

# Corporate Plan

2021-22 to 2025-26





**Creating  
natural resource  
management  
partnerships and  
programs that  
deliver lasting  
change**



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## Acknowledgment of Country

The North Central Catchment Management Authority acknowledges Aboriginal Traditional Owners within the region, their rich culture and spiritual connection to Country. We also recognise and acknowledge the contribution and interest of Aboriginal people and organisations in land and natural resource management.

**Front cover:** 2020 Working for Victoria crew member Toby Cocks undertaking weed control along the Campaspe River at Rochester.

# Foreword from the Chair

We view the 2021-22 year as one of getting on with the job and continuing to pursue new opportunities and innovation as a leader in natural resource management across north central Victoria. We're dedicated to achieving our vision of sustainably managed land, water and biodiversity resources that support productive and prosperous communities in a changing climate.

This year's Corporate Plan points to an optimistic future, and while the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic comes with some uncertainty to our operating environment, we are focusing our ability to deliver on the Minister's Letter of Expectations and the nine-key state government policy priority areas. Outcomes from our diverse range of programs and projects will contribute to the health of our communities, land, water and biodiversity resources.

Over the past 12 months we have remained flexible in response to the disruption of coronavirus (COVID-19), and it is this flexibility and adaptability that has changed the way we operate, particularly our approach to engagement. We will work with our staff, stakeholders and community to renew our 2017-20 Engagement Strategy that will provide clear expectations to our communities, partners and stakeholders on how and why we interact with them and innovative opportunities to do so.

We will continue to focus on creating successful outcomes and value within our focus areas and progress our important long-term work. Some highlights from this year's program of works include:

- ✓ Implementing our regional integrated catchment management approach through the 2021-27 North Central Regional Catchment Strategy (RCS). Through consultation over the past year, we have defined a shared and compelling vision for the region's natural resources, identifying those most in need of our attention, and will create a regionally-owned program of work and commitment with our partners and the community to secure them for the future.
- ✓ Implementing the CMA created Climate Change Commitment and Action Plan that will drive adaptation thinking and action central in all of our work. Climate change adaptation and mitigation is embedded into the renewed North Central RCS and will continue to be embedded into regional natural resource management programs. This builds upon the knowledge outlined in the North Central Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Plan as to how the region's natural resources are likely to respond to climate change and sets out adaptation and mitigation opportunities.

- ✓ Continuing to build relationships with the seven Traditional Owner groups in our region to achieve shared aspirations for healthy Country. Programs will be developed together guided by key drivers including Recognition and Settlement Agreements, Country Plans, and our Reconciliation Action Plan.
- ✓ Progressing the \$7 million Victorian Government stimulus investment in environmental infrastructure works in the Gunbower and Lower Loddon area that will help native fish to breed and move along a fish 'superhighway'. This progress builds on the sharp focus and persistence associated with our entrepreneurial Native Fish Recovery Plan.

We understand the value of thinking and acting innovatively and aim to bring new public and private partnerships to the table for regional natural resource management investment and collective impact. Our Business Development Program will create focus, relationships and traction on a pipeline of innovative strategies and projects, there are 60 to date, that can deliver on our CMA objectives and meet the region's needs. We will continue to reflect and improve upon the successful core projects for which we are renowned.

Due to good management and oversight, the organisations current financial position is optimistic. This plan sets out financial statements based on estimated revenue for the 2021-22 year informed by the best advice available at the time. In planning for the year ahead, we have tested a range of scenarios to ensure we are on the front foot in the event of government budget change and can evolve and reset our programs and budgets to meet emerging funding circumstances.

On behalf of the North Central CMA team, we look forward to working with the Victorian Government and our regional community, industry, Traditional Owners and government partners to realise the outcomes outlined in this Corporate Plan.



Julie Miller Markoff  
Chair



# 1. About the North Central CMA

The North Central Catchment Management Authority (CMA) is the lead natural resource management (NRM) agency in north central Victoria and has a track record of creating natural resource management partnerships and programs that deliver lasting change.

Established in 1997 under Victoria's *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994 (CaLP Act)* the North Central CMA also has powers and functions under the *Water Act 1989 (Water Act)*. It is accountable to the Hon. Lisa Neville MP, Minister for Water and the Hon. Lily D'Ambrosio MP, Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change via the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning.

## The North Central CMA region

The North Central CMA region covers about three million hectares or 13 per cent of Victoria. It is bounded by the Murray River to the north, Mt Camel Range to the east and the Great Dividing Range to the south. The region's rich natural assets have been reserved as regional and national parks, internationally significant wetlands, flora and fauna reserves and reference areas from the gold-mining era.

The region has a population of more than 240,000 people, concentrated in the growing regional hub of Bendigo and the townships of Echuca, Swan Hill, Charlton, Donald, St Arnaud, Maryborough, Castlemaine, Kyneton and Heathcote.

There are four major river systems in the catchment; the Campaspe, Loddon, Avoca, and Avon- Richardson rivers. The Campaspe and Loddon rivers are regulated systems that flow to the Murray River. Across the catchment there are 1,619 wetlands covering 84,325 hectares with 77 per cent considered to be of regional, national or international importance.

The region includes the traditional land of the Dja Dja Wurrung, Barapa Barapa, Wamba Wamba, Yorta Yorta, Taungurung, Wadi Wadi and Wergaia represented by the Barengi Gadjin Land Council. The North Central CMA recognises the connection Traditional Owners and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations have with Country and their obligations, rights and responsibilities to use and care for it.

The North Central CMA region is diverse. Eighty-seven per cent of land is privately owned and much of it is used for agriculture. The region comprises a rich variety of land and soil types that sustain a range of agricultural enterprises. There are extensive areas of irrigation in the north, productive, large-scale cropping in the west and mixed farming in the mid and upper catchments to the south. Intensive animal and horticultural enterprises are also found throughout the region. In the southern area, particularly near major population centres, traditional agricultural pursuits are giving way to smaller enterprises and rural living zones.

While many profitable farms remain south of Bendigo, this transition is being driven by increased land amenity values which, in most cases, exceed the primary production capacity of the land. Significant natural resource assets also exist on private land, particularly remnant woodlands, grasslands and wetlands that haven't been cleared for farming, making private land managers key partners in natural resource management across the region.

The region spans a number of local government areas, incorporating the Loddon Shire, Mount Alexander Shire, Central Goldfields Shire, Hepburn Shire, Gannawarra Shire, City of Greater Bendigo and Campaspe Shire and parts of the Northern Grampians, Buloke, Pyrenees Shires, City of Ballarat, Macedon Ranges Shires and the Swan Hill Rural City.

# 2. Governance

The 10 Victorian CMAs, including the North Central CMA, were established under and deliver legislative requirements of the *Catchment and Land Protection (CaLP Act 1994)* and the *Water Act 1989*, according to a Statement of Obligations issued by the Minister for Water. The Statement of Obligations aligns with the Victorian Government’s *Water for Victoria* and *Our Catchment Our Communities* initiatives.

As a public sector entity, the *Public Administration Act 2004*, *Financial Management Act 1994*, *Freedom of Information Act 1982*, *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*, *Protected Disclosure Act 2012* and other associated statutory instruments, Ministerial Directions, state and federal government programs and departmental requirements provide further guidance to the CMAs on their governance requirements.

Under the *CaLP Act*, CMAs are governed by ministerially appointed Boards and have a Board Charter that sets out their governance framework. The North Central CMA has a Board Charter that is reviewed annually.

The North Central CMA’s Board, committees and staff have a strong commitment to continual improvement in maintaining high standards of corporate governance.

These high standards are supported through a structure and culture that establishes and maintains the appropriate separation of duties and demands accountability and performance in all aspects of the organisation.

## 2.1 Reporting structure

The North Central CMA is a statutory authority that reports through the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) to the Minister for Water and Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change and, ultimately, the Parliament of Victoria.

This Corporate Plan, together with the North Central CMA Annual Report, provides the basis for:

- Planning, managing and monitoring the North Central CMA’s overall performance.
- Reporting to the Board and stakeholders on the North Central CMA’s business.
- Demonstrating compliance with legislative obligations, ministerial directions and departmental requirements.

In addition to this Corporate Plan, the North Central CMA provides a range of other documents to Ministers to demonstrate compliance and performance:

- North Central CMA Annual Report.
- Victorian CMA Actions and Achievements Report.
- North Central CMA Board annual performance assessment results.




**LEGEND**

- ▲ Main towns
- Main wetlands
- Main rivers
- Watercourses

## 2.2 Board and committees

The Victorian Government appoints diverse Boards of up to nine members to govern CMAs based on their skills and background relevant to natural resource management. Board members may also have a valuable connection to their local community and represent community values and priorities when considering strategic issues relating to the protection and improvement of the region's natural resources.

The Board has six standing committees each chaired by a Board member, complemented by a range of project specific committees.

### Community Leaders' Group

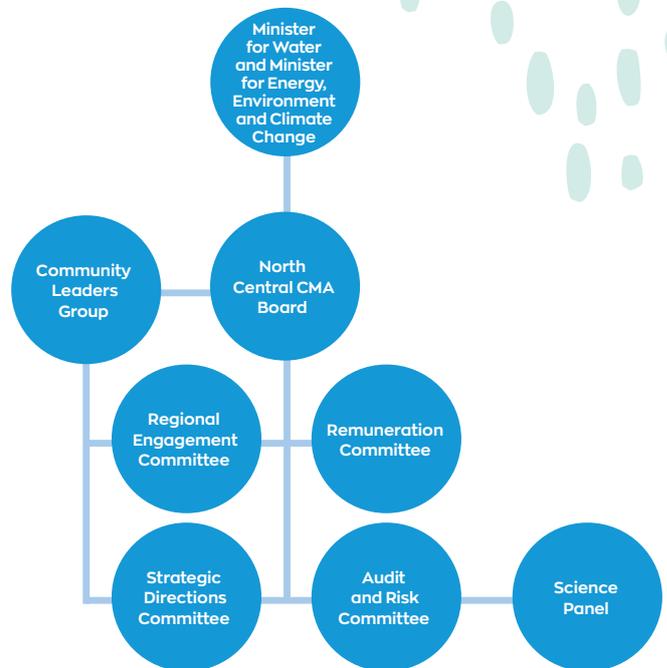
Members of the Community Leaders Group have specific appointed roles as chair of project/program committees and/or participating in strategy initiatives (e.g. strategy development or Board sub-committees). These projects and programs have a significant community interface and members bring personal expertise and a community linkage to the work of the North Central CMA.

### Regional Engagement Committee

Strategically analyses, develops, monitors and coordinates approaches and practices in relation to the way we engage with our partners, stakeholders and the general community. Membership consists of three Board members, nominated and endorsed by the full Board and three Community Leader Group members.

### Strategic Directions Committee

Supports the North Central CMA to deliver on the strategic direction of the North Central Regional Catchment Strategy (RCS) and sub-strategies. Membership consists of three Board members and two Community Leader Group members.



### Audit and Risk Committee

Monitors and evaluates the adequacy and effectiveness of the corporate governance and risk management frameworks. Membership consists of three Board members nominated and endorsed by the full Board and an external, independent member. It is supported by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Executive Manager Corporate Services, and Financial Accountant.

### Remuneration Committee

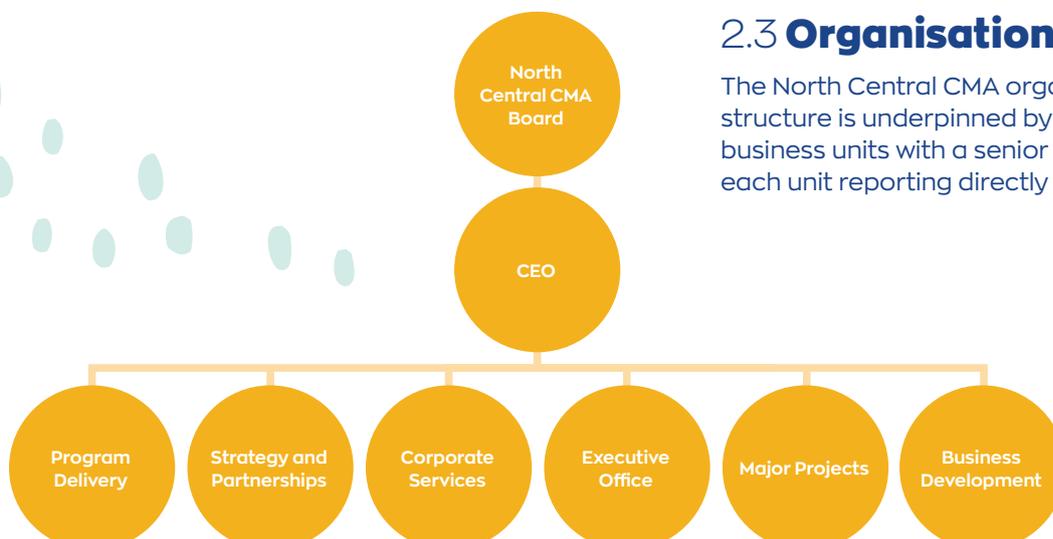
Oversees the management, performance and remuneration of the CEO. The committee is made up of three Board members nominated and endorsed by the full Board.

### Science Panel

The Science Panel stewards long-term, evidence-based knowledge management and ensures that this is embedded into our strategies and projects as well as undertaking key tactical tasks to respond to challenging or contested areas of science. It is chaired by a Board member and will be made up of recognised academic or industry experts relevant to the work of the North Central CMA.

## 2.3 Organisation structure

The North Central CMA organisation structure is underpinned by six key business units with a senior manager from each unit reporting directly to the CEO.



# 3. Business Direction

The strategic direction and responsibilities for all CMAs are guided by the *CaLP Act* and *Water Act*, along with their complementary Statement of Obligations (SoO), Ministerial Letter of Expectations and other key government strategic directions and programs.

## 3.1 Victorian Government policy priorities

In March 2021, the Acting Minister for Water issued a Letter of Expectations to the North Central CMA outlining nine key Victorian Government policy priorities and performance expectations:

1. Climate Change
2. Waterway and Catchment Health
3. Water for Agriculture
4. Community Engagement and Partnerships
5. Recognise and Support Aboriginal Cultural Values and Economic Inclusion in the Water Sector
6. Recognise Recreational Values
7. Resilient and Liveable Cities and Towns
8. Leadership, Diversity and Culture
9. Improved Performance and Demonstrating Outcomes

These priorities are detailed in Table 2 along with key performance indicators for each measure and align with the outcomes and outcome indicators in the Business Outcomes Framework (Table 1) and Delivery Program outcomes in section 5.2.

## 3.2 North Central CMA's strategic direction

The North Central CMA's strategic direction creates a clear, purposeful and enabling path for the organisation. It is developed by the Board to ensure the delivery of the best possible value for our communities, government and interested stakeholders.

The 'Our Culture' component of the strategic direction has been refined in consultation with staff to better reflect the organisation's appetite towards new challenges, innovation and collaboration.

### Our purpose (mission)

We create natural resource management partnerships and programs that deliver lasting change.



### Our vision

Sustainably managed land, water and biodiversity resources that support productive and prosperous communities in a changing climate.



### Our approach

#### Connecting natural resource management activities

- Delivering water for the environment and improving waterway habitats.
- Promoting sustainable agricultural land management.
- Securing and linking habitats and species.
- Adapting landscapes to a changing climate.



#### Enabling active communities

- Encouraging and supporting community action for the environment.
- Supporting Traditional Owner and Aboriginal self-determination, cultural values and economic inclusion.
- Partnering with government, industry and community.

#### Supporting sound decisions with knowledge

- Identifying regional natural resource management priorities.
- Gathering and sharing knowledge from Traditional Owner, local and scientific sources.
- Providing information to prepare and protect the community from flooding.

### Our culture

As a public-sector entity we behave in line with the Victorian Public Sector values.

Our values are:



#### Care

#### Connection



### 3.3 Initiatives that support our strategic direction

There are foundational initiatives across our organisation that further support our business direction and are at the centre of all that we do:

#### People and culture

The 'Our Culture' component of the North Central CMA's strategic direction has been refined in consultation with staff to position us for the future and better reflect the organisation's appetite towards new challenges, innovation and collaboration. Over the next year we will work across the organisation to bring these new values to life in a way that shapes our culture and supports our strategy.

The North Central CMA values the difference between people and the contribution these differences make to our work and our communities. We will continue to implement our Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2017-2022 and incorporate additional activities that support gender equity and cultural diversity in our workplace.

#### Climate change adaptation and mitigation

The North Central Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Plan describes how the region's natural resources are likely to respond to climate change and sets out adaptation and mitigation opportunities.

More recently the North Central CMA has created a Climate Change Commitment and Action Plan that embeds action into our work and climate change adaptation and mitigation is a key focus of the (draft) 2021-27 North Central Regional Catchment Strategy (RCS) and will continue to shape regional NRM programs.

Through this Corporate Plan we commit resources to the coordination of our climate change efforts and priority actions arising from the RCS and our Climate Change Action Plan.

#### Supporting Traditional Owner and Aboriginal self-determination

The CMA will continue to build relationships with the seven Traditional Owner groups in our region to achieve shared aspirations for healthy Country, with a strong focus on supporting self-determination. Programs will be developed together guided by key drivers including Recognition and Settlement Agreements, Country Plans, and our Reconciliation Action Plan.

Our current Innovate-level RecAP consists of 81 actions, including tracking and reporting. Some actions are annual commitments, such as activities for Reconciliation week and NAIDOC week. The RecAP implementation is progressing well, 67 actions are complete or ongoing; 12 actions are on-track for completion; 2 actions e.g. develop a new draft plan are yet to be commenced.

The North Central CMA's Reconciliation Working group has considered and agreed on a renewal approach to implement outstanding actions and to stretch our aspirations in this area. These aspirational actions include the development and implementation of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment and Retention strategy, and the development of a pilot Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy. A draft is expected to be endorsed by Reconciliation Australia during the 2021-22 year.



# 4. Business Outcomes

Our projects and programs deliver significant community value and tracking our outputs alone e.g. activities, products or services undervalues our achievements for the region’s natural resources and community. In order to improve our capacity to tell the story of the contribution our programs make to the desired end-state of prosperous individuals, families and communities, we have shifted to an outcomes focus.

The Victorian Government’s public-sector reform agenda has established an Outcome Framework (Figure 1) for all government agencies. The Outcome Framework promotes consistent approaches and language as well as consistent measurement systems.

The outcomes-based approach to government focuses on actual results achieved, rather than inputs and outputs. A focus on outcomes provides a clear line of sight from investment through to success.

The Business Outcomes Framework outlines what the North Central CMA will do to achieve the top two tiers of the Victorian Government Outcome Framework through our 2021-22 Corporate Plan. Importantly it sets out how we will measure success against our vision, mission and approach.

The outcomes and outcome indicators have been developed to enable us to tell the story about how we deliver on our business objectives and in turn, our vision and mission. We will report against the achievement of these outcome indicators in annual reports.

The programs and projects delivered by the organisation during 2021-22 and beyond are detailed in the Planned Programs, Services and Infrastructure Delivery (chapter 5) of this Corporate Plan. To demonstrate how each project contributes to achieving the outcomes, the outcome indicators relevant to that project have been listed. This provides a line of sight demonstrating how a project contributes to the organisation’s vision.

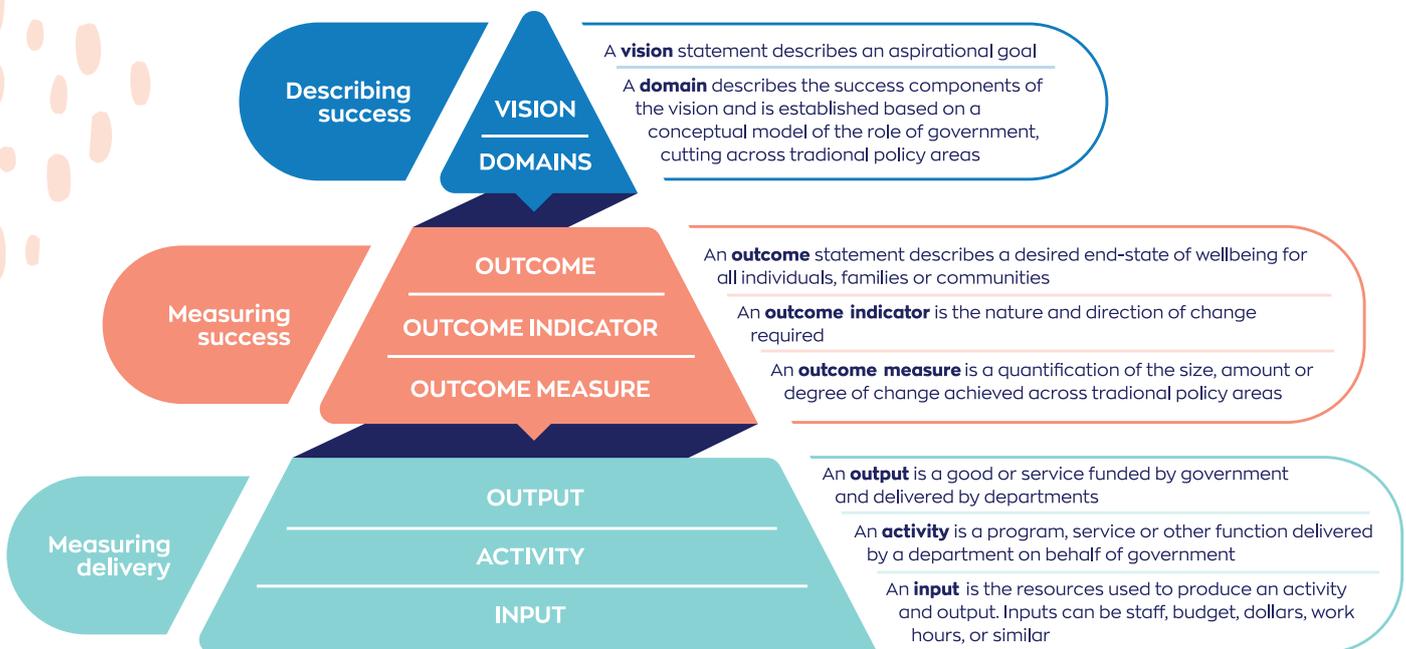


Figure 1 Victorian Government Outcome Framework Diagram



## 4.1 Business Outcomes Framework

Our business outcomes align with the Victorian Government’s policy priorities (Table 2), including a strong focus on climate change in everything we do. We will review the Business Outcomes Framework during 2021-22 to ensure there

continues to be a clear line of sight between the Victorian Government’s policy priority areas, our performance and the ability to demonstrate our value to the community and our investors.

**Table 1 North Central CMA Business Outcomes Framework**

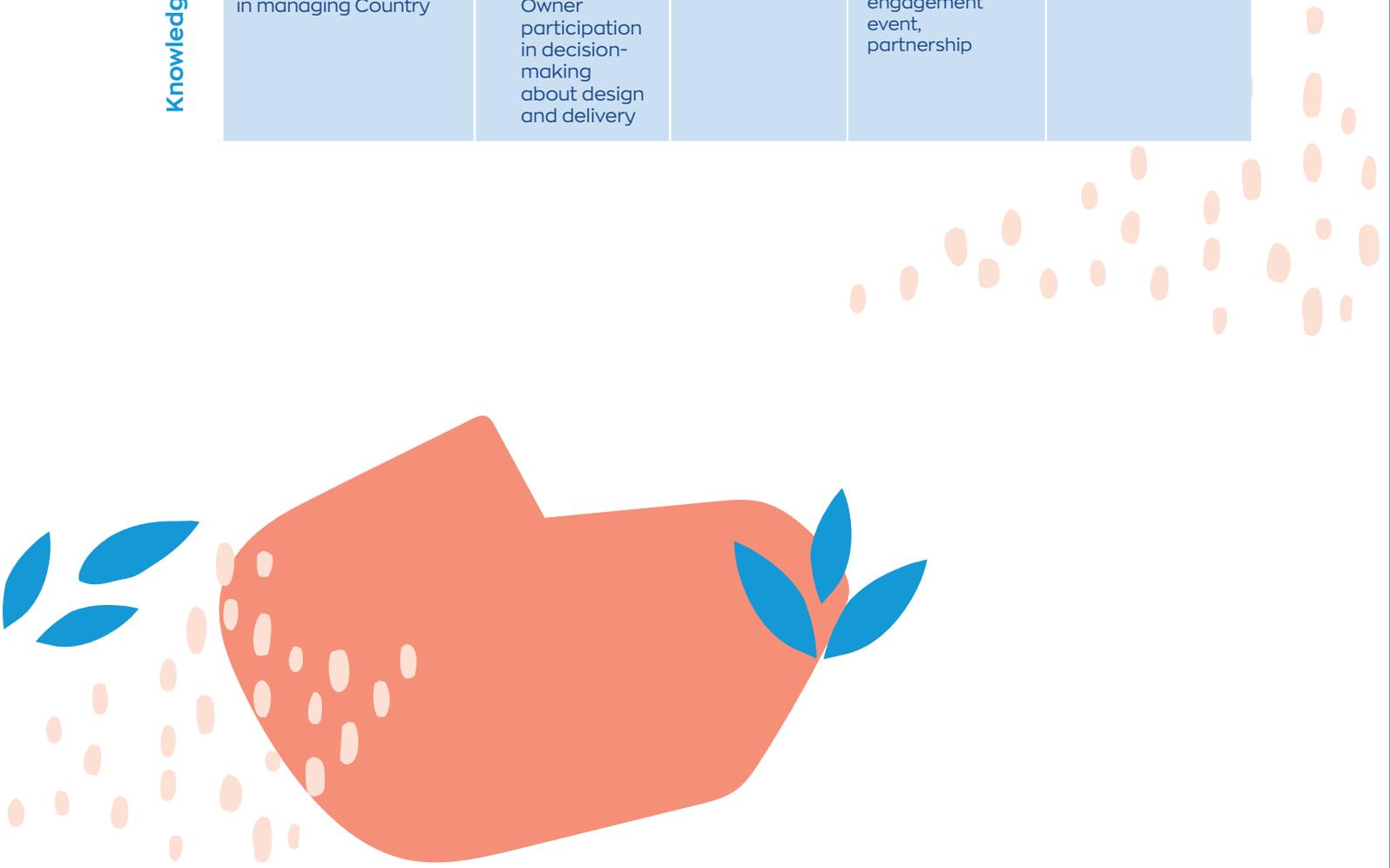
**Vision** **Sustainably managed land, water and biodiversity resources that support productive and prosperous communities in a changing climate.**

| Domains             | Outcomes   | Outcome Indicator   | Measure   | Outputs   | Business Unit Alignment   |
|---------------------|--|---|---|---|---|
| Healthy Environment | Priority waterways and associated riparian zones are providing enhanced social, economic and environmental services to the community   | a. Increased waterway protection and/or improved management     | Hectares; number of systems with seasonally correct environmental flows | Fence, vegetation, weed control, pest control, water, grazing, management agreement, engagement event, approval and advice, partnership | Environmental Assets, Water for the Environment, Strategy and Partnerships, Statutory Functions and Floodplain Management |
|                     | Priority wetlands and associated riparian zones are providing enhanced social, economic and environmental services to the community  | b. Increased wetland protection and/or improved management      | Hectares  | Fence, vegetation, weed control, pest control, water, grazing, management agreement, engagement event, partnership                      | Environmental Assets, Water for the Environment, Strategy and Partnerships  |
|                     | Planning guidelines, advice and agencies are reducing the costs and impacts of flooding to property and asset owners, while maintaining floodplain connectivity and flow paths | c. Reduced flood risk   | Hectares/ number of properties  | Approval and advice, partnership, measurement station, assessment engagement event  | Statutory Functions and Floodplain Management   |
|                     | Priority ecosystems are providing enhanced social, economic and environmental services to the community and protecting threatened species for future generations               | d. Increased biodiversity protection and/or improved management | Hectares  | Waterway structure, fence, vegetation, weed control, pest control, water, grazing, management agreement, engagement event               | Environmental Assets, Water for the Environment, Strategy and Partnerships  |
|                     | Appropriate land use and management practices are enabling economic profit for farmers, while minimising social and environmental impacts for the community                    | e. Improved agricultural management                             | Hectares  | Fence vegetation, soil treatment, grazing, agricultural practice, assessment, engagement event, partnership, plan                       | Sustainable Agriculture   |

Vision

**Sustainably managed land, water and biodiversity resources that support productive and prosperous communities in a changing climate.**

| Domains                              | Outcomes  | Outcome Indicator  | Measure   | Outputs  | Business Unit Alignment |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|---|--|-------------------------|
| Knowledgeable and Active Communities | The community is aware, knowledgeable, skilled and resourced to actively participate in environment and agricultural management | f. Maintain Landcare Group Health<br>g. Increased participants knowledge, awareness, skills and/or attitude (KASA) | Group Health Score; percentage of respondents with increase in KASA | Fence, vegetation, weed control, pest control, engagement event, partnership | All                     |
|                                      | Traditional Owners are aware, knowledgeable, skilled and resourced to actively participate in managing Country                  | h. Increased number of projects with Traditional Owner participation in decision-making about design and delivery  | Count of projects   | Fence, vegetation, weed control, pest control, engagement event, partnership | All                     |



**Table 2 Minister’s Letter of Expectations: Priority areas, outcome indicators and measures**

| Priority area  | Outcome Indicators   | Measure   |
|--|--|---|
| 1. Climate Change  | E1 Active investigation into new opportunities that sequester carbon                             | E1.1 Explore opportunities to sequester carbon and generate carbon offsets.   |
|  |  | E1.2 Progress on climate change adaptation initiatives outlines in climate change and catchment strategies.   |
| 3. Waterway and Catchment Health   | CH2 Improved catchment health and resilience   | CH2.1 Develop and coordinate the implementation of your new Regional Catchment Strategy according to legislative changes and new guidelines established by the Victorian Catchment Management Council.                              |
|  |  | CH2.2 Deliver integrated catchment management in line with Water for Victoria and building on the legacy of <i>Our Catchments Our Communities</i> with strengthened performance across environmental, social and economic outcomes. |
|  |  | CH2.3 Report on Catchment Partnership Agreements for your region in accordance with the Framework for Catchment Partnership Agreements.   |
| 3. Water for Agriculture   | WA1 A productive and profitable irrigation sector and vibrant and resilient regional communities | WA1.1 Promoting sustainable irrigation management practices to support the growth and viability of regional communities.  |
|  |  | WA1.2 Planning and coordinating activities to manage salinity, waterlogging and water quality in agricultural areas.  |
|  |  | WA1.3 Providing flexibility for agriculture to continue to adapt to change and help the sector do more with less water.   |
| 4. Community Engagement and Partnerships   | CE1 A strong community engagement focus that is a cornerstone of all CMA’s functions             | CE1.1 Continue to build extensive, effective and consistent approaches to community engagement and partnerships in regional planning and implementation.  |
|  |  | CE1.2 Work collaboratively with organisations and communities to strengthen engagement approaches and capacity.   |
| 5. Recognise and Support Aboriginal Cultural Values and Economic Inclusion in the Water Sector | AC1 Effective engagement of Traditional Owners   | AC1.1 Number of effective engagements with Traditional Owners in water planning and management that have led to improved outcomes for Aboriginal communities.   |
| 6. Recognise Recreational Values   | RV1 Water services that explicitly consider recreational values, within existing frameworks      | RV1.1 Evidence that recreational values were considered in waterway health and environmental water planning and management.   |

**Table 2 Minister's Letter of Expectations: Priority areas, outcome indicators and measures**

| Priority area   | Outcome Indicators  | Measure  |
|---|---|--|
| <b>6. Recognise Recreational Values</b>                   | RV2 Engagement with the community to identify and prioritise opportunities to deliver recreational objectives relating to the management of water and waterways | RV2.1 Number of engagement processes with community or stakeholders that identified and considered recreational values of waterways.   |
|   | RV3 Accessible and user friendly information for recreational users about waterway conditions to help community members plan their recreational activities      | RV3.1 Evidence of improvements to information sources (e.g. online).   |
|   | RV4 Collaboration with other organisations and government agencies to explore and progress opportunities to support recreational values                         | RV4.1 Evidence of collaboration with other organisations or agencies to support recreational values, such as sharing of information on recreational value planning or management with other organisations, partnerships with other organisations or agencies in site-based or regional projects, and/or amounts of co-investment with other organisations. |
| <b>7. Resilient and Liveable Cities and Towns</b>         | LC1 Healthy communities and supporting resilient environments   | LC1.1 Collaborating with water corporations and local government, including participation in Integrated Water Management Forums, to help facilitate integrated water management, with a focus on enhancing public open spaces (such as waterway corridors).  |
|   |   | LC1.2 Participating in the development and implementation of integrated water management plans, particularly through prioritising measures to enhance urban waterway values.   |
| <b>8. Leadership, Diversity and Culture</b>               | G1 Diversity and inclusion  | G1.6 Developing strategies and goals that will increase cultural diversity in the workforce and gender equity in executive leadership and throughout the organisation.   |
|   |   | G1.7 Encouraging staff participation in the Victorian Public Sector Commission 'People Matter Survey' or equivalent survey.  |
| <b>9. Improved Performance and Demonstrating Outcomes</b> | PE1 Improved performance and demonstrated results against outcomes  | PE1.1 Collaborating with DELWP to improve reporting systems and processes.   |
|   |   | PE1.2 Demonstrate outcomes of government investment into waterways and catchment health.   |
|   |   | PE1.3 Deliver efficiency through shared services, smarter procurement and lower-cost technology.   |
|   |   | PE1.4 Commit to working collectively via Vic Catchments membership to strengthen collaboration and performance in the catchment management sector in Victoria.   |

# 5. Planned Services and Infrastructure Delivery

Our projects and programs and service delivery will ensure:

- Performance against the Victorian Government's policy priorities (Table 2).
- Alignment with the RCS and sub-strategies (refer to 5.1).
- Contribution to the Victorian and Australian Government policies and priorities.
- Confidence in our ability to secure lasting environmental, social, and economic outcomes.
- Delivery through partnerships and regular advice from stakeholders.
- Value for money outcomes achieved through best practice project management methodology.
- Continuous improvement through strong focus on monitoring and evaluation across the project life cycle.

The program may be refined during 2021-22 to reflect changes to state and federal government confirmed funding and resources.

## 5.1 Regional Catchment Strategy

During 2020, and despite the disruption caused by COVID-19 to our traditional engagement approach, we continued to consult and engage with our communities and key stakeholders both online and face-to-face, to review and most importantly renew the region's 2012-19 Regional Catchment Strategy (RCS). Our extensive consultation has resulted in a draft 2021-27 RCS that has a focus on climate change and Traditional Owner self-determination. It also clearly articulates the regional assets, important to our communities and partners, and the challenges and opportunities to protect and enhance these assets over the next six-years.

What has not changed is the intent of the RCS. The strategy is the key planning document that sets regional priorities for the management of natural resources across the region to strengthen the links between rivers, landscapes, and people. The preparation of the RCS is work that we do on behalf of the region, but partnerships are essential in delivering it. There are many that have a role in caring for our region's natural resources and many that rely on them.

A range of sub- strategies (Figure 2) provide further detailed guidance to the activities of the North Central CMA.

While much of the organisation's activity is managed through separate programs described below, an integrated approach is taken to the management of NRM assets consistent with the objectives of the North Central RCS, the Loddon Campaspe Irrigation Region Land and Water Management Plan, the 2014-22 North Central Regional Waterway Strategy and other relevant theme-based strategies. The North Central Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Plan, along with the North Central Regional Sustainable Agriculture Strategy, strengthen the strategic planning approach for achieving enduring environmental change across north central Victoria by factoring in the vulnerability of different assets to the climate change predictions for the region.

To deliver on various strategies the North Central CMA has established a range of projects and programs that organise and drive the operational activity of the organisation.

The nature and scope of the North Central CMA's projects and programs contribute to the achievement of its business objectives and business outcomes. These are delivered through Delivery, Business Improvement and Business Development programs to ensure quality outcomes are achieved.

## Regional Catchment Strategy

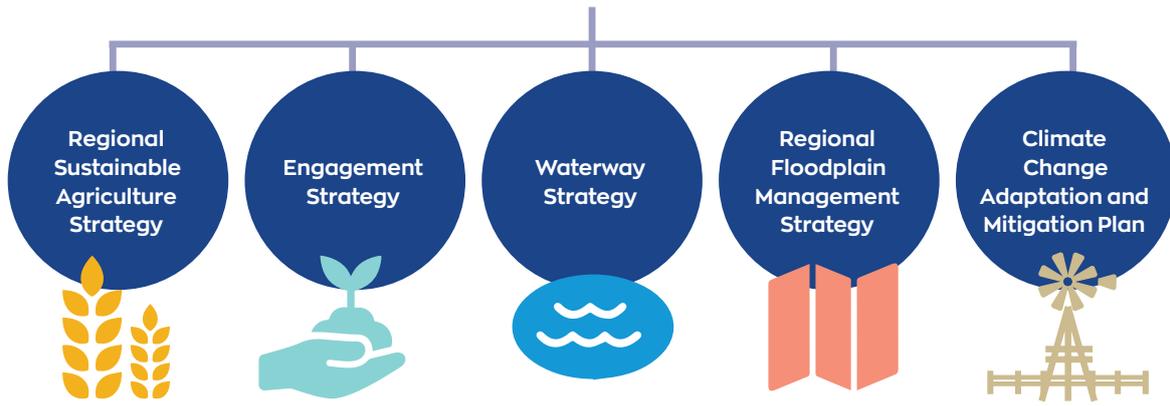


Figure 2 **Sub-strategies of the Regional Catchment Strategy**

### 5.2 Delivery program

The North Central CMA is principally responsible for protecting and improving the health of the region's natural resources through partnerships in line with the RCS and sub-strategies, and delivering its statutory responsibilities for waterway, rural drainage, and floodplain management.

Business units within the North Central CMA that contribute directly to our Delivery Program are:

- Environmental Assets
- Major Projects
- Water for the Environment
- Sustainable Agriculture
- Strategy and Partnerships
- Statutory Functions and Floodplain Management

Projects and programs for each business unit are detailed to the right.

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| <b>Projects</b>           | Describes the nature and scope of the projects to be delivered over the Corporate Plan period.  |
| <b>Outcome indicators</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Alignment with the North Central CMA's Business Outcomes Framework (Table 1).</li> <li>- Alignment with the Victorian Government's priority policy areas and outcome indicators which the project mostly contributes (Table 2).</li> </ul> |
| <b>CMA Strategy</b>       | Establishes strategic importance of the project.  |
| <b>External Strategy</b>  | Regional, Victorian or Australian Government strategies or programs to which the project mostly contributes.  |
| <b>Outputs</b>            | Describes the standard outputs that are in scope for the planned project.   |

## Environmental Assets

The Environmental Asset program is responsible for delivering a broad range of projects aimed at improving the health of waterways, wetlands and biodiversity within our region. The program delivers on the priorities identified within the North Central Regional Catchment Strategy, the North Central Waterway Strategy, and a range of national and international environmental obligations. The program also works closely with the broader north central Victorian community and key Traditional Owner groups to help build capacity for delivering shared benefits across the region.



| Projects  | Outcome Indicators   | CMA Strategy  | External Strategy  | Outputs   |
|---|--|---|--|---|
| <b>Waterway Health, On-ground Works and Community Engagement</b>  |  |   |  |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delivers a range of activities to improve waterway health, build capacity and support our community.</li> <li>Delivers large scale river restoration projects through the Caring for the Campaspe and Kyneton Offsets projects.</li> <li>Restores native fish populations through the Murray and Loddon Floodplain Native Fish Recovery project and the Mid-Murray Recovery Reach project.</li> <li>Continues sharing of ideas, transferring knowledge, and collaborating on initiatives with Traditional Owners.</li> </ul> | a, b, d, h: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9: E1, CH2, CE1, AC1, RV1, RV2, RV3, RV4, LC1, PE1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2014-22 North Central Regional Waterway Strategy</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water for Victoria</li> <li>Regional Riparian Action Plan</li> <li>Victorian Waterway Management Strategy</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fence</li> <li>Water storage</li> <li>Vegetation</li> <li>Weed control</li> <li>Grazing</li> <li>Management Agreement</li> <li>Engagement event</li> <li>Partnership</li> <li>Publication</li> <li>Waterway structure</li> <li>Monitoring structure</li> <li>Earthworks</li> <li>Assessment</li> </ul> |
| <b>Integrated Catchment Management / Our Catchments, Our Communities</b>  |  |   |  |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improves riparian conditions along priority waterways and fosters greater catchment stewardship and improved land management across the Upper Coliban and Tullaroop catchments through traditional waterway management approaches and strategic partnerships and initiatives.</li> </ul>   | a, b, d, h: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9: E1, CH2, CE1, AC1, RV1, RV2, RV3, RV4, LC1, PE1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>North Central Regional Catchment Strategy</li> <li>2014-22 North Central Regional Waterway Strategy</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water for Victoria</li> <li>Regional Riparian Action Plan</li> <li>Victorian Waterway Management Strategy</li> <li>Our Catchments, Our Communities Integrated Catchment Management in Victoria 2016-19</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fence</li> <li>Vegetation</li> <li>Weed control</li> <li>Waterway structure</li> <li>Grazing</li> <li>Management Agreement</li> <li>Assessment</li> <li>Engagement event</li> <li>Partnership</li> <li>Plan</li> </ul>   |

| Projects   | Outcome Indicators                                      | CMA Strategy  | External Strategy  | Outputs  |
|--|---|---|--|--|
| <b>Protecting Investment and Improving Capacity</b>  |   |   |  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhances river health outcomes by ensuring previous on-ground works are maintained and where possible improved by landholders through the provision of best practice management extension advice and minor on-ground works.</li> </ul>  | a, d, g: 2, 4, 6, 9; CH2, CE1, RV2, RV3, PE1            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>North Central Regional Catchment Strategy</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Victorian Waterway Management Strategy</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment</li> <li>Partnership</li> <li>Information management system</li> <li>Vegetation</li> <li>Weed control</li> <li>Fencing</li> <li>Water storage</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Threatened Species</b>  |   |   |  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increases the extent and quality of tall marsh wetland habitats to contribute to the recovery of the Threatened Australasian bittern and growling grass frog.</li> </ul>  | b, d, g, h: 2, 4, 5, 6, 9: CH2, CE1, AC1, RV1, RV2, PE1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>North Central Regional Catchment Strategy</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Victorian Waterway Management Strategy</li> <li>Australian Government Threatened Species Strategy</li> <li>Australia's Biodiversity Strategy</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vegetation</li> <li>Fence</li> <li>Weed control</li> <li>Grazing</li> <li>Earth works</li> <li>Management Agreement</li> <li>Waterway structure</li> <li>Assessment</li> <li>Pest animal control</li> <li>Engagement event</li> </ul> |
| <b>Ramsar Site Management</b>  |   |   |  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improves the ecological character of the Kerang Wetlands and the Gunbower Forest Ramsar sites through traditional on-ground works such as weed control and pest animal control.</li> <li>Strengthens regional partnerships to deliver effective monitoring and management of these internationally important wetland habitats.</li> </ul> | b, d, g, h: 2, 4, 5, 6, 9: CH2, CE1, AC1, RV1, RV2, PE1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>North Central Regional Catchment Strategy</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Victorian Waterway Management Strategy</li> <li>Australia's Biodiversity Strategy</li> <li>Australian Pest Animal Strategy</li> </ul>                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment</li> <li>Weed control</li> <li>Pest animal control</li> <li>Partnership</li> <li>Management Agreement</li> <li>Engagement event</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Northern Plains Grasslands</b>  |   |   |  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protects in-perpetuity and enhances high quality plains wanderer grassland habitat on private land in partnership with private and public land managers.</li> </ul>   | b, d, g, h: 2, 4, 5, 6, 9: CH2, CE1, AC1, RV1, RV2, PE1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>North Central Regional Catchment Strategy</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Australian Government Threatened Species Strategy</li> <li>Australia's Biodiversity Strategy</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grazing</li> <li>Fence</li> <li>Management Agreement</li> <li>Weed control</li> <li>Pest animal control</li> <li>Vegetation</li> <li>Assessment</li> <li>Engagement event</li> </ul>  |

## Water for the Environment

The core business of the Environmental Water program is to deliver against the North Central CMA’s statutory responsibilities to manage the environmental water reserve in our region pursuant to the *Water Act 1989*.

This includes long-term and annual planning, adaptively managing delivery, event-based monitoring and extensive community and Traditional Owner engagement. The program also includes management of works and measures that support environmental watering objectives such as infrastructure to deliver water to a site.



| Projects   | Outcome Indicators  | CMA Strategy   | External Strategy   | Outputs  |
|--|---|--|---|--|
| <b>The Living Murray Gunbower Forest</b>   |   |  |   |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides water for the environment to Gunbower Creek and restores regular flooding to Gunbower Forest through operation of infrastructure. Extensive annual ecological monitoring program, Indigenous partnership programs and community engagement are also core to this project.</li> </ul>   | a, d, g, h: 2,4, 5, 6, 7, 9: CH2, CE1, AC1, RV1, RV2, RV3, RV4, PE1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2014-22 North Central Regional Waterway Strategy</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water for Victoria</li> <li>Victorian Waterway Management Strategy</li> <li>Murray Darling Basin Plan</li> <li>Gunbower Forest EWMP (MDBA produced)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water</li> <li>Assessment</li> <li>Engagement event</li> <li>Partnership</li> <li>Plan</li> </ul> |
| <b>Environmental Water Management</b>  |   |  |   |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manages specific Victorian Environmental Water Holder entitlements for the Campaspe River (including the Coliban River), Loddon River System (including Tullaroop, Serpentine and Pyramid creeks) and 16 central Murray and mid-Loddon wetlands, and seven Wimmera Mallee Pipeline wetlands.</li> <li>Collaborates with key partners, provide input to water policy, deliver technical investigations.</li> <li>Ensures Traditional Owner Groups have input into planning processes to incorporate cultural values.</li> <li>Ensures shared benefits for key recreational users and the regional economy.</li> <li>Manage flow related issues in unregulated catchments as required.</li> </ul> | a, d, g, h: 2,4, 5, 6, 7, 9: CH2, CE1, AC1, RV1, RV2, RV3, RV4, PE1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2014-22 North Central Regional Waterway Strategy</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water for Victoria</li> <li>Victorian Waterway Management Strategy</li> <li>Murray Darling Basin Plan</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water</li> <li>Engagement event</li> <li>Partnership</li> <li>Plan</li> </ul>                     |



# Sustainable Agriculture

The Sustainable Agriculture program works with communities, Traditional Owners, agricultural industries, and partner agencies to achieve productive farming while protecting the natural resource base.

It delivers regional priorities identified in the North Central Regional Sustainable Agriculture Strategy that supports agriculture across north central Victoria.



| Projects   | Outcome Indicators   | CMA Strategy   | External Strategy   | Outputs   |
|--|--|--|---|---|
| <b>Regenerative Agriculture</b>  |  |  |   |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increases the capacity of north central Victorian agricultural communities to adopt to emerging practices to improve soil, biodiversity and vegetation.</li> </ul>  | d, e, g, h: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9; E1, CH2, WA1, CE1, AC1, RV2, RV4, PE1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>North Central Victoria Regional Sustainable Agriculture Strategy</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Soil R,D &amp; E Strategy</li> <li>Victorian Soil Health Strategy</li> <li>Australia's Biodiversity Strategy</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engagement event</li> <li>Plan</li> <li>Assessment</li> <li>Partnership</li> </ul> |
| <b>Plan2Farm</b>   |  |  |   |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote and utilise the Irrigation Farm Business Plan – Plan2Farm workbook.</li> </ul> <p>By working through the Irrigation Farm Business Plan, farmers set goals appropriate for their business and personal aspirations and make more informed decisions regarding the efficiency of their on-farm irrigation system and the amount of water they have available to their business.</p> | d, e, g, h: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9; E1, CH2, WA1, CE1, AC1, RV2, RV4, PE1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loddon Campaspe Irrigation Region Land and Water Management Plan Draft (2020-2030)</li> <li>North Central Victoria Regional Sustainable Agriculture Strategy</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water for Victoria</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partnership</li> <li>Assessment</li> <li>Plan</li> <li>Engagement event</li> </ul> |
| <b>Regional Agricultural Landcare Facilitator</b>  |  |  |   |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Directly supports rural, regional, and urban communities, including Indigenous Australians to improve ecological conditions, farm sustainability and build resilience around changing climate and market demands.</li> </ul>  | d, e, g, h: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9; E1, CH2, WA1, CE1, AC1, RV2, RV4, PE1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>North Central CMA Landcare Support Plan 2018-23</li> <li>North Central Victoria Regional Sustainable Agriculture Strategy</li> </ul>                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Australian Pest Animal Strategy</li> <li>Australian Weeds Strategy</li> <li>Australian Framework for Landcare</li> <li>Community Call for Action</li> <li>Threatened Species Strategy</li> <li>EPBC Act</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engagement event</li> <li>Partnership</li> <li>Publication</li> </ul>              |

| Projects  | Outcome Indicators  | CMA Strategy   | External Strategy   | Outputs  |
|---|---|--|---|--|
| <b>Healthy Productive Irrigated Landscapes</b>  |   |  |   |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement the Loddon Campaspe Irrigation Region Land and Water Management Plan.</li> <li>• Complete the Surface Water Engagement Plan for the North Central CMA drains and private drains.</li> <li>• Develop the LCIR Traditional Owner and Aboriginal Landholder Engagement Plan.</li> <li>• Support the development and management of water-use licences and associated Ministerial determinations.</li> <li>• Takes responsibility for changes to Water-Use Objectives and Standard Conditions (including section 51 licence amendments).</li> <li>• Implement Irrigation Development Guidelines.</li> <li>• Partner with key organisations to ensure the State Environment Protection Policy (Waters)/ GED obligations are adhered to e.g. no impact on the beneficial users of groundwater.</li> </ul> | <p>d, e, g, h: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9:<br/>E1, CH2, WA1, CE1, AC1, RV2, RV4, PE1</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loddon Campaspe Irrigation Region Land and Water Management Plan Draft (2020-2030)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Murray Darling Basin Salinity Management Strategy 2030</li> <li>• Murray Darling Basin Plan</li> <li>• Water for Victoria</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Channel</li> <li>• Approval and advice</li> <li>• Assessment</li> <li>• Partnership</li> <li>• Plan</li> <li>• Publication</li> </ul> |
| <b>Reporting and Accounting for Salinity</b>  |   |  |   |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contributes to the implementation of the Murray Darling Basin Salinity Management Strategy (BSM2030).</li> <li>• Manages accountable actions for MD BSM2030 Salinity Register entries within the north central Victoria.</li> <li>• Contributes to Victoria's Annual Murray Darling Basin Salinity Management Strategy Report.</li> <li>• Assess the salinity impact of environmental watering within the River Murray floodplain.</li> <li>• Development of an improved landscape salinity model incorporating the understanding of surface water and groundwater interactions active in the generation of salt exports from Barr Creek and Tragowel Plains in northern Victoria.</li> </ul>  | <p>e: 2, 3, 4, 9:<br/>CH2, WA1, CE1, PE1</p>                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loddon Campaspe Irrigation Region Land and Water Management Plan Draft (2020-2030)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Murray Darling Basin Salinity Management Strategy 2030</li> <li>• Murray Darling Basin Plan</li> <li>• Water for Victoria</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approval and advice</li> <li>• Assessment</li> <li>• Partnership</li> <li>• Publication</li> </ul>                                    |

## Strategy and Partnerships

The Strategy and Partnerships program provides support and leadership across community focused projects and programs.

A key part of the program is supporting Landcare Networks and Groups, administration of Landcare grants, delivering the citizen science Waterwatch program and coordinating the North Central CMA Indigenous Program.



| Projects   | Outcome Indicators   | CMA Strategy  | External Strategy  | Outputs   |
|--|--|---|--|---|
| <b>Victorian Landcare Grants &amp; Regional Landcare Coordinator</b>   |  |   |  |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A rigorous process enables funding through the Victorian Landcare grants to local Landcare groups.</li> <li>Supports Landcare groups and Landcare networks to undertake local NRM activities.</li> </ul>  | b, d, f, g, h: 2, 5, 6, 8, 9: CH2, CE1, AC1, RV1, RV2, RV3, RV4, PE1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>North Central Regional Catchment Strategy</li> <li>North Central CMA Landcare Support Plan 2018-23</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Victorian Landcare Program Review Action Plan</li> <li>Australian Pest Animal Strategy</li> <li>Australian Weeds Strategy</li> <li>Australian Framework for Landcare</li> <li>Community Call for Action</li> <li>Threatened Species Strategy</li> <li>EPBC Act</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fence</li> <li>Vegetation</li> <li>Weed control</li> <li>Pest</li> <li>Grazing</li> <li>Engagement event</li> <li>Visitor facility</li> <li>Publication</li> </ul> |
| <b>Waterwatch and Citizen Science Program</b>  |  |   |  |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supports people to actively care for their environment by participating in programs that monitor and report on the health of our regions land, water and biodiversity resources.</li> <li>Provides opportunities for people to participate in training programs that raise awareness and improve people's skills.</li> <li>Supports broader community to participate in activities that relate to the ecological health of our region.</li> </ul> | b, d, g, h: 2, 5, 6, 8, 9: CH2, CE1, AC1, RV1, RV2, RV3, RV4, PE1    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>North Central Regional Catchment Strategy</li> <li>2014-22 North Central Regional Waterway Strategy</li> <li>North Central Waterwatch and Citizen Science Action Plan 2020 - 2025</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water for Victoria</li> <li>Victorian Waterway Management Strategy</li> <li>Protecting Victoria's Biodiversity 2037</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment</li> <li>Engagement event</li> <li>Plan</li> <li>Publication</li> <li>Information management system</li> </ul>  |

| Projects  | Outcome Indicators   | CMA Strategy   | External Strategy  | Outputs  |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| <b>River Detectives Program</b>   |  |  |  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports youth across the region to participate in educational programs.</li> <li>• Raises awareness and improves our future leaders' skills and knowledge in natural resource management.</li> </ul>  | b, d, g, h: 2, 5, 6, 8, 9: CH2, CE1, AC1, RV1, RV2, RV3, RV4, PE1              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2014-22 North Central Regional Waterway Strategy</li> <li>• North Central Waterwatch and Citizen Science Action Plan 2020 - 2025</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water for Victoria</li> <li>• Victorian Waterway Management Strategy</li> </ul>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment</li> <li>• Engagement event</li> <li>• Plan</li> <li>• Publication</li> <li>• Information management system</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Our Catchment, Our Communities</b>   |  |  |  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Works with the community, government agencies and stakeholders to deliver integrated catchment management outcomes that align to the Regional Catchment Strategy.</li> <li>• Working in partnership with Traditional Owners to better understand land and water aspirations and to heal Country together.</li> <li>• Renewal of Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-2027.</li> </ul>  | b, d, f, g, h: 1, 2, 5, 5, 6, 8, 9: E1, CH2, CE1, AC1, RV1, RV2, RV3, RV4, PE1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• North Central Regional Catchment Strategy</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our Catchments, Our Communities Integrated Catchment Management in Victoria 2016-19</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fence</li> <li>• Vegetation</li> <li>• Weed control</li> <li>• Management agreement</li> <li>• Assessment</li> <li>• Engagement event</li> <li>• Partnership</li> <li>• Plan</li> </ul> |
| <b>Water for Country</b>  |  |  |  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Works with Traditional Owners to improve participation in the Victorian water planning and management frameworks.</li> <li>• Identifies and leverages opportunities for economic development from water, through consultative structures that address the rights and interests of Victorian Traditional Owners.</li> <li>• Supports self-determination of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within our region.</li> </ul> | b, d, f, g, h: 1, 2, 5, 5, 6, 8, 9: E1, CH2, CE1, AC1, RV1, RV2, RV3, RV4, PE1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• North Central Regional Catchment Strategy</li> <li>• 2014-22 North Central Regional Waterway Strategy</li> </ul>                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water for Victoria</li> <li>• National Water Initiative</li> <li>• The Living Murray</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment</li> <li>• Publication</li> <li>• Engagement event</li> </ul>  |



## Major projects

The Victorian Murray Floodplain Restoration Project (VMFRP) aims to enhance the highly valued floodplains and consists of nine distinct project sites on the Murray River in Victoria. Works will generally involve construction of weirs, regulators, pump stations, and improvements to existing and new flood levees and access tracks, so that a more natural environmental watering regime can be achieved.

The planning phase has been funded by the Australian Government (\$29 million) until December 2022.

The North Central CMA is contracted by Lower Murray Water via a service level agreement (SLA) to deliver project management and support services for the Eastern Package (Guttrum-Benwell and Gunbower) of the VMFRP.

The Fish Passage Stimulus Package has been funded by the Victorian Government (\$7.1 million) to address the key threats to native fish populations in northern Victoria by enabling fish movement throughout the Gunbower and lower Loddon system. The stimulus package funding addresses the highest priority remaining barriers to fish passage in the organisation's *Native Fish Recovery Plan – Gunbower and lower Loddon*.



| Projects  | Outcome Indicators                         | CMA Strategy   | External Strategy   | Outputs   |
|---|--|--|---|---|
| <b>Guttrum Benwell Forest Floodplain Restoration Project</b>  |  |  |   |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reinstates a more natural flooding regime for the forest, particularly to address the reduced frequency and duration of floods by delivering water for the environment to the forest and semi-permanent wetlands via pump stations and levees to contain water on the floodplain.</li> </ul>   | g, h: 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9: CH2, CE1, AC1, RV1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2014-22 North Central Regional Waterway Strategy</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water for Victoria</li> <li>Victorian Waterway Management Strategy</li> <li>Murray Darling Basin Plan</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment</li> <li>Partnership</li> <li>Plan</li> <li>Engagement event</li> </ul> |
| <b>Gunbower Forest Floodplain Restoration Project</b>   |  |  |   |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enables the delivery of environmental water to the wetlands and forest of the Gunbower National Park to mimic a natural flood event, including delivering water to almost half of the permanent and temporary wetlands and river red gums with flood dependent understorey.</li> <li>Provision of infrastructure to enable the deployment of water to land that can currently not be watered by any other infrastructure.</li> </ul> | g, h: 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9: CH2, CE1, AC1, RV1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2014-22 North Central Regional Waterway Strategy</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water for Victoria</li> <li>Victorian Waterway Management Strategy</li> <li>Murray Darling Basin Plan</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment</li> <li>Partnership</li> <li>Plan</li> <li>Engagement event</li> </ul> |

| Projects  | Outcome Indicators                                | CMA Strategy  | External Strategy  | Outputs   |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| <b>Koondrook Weir Fish Passage</b>  |   |   |  |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction and installation of a dual entry fish passage at the Koondrook Weir site to allow fish movement between the Murray River and Gunbower Creek.</li> <li>• Provision of infrastructure to enable the deployment of water to land that can currently not be watered by any other infrastructure.</li> </ul> | <p>g, h: 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9: CH2, CE1, AC1, RV1</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• North Central CMA Native Fish Recovery Plan – Gunbower and lower Loddon</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Victorian Environmental Water Holder (funded \$4.6 million)</li> <li>• Victorian Waterway Management Strategy</li> <li>• Murray Darling Basin Plan</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detailed designs</li> <li>• Construction</li> <li>• Installation</li> <li>• Approvals</li> <li>• Engagement</li> <li>• Communications</li> </ul> |



# Statutory Functions and Floodplain Management

The Statutory Functions and Floodplain Management program provides flood information and support to the Victorian State Emergency Service, local government and the community. This contributes to the communities understanding of their flood risk whilst also ensuring that infrastructure development considers flood hazard and waterway health to minimise growth in flood risk and to protect and enhance waterway health.

The 2017-18 Regional Floodplain Strategy provides a work plan prioritising actions across the region to manage the risk of flooding and improve flood resilience of our communities into the future.



North Central CMA delivers on actions in the work plan while also supporting partner agencies with technical assistance to deliver actions. North Central CMA will continue to support the delivery of priority actions, while also working with partner agencies to secure further funding for priority actions that contribute to meeting the objectives of the strategy.

| Projects  | Outcome Indicators   | CMA Strategy  | External Strategy  | Outputs  |
|---|----------------------|---|--|--|
| <b>Administration of Statutory Functions</b>  |                      |   |  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide advice to the community, development industry and local government about the potential impacts of flooding.</li> <li>Protect waterways from the impacts of third party works through the Works on Waterway Permit Scheme.</li> </ul> | c, g: 4, 7: CE1, LC1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>North Central Regional Floodplain Management Strategy</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Victorian Floodplain Management Strategy</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approval and advice</li> <li>Information Management System</li> </ul>               |
| <b>Regional Floodplain Management Strategy Implementation</b>   |                      |   |  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support local government, DELWP, VicSES and the community to implement the priorities of the Regional Floodplain Management Strategy (RFMS).</li> </ul>  | c, g: 5, 8: CE1 LC1  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>North Central Regional Floodplain Management Strategy</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Victorian Floodplain Management Strategy</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engagement event</li> <li>Plan</li> <li>Publication</li> <li>Partnership</li> </ul> |



# 6. Business Improvement Program

With a commitment to continual improvement and organisational development, the North Central CMA identifies and delivers a targeted suite of business improvement initiatives each year, some of which are the focus of effort over multiple years and some of which are shorter term.

The initiatives below focus on the approaches and strategies that support our business direction and NRM activities and are informed by various sources including the Minister's Letter of Expectations and an external Organisational Performance Excellence review completed in 2017.

## Initiatives

## Tim Frame

### People and culture

The 'Our Culture' component of the North Central CMA's strategic direction has been refined in consultation with staff to position us for the future and better reflect the organisation's appetite towards new challenges, innovation and collaboration. Over the next year we will work across the organisation to bring these new values to life in a way that shapes our culture and supports our strategy.

The North Central CMA values the difference between people and the contribution these differences make to our work and our communities. We will continue to implement our Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2017-2022 and incorporate additional activities that support gender equity and cultural diversity in our workplace.

Priority initiatives include:

- A program to embed our new values and behaviours into the organisation.
- Development of a Gender Equity Plan and delivery of priority actions.

2021-22  
2021-2025

### Climate change adaptation and mitigation

The North Central Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Plan describes how the region's natural resources are likely to respond to climate change and sets out adaptation and mitigation opportunities.

More recently the North Central CMA has created a Climate Change Commitment and Action Plan that embeds action into our work and climate change adaptation and mitigation is a key focus of the draft 2021-27 North Central RCS and will continue to shape regional NRM programs.

Priority initiatives include:

- Allocating dedicated resources to coordinate our climate change efforts and priority actions arising from the RCS and our Climate Change Action Plan.
- Undertaking a Carbon Footprint benchmark for the CMA and determine action to become a carbon neutral.
- Establish a group of staff to champion climate change from across the CMA, to increase capacity and support action.

2021-22

2021-22  
2021-22

### Supporting Traditional Owner and Aboriginal self-determination

The CMA will continue to build relationships with the seven Traditional Owner groups in our region to achieve self-determined participation and leadership and natural resource management. Programs will be developed together guided by key drivers including Recognition and Settlement Agreements, Country Plans, and our Reconciliation Action Plan.

Priority initiatives include:

- Renewal and implementation of our Reconciliation Action Plan.
- Continue to build the cultural competency of the CMA to provide a cultural safe and inclusive workplace.
- More Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Victorians employed to actively care for Country, enabled through; skill development and employment opportunities and engaging Aboriginal owned enterprises.

2021-22

Ongoing  
Ongoing



## Initiatives

## Time Frame

| Shared benefits   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>In creating positive change for the region's natural resources, the North Central CMA also creates a range of social and economic outcomes. Recognising this linkage, we have specific obligations relating to the consideration of recreational and cultural values in water management. This theme has strong links to the Supporting Traditional Owner and Aboriginal self-determination theme.</p> <p>To ensure that we meet these obligations we must ensure that we are actively working with our partners and communities to identify shared benefit opportunities and looking for ways to realise them, without compromising the environmental outcome being sought.</p> <p>Priority initiatives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review our approaches to identifying and assessing opportunities to create shared value.</li> <li>• Review community representation/membership on CMA community groups to ensure there is an opportunity for community and partners to guide the inclusion of shared benefits when delivering natural resource management programs.</li> <li>• Seek membership on forums not traditionally focused on natural resource management to build a greater appreciation of opportunities within other disciplines e.g. Economic Development, Health, Social inclusion.</li> </ul> | <p>Ongoing<br/>2021-22</p> <p>Ongoing</p> |
| Community engagement model  |   |
| <p>The community is at the centre of all we do and those communities and their needs change over time. During 2021-22 we will review and renew our engagement approach with staff and key partners to understand the achievements of our current approach and opportunities, including innovation, to improve and better meet the needs of the communities we work with.</p> <p>We will work with the Regional Engagement Committee to implement our renewed Engagement Strategy and Community Engagement Governance Framework to ensure our stakeholders' expectations are met in a changing operating environment.</p> <p>Priority initiatives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and renewal of our Engagement Strategy.</li> <li>• Update of our Community Engagement Governance Framework.</li> </ul>  | <p>2021-22</p> <p>2021-22</p>             |
| New stewardship approaches  |   |
| <p>At the North Central CMA we are committed to creating lasting change. Our onground work is the first step in a trajectory of change and to continue on a positive trajectory it is essential that work sites progress is tracked over time and interventions made at key points.</p> <p>We share responsibility for work site outcomes with the landholder with the CMA typically investing its effort up front and the landholder maintaining the site over time. We build on our NRM Audit and Protecting Investment, Increasing Capacity projects to develop new approaches to supporting landholder stewardship over the long term.</p> <p>Priority initiatives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigation into Customer Relationship Management System options.</li> <li>• Development of a Post-works Site Stewardship Policy.</li> </ul>   | <p>2021-22</p> <p>2021-22</p>             |
| Project processes   |   |
| <p>The delivery of projects that support the sustainable management of the region's natural resources is at the core of what we do for government and the community. We are always interested in ensuring that the way we manage our projects is effective and efficient and supports their delivery to time, cost and quality standards.</p> <p>Over recent years we have focused on the implementation of Project Lifecycle and budget management packs in our enterprise resource planning system and our focus this year builds on and creates further value from that work.</p> <p>Priority initiatives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved reporting to support project management and output tracking.</li> <li>• Streamlining day-to-day project management processes.</li> </ul>  | <p>2021-22</p> <p>2021-22</p>             |

# 7. Business Development Program

Our Business Development Program (BDP) is an exciting chapter in the journey of the North Central CMA. It provides an opportunity for the CMA to proactively develop project concepts and business cases that respond to our region's needs while continuing to develop successful business-as-usual projects for which we are renowned. Importantly, the program has support from our regional Catchment Partners Forum through the development of a regional NRM prospectus that presents a compelling picture of a short list of new natural resource management opportunities.

We have a framework to work from. The North Central Regional Catchment Strategy (RCS) sets the long-term vision for NRM within the North Central CMA region. The RCS provides the vision, the BDP is the vehicle that turns this vision into action.

The development of projects follows a consistent approach, the Project Management Framework, to ensure outcomes are always achieved and formalises the 'line of sight' model into a set of templates, supporting processes and approvals. Key project themes have also been developed with this approach in mind to position the CMA for new NRM opportunities in the region. The themes, carbon offsets; connected nature; soil health; sustainable farming model and Traditional Owner engagement, align with local priorities identified in the North Central Regional Catchment Strategy.

The program is already showing signs of success. In the past 12 months, the North Central CMA has submitted over \$17 million dollars worth of projects proposals where the BDP has contributed – with more than \$5 million in projects successfully funded. An example of this success is our Caring for the Campaspe project.

The Campaspe River is one of ten Flagship Waterways in Victoria. The Caring for the Campaspe project has a strong emphasis on stakeholder engagement - including Traditional Owners, Coliban Water, EPA and community involvement through citizen science. The CMA has used these relationships, and our extensive project delivery expertise, to protect and enhance more than 50% of the river. Project works are improving the river's resilience to cope with a changing climate by targeting the protection of drought refuge pools and improving the quality of native vegetation.

From a funding perspective, the CMA has collaborated with our strategic partners to help obtain crucial support for the Native Fish Recovery Plan. This equates to approximately \$14 million in

funding in the past 12 months and demonstrates the importance of business development and partnerships in delivering positive NRM outcomes. Of this, \$7.1 million of funding was announced by the Victorian Government in late 2020 for the CMA to undertake a package of works that includes the construction or improvement of fishways and self-cleaning irrigation screens in the Gunbower and lower Loddon systems. The works will allow native fish to move uninterrupted within the systems while the construction of fish screens will prevent thousands of larvae and native fish being lost to irrigation channels each year.

The BDP is underpinned by the Board endorsed Business Development Strategy. The strategy encourages the CMA to be nimble and agile in its approach and also specifies objectives and measures that will define success, these include:

**Objective 1:** Attracting new investment to the north central region to solve NRM problems.

**Measure 1:** Number of dollars (\$) attributed to the Business Development program, including grants, partnerships, NRM projects where the CMA has enabled or facilitated investment, and via alternative funding streams.

**Objective 2:** Reshaped perception of the North Central CMA by those in the NRM industry, encouraging new opportunities for collaboration and innovation, including with the private sector.

**Measure 2:** Case studies collated from existing and new partners and a developmental evaluation process undertaken by a third-party provider to help answer the question – have we achieved what we set out to achieve?

**Objective 3:** Additional profitable NRM projects, attractive to private investors. Readiness of the North Central CMA to respond to emerging funding opportunities.

**Measure 3:** Number of projects in our pipeline, number of business cases developed and number of funding opportunities that the BDM has responded to – considering depth and breadth of opportunities.

To date we have 60 project concepts in the pipeline and we will continue to work with prospective external partners to ensure we maximise natural resource management ideas and investment for the region.

# 8. Future Challenges and Opportunities

The North Central CMA has a strong and genuine focus on the opportunities and challenges that may impact the organisation's ability to achieve its objectives.

In meeting its strategic priorities, the CMA will take every opportunity to build sustainable and mutually beneficial partnerships with communities, Traditional Owners, partner organisations and landholders. The Board, CMA staff, and CMA Community Leaders' Group have the skills and knowledge to ensure that the North Central CMA provides a strong, future orientated leadership role in integrated catchment management across our region.

The following describes a range of specific challenges and opportunities and corresponding strategies to meet service demands and outcomes as well as key initiatives that are at the heart of how the North Central CMA operates, measures business performance and manages risk. These initiatives ensure that the organisation is positioned to respond to unforeseen challenges and opportunities.

## 8.1 Specific challenges and opportunities

While the future will undoubtedly present some unexpected challenges and opportunities, over the life of this Corporate Plan some are more predictable and are likely to inform the future direction and work of the organisation.

These challenges and opportunities are themed based and discussed briefly below to ensure the North Central CMA meets its service demands and outcomes.

### Environment

#### Drought refuge under a climate change future

Drought refuges will be critical for environmental values across our region under a climate change future. While we understand where many of these sites are, many of these are being used as storages in the irrigation system or salt disposal basins. The management of these sites is established in operational plans with consumptive or salt management objectives.

Their value as drought refuges is not a key consideration, and as a consequence these sites could perform better in supporting water dependent environmental values, as they are some of the most secure water sources in the region.

*The CMA could work with land and water managers and the community to identify, understand and improve the quality of these drought refuges and increase the carrying capacity of these sites for a high diversity and abundance of aquatic, and water dependent species.*

## Working towards landscape scale outcomes

Research is demonstrating that some biota, such as native fish and waterbirds, require different habitats within the landscape to complete different stages of their life cycles. Across the North Central CMA region many of these habitats are located on both public and private land, but they are disconnected from one another by past or current land and water management practices, and this limits the environmental productivity of the landscape.

*The CMA could identify priority landscape areas that provide a diverse range of habitats where enhanced connections will better support plant and animal life cycles.*

## Social/Economic

### Returning to our roots

Rural landholders continue to be the foundation for landscape scale NRM in the region with 87% land in the CMA region being privately owned.

The future challenge is to maintain long-term enduring partnerships with our communities to maximise outcomes on private land. We need to ensure that our community engagement models increase the diversity of people we engage with and enable the co-design of projects with community and Traditional Owners. It will also require larger and broader citizen science programs and the delivery of environmental stewardship programs that maximise the public benefit of programs on private land, including natural capital accounting and market-based instruments.

*The CMA could review and renew its engagement approaches and implement actions to ensure the long-term partnerships with our communities are strengthened to maximise opportunities for NRM works and outcomes on private land.*

## Water for the environment and the socioeconomic and cultural values

The scale of water reform across our region has been substantial which was driven by the need to use water more efficiently and to provide for the watering requirements of the values that are dependent on our rivers and wetlands. Those programs of work have finished or matured respectively and the environmental outcomes have been measured and are reasonably well known. These interventions also provide for a range of ecosystem services that support socioeconomic or cultural outcomes however there is a gap in data collection to properly understand and optimise these outcomes.

*The CMA could work with Traditional Owners and communities, through established working groups and partnerships, to better understand the socioeconomic and cultural outcomes of water for the environment.*

# 9. Organisational Performance Framework (OPF)

The Organisational Performance Framework defines, for primarily internal audiences, the North Central CMA’s success and how it is measured. This is focused in the medium-term, across the entire range of organisational activity. The Organisational Performance Framework is intended to collect data to enable:

- More effective attention and targeting of resources to actions that will create public value.
- A consistent, integrated overview of CMA performance as a platform for governance and management.
- Data and dialogue that enables individual and organisational learning and improvement, contributing to professional growth, pride in the CMA’s work, and job engagement.

The Organisational Performance Framework provides a set of fifteen mid-term measures (2-9 years) to track performance against and between different organisational functional levels (from governance to people and knowledge development). It arose out of a series of monitoring, evaluation, reporting and improvement (MERI) related discussions, the Australian Organisational Excellence Framework review and Organisational Performance Framework and recent work of the Strategy Implementation Committee.

Figure 3 describes the structure of the Organisational Performance Framework and articulates the fifteen selected measures. Reporting against all available measures will be undertaken in the Annual Report.

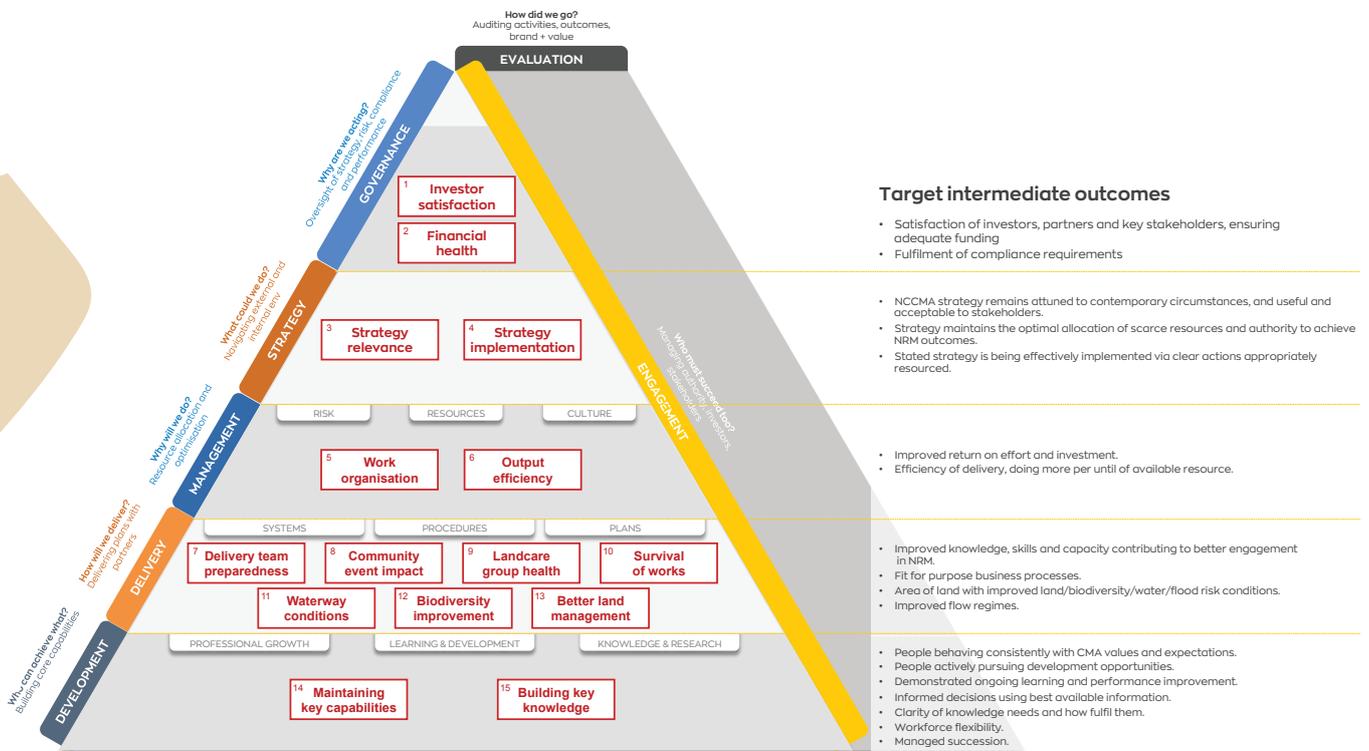


Figure 3 Organisational Performance Framework

Many of the measures proposed for the Organisational Performance Framework are aligned with the Business Outcomes Framework, described in Table 1. This places the North Central CMA in a sound position to report outcomes, in alignment with Victorian Government direction.

## Risk management

To facilitate the achievement of the CMA's mission and underlying strategic objectives, the Board and the Audit and Risk Committee support the development of robust risk management framework and risk culture.

Consistent with International Risk Management Standard AS/NZS ISO 31000:2009, the North Central CMA adopts the following definition of risk management:

*The processes, systems and culture applied to manage the upside and downside of uncertainty on the strategic objectives of North Central CMA.*

The North Central CMA considers risk management an important aspect of corporate governance and, therefore, a significant contributor to embedding its culture and values and, in turn, delivering on the organisation's vision.

The North Central CMA's operations are underpinned by two key pieces of legislation and a set of statutory obligations. In addition, as an entity under the *Public Administration Act 2004*, there are further requirements to fulfil to ensure the expectations of government and the Victorian Public Sector Commission are met.

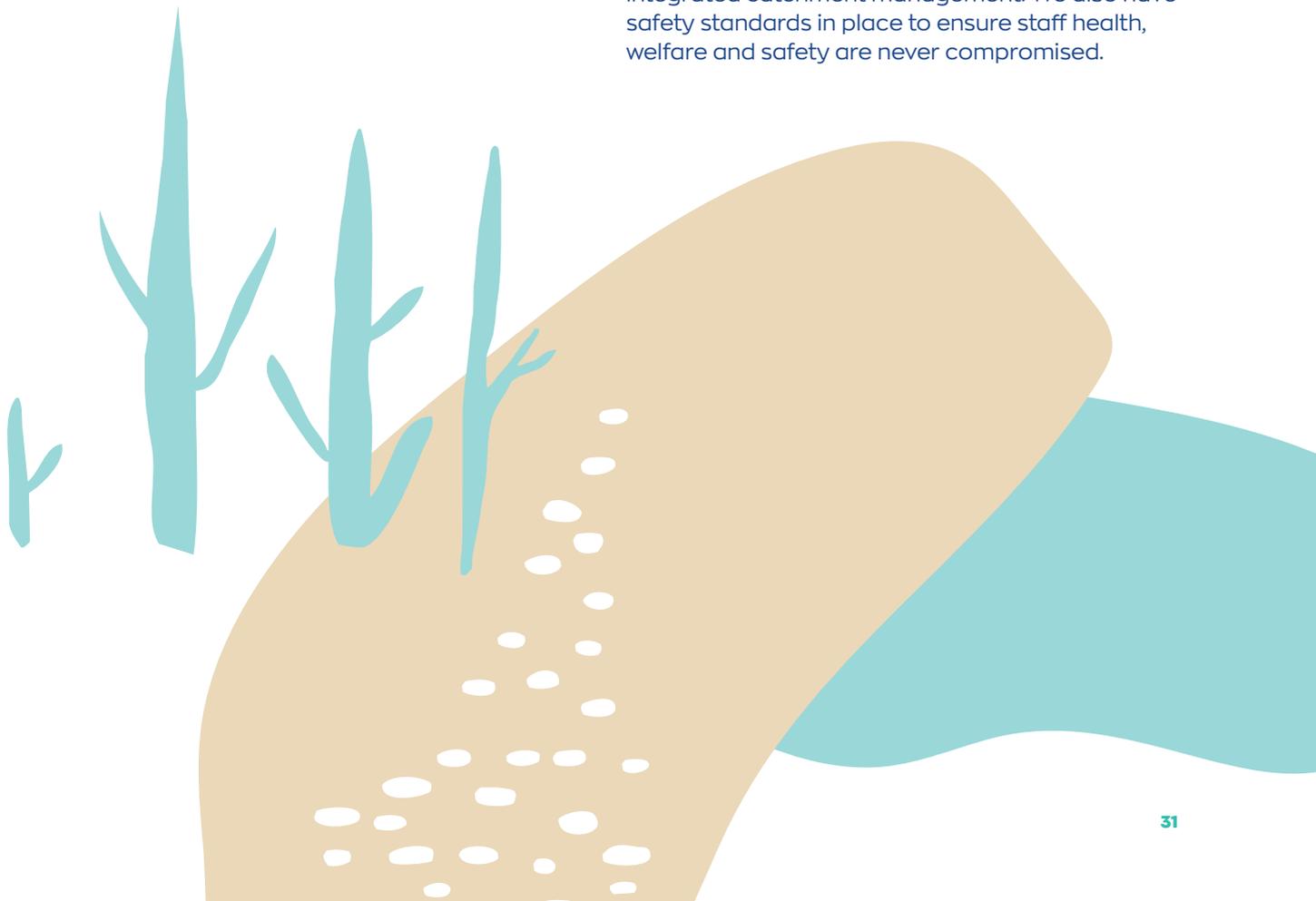
## Risk appetite statement

For more than 20 years, North Central CMA has been working with communities, Traditional Owners, and stakeholders to create natural resource management partnerships and programs that deliver lasting change. Our programs and activities are guided by the North Central Regional Catchment Strategy and backed by knowledgeable staff, sound research, the best available science and supported by local community and Traditional Owner knowledge.

We are mindful of our governance obligations in all that we do. These obligations are underpinned by our Enterprise Risk Framework, the Board has a focus on opportunities and risks – negative and positive and are governed by key pieces of legislation and specific statutory obligations. We are also focused on meeting the expectations of government and the Victorian Public Sector Commission as outlined in the *Public Administration Act 2004*.

We recognise the current and projected impacts of climate change on the environment, our work to protect it and on our communities. Our projects are developed through the lens of climate change and we work closely to support our communities to adapt to the changing conditions.

Lastly and of most importance are our staff – our greatest asset. We are dedicated to building the capabilities of our corporate family to ensure that the North Central CMA is viewed as a leader in integrated catchment management. We also have safety standards in place to ensure staff health, welfare and safety are never compromised.



## Summary Risk Appetite View

| Key Enterprise Risk               | Risk Appetite   |   |   |   | Risk Statement   |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|---|--|
|                                   | Control   | Caution   | Accept  | Open  |  |
| 1. Social Licence                 |   |   |    |    | We will build our reputation with key strategic partners, land owners, Traditional Owners (TO) and communities to support the legitimacy of our work.                            |
| 2. Occupational Health and Safety |    |   |   |    | We will provide a safe working environment for our staff, contractors, community and visitors and we will not compromise on this.  |
| 3. Innovation                     |   |   |   |    | We will be innovative, responsive and agile; 'tell our story' with confidence. We will always be open to exploring new opportunities in the pursuit of our strategic objectives. |
| 4. TO Self Determination          |   |  |   |    | We will provide the time, training and resources necessary to ensure engagement with the TO community is supportive of Self Determination and that all our obligations are met.  |
| 5. Information Technology         |   |   |   |    | We will ensure secure business systems are always available to support efficient and effective collaboration, wherever we may work.  |
| 6. Statutory Planning Advice      |  |   |   |  | We will ensure our statutory obligations under relevant legislation are met at all times.<br>We will integrate community knowledge into our project planning and delivery.       |
| 7. Interagency Leadership         |   |   |   |  | We will provide industry leading services and support to our partners.<br>We will build and maintain trusted partnerships to provide mutual and shared benefits.                 |
| 8. Financial Management           |  |   |   |  | We will ensure that all of our compliance and regulatory obligations are met.  |
| 9. Staff Capability and Culture   |   |   |  |  | We will provide the flexibility, training and support necessary for our staff to enhance business outcomes and achieve personal and team goals.                                  |
| 10. Regulatory Compliance         |  |   |   |  | We will ensure that all of our compliance and regulatory obligations are met. We will ensure our statutory obligations under relevant legislation are met at all times.          |
| 11. Climate Change                |   |   |   |  | We will be proactive in integrated planning and management for natural assets in our region. We will always seek long term enduring change over short-term satisfaction.         |

### Controlled

Avoidance of risk is the main treatment.

### Cautious

Prefer safe options with little risk of adverse exposure for North Central CMA and/or the government.

### Accepting

Willing to consider all options and choose the one that is most likely to result in successful delivery while also providing a reasonable degree of the protection from high risks.

### Open

Eager to engage with risks and opportunities when the potential benefit is great.

# 10. Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure

This Corporate Plan includes revenue from confirmed and proposed/potential funding based on likely but unconfirmed programs with total revenue for 2021-22 expected to be \$16.2 million, of which \$11.3 million relates to State based funding initiatives.

Total project expenditure is expected to be \$16.3 million. The excess expenditure over revenue is reflective of project funding from previous years being spent on project delivery in 2021-22.

Total corporate expenditure (including salaries) for 2021-22 is estimated at \$4.7million. The focus on Corporate cost efficiencies continues with future growth expected to come predominantly from wage inflation per Enterprise Bargaining Agreements.

Minimal corporate surpluses have been budgeted into the future. Forecasts for corporate and support functions, capital expenditure and cash flow have been managed to ensure a sound financial position is maintained, with no growth in headcount expected in the forecast period.



## Programs budget

| Income (\$'000)                               |                            |                              |                              |                               |               |                 | Expenditure (\$'000) | Carry-over (\$'000)     |
|---|----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
|   | Investor Program Reference | Carry-forward from last year | Victorian Government funding | Australian Government Funding | Other funding | PROGRAM TOTAL   | PROGRAM TOTAL        | Carry-over to next year |
| Environmental Assets                          | C3, C4, O1, O2, S8, S9     | \$889                        | \$3,293                      | \$1,197                       | \$527         | \$5,906         | \$5,041              | \$865                   |
| Environmental Water                           | C1, S1                     | \$363                        | \$908                        | \$1,214                       | \$0           | \$2,485         | \$2,233              | \$252                   |
| Sustainable Agriculture                       | C5, S3, O3                 | \$1,240                      | \$1,363                      | \$480                         | \$97          | \$3,180         | \$2,064              | \$1,116                 |
| Community Engagement and Strategy             | C2, S2, S6, S7             | \$0                          | \$847                        | \$228                         | \$0           | \$1,075         | \$1,075              | \$0                     |
| Floodplain Management and Statutory Functions | S4, S5                     | \$687                        | \$1,047                      | \$0                           | \$0           | \$1,734         | \$1,048              | \$686                   |
| Flood Restoration Project                     | C6, S8, S11                | \$0                          | \$3,883                      | \$1,089                       | \$0           | \$4,972         | \$4,972              | \$0                     |
| <b>Total</b>                                  |                            | <b>\$3,179</b>               | <b>\$11,341</b>              | <b>\$4,208</b>                | <b>\$624</b>  | <b>\$19,352</b> | <b>\$16,433</b>      | <b>\$2,919</b>          |



## Income assumptions (Investor Programs for the forthcoming financial year (\$000))

|                            |                             |  | Total           |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|--|-----------------|
| Investor Program Reference | Victorian Government        | Program Title                                      | \$000           |
| S1                         | DELWP                       | Environmental Water Program                        | \$908           |
| S2                         | DELWP                       | Our Catchments Our Communities                     | \$340           |
| S3                         | DELWP                       | Sustainable Irrigation Program                     | \$1,164         |
| S4                         | DELWP                       | Floodplain Management Strategy                     | \$150           |
| S5                         | DELWP                       | Statutory Functions                                | \$897           |
| S6                         | DELWP                       | Regional Landcare                                  | \$166           |
| S7                         | DELWP                       | Aboriginal Water                                   | \$341           |
| S8                         | DELWP                       | Floodplain Recovery and Monitoring                 | \$496           |
| S9                         | DELWP                       | Victorian River and Wetland Management Program     | \$2,943         |
| S10                        | DELWP                       | Drought Resilience                                 | \$199           |
| S11                        | DELWP                       | Fishway Stimulus                                   | \$3,737         |
| <b>Sub Total</b>           |                             |  | <b>\$11,341</b> |
| Investor Program Reference | Australian Government       | Program Title                                      | \$000           |
| C1                         | Murray Darling Basin Plan   | The Living Murray                                  | \$1,214         |
| C2                         | National Landcare Program 2 | Core Services                                      | \$228           |
| C3                         | National Landcare Program 2 | Plains for Wanderers                               | \$790           |
| C4                         | National Landcare Program 2 | Bringing Back the Bittern                          | \$407           |
| C5                         | National Landcare Program 2 | Regenerative Agriculture in North Central Victoria | \$480           |
| C6                         | Murray Darling Basin Plan   | Floodplain Restoration Project                     | \$1,089         |
| <b>Sub Total</b>           |                             |  | <b>\$4,208</b>  |
| Investor Program Reference | Other                       | Program Title                                      | \$000           |
| O1                         | Coliban Water               | Kyneton Offsets Project                            | \$137           |
| O2                         | Coliban Water               | Healthy Coliban Catchment                          | \$390           |
| O3                         | Soil CRC                    | Building Capacity in Soil Management               | \$97            |
| <b>Sub Total</b>           |                             |  | <b>\$624</b>    |
| <b>Total</b>               |                             |  | <b>\$16,173</b> |

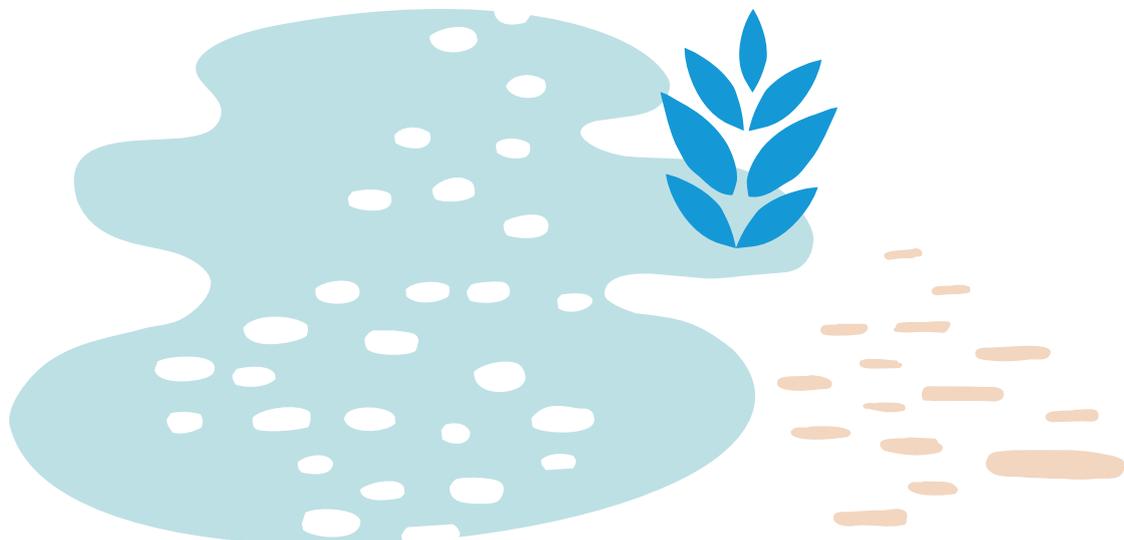
## Operating statement

| Operating Statement                         | Actual<br>2018/19<br>\$ 000's | Actual<br>2019/20<br>\$ 000's | Estimate<br>2020/21<br>\$ 000's | Budget<br>2021/22<br>\$ 000's | Forecast<br>2022/23<br>\$ 000's | Forecast<br>2023/24<br>\$ 000's |
|---|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Income</b>                               |                               |                               |                                 |                               |                                 |                                 |
| <b>Statutory Operations</b>                 |                               |                               |                                 |                               |                                 |                                 |
| Corporate Funding                           | \$843                         | \$843                         | \$843                           | \$843                         | \$843                           | \$843                           |
| Interest Received                           | \$144                         | \$83                          | \$27                            | \$26                          | \$30                            | \$30                            |
| Other (includes staff secondments)          | \$115                         | \$1,125                       | \$1,262                         | \$1,571                       | \$1,100                         | \$750                           |
| Recovery from Project programs              | \$6,666                       | \$6,032                       | \$7,603                         | \$6,653                       | \$7,285                         | \$7,710                         |
| <b>Total Revenue</b>                        | <b>\$7,768</b>                | <b>\$8,083</b>                | <b>\$9,735</b>                  | <b>\$9,093</b>                | <b>\$9,258</b>                  | <b>\$9,333</b>                  |
| <b>Expenditure</b>                          |                               |                               |                                 |                               |                                 |                                 |
| <b>Corporate &amp; Statutory Operations</b> |                               |                               |                                 |                               |                                 |                                 |
| Board                                       | \$262                         | \$250                         | \$241                           | \$288                         | \$297                           | \$306                           |
| Chief Executive Officer & support           | \$368                         | \$557                         | \$612                           | \$580                         | \$597                           | \$615                           |
| Corporate Services                          | \$2,011                       | \$2,115                       | \$1,922                         | \$2,159                       | \$2,224                         | \$2,290                         |
| Fleet & Accommodation                       | \$669                         | \$539                         | \$528                           | \$581                         | \$598                           | \$616                           |
| Engagement & Strategy                       | \$976                         | \$837                         | \$1,011                         | \$1,042                       | \$1,073                         | \$1,105                         |
| Project Staff                               | \$3,481                       | \$3,968                       | \$4,994                         | \$4,435                       | \$4,368                         | \$4,299                         |
| <b>Total Expenditure</b>                    | <b>\$7,767</b>                | <b>\$8,266</b>                | <b>\$9,308</b>                  | <b>\$9,085</b>                | <b>\$9,158</b>                  | <b>\$9,232</b>                  |
| <b>Surplus/(Deficit)</b>                    | <b>\$1</b>                    | <b>(\$183)</b>                | <b>\$427</b>                    | <b>\$8</b>                    | <b>\$100</b>                    | <b>\$100</b>                    |
| <b>Profit/(Loss) on Disposal of Assets</b>  | <b>\$43</b>                   | <b>\$12</b>                   | <b>\$0</b>                      | <b>\$12</b>                   | <b>\$12</b>                     | <b>\$12</b>                     |
| <b>Total Surplus/(Deficit)</b>              | <b>\$44</b>                   | <b>(\$171)</b>                | <b>\$427</b>                    | <b>\$20</b>                   | <b>\$112</b>                    | <b>\$112</b>                    |



## Cashflow statement

| Cash Flow Statement                                | Actual<br>2018/19<br>\$ 000's | Actual<br>2019/20<br>\$ 000's | Estimate<br>2020/21<br>\$ 000's | Budget<br>2021/22<br>\$ 000's | Forecast<br>2022/23<br>\$ 000's | Forecast<br>2023/24<br>\$ 000's |
|--|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Cash Flows from Operating Activities</b>        |                               |                               |                                 |                               |                                 |                                 |
| <b>Receipts</b>                                    |                               |                               |                                 |                               |                                 |                                 |
| Corporate Funding                                  | \$843                         | \$843                         | \$843                           | \$843                         | \$843                           | \$843                           |
| Interest   | \$144                         | \$83                          | \$27                            | \$26                          | \$30                            | \$30                            |
| Net GST Received from ATO                          | \$390                         | \$212                         | \$343                           | \$298                         | \$249                           | \$249                           |
| Other  | \$38                          | \$1,125                       | \$1,262                         | \$1,571                       | \$1,100                         | \$750                           |
| <b>Grants</b>                                      |                               |                               |                                 |                               |                                 |                                 |
| Receipts from State                                | \$8,993                       | \$8,712                       | \$13,195                        | \$11,114                      | \$9,000                         | \$9,000                         |
| Receipts from Commonwealth                         | \$2,383                       | \$2,982                       | \$3,182                         | \$3,240                       | \$2,800                         | \$2,800                         |
| Receipts from Other Investors                      | \$1,321                       | \$1,280                       | \$762                           | \$564                         | \$663                           | \$665                           |
| <b>Payments</b>                                    |                               |                               |                                 |                               |                                 |                                 |
| Payments to suppliers                              | (\$8,806)                     | (\$9,958)                     | (\$10,006)                      | (\$11,604)                    | (\$8,108)                       | (\$7,110)                       |
| Payments to employees and staff costs              | (\$6,160)                     | (\$6,312)                     | (\$7,276)                       | (\$6,897)                     | (\$7,069)                       | (\$7,246)                       |
| <b>Net cash provided/(used) in Operating</b>       | <b>(\$854)</b>                | <b>(\$1,033)</b>              | <b>\$2,332</b>                  | <b>(\$845)</b>                | <b>(\$492)</b>                  | <b>(\$19)</b>                   |
| <b>Cash Flows from Investing Activities</b>        |                               |                               |                                 |                               |                                 |                                 |
| Payments for purchase of fixed assets              | (\$396)                       | (\$200)                       | (\$300)                         | (\$300)                       | (\$300)                         | (\$300)                         |
| Proceeds from disposal of fixed assets             | \$190                         | \$107                         | \$150                           | \$150                         | \$150                           | \$150                           |
| Proceeds from disposal of investments              | \$500                         | \$500                         | \$0                             | \$0                           | \$0                             | \$0                             |
| <b>Net Cash used provided/(used) in investing</b>  | <b>\$294</b>                  | <b>\$407</b>                  | <b>(\$150)</b>                  | <b>(\$150)</b>                | <b>(\$150)</b>                  | <b>(\$150)</b>                  |
| <b>Net increase/(decrease) in cash held</b>        | <b>(\$560)</b>                | <b>(\$626)</b>                | <b>\$2,182</b>                  | <b>(\$995)</b>                | <b>(\$642)</b>                  | <b>(\$169)</b>                  |
| <b>Cash at the beginning of the financial year</b> | <b>\$7,439</b>                | <b>\$6,879</b>                | <b>\$6,253</b>                  | <b>\$8,435</b>                | <b>\$7,440</b>                  | <b>\$6,798</b>                  |
| <b>Cash at the end of the financial year</b>       | <b>\$6,879</b>                | <b>\$6,253</b>                | <b>\$8,435</b>                  | <b>\$7,440</b>                | <b>\$6,798</b>                  | <b>\$6,629</b>                  |



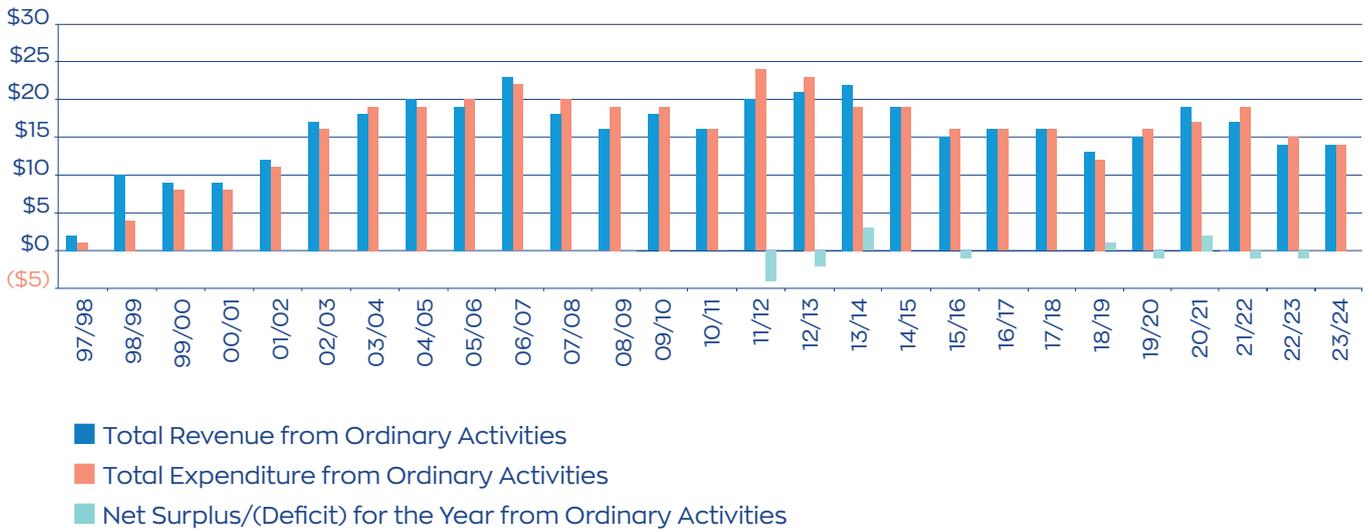
## Balance sheet

| Balance Sheet                          | Actual<br>2018/19<br>\$ 000's | Actual<br>2019/20<br>\$ 000's | Estimate<br>2020/21<br>\$ 000's | Budget<br>2021/22<br>\$ 000's | Forecast<br>2022/23<br>\$ 000's | Forecast<br>2023/24<br>\$ 000's |
|--|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Assets</b>                          |                               |                               |                                 |                               |                                 |                                 |
| <b>Financial Assets</b>                |                               |                               |                                 |                               |                                 |                                 |
| Cash/Deposits                          | \$6,879                       | \$6,253                       | \$8,435                         | \$7,440                       | \$6,798                         | \$6,629                         |
| Investments & Other Financial Assets   | \$500                         | \$0                           | \$0                             | \$0                           | \$0                             | \$0                             |
| Receivables & Accrued Revenue          | \$472                         | \$117                         | \$284                           | \$300                         | \$300                           | \$300                           |
| Prepayments                            | \$181                         | \$214                         | \$280                           | \$150                         | \$150                           | \$150                           |
| AASB15 Contract Assets                 |                               | \$1,153                       | \$1,237                         | \$985                         | \$700                           | \$0                             |
| PP&E                                   | \$2,074                       | \$2,009                       | \$1,920                         | \$1,900                       | \$1,950                         | \$1,950                         |
| <b>Total Assets</b>                    | <b>\$10,106</b>               | <b>\$9,746</b>                | <b>\$12,156</b>                 | <b>\$10,775</b>               | <b>\$9,898</b>                  | <b>\$9,029</b>                  |
| <b>Liabilities</b>                     |                               |                               |                                 |                               |                                 |                                 |
| <b>Current</b>                         |                               |                               |                                 |                               |                                 |                                 |
| Accounts Payable & Accrued Expenses    | \$735                         | \$407                         | \$650                           | \$650                         | \$650                           | \$650                           |
| Employee Provisions                    | \$1,493                       | \$1,464                       | \$1,540                         | \$1,586                       | \$1,634                         | \$1,683                         |
| Right of Use Lease Liabilities         |                               | \$31                          | \$17                            | \$5                           | \$0                             | \$0                             |
| <b>Non Current</b>                     |                               |                               |                                 |                               |                                 |                                 |
| Employee Provisions                    | \$107                         | \$137                         | \$166                           | \$170                         | \$175                           | \$180                           |
| <b>Total Liabilities</b>               | <b>\$2,335</b>                | <b>\$2,039</b>                | <b>\$2,373</b>                  | <b>\$2,411</b>                | <b>\$2,459</b>                  | <b>\$2,513</b>                  |
| <b>Net Assets</b>                      | <b>\$7,771</b>                | <b>\$7,707</b>                | <b>\$9,783</b>                  | <b>\$8,364</b>                | <b>\$7,439</b>                  | <b>\$6,516</b>                  |
| <b>Equity</b>                          |                               |                               |                                 |                               |                                 |                                 |
| Contributed Capital                    | \$229                         | \$229                         | \$229                           | \$229                         | \$229                           | \$229                           |
| Contributed Capital - surplus transfer | \$8,527                       | \$8,527                       | \$8,527                         | \$8,527                       | \$8,527                         | \$8,527                         |
| Asset Revaluation                      | \$848                         | \$848                         | \$848                           | \$848                         | \$848                           | \$848                           |
| Accumulated Surplus (Deficit)          | (\$1,833)                     | (\$1,897)                     | \$179                           | (\$1,240)                     | (\$2,165)                       | (\$3,088)                       |
| <b>Total Equity</b>                    | <b>\$7,771</b>                | <b>\$7,707</b>                | <b>\$9,783</b>                  | <b>\$8,364</b>                | <b>\$7,439</b>                  | <b>\$6,516</b>                  |

## Estimated capital expenditure

| Estimated Capital Expenditure     | Actual<br>2018/19<br>\$ 000's | Actual<br>2019/20<br>\$ 000's | Estimate<br>2020/21<br>\$ 000's | Budget<br>2021/22<br>\$ 000's | Forecast<br>2022/23<br>\$ 000's | Forecast<br>2023/24<br>\$ 000's |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Opening Written Down Value</b> | <b>\$2,003</b>                | <b>\$2,074</b>                | <b>\$2,009</b>                  | <b>\$1,920</b>                | <b>\$1,900</b>                  | <b>\$1,950</b>                  |
| Depreciation                      | (\$196)                       | (\$199)                       | (\$191)                         | (\$182)                       | (\$180)                         | (\$185)                         |
| Additions                         | \$396                         | \$229                         | \$300                           | \$300                         | \$300                           | \$300                           |
| Revaluation                       | \$18                          | \$0                           | \$0                             | \$0                           | \$0                             | \$0                             |
| Disposals at Written Down Value   | (\$147)                       | (\$95)                        | (\$198)                         | (\$138)                       | (\$69)                          | (\$115)                         |
| <b>Closing Written Down Value</b> | <b>\$2,074</b>                | <b>\$2,009</b>                | <b>\$1,920</b>                  | <b>\$1,900</b>                | <b>\$1,950</b>                  | <b>\$1,950</b>                  |

## Summary of financial results and forecasts 1997-98 to 2023-24 (\$ millions)



## New project funding

| New Project Funding                     | Actual 2018/19 \$ 000's | Actual 2019/20 \$ 000's | Estimate 2020/21 \$ 000's | Budget 2021/22 \$ 000's | Forecast 2022/23 \$ 000's | Forecast 2023/24 \$ 000's |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>State Government</b>                 |                         |                         |                           |                         |                           |                           |
| DELWP                                   | \$8,925                 | \$8,522                 | \$12,061                  | \$11,114                | \$9,000                   | \$9,000                   |
| Department of Justice                   | \$68                    | \$190                   | \$0                       | \$0                     | \$0                       | \$0                       |
| Department Jobs, Precincts & Regions    | \$0                     | \$0                     | \$1,134                   | \$0                     | \$0                       | \$0                       |
| <b>Commonwealth Government</b>          |                         |                         |                           |                         |                           |                           |
| Murray Darling Basin Plan               | \$1,263                 | \$1,294                 | \$1,445                   | \$1,214                 | \$1,200                   | \$1,200                   |
| National Landcare Program               | \$556                   | \$1,688                 | \$1,559                   | \$1,676                 | \$1,600                   | \$1,600                   |
| Natural Disaster Financial Assistance   | \$564                   | \$0                     | \$0                       | \$0                     | \$0                       | \$0                       |
| Other                                   | \$0                     | \$0                     | \$178                     | \$350                   | \$0                       | \$0                       |
| <b>Other Funding</b>                    |                         |                         |                           |                         |                           |                           |
| Water Corporations                      | \$840                   | \$1,191                 | \$568                     | \$390                   | \$500                     | \$500                     |
| CMA's                                   | \$37                    | \$65                    | \$59                      | \$61                    | \$63                      | \$65                      |
| Other                                   | \$83                    | \$24                    | \$135                     | \$113                   | \$100                     | \$100                     |
| <b>Total Project Funding Received</b>   | <b>\$12,336</b>         | <b>\$12,974</b>         | <b>\$17,139</b>           | <b>\$14,918</b>         | <b>\$12,463</b>           | <b>\$12,465</b>           |
| <b>Project Programs Expenditure</b>     | <b>(\$13,494)</b>       | <b>(\$13,962)</b>       | <b>(\$15,447)</b>         | <b>(\$16,345)</b>       | <b>(\$13,500)</b>         | <b>(\$13,500)</b>         |
| <b>Net Programs (Expenditure)/Carry</b> | <b>(\$1,158)</b>        | <b>(\$988)</b>          | <b>\$1,692</b>            | <b>(\$1,427)</b>        | <b>(\$1,037)</b>          | <b>(\$1,035)</b>          |

|                            |                  |                |                |                  |                  |                  |
|----------------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>Opening Balance</b>     | <b>\$6,568</b>   | <b>\$5,410</b> | <b>\$4,422</b> | <b>\$6,114</b>   | <b>\$4,687</b>   | <b>\$3,650</b>   |
| <b>(Expenditure)/Carry</b> | <b>(\$1,158)</b> | <b>(\$988)</b> | <b>\$1,692</b> | <b>(\$1,427)</b> | <b>(\$1,037)</b> | <b>(\$1,035)</b> |
| <b>Closing Balance</b>     | <b>\$5,410</b>   | <b>\$4,422</b> | <b>\$6,114</b> | <b>\$4,687</b>   | <b>\$3,650</b>   | <b>\$2,615</b>   |

# Notes

In order to deliver NRM and statutory functions, the North Central CMA must have corporate systems and services in place such as human resource management, finance, ICT, communications and governance. The Victorian Government provides \$0.8 million toward corporate charges and expenditures that are considered annually by the Board as part of the budget process and are based on a full cost recovery model.

Business and system improvements and continued productivity gains have enabled the North Central CMA to maintain corporate charge rates steady for the past three years.

## Service fees and charges

The North Central CMA charges fees for services provided in accordance with the Department of Treasury and Finance Cost Recovery Guidelines. The Authority does not currently charge any other fees for services.

## Compliance with Australian Accounting Standards

The North Central CMA prepares the annual general-purpose financial report in compliance with Australian Accounting Standards, other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board, the requirements of the *Financial Management Act* and applicable Ministerial Directions.

## Depreciation and amortisation

Depreciation is included in the financial statements. Rates for depreciation are determined by the expected useful life of the assets. In 2020–21, formal revaluations of Land and Buildings have been conducted in accordance with the FRD. In future periods, land value will be increased in line with indexations advised by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning. The formal revaluation increase will be affected in the Balance Sheet at 30 June 2021 with the offset presented as an increase in the Asset Revaluation Reserve.

## Capital

The majority of capital expenditure for the North Central CMA relates to the replacement of motor vehicles in line with Government Standard Motor Vehicle policy and safety requirements. The Plan includes an allocation of \$250k per year for this purpose.

## Key financial assumptions

The key financial assumptions that have been used in the development of the Corporate Plan are:

- Revenue based on current programs and expected future programs.
- Salaries and wages increase of three per cent in-line with the endorsed Enterprise Agreement.
- Corporate cost increases of two per cent factoring in some expected savings targets.
- Growth in project or corporate FTEs limited to project demand.
- Corporate cost recovery targeted towards a break-even position.
- Interest rates to remain low.

Net Project Expenditure in excess of Project Receipts represent the intent to deliver project funding carried forward from previous years.

## Review of Corporate Plan

The Board monitors progress against the Corporate Plan objectives at its meetings.

The North Central CMA's performance, as defined by the performance measures in the Corporate Plan, is reported in the Annual Report.

The strategic objectives are updated each year based on changes occurring in the operating environment, including:

- Changes in revenue
- The drive for more-cost-effective systems, processes and allocation of resources
- Ministerial direction
- Community feedback
- Catchment condition
- Government reform

