

# Gippsland Environmental Agencies STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2028



Members of GEA

- Department of Environment, Energy and Climate Action - Gippsland (DEECA) including Agriculture Victoria (AgVic)
- East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority (EGCMA)
- East Gippsland Water (EGW)
- Environmental Protection Authority—Gippsland (EPA)
- Gippsland Regional Water Corporation (GW)
- Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC)
- Gunaikurnai Traditional Owner Land Management Board (GKTOLMB)
- Mine Land Rehabilitation Authority (MLRA)
- Parks Victoria - Eastern region (PV)
- South Gippsland Regional Water Corporation (SGW)
- Southern Rural Regional Water Corporation (SRW)
- Trust for Nature (TFN)
- West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority (WGCMA)



For more information on the Gippsland Environmental Agencies Partnership, please contact Executive Officer Belinda Brennan E: [belindab@wgcm.vic.gov.au](mailto:belindab@wgcm.vic.gov.au) P: 0409 004 901

*We acknowledge and pay our respects to the Traditional Owners of the region, the Gunaikurnai, the Bunurong, the Boonwurrung and the Wurundjeri Peoples, their rich culture and spiritual connection to Country. We also acknowledge the contribution and interest of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples and organisations in natural resource management and pay respects to Elders, past, present and emerging.*



**Who is GEA?**

GEA is a forum for the Managing Directors/ Regional Director/ CEO of thirteen environmental Agencies in Gippsland to meet to strengthen coordination, collaboration, and accountability, reduce duplication, and provide clarity on roles and responsibilities between key partners.

A key to that strength is the partnership with Traditional Owners and the commitment of all agencies to work with Aboriginal people to learn from each other, care for Country and deliver on their aspirations and priorities.

**Principles for GEA Operation**

- ⇒ **Collaboration**
- ⇒ **Connection to Country**
- ⇒ **An Enduring and Effective Partnership**
- ⇒ **Mutual Respect**
- ⇒ **Shared Decision Making**
- ⇒ **Community Focus**

Trust across all agencies and relationships that have been built are vital for ongoing delivery of projects.

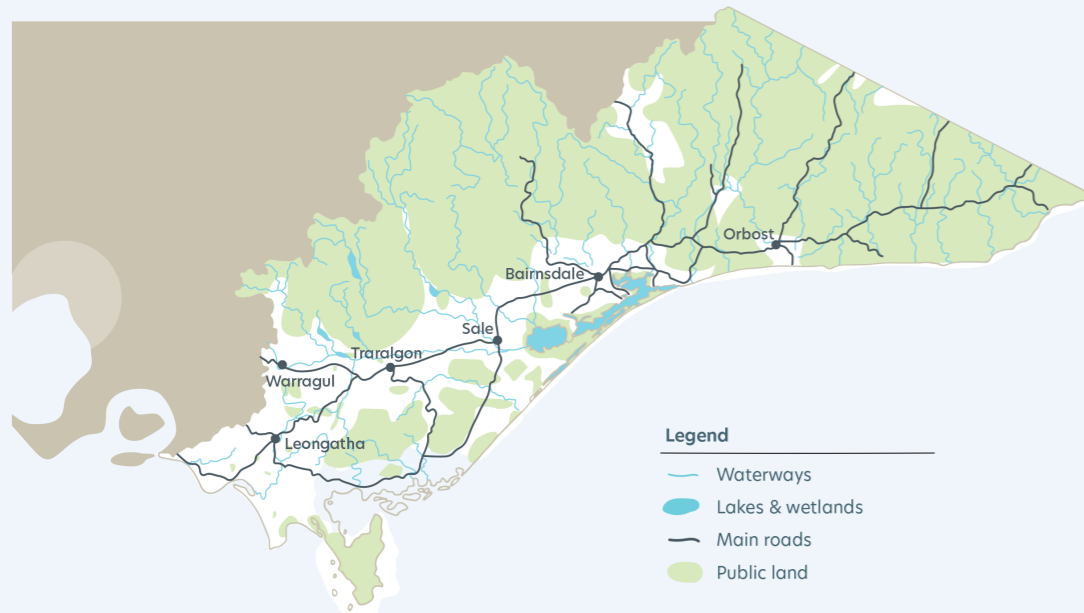
*Committed to working together to improve the management of land, water and biodiversity resources across Gippsland*

**Key Areas of Common Focus (2023 – 2028)**

PEOPLE <i>Foster innovation and empower people.</i>	PARTNERS <i>Work together for innovative solutions to issues challenging communities</i>	TRADITIONAL OWNERS <i>Empower traditional owners on their journey towards self determination</i>	ENVIRONMENT <i>Protect, enhance and restore Gippsland region</i>	LEGISLATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES <i>Maintain high standard of partner and community engagement whilst meeting legislative responsibilities</i>
<b>PRIORITIES</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⇒ Foster a skilled, knowledgeable, flexible workforce.</li> <li>⇒ Encourage and support secondment opportunities.</li> <li>⇒ Strengthen leadership and development opportunities</li> <li>⇒ Support regional leadership in diversity and inclusion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⇒ Implement a collaborative model for regional emergency preparedness</li> <li>⇒ Improve connections with other regional organisations</li> <li>⇒ Jointly deliver key regional projects and reduce duplication</li> <li>⇒ Provide the framework for cooperation and progress as well as better enabling other strategies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⇒ Support Aboriginal people in their journey to self-determination and greater connection to work on-country</li> <li>⇒ Support the development of an Aboriginal Employment Development Strategy</li> <li>⇒ Develop relationship with non RAP Traditional Owners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⇒ Develop joint framework for implementation, reporting and evaluation of regional strategies and plans</li> <li>⇒ Strengthen collaboration in implementation of key NRM Regional Strategies and Plans</li> <li>⇒ Investigate collaborative climate change mitigation and adaptation options</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⇒ Strengthen the cross organisational cooperation and contribution for review and implementation of key policy and strategies.</li> <li>⇒ Create more integrated strategy and policy solutions for Gippsland region</li> </ul>
<b>OUTCOMES</b>				
Strong and supported Gippsland workforce leading the way	Collaborative and cooperation across the region, reducing duplication and providing better value for investment in NRM	Traditional Owners' aspirations for land, water and culture are realised.	Healthier and more productive land, biodiversity, water and waste assets, and ecosystems	Key regional NRM policies and strategies address key regional challenges and strengthen collaborative approach to implementation

*Role of GEA Forum*

- ◇ Identify regional priorities that need cross-organisational collaboration to be successfully implemented.
- ◇ Account for legislative responsibilities and describe and clarify policy implementation and regionally specific roles of the partners.
- ◇ Support development and implementation of the Regional Catchment Strategies in East and West Gippsland and monitor progress.
- ◇ Commit to collaborating with the region's Traditional Owners across all aspects of planning, strategy, and project delivery with an emphasis on two-way knowledge sharing. These arrangements are tailored to each Country and cultural landscape context.
- ◇ Identify any relevant regional issues and develop options for resolving them.
- ◇ Review new relevant government policies to identify those that will require cross-organisational cooperation and collaboration for implementation.
- ◇ Ensure that all relevant partners may be signatories and are involved in all relevant issues, decisions, and policy implementation in a timely and collaborative manner.



**Gippsland**

Gippsland covers close to 41,500 square kilometres and has the largest area of public land in Victoria with 1.6 million hectares encompassing forest, state and national parks, Marine and Coastal Parks and Reserves and Ramsar Wetlands with more than 700 kilometres of Victorian Coastline.

The diversity of Gippsland's natural environment sets us apart. Our landscape and environmental values provide an enviable lifestyle and visitor destination, with pristine beaches, snowfields, lakes and rivers, bushland, rainforests, the Gippsland Lakes, and rich cultural and historical values. Gippsland has an abundance of natural resources such as timber, coal, oil and gas.

Gippsland is home to several Aboriginal communities, including Gunaikurnai, Bidwell, Bunurong, Boonwurrung, Woiwurrung peoples, Jaithmathang, and Monero/Ngarigo Nations, as well as Aboriginal and Torres Strait people from other regions of Australia. Traditional Owners and Aboriginal people have a unique connection with Gippsland's waters and land, which adds to our beautiful region's fabric and rich culture and will be further enhanced as we progress reconciliation and healing.