

WEST GIPPSLAND CATCHMENT
MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

Our Strategic Plan

2024-29



Acknowledgement of Country

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 responsibility of First Peoples to care for Country and pay respects to Elders, past, present and emerging.

Working from the mountains to the sea...

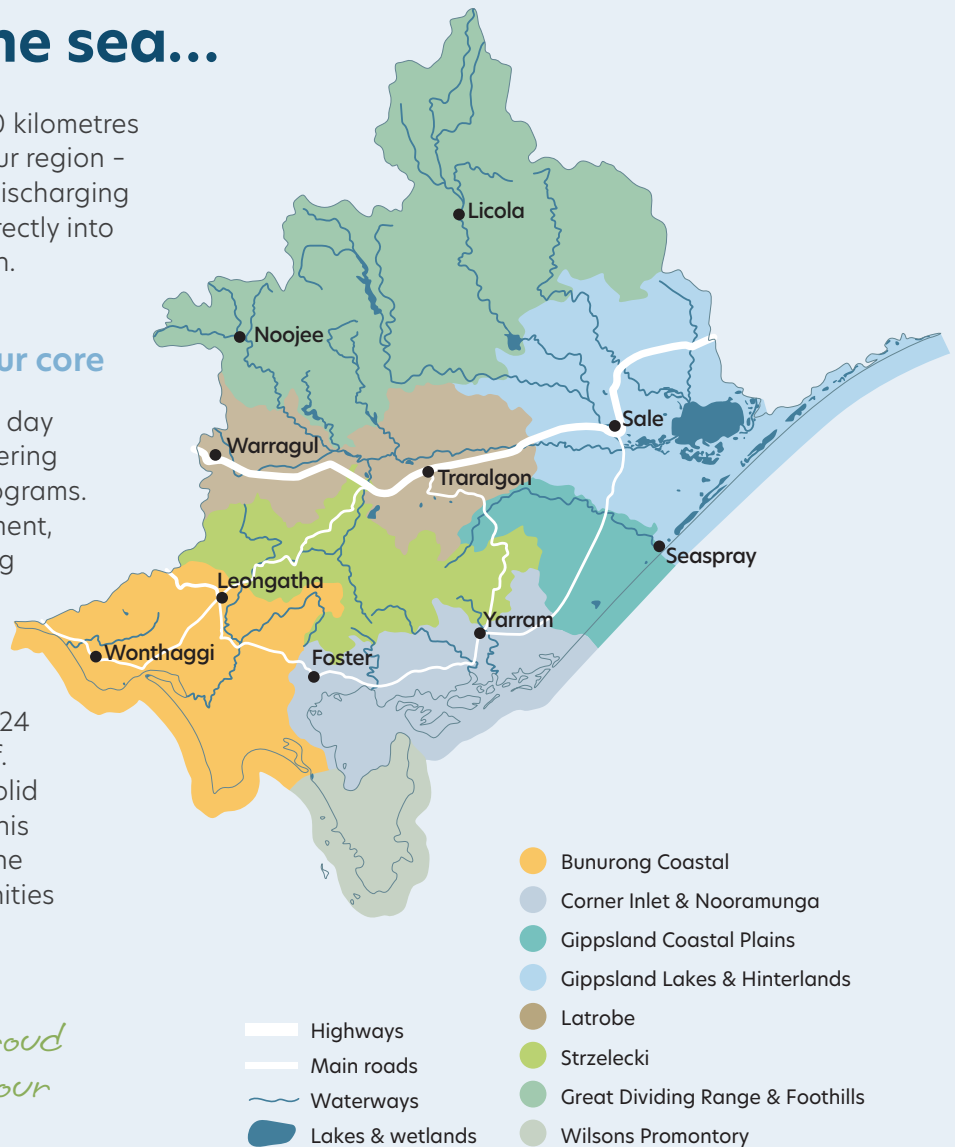
We are responsible for over 40,000 kilometres of designated waterways across our region – all flowing to the Victorian coast, discharging through the Gippsland Lakes, or directly into Bass Strait and the Southern Ocean.

Caring for catchments at our core

At our core is the work we do every day for catchment health through delivering Natural Resource Management programs. We remain committed to measurement, evaluation and improvement, strong partnerships and building our capacity as an organisation.

We've made great progress through our Strategic Plan 2019-2024 with Board, management and staff. It served us well and gave us the solid foundation to be able to develop this new plan 2024-2029 that tackles the emerging challenges and opportunities we agreed to as a team.

What we do makes a difference and we are proud of this new plan to guide our next five years.



Our Strategic Plan outlines the steps towards our vision

Strategic areas of focus



Partnerships and relationships
Working together



First Peoples self determination
Change together



Communicating for the catchment
Inspiring action



Organisational capacity
The best we can be

Five year success measure

Our region is increasingly resilient to pressures from changes in climate and land use.

Our values

We collaborate and support each other and our partners by acting with integrity, empathy and passion to protect and enhance the region's catchments.

Our vision

Healthy and resilient catchments, valued and cared for by the community, that underpin the environmental, social, cultural and economic wealth of the region.



Purpose of this plan

This plan guides the work of West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority (CMA) in areas of strategic importance over the 2024-2029 planning period.

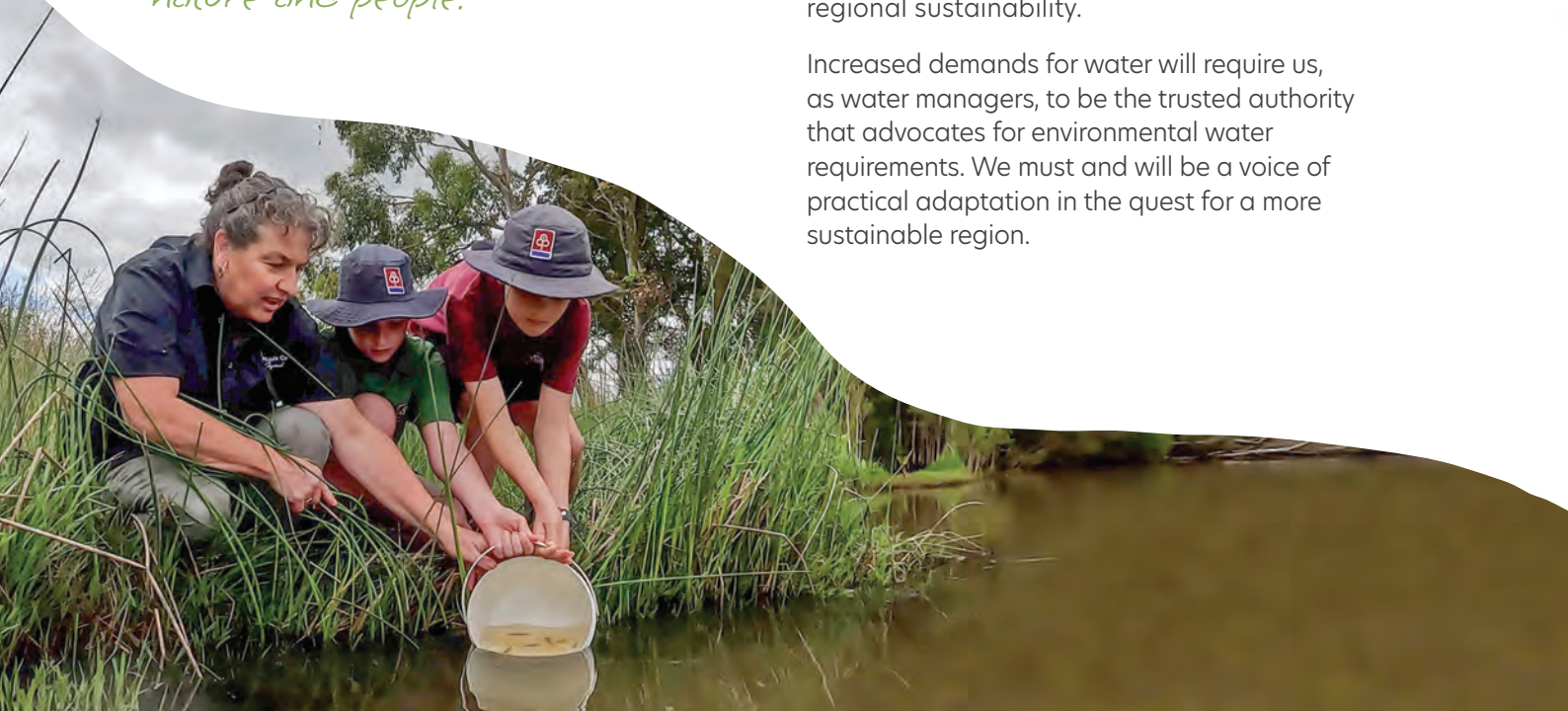
It is an agreed map between the Board, management and staff, setting the priorities, focus and direction for West Gippsland CMA over the next five years.

Our region and its catchments are facing challenges that require new ways of delivering catchment-positive outcomes for the benefit of nature and people.

The impacts of climate change necessitate that we play a role in encouraging and facilitating adaptation to the changes and challenges they present.

As our region undergoes significant demographic changes associated with energy transition, and with population growth and movement, our region and its people will change. New land use trends will emerge creating new challenges and opportunities for regional sustainability.

Increased demands for water will require us, as water managers, to be the trusted authority that advocates for environmental water requirements. We must and will be a voice of practical adaptation in the quest for a more sustainable region.





Delivering our plan

Our Plan responds to these challenges and builds on a strong track record of innovation and the development of highly successful partnerships. It also recognises that we have a high level of expertise and competence in delivering on our roles, functions and duties as directed by government, all of which will continue as underlying aspects of our operations.

We will retain and strengthen all of these important attributes of our work in this next planning period, constantly pursuing exemplary catchment management that benefits the community, the environment and the region as a whole.



Strategic areas of focus:



Working together

Partnerships and relationships

Partnerships are the primary way we bring about change in our region. Productive partnerships drive change on the ground and influence the way our community responds to challenges facing our catchments.

We have many successful partnerships. The strong relationships that have developed from these must continue to benefit our catchments. Additionally, there are partnerships that we must develop to address emerging changes in the makeup of our region and the pressures being placed on it.

We will nurture partnerships that pointedly address the priority challenges of climate adaptation, water demand, energy transition and regional sustainability.

Intended 5-year outcomes:

- ▶ Existing partnerships show, at a minimum, demonstrable progress towards achieving goals that tackle our priority challenges.
- ▶ Our new partnerships have set goals and have commenced implementing solutions that address our priority challenges.
- ▶ Local governments are confidently and appropriately applying regulations and planning policy to catchment needs.
- ▶ West Gippsland CMA is viewed by our partners as an honest broker, a trusted catchment advocate and a “can-do” organisation.





Change together

First Peoples self determination

We acknowledge and regret the many harmful acts of cultural suppression that have taken place in our region.

First Peoples have a deep obligation to care for and heal Country, and have traditional ecological knowledge and customs built over thousands of years of practice.

We offer our commitment to First Peoples in the region to support them, to the extent that they desire, in their steps to self determination, and through that, to shape a region that better supports its people once more.

Intended 5-year outcomes:

- ▶ We have moved from cultural awareness to cultural competency, so we can be effective partners if required.
- ▶ We are culturally safe and have embedded cultural competency into our policies and processes including our approaches and recommendations for management of Country.
- ▶ First Peoples are appropriately remunerated for their time, knowledge and other resources that support our programs and our cultural competency journey.
- ▶ Our partners are developing their own culturally competent relationships with First Peoples.





Inspiring action

Communicating for the catchment

Effective communication is a powerful tool for inspiring and encouraging change.

We use communication to promote the values of our catchments and the benefits they provide, to increase community ownership and advocacy, and to encourage greater rates of catchment-positive behaviour.

Climate adaptation, water demand and biodiversity decline are challenges that our broadest communication campaigns will address.

By highlighting the successes of our partners and programs in these areas, we can also highlight the impact that successful collaboration – and personal action – can have on our region.

Intended 5-year outcomes:

- ▶ More people than ever are undertaking personal actions and advocacy that benefit the catchment.
- ▶ The level of participation in on-ground catchment-positive activities has increased and continues to rise.
- ▶ CMA is viewed by the community as an advocate for and trusted facilitator of catchment health.
- ▶ Regional decision makers and other influencers are actively seeking opportunities to be profiled in our catchment-positive stories.
- ▶ Communicating about our work and its outcomes is an embedded, standard practice within all our programs.





The best we can be

Organisational capacity

A high functioning, adequately supported and appropriately resourced staff group is a critical component of our campaign to improve the resilience and adaptability of our region.

We commit to nurturing a workplace culture that provides a stimulating and fulfilling employee experience, securing and retaining the best people at all levels of leadership and governance in order to achieve our goals.

Intended 5-year outcomes:

- ▶ West Gippsland CMA is a recognised “employer of choice” in the region and beyond.
- ▶ Our retention and development of staff expertise has allowed us to respond to difficult catchment challenges.





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