



Photo: North East CMA

Our Catchments *Our* Communities

Delivering integrated catchment management in Victoria

Progress update July 2019

If you have any questions about the strategy and its implementation, please contact OurCatchments.OurCommunities@delwp.vic.gov.au or your local CMA



Environment,
Land, Water
and Planning

Achievements

We're delivering *Our Catchments, Our Communities* in partnership with Catchment Management Authorities (CMAs).

It is the first statewide strategy for integrated catchment management in Victoria that confirms the Victorian Government's commitment to managing our catchments to benefit our environment, our community, and our economy.

Our vision is to deliver "Healthy, sustainable and productive land, water and biodiversity maintained through integrated catchment management that is strongly community based, regionally focused and collaborative."

The Victorian Government has provided \$22 million over four years to implement the *Our Catchments, Our Communities* strategy. Progress to date includes:



"Without a substantial grant like the *Our Catchments, Our Communities* program we couldn't do these sorts of (planting) days."

Charlie Miller, First Friends of Dandenong Creek
Project partner, Port Phillip and Westernport CMA

Photo: Port Phillip and Westernport CMA



19 on-ground integrated catchment management projects focused on community priorities and implementing Regional Catchment Strategies.



Over **43,500** hectares of environmental works including revegetation, pest control and improved land management practices.



Over **8,600** people engaged in field days, workshops, meetings and training.



175 partnerships with local communities and organisations across Victoria.

Local communities driving the program

Nineteen new on-ground integrated catchment management projects are well underway with Catchment Management Authorities focusing on what is important to the local community.

Our catchments are being looked after through partnerships with schools, art galleries, farmers, Landcare groups, universities, Aboriginal communities, recreational groups and other agencies and organisations.

Port Phillip and Westernport CMA Greens Bush to Arthurs Seat Biolink



Ucan2 Centre for Multicultural Youth students at a tree planting event on one of the participating properties.

Photo: Port Phillip and Westernport CMA

“The best part was we got to care for the environment and enjoy nature. It was a therapeutic and healing experience.”

Sarah Williams, multicultural youth worker

Partnerships - local, regional and state

Catchment Management Authorities are facilitating formal partnerships with communities and organisations that are essential for achieving healthy catchments and improving our environment. Key achievements to date:

- Over 74 management agreements made with landholders for fencing, revegetation and the management of pest plants and animals
- 10 new Catchment Partnership Agreements outlining how regional partners will work better together for regional communities with a total of 135 signatory partners and an additional 87 non-signatory partners
- 2 Catchments Summits held involving over 360 participants from across Victoria to share information and approaches to integrated catchment management and partnerships.

Glenelg Hopkins CMA Wetlands of the Greater Grampians



DELWP investors and Glenelg Hopkins CMA steering committee and project team members including Nature Glenelg Trust at Green Swamp.

Photo: Clem Sturmfels

“The CMA have been working with us in this area for the last five years and on this particular concept for the last couple of years. They have been the major contributor towards the funding of this site.”

Mark Bachmann, Nature Glenelg Trust

Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Communities

Twenty-two Traditional Owner Corporations and Aboriginal groups are partners in *Our Catchments, Our Communities* projects. These partnerships involve planning and managing integrated catchment management projects, delivering on-ground works, and undertaking cultural heritage assessments to make sure projects are sensitive and aligned to the goals of Traditional Owners for working on Country.

East Gippsland CMA

Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation and Gippsland Environment Agency Partnership Agreement (13 signatories)



Students from Lindenow Primary School, Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation and Greening Australia participating in tree planting and other activities at Skull Creek.

Photo: East Gippsland CMA

“We have a partnership with the East Gippsland CMA which offers to support and collaborate the works together. The relationship allows us to be part of the planning of the projects we undertake in these significant areas, which are quite important to the Gunaikurnai people.”

Grattan Mullett Senior, Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation

Improving catchments through on-ground works

Nineteen new integrated catchment management projects have achieved:

- 553 hectares of native vegetation planted for water quality, climate change and biodiversity outcomes
- weeds controlled on 4,485 hectares of land
- pest animals controlled on 36,427 hectares of land
- improved management practices on 1,905 hectares of agricultural land to benefit catchment health
- 74 landowners entered into formal agreements with Catchment Management Authorities for improved property management
- 252 ecological, cultural and soil assessments conducted.

Wimmera CMA Enhancing the health, environment and liveability of the Wimmera River



Wimmera River.
Photo: DELWP

“This is a great fishing spot (Big Water). It will improve the area and encourage people to come out here and fish and picnic as well.”

Angling club member Neil Delaney

Inspiring future catchment management leaders

The *Our Catchments, Our Communities* Leadership Development Grants are building leadership capacity and providing opportunities for professional development for aspiring future leaders in catchment management.

Eight Leadership Development Grants have been awarded to future catchment management leaders in the categories of Aboriginal Leadership, Innovation and Women in Leadership.

Leadership Development Grants



DELWP Deputy Secretary Water and Catchments, Helen Vaughan congratulates the 2018 grant recipients: (L-R) Kelly Nichols, Leonie Duncan, Bradley Costin and Kaleana Reyland.

Photo: DELWP

“I would certainly recommend individuals with an idea they believe is worth pursuing to apply for a Leadership Development Grant. It can provide a once in a lifetime opportunity to bring it forward and make it happen.”

Bradley Costin, 2018 recipient

Women in catchment management

The number of women represented on catchment management boards in Victoria has increased significantly in recent times. In 2017, sixty per cent of Catchment Management Authority chair appointees were women, expanding the breadth of views, knowledge and experience in catchment management.

The first Women in Catchment Management event held in 2017 celebrated 120 women working in the sector across Victoria providing valuable opportunities for networking and to learn about career journeys, mentoring, diversity and inclusion and women in science.

Women in Catchment Management event



Conservation circles.

Photo: DELWP

“It was really inspirational and wonderful to get perspectives of the leadership and life experiences that women in Victorian natural resource management and science fields have had throughout their careers.”

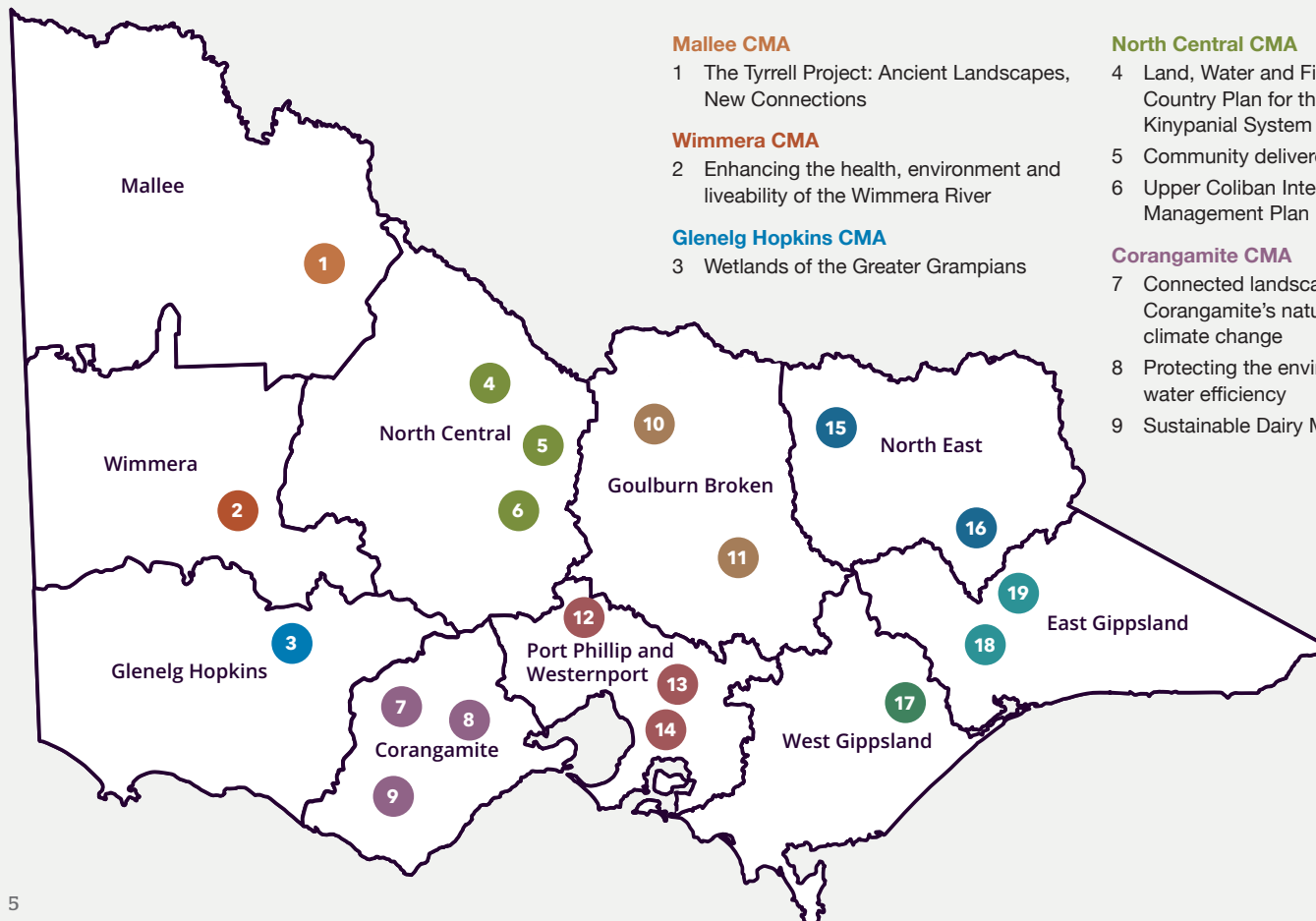
Hannah Brook, Glenelg Hopkins CMA

Delivering projects through CMAs

Our Catchments, Our Communities has funded 19 new projects across Victoria, which are flexible to meet the needs of the local communities. Catchment Management Authorities are working with a diverse range of groups and landholders, across public and private land.

Integrated catchment management activities include:

- working on Country with Traditional Owners
- restoring significant wetlands
- helping endangered native birds
- providing land management incentives to landholders
- linking native vegetation on public and private land
- improving river health by removing weeds
- citizen science monitoring of trees, frogs and bores
- sustainable dairy management
- upgrading walking tracks and improving recreational access
- promoting community involvement and education.



Mallee CMA

- 1 The Tyrrell Project: Ancient Landscapes, New Connections

Wimmera CMA

- 2 Enhancing the health, environment and liveability of the Wimmera River

Glenelg Hopkins CMA

- 3 Wetlands of the Greater Grampians

North Central CMA

- 4 Land, Water and Fire – Healthy Country Plan for the Boort, Lyndger, Kinypanial System
- 5 Community delivered ICM projects
- 6 Upper Coliban Integrated Catchment Management Plan Implementation

Corangamite CMA

- 7 Connected landscapes: adapting Corangamite's natural assets to climate change
- 8 Protecting the environment via on-farm water efficiency
- 9 Sustainable Dairy Management

Goulburn Broken CMA

- 10 Resilient Landscapes Vibrant Communities: Linking Lower Goulburn
- 11 Resilient Landscapes Vibrant Communities: Bogies and Beyond

Port Phillip and Westernport CMA

- 12 Restoring the Natural Glory of Jacksons Creek
- 13 Transforming the Dandenong Creek Corridor into a world class urban link
- 14 Greens Bush to Arthurs Seat Biolink

North East CMA

- 15 Keeping Productive Landscapes Resilient in the Lower Ovens
- 16 Building Resilient Environmental and Social Networks in the Upper Mitta Mitta

West Gippsland CMA

- 17 Protecting Our Ponds

East Gippsland CMA

- 18 Implementing the Regional Catchment Strategy on the Red Gum Plains
- 19 Implementing the Regional Catchment Strategy in the Tambo Valley

Integrated catchment management projects

Ten featured projects from *Our Catchments, Our Communities*.

Corangamite CMA

Connected landscapes: adapting Corangamite's natural assets to climate change

Fifteen community groups and their partners are collaborating to plan and manage the impacts of climate change on the Ramsar-listed Western District Lakes across 33,000 hectares of agricultural landscapes.



The Connected Landscapes project area.

Photo: DELWP



A GLaWAC crew member and student plant the nationally endangered Swamp Everlasting.

Photo: Marty Potts, Greening Australia.

East Gippsland CMA

Implementing the Regional Catchment Strategy on the Red Gum Plains

The Red Gum Plains and its wetlands are being improved through revegetation and control of weeds, and there is growing awareness of Aboriginal cultural values and connections to the land in the Walpa region.



Walker Swamp.

Photo: Glenelg Hopkins CMA

Glenelg Hopkins CMA

Wetlands of the Greater Grampians

Critically endangered wetlands of the Grampians are being protected through the purchase of Walker Swamp Reserve and incentives to farmers for wetland protection and pest animal control.

“The Panyyabyr Landcare Group greatly thank the Glenelg Hopkins CMA and, in particular, the *Our Catchments, Our Communities* program and steering committee, for their support, encouragement and belief in the continuation of our long-running fox control program.”

Lisa McIntyre, Panyyabyr Landcare Group Facilitator

Project partner, Glenelg Hopkins CMA

“Catchments are diverse areas and a range of landholders are involved in managing catchments. The Integrated Catchment Program, through the *Our Catchments, Our Communities* strategy allows projects to be tailored to suit their needs and to be delivered across a range of areas and timescales. It allows increased communication across the region and it brings together agencies and landholders to share a common view of where the direction of the catchment is heading.”

Peter Field, Central Highlands Water

Project partner, Corangamite CMA

“*Our Catchments, Our Communities* funding for Skull Creek has allowed us to work with flexibility across that landscape. Each land owner has been worked with one on one to understand the importance of the site through good planning and looking for what wildlife exists. Making sure our investment is improving the overall farm practices has been very significant.”

Martin Potts, Greening Australia

Project partner, East Gippsland CMA

Integrated catchment management projects

Goulburn Broken CMA

Resilient Landscapes Vibrant Communities: Linking Lower Goulburn

Vegetation linkages between the Lower Goulburn and Barmah National Parks are improving in the irrigated landscape with engagement focused on providing habitat for the Bush-Stone curlew, and providing NRM experience for the Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation's Woka Wolla works crew.



Bush-Stone curlew information day.
Photo: DELWP

Mallee CMA

The Tyrrell Project: Ancient Landscapes, New Connections

Habitats within the agricultural landscapes of the Avoca Basin and the Terminal Lakes system are being improved and recreation access managed to minimise impacts on the environment including at Lake Tyrrell.



Cokum Bushland Reserve carpark surfacing after upgrade.
Photo: Mallee CMA

North Central CMA

Land, Water and Fire - Healthy Country Plan for the Boort, Lyndger, Kinypanial System

This project is supporting Dja Dja Wurrung aspirations for self-determination and increasing their capacity and involvement in managing land, fire and water of the Lake Boort, Lake Lyndger and Kinypanial Creek system.



Smoking ceremony for successful planting of redgums at Lake Boort
Photo: Nathan Wong

North East CMA

Building Resilient Environmental and Social Networks in the Upper Mitta Mitta

The project is improving in-stream and riparian habitat along the Mitta Mitta River and improving catchment health and recreational opportunities in partnership with Landcare, Landholders and agencies.



Willows at Livingston Creek in Omeo.
Photo: DELWP

“For these types of programs to continue into the future, it’s really important for us because they provide opportunities for government to take the leap of faith to support and enable and empower Traditional Owners to play a far greater role in land management and the decisions around the management of Country.”

Nathan Wong, Dja Dja Wurrung Enterprises
Project partner, North Central CMA

“The beauty of the *Our Catchments, Our Communities* program is that it allows our crews to fully have a really open mind about what our Country is about. It’s given them the opportunity to be out working on Country and to really understand the values and the stories that are connected to those places. It’s important, the recognition of our own people being able to partner and work on some of these projects in places that we don’t normally get access to.”

Grattan Mullett Senior, Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation
Project partner, East Gippsland, West Gippsland and North East CMAs

“The positive and enthusiastic feedback from the community is encouraging. Bringing specialist presenters and providing access to information about emerging regenerative agriculture techniques is beneficial to our region’s land managers and the region’s future. We also find delivering (vegetation) incentives are a positive way to engage with interested landholders and helps spread the message about the benefits of nature within agricultural systems.”

Jo Doolan, Goulburn Murray Landcare Network
Project partner, Goulburn Broken CMA

Integrated catchment management projects

Port Phillip and Westernport CMA

Transforming the Dandenong Creek Corridor into a World Class Urban Living Link

The Dandenong Creek corridor is being transformed into a world class urban link through extensive community involvement and restoration works.



Bird watching at Tirhatuan Park, Dandenong North.

Photo: Port Phillip and Westernport CMA



Pond protected with fencing on private land.

Photo: DELWP

West Gippsland CMA

Protecting Our Ponds

The unique chain of ponds are being restored and protected in the Perry River catchment, including on HVP Plantations land where 300-400 exist.

Wimmera CMA

Enhancing the Health, Environment and Liveability of the Wimmera River

The health of the Wimmera River is improving due to restoration works, improved recreation access minimising impacts on the environment, and the protection of cultural heritage in partnership with Traditional Owners.



Fencing along the Wimmera River in Horsham.

Photo: Wimmera CMA

“The *Our Catchments, Our Communities* integrated catchment approach has provided us with a really good model and a good experience for working really closely with our project partners. The collaborations probably better than I’ve seen in most projects that I’ve worked on and I think that’s been a great benefit because we feel like we’re delivering something absolutely in partnership with the other project partners and hopefully we can continue that through future projects.”

John Hick, Trust for Nature

Project partner, West Gippsland CMA

“As land managers we focus on ensuring that our operations have minimal environmental impact, particularly on water quality and river health. The project provided a significant opportunity for HVP to learn more about the chain of ponds waterways on their estate and identify better ways to manage our operations and land so that we can help improve the condition of the waterways, not just on our land but throughout the catchment.”

Simon Heislers, HVP Plantations

Project partner, West Gippsland CMA



Heart Morass wetland restoration
Photo: West Gippsland CMA