeframe
Action 6.2 Include Aboriginal values and traditional ecological knowledge in water planning		<p>Changes have been made to the <i>Water Act 1989</i> and the <i>Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994</i> to recognise Aboriginal cultural values and knowledge in water and catchment management processes, which has enabled Traditional Owners to participate in statewide water policy and strategy development.</p> <p>An Aboriginal Water Officers network has also been established and is proving to be an effective community of practice for the officers involved to share stories, work, learn and build capacity. The AWOs are also an important conduit to Traditional Owners groups and communities in improving capacity and knowledge of water planning and management.</p>	Ongoing
Action 6.3 Support Aboriginal access to water for economic development		<p>In partnership with the Federation of Victorian Traditional Owner Corporations and Murray Lower Darling Indigenous Nations, a suite of on ground projects with 12 Traditional Owner groups has been developed under the Economic Development initiative. An evaluation of the initiative and the Values and Uses initiative is complete and will inform the design of the Aboriginal Water Program to better reflect the aspirations of Traditional Owners.</p> <p>Projects investigating water access opportunities and barriers for water-related enterprises have been completed and the Cultural Waters for Cultural Economies report focusing on legal barriers and opportunities to access water has been delivered. <i>Water is Life</i>, an Aboriginal access to Water roadmap, has been developed to guide future policy direction to support Aboriginal access to water for self-determined purposes.</p> <p>The new Central and Gippsland Region Sustainable Water Strategy will identify ways to return water to Traditional Owners to support cultural, economic and spiritual values and uses as determined by Traditional Owners in the region.</p>	Ongoing
Action 6.4 Build capacity to increase Aboriginal participation in water management		<p>Since 2016, funding has been provided for Aboriginal Water Officers, to develop and maintain partnerships between Traditional Owners and Government and build capacity for Aboriginal participation in Victoria's water management frameworks.</p>	Ongoing



Complete and
now business
as usual






In progress



In progress with
revised timeframe

Action	Status	Highlight	Timeframe
--------	--------	-----------	-----------

Chapter 7: Recognising recreational values

Action 7.1 Include recreational values in water and waterway planning		Amendments were made to the <i>Water Act 1989</i> in 2019, and recreational and social values and uses have been incorporated into subordinate instruments where relevant. Support and guidance are being provided to water sector agencies as these changes take effect.	Ongoing
Action 7.2 Help communities understand how to achieve their recreational objectives		Through the Boosting Recreational Water Use initiative (BRWUI), nine site-based projects have brought together water authorities, local councils and community groups to improve recreational access and experience at the Wimmera, Werribee, Barwon, Maribyrnong and Campaspe Rivers, Moonee Ponds Creek, Blue Rock, Eildon and Eppalock. Governance requirements and community engagement has been strengthened to ensure agencies continue to engage with recreational user groups and provide user friendly information. Building on BRWUI, further investment is now supporting the delivery of fifteen site-based projects across the state.	Ongoing
Action 7.3 Support recreation at water storages through infrastructure and better information		Water corporations continue to provide recreational management services and facilities at storages and are progressing land and recreation management plans for water storages of significant recreational value.	Ongoing



Complete and
now business
as usual



In progress



In progress with
revised timeframe

Action	Status	Highlight	Timeframe
--------	--------	-----------	-----------

Chapter 8: Water entitlements and planning

Action 8.1 Ensure a strong, responsive water entitlement system		Work is being undertaken to simplify regulatory instruments for the management of water systems and improve consistency, transparency and accountability, maintain the integrity, and ensure a strong and responsive framework for bulk water entitlements and systems.	Ongoing
---	--	---	---------

Action 8.2 Provide greater flexibility and choice for licence-holders		An investigation into take and use licences has been completed. DELWP is considering enhancements to the water licensing framework that will improve flexibility and certainty to entitlement holders.	Ongoing
---	--	--	---------

Action 8.3 Investigate increased flexibility for taking water under winter-fill licences		Preliminary investigation has been completed, concluding that it would be a highly unreliable source of water. Further work to be undertaken to consider the value and feasibility of increased flexibility under a changing climate.	Ongoing
--	--	---	---------

Action 8.4 Better record and report on emerging significant uses of water		Annual Water Accounts continue to report on significant uses of water. Long-term water resource assessment and Sustainable Water Strategies will review risks to Victoria's water resources. Relevant information was included in the 2021 draft and 2022 final Central and Gippsland Region Sustainable Water Strategy.	Ongoing
---	--	--	---------

Action 8.5 Ensure a modern compliance regime that works		Victoria takes active steps to continue to improve compliance and enforcement frameworks, including amending legislation, implementing new regulations and improving performance reporting. Regulations are now in place so that water corporations can apply penalty infringement notices or "on-the-spot" fines for unauthorised take up to 10 ML. All water corporations with rural customers have Metering Action Plans outlining actions to ensure accurate metering and measurement of water, including the application of telemetry 'real-time data' for high-risk sites.	Ongoing
---	--	--	---------

Action 8.6 Commence the long-term water resource assessment (LTWRA) process		The Long-Term Water Resource Assessment (LTWRA) for southern Victoria was released in March 2020. Legislation has been amended to allow for the findings of a LTWRA to be considered through the Central and Gippsland Region Sustainable Water Strategy and to delay the LTWRA for Northern Victoria so that it can align with and inform the Basin Plan review in 2026. The findings of the LTWRA have informed the actions contained in the 2021 draft and 2022 final Central and Gippsland Region Sustainable Water Strategy.	Ongoing
---	--	---	---------



Complete and
now business
as usual



In progress



In progress with
revised timeframe

Action	Status	Highlight	Timeframe
Action 8.7 Commence sustainable water strategy (SWS) reviews		<p>The Central and Gippsland Region Sustainable Water Strategy review is complete and was released in 2019. The Western Region and Gippsland Region 5-yearly assessments were completed and released in late 2018.</p> <p>The new Central and Gippsland Region Sustainable Water Strategy was developed in 2021-22. Public consultation on the draft was held from October – December 2021. It includes a range of climate change scenarios and considers opportunities to achieve shared benefits and recreational values. DELWP has partnered with Traditional Owners to develop the strategy, with Traditional Owners represented on the Consultative Committee.</p>	Ongoing
Action 8.8 Align the sustainable water strategy (SWS) and long-term water resource assessment (LTWRA) processes		Legislation has been amended to align the Sustainable Water Strategy and LTWRA processes.	Ongoing
Action 8.9 Improve rural water supply planning		Rural water corporations have continued to improve provision of information on water resource availability through publication of annual water outlooks. Draft guidelines for the development of low flow contingency plans have been developed and consultation with water corporations is underway with pilot low flow contingency plans to be developed for priority systems as a next step.	Ongoing
Action 8.10 Provide clear information about water resources to the community		<p>Annual water accounts have been released via an interactive website as well as a comprehensive written report. Regular water resource reporting has been improved and the development of a new accounts website with even more detail is in progress.</p> <p>A <i>Water Market Watch</i> app with real-time market information has been released.</p> <p>In collaboration with the Geography Teachers' Association of Victoria, teacher and student water units for Years 7 and 10 have been developed to include DELWP's rich water data and new digital information products. DELWP and Geography Teachers' Association of Victoria have commenced stage 2 which will involve curating an online space for teachers to access the wealth of information available from Water Corporations and DELWP on the water life cycle.</p> <p>Work is well advanced in the redevelopment of the Water Information Management System to meet end-user expectations.</p>	Ongoing



Complete and
now business
as usual



In progress



In progress with
revised timeframe

Action	Status	Highlight	Timeframe
Action 8.11 Improve water resource information to support planning and decisions		Real-time monitoring is in operation, and agreements are in place with over 50 regional monitoring partners to continue statewide surface water and groundwater monitoring networks. The transition from 3G to 4G surface water monitoring is almost complete. The 4G groundwater transition is underway. Water resource assessment and modelling capabilities have been strengthened to improve understanding of water availability, use and impacts of climate change, and are being used to inform evidence-based policy.	Ongoing

Chapter 9: Realising the potential of the grid and markets

Action 9.1 Develop a grid oversight function		<p>A grid oversight function, the Water Grid Partnership, has been established and the first biennial statement on water resources status across the state was released in October 2018. Since then, further work has been completed to improve understanding of water availability, demand, risks, level of security and potential future grid augmentations – key inputs to the Central and Gippsland Region Sustainable Water Strategy. The second biennial statement, improved to be more interactive, went live on the DELWP website in 2021.</p> <p>The findings of this work have informed the 2021 draft and 2022 final actions contained in the Central and Gippsland Region Sustainable Water Strategy. This includes a commitment to a new governing arrangement (Executive Advisory Committee) and development of a Water Grid Plan by mid-2023.</p>	Ongoing
Action 9.2 Plan for future grid augmentations		<p>Potential future grid augmentation options will be considered through biennial statements, as well as through the Water Grid Plan and Urban Water Strategies.</p> <p>The findings of this work have informed the actions contained in the 2021 draft and 2022 final Central and Gippsland Region Sustainable Water Strategy. This includes a commitment to a new governing arrangement (Executive Advisory Committee) and development of a Water Grid Plan by mid-2023.</p>	Ongoing



Complete and
now business
as usual



In progress



In progress with
revised timeframe

Action	Status	Highlight	Timeframe
Action 9.3 Improve the effectiveness of water markets		<p>A report on market effectiveness has been completed and improvements to water market oversight are in progress. Annual audits of water broker performance have been delivered.</p> <p>Work has also been undertaken to influence and contribute to joint government priorities including a water market reform roadmap based on the ACCC Murray-Darling Basin Water Markets Inquiry (March 2021) and associated final Roadmap due out by end 2022, and report on Managing Delivery Risks in the River Murray (2020).</p>	Ongoing
Action 9.4 Increase water market transparency and information sharing		<p>Enhancements to the Victorian Water Register have been completed to improve public entitlement and trade services. Targeted consultation with the public on transparency preferences has been completed, informing new Water Market Insights website pages with dashboards on water availability, trade opportunities and how trade rules work, market prices, and large water owners. Significant progress has been made on building a new Victorian Water Register.</p>	Ongoing
Action 9.5 Develop the water market in south central Victoria		<p>The south central water market trial is now complete with the findings of this work, not to proceed with the development of a fuller market, contained in the 2021 draft and 2022 final Central and Gippsland Region Sustainable Water Strategy.</p> <p>Significant progress has been made on reforms to entitlements and pricing that will facilitate better management of pooled resources and provide better signalling for local and system scale augmentations – the findings of this work have informed actions in the 2021 draft and 2022 final Central and Gippsland Region Sustainable Water Strategy.</p>	Ongoing
Action 9.6 Improve trading rules in northern Victoria		<p>Regulatory steps have been completed to implement refined long-term Goulburn to Murray trade and operating rules. The rules, announced in June 2022, ensure trade is only allowed within the ecological tolerances of the lower Goulburn River. The new assessment process was reviewed following the first year of implementation for the assessment of works licences and extraction shares in the Lower Murray. New legislation was passed in 2021 to further clarify arrangements for rationing during a shortfall event.</p>	Ongoing




Complete and
now business
as usual



In progress



In progress with
revised timeframe

Action	Status	Highlight	Timeframe
Action 9.7 Develop trading rules in other water systems		A review of water entitlements and trading in western Victoria has been completed and actions to support trade in that system are being progressed. A review of the opportunities for trade between groundwater and surface water has been completed. Commitments to continue to improve groundwater trading were included in the Groundwater 2030 strategy. Work commenced with Southern Rural Water on a Macalister Irrigation District market platform trial to increase ease of trade.	Ongoing

Chapter 10: Jobs, economy and innovation

Action 10.1 Improve engagement with customers and the broader community		<p>A continuous program has been implemented to ensure water corporations improve interactions with all customer groups. The water sector also continues to participate in regionally based forums to inform and deliver on Regional and Metro Partnership priorities.</p> <p>Water corporations have continued to focus on customer engagement to inform pricing decisions under the PREMO model regulated by the Essential Services Commission.</p>	Ongoing
Action 10.2 Consult business on future needs and provide information to support investment		Water corporations continue to engage with businesses on future needs and are building this into strategic planning processes.	Ongoing
Action 10.3 Promote innovation in the water sector		<p>Investment has been made in the Cooperative Research Centre for Water Sensitive Cities to help drive innovative solutions to water problems, while fifteen Victorian water corporations, DELWP and VicWater continue to actively participate in Intelligent Water Networks.</p> <p>In 2021, the Cooperative Research Centre for Water Sensitive Cities completed its operations. A new research centre, the Water Sensitive Cities Institute, has been established in its place and DELWP has contributed funding to support the Water Sensitive Cities Institute to focus work on regional IWM issues in Victoria.</p>	Financial contribution to be reviewed by June 2022

Action 10.4 Build capacity and capability in the water sector		Water corporations and Catchment Management Authorities are continuing to work with delivery partners to identify skills gaps and develop programs to improve skills and capacity in the sector, including traineeships, apprenticeships and Director development programs. DELWP will work with Traditional Owner Groups across 2022-2024 to develop a pipeline of First Nations Victorians who will make an expression of interest to be on a water board.	Ongoing
Action 10.5 Provide third party access to existing infrastructure		A framework for third party access has been developed, which will enable other service providers to use existing infrastructure if required to achieve strategic objectives, such as augmenting water supply or treating wastewater.	Ongoing
Action 10.6 Drive strong governance and performance		Ongoing engagement across the water sector has improved governance and clarified performance expectations against an outcomes framework.	Ongoing
Action 10.7 Promote gender equity in the water sector		The water sector has developed strategies and goals to increase and support both gender equity and Aboriginal inclusion including establishment of the Insight: Executive Leadership Program for women in water. The 12-month learning program targeting small regional and rural water sector organisations commenced in 2020 and moved seamlessly into a virtual learning environment. The program is running again in 2022 and 2024.	Ongoing
Action 10.8 Increase Aboriginal inclusion in the water sector		The water sector is making positive change to improve Aboriginal inclusion in the water sector, including increasing the number of Aboriginal Victorians appointed to water authority boards. This work continued in 2021-22 with scholarships awarded to high potential individuals to receive AICD training in governance. In 2022-23 further funding is being used to improve the awareness of the water sector, and to develop high potential individuals for future board positions.	Ongoing
Action 10.9 Support economic development through Aboriginal participation		The water sector is working with Traditional Owner groups to support increased Victorian Aboriginal self-determination by exploring and developing opportunities for Aboriginal enterprises to supply goods and services for the water sector. Water corporations and Catchment Management Authorities are also developing traineeship and employment programs for Aboriginal Victorians to increase participation in the sector.	Ongoing
Action 10.10 Respond to the Royal Commission into Family Violence		The Essential Services Commission has worked with water corporations to amend customer policies to include training and support, secure handling of information, debt management and referral of affected customers to specialist services.	Ongoing

Action 10.11
Find ways to cut red tape



A review of administrative practices was undertaken, and amendments have been made to relevant legislation.

Ongoing

A project to improve and consolidate performance reporting for the sector is also underway, allowing the last five years of historical data (i.e., Annual Report, Corporate Plan and ESC Pricing data) to facilitate analysis of water sector performance and identify areas for improvement. The project will examine the possible development of a process and mechanism for a 'one-stop' approach to performance data collection from water corporations. A pilot database was completed in 2021-22 and is in the testing and development phase.

Action 10.12
Improve emergency management capability



The capability and capacity of the water sector to prepare and respond to water related incidents continues to be significantly improved, through training and emergency exercises, as well as improved emergency management processes and systems. Further capability has been included within DELWP's Water and Catchments Group with the training of additional Water Duty Officers and Water Service Specialists. These roles support the 6 State Controllers for Class 2 water emergencies.

Ongoing

Water Corporations and Catchment Management Authorities roles and responsibilities in emergency management have been included in the State Emergency Management Plan. Several State Emergency Management Plan Sub-plans have been updated, with DELWP reinforcing its emergency management capability.

Through the upgraded web-based Water Intelligence Platform, data on algal blooms, dam safety and other key water sector risks continue to be readily available to key stakeholders for monitoring, analysis and reporting. Additional funding has been secured to further enhance the functionality of modules within Floodzoom.

Action 10.13
Deliver *Water for Victoria*



Project Office and Project Control Board have been established. Water for Victoria progress updates continue to be published, and monitoring, evaluation and reporting processes are in place for all initiatives funded by the Environmental Contribution.

Ongoing

© The State of Victoria Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning 2022. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International licence. You are free to re-use the work under that licence, on the condition that you credit the State of Victoria as author. The licence does not apply to any images, photographs or branding, including the Victorian Coat of Arms, the Victorian Government logo and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) logo. To view a copy of this licence, visit creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/.

Cover photo: Craig Moodie

ISBN 978-1-76136-117-3 (pdf/online/MS Word)

Disclaimer: This publication may be of assistance to you but the State of Victoria and its employees do not guarantee that the publication is without flaw of any kind or is wholly appropriate for your particular purposes and therefore disclaims all liability for any error, loss or other consequence which may arise from you relying on any information in this publication.

Accessibility

If you would like to receive this publication in an alternative format, please telephone the DELWP Customer Service Centre on 136 186, or email customer.service@delwp.vic.gov.au, or via the National Relay Service on 133 677, www.relayservice.com.au. This document is also available on the internet at www.delwp.vic.gov.au