

Corporate Plan

2023-24 to
2027-28





We lead with experience and integrity, creating natural resource management partnerships and programs that deliver lasting, positive change.



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 image: North Central CMA's Galkungu Reconciliation Action Plan launch 7 March 2023.

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Foreword from the Chair

Our plan outlines our credible, committed, and flexible responses to act in partnership and steward the environment upon which we depend.

In 2022, our region faced extreme flooding events that were challenging for the communities we support. While the floods themselves are behind us their impacts are not. Through our Flood Recovery Program, we will support the priority repair of flood damage to the region's rivers and associated assets. As part of our strategic role in floodplain management we will continue to prioritise, advocate for and support activities that increase community flood preparedness.

Our renewed Reconciliation Action Plan, Galkangu, outlines our ongoing commitment to reconciliation with First Nations People. This 2023 endorsed 'Stretch' plan reaffirms the importance of First Nations people self-determination and in caring for and healing country. We are grateful for the relationships we have built with the seven Traditional Owner groups in our region. We continue to work closely with them to understand and implement their aspirations for Country, recognising that this will require changes to the way we have worked in the past, and as we follow their leadership.

We know that the region's natural resources and the communities that depend on them will continue to be greatly affected by climate change. We are committed to championing initiatives that increase learning and action across the region.

We continue to embed climate action into all our work through our Climate Change Commitment and Action Plan. And to support continuing adaptation and mitigation for the region's land, water, and biodiversity we will renew the Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Plan to update our shared knowledge and responses to heightened risks.

The state of nature is increasingly everyone's business whether that's a stake in carbon, biodiversity, or increased stewardship. Emerging Natural Capital initiatives point to increased interest and potential investment in nature both on farm and at landscape scale. We will take a leadership position to build awareness of opportunities and capability in natural capital approaches across the community, partners,

and our organisation; assess the various natural capital accounting methods to capture the value of improvement; and seek a private sector investor partnership where we can 'learn by doing' in this emerging environmental market.

While we continue to adjust to our adaptive environments our work remains informed by two solid directions:

Responding to the needs outlined in our renewed Regional Catchment Strategy (RCS). RCS is the primary driver across our organisation's focus that delivers regional outcomes. In delivering the RCS we will lead from our unique foundation of experience and integrity to both respond to current needs and pursue new opportunities with partners in the North Central CMA region.

Continuing to nurture our staff culture and connection as the organisation specifically adjusts to post COVID-19 functioning. We have established a new Hybrid Working Framework that helps to implement a new and better way of working, ensuring that we strike the right balance between the productivity and wellbeing of our staff, our most important asset.



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 history of creating 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 primarily accountable to the Hon. Harriet Shing MP, Minister for Water and the Hon. Ingrid Stitt MP, Minister for Environment through the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action.

The North Central CMA region

The North Central CMA region covers 13% (three million hectares) of Victoria and includes the traditional lands of the Dja Dja Wurrung, Barapa Barapa, Wamba Wamba, Yorta Yorta, Taungurung, Wadi Wadi and Wergaia represented by the Barengi Gadjin Land Council.

It comprises four inland river catchments, the Campaspe, Loddon, Avoca and Avon-Richardson, which rise on the northern slopes of the Great Dividing Range and flow northward onto the wide, flat riverine plains of northern Victoria. The catchments form part of the Murray-Darling Basin.

The region's waterways encompass more than 100,000 km of streams and 1,600 wetlands, with 77 per cent considered to be of regional, cultural, national or international importance including two internationally recognised Ramsar wetlands, Gunbower Forest and Kerang Wetlands.

Eighty-seven per cent of land is privately owned and much of it is used for a range of agriculture 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.

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.



Legend

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



Figure 1 North Central CMA region

2. Governance

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 Victorian Government strategies and initiatives such as, *Water for Victoria*, *Water is Life*, *Our Catchment*, *Our Communities*, Victoria's Climate Change Strategy and Protecting Victoria's Environment – Biodiversity 2037.

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's Board Charter 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 to the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action to the relevant Ministers 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 reports to Ministers to demonstrate compliance and performance:

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

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 four standing committees (Figure 2) each chaired by a Board member. The committees support a range of CMA strategies, initiatives, and programs are complemented by a range of project-specific committees.

Community Leaders' Group

The Community Leaders' Group key role is overseeing the implementation of North Central CMA's Engagement Strategy and monitoring its progress against objectives.

Members of the Community Leaders' Group also have specific appointed roles as chair of project/program committees and/or membership on Board subcommittees.

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 a Community Leader Group member.

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.

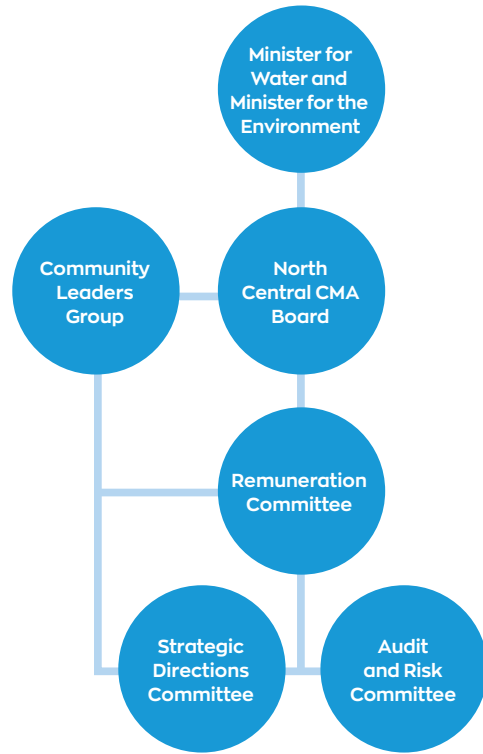


Figure 2 North Central CMA Board structure

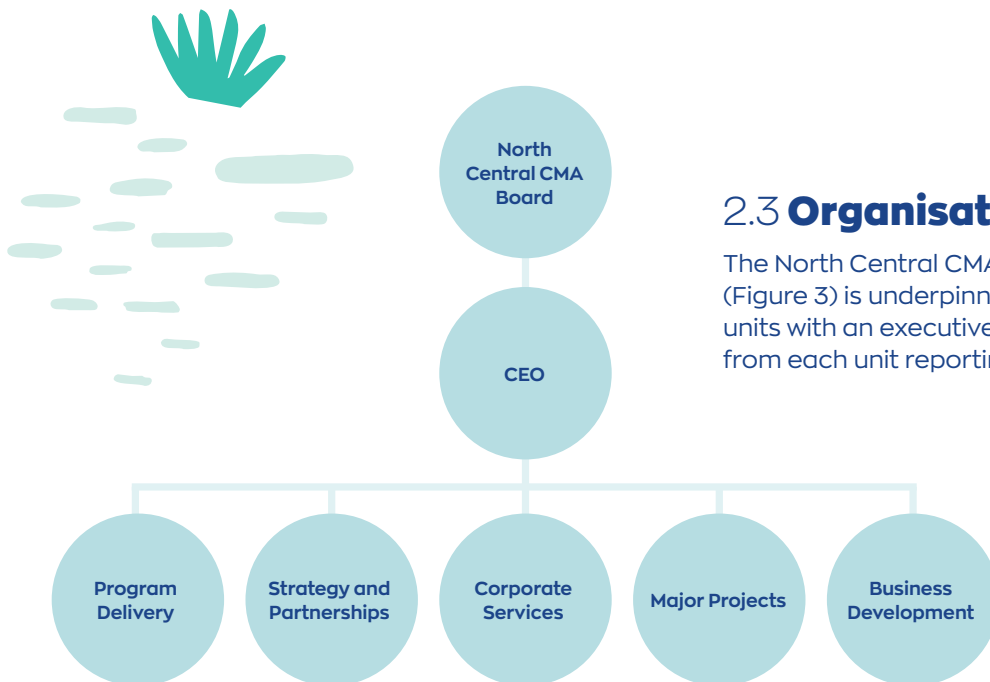


Figure 3 Organisational structure

2.3 Organisation structure

The North Central CMA organisation structure (Figure 3) is underpinned by five key business units with an executive or 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 North Central CMA's strategic direction

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

The 'Our Culture' component of the strategic direction reflects the organisation's appetite towards new challenges, innovation and collaboration.

Our purpose

We lead with experience and integrity, creating natural resource management partnerships and programs that deliver lasting positive change.



Our vision

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



Our approach

Connecting natural resource management activities

- Delivering water for the environment and improving waterways.
- 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.
- Leading and partnering across government, business 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 support to prepare and protect the community from extreme events such as flooding.

Our culture

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



Our values

We have created our own set of values that guide our internal and external interactions and our work.



Care



Courage



Connection

Figure 4 North Central CMA values

3.2 Victorian Government policy priorities

In March 2023, the Minister for Water issued a Letter of Expectations (LOE) to the North Central CMA outlining nine key Victorian Government policy priority areas:

- LOE 1 Improved performance and demonstrating outcomes
- LOE 2 Climate change
- LOE 3 Waterway and catchment health
- LOE 4 Water for agriculture
- LOE 5 Community engagement and partnerships
- LOE 6 Recognise and support Aboriginal cultural and spiritual values and economic inclusion in the Water Sector
- LOE 7 Recognise recreational values
- LOE 8 Resilient and liveable cities and towns
- LOE 9 Leadership, diversity and culture

The Delivery Program (section 5.2) of this Corporate Plan demonstrates the projects and programs that directly contribute to the nine policy areas with reference to the associated outcome indicators.

3.3 Initiatives that support our strategic direction

In addition to our Planned Service and Infrastructure deliverables (section 5), there are foundational initiatives across our organisation that further support our business direction:

Recognise and support Traditional Owner and Aboriginal self-determination

Victoria has a bold and progressive agenda through its commitment to a Treaty that delivers self-determination for Victoria's First Nation People. Treaty provides a path to negotiate the transfer of power and resources for First Nations People to control matters which impact their lives. Treaty is also an opportunity to recognise and celebrate the unique status, rights, cultures and histories of First Nations People. Directly relevant to the North Central CMA, the Victorian Government's Water is Life: Traditional Owner Access to Water Roadmap provides an important framework for Traditional Owner self-determination in water access and management, balanced against the rights and entitlements of a range of stakeholders.

North Central CMA recognises the vital role of Traditional Owners in managing Victoria's natural resources, particularly where formalised Recognition and Settlement Agreements under the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010 (Vic)* confer certain requirements on the state and therefore the CMA.

Our Galkangu, 'we build together' (*Dja Dja Wurrung language*), Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan 2022-25 establishes our vision for reconciliation – *The North Central CMA will walk and work together on Country with First Nations People and organisations as equals to promote healthy community and healthy Country to enable our whole community to prosper* – and positions us to approach self-determination from a foundation of genuine and meaningful relationships with the seven Traditional Owners groups across the region. There are a range of actions in the RAP to be delivered over the next three years under the themes of Relationships, Respect and Opportunities.

Natural capital and environmental market development

There is growing interest in funding environmental initiatives by companies, and their investors, as systems such as the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD) make clear the relationship between financial and environmental sustainability at company scale and compel action to address nature-related risks. The Federal Government's Nature Repair Market is responding to this interest by providing a legal framework to enable private sector investment in biodiversity. These developments mean that natural capital is of real strategic interest to NRM agencies across Australia including the North Central CMA.

With increased transparency and accountability for environmental impacts, and the right market drivers to incentivise better management, these approaches have the potential to create a step change in private-sector investment and private land management aligned to the North Central Regional Catchment Strategy.

In response we are considering our role, with direction from the Board, to maximise regional outcomes from this emerging opportunity. We will take a leadership position, as an 'honest broker', to build awareness and capability in natural capital approaches across the community, partners, and our organisation and to proactively seek private sector partners to test natural capital approaches. Furthermore, we will test and track a range of environmental markets (e.g., carbon and biodiversity) and natural capital accounting methods for their potential application in the north central region.

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 made a Climate Change Commitment and developed an Action Plan to deliver on it. Climate change is a key focus of the new 2021-27 North Central Regional Catchment Strategy (RCS) which identifies renewal of the North Central Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Plan as a priority.

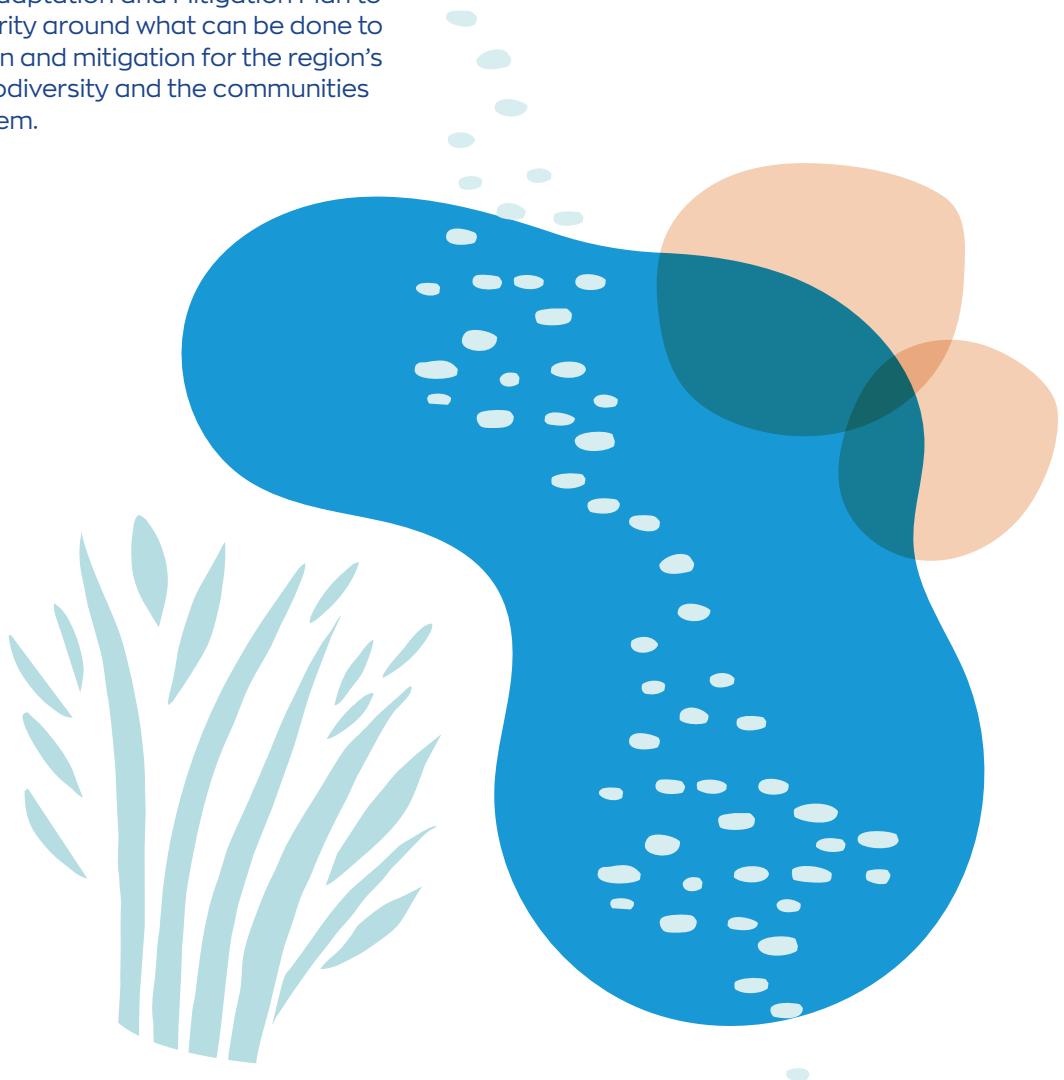
These documents will continue to shape regional natural resource management programs.

Through this Corporate Plan we commit further resources to the coordination of our climate change efforts and priority actions arising from the RCS and our Climate Change Action Plan, with a particular focus on renewing the North Central Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Plan to strengthen the clarity around what can be done to support adaptation and mitigation for the region's land, water and biodiversity and the communities that depend on them.

The 'Way we Work'

Staff are our most important asset and they have proven their ability to respond to rapid change to where and how they work during the COVID-19 pandemic and dealing with a sustained "new way of working" needs focused thought to ensure we can be most effective as individuals, teams and as an organisation.

We have worked with Swinburne University to establish a Hybrid Working Framework that makes clear the key drivers and enablers that define success in relation to where and how we connect with each other. The Framework provides a mechanism to check our actions and next steps to ensure consistency such as the "Where is best? Playbook" that provides a practical tool to guide our day-to-day choices in where and how we work, and provides guidance as we structure our policies, procedures and, of course, our central office space to best fit the "new way of working".



4. Business Outcomes

Our projects and programs deliver significant environmental, community, recreational, economic, and cultural benefits. To improve our capacity to tell the story of the contribution our programs make, we have adopted the Victorian Outcomes Framework (Figure 5) that adopts a focus on outcomes rather than outputs. It also promotes consistent approaches, language and measurement systems for government agencies.

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.

In addition, the North Central CMA 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 2023-24 Corporate Plan. Importantly it sets out how we will measure success against our vision, mission and approach.

The Business Outcomes Framework outcomes and outcome indicators have also been developed to enable us to tell the story about how we deliver on the Victorian government's key policy areas and our business objectives. The outcome indicators relevant to that project are listed in section 5.2.

We also report against the achievement of these outcome indicators in annual reports.

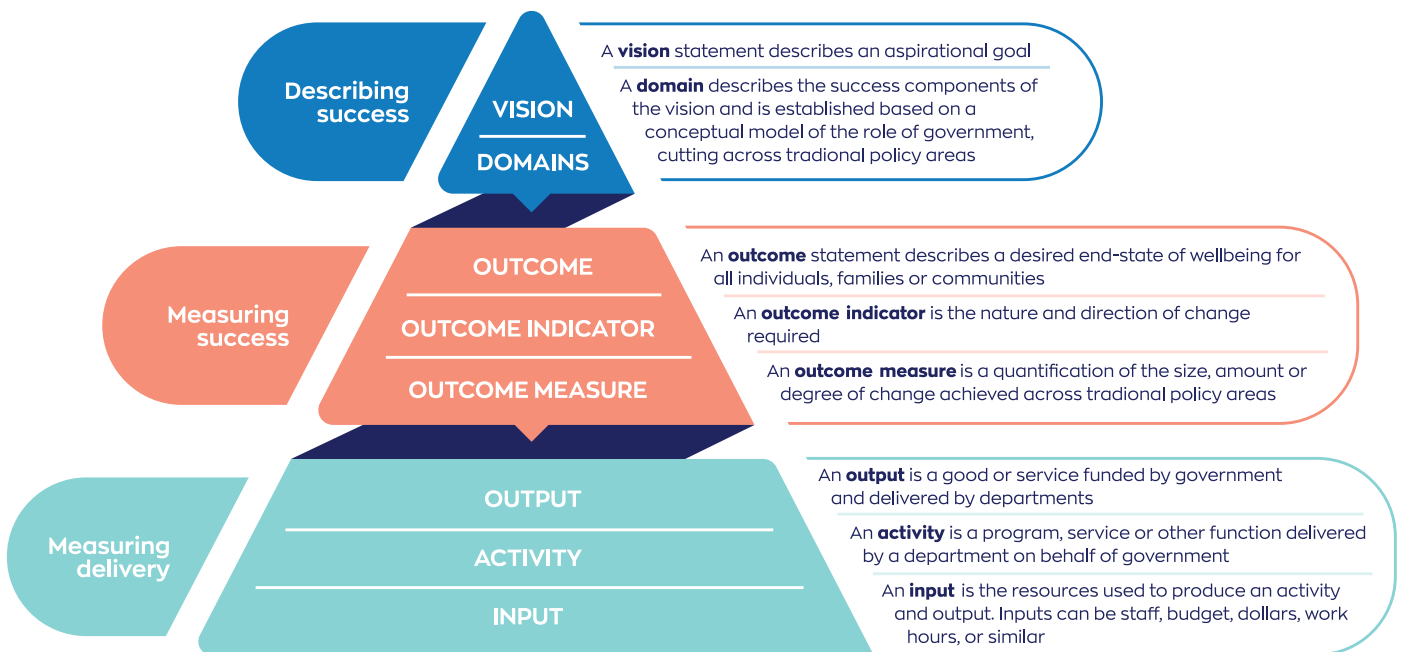


Figure 5 Victorian Government Outcome Framework Diagram

4.1 Business Outcomes Framework

The Business Outcomes Framework (BOC) provides a clear line of sight between the Victorian Government's policy priority areas and provides the framework to demonstrate our value to the community and our investors.

BOC outcomes closely align with the Victorian Government's policy priorities (Table 2).

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
	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
Healthy Environment	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 environmental and agricultural management	f. Maintain Landcare Group Health 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



4.2 Victorian Government key policy Areas

In March 2023, the Minister for Water issued a Letter of Expectations to the North Central CMA outlining nine key Victorian Government policy priorities and performance expectations (Table 2) that provide the foundation for our program and project activities.

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

LOE 1: Improved performance and demonstrating outcomes Commit to delivering integrated catchment management, including leading the implementation and monitoring of catchment partnership agreements.	
Outcome Indicators	Measure
PE1 Improved performance and demonstrated results against outcomes.	PE1.1 Collaborate with DEECA (formerly 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.
LOE 2: Climate Change Explore opportunities and/or deliver carbon sequestration initiatives and adapt to climate change and climate variability.	
Outcome Indicators	Measure
E1 Carbon sequestration Active investigation into opportunities to sequester carbon and generate carbon offset credits in Victoria.	Corporate Plan - measures: Qualitative information and/or case studies on initiatives to build water sector understanding of, and/or deliver, efficient carbon sequestration projects in Victoria - particularly through initiatives which deliver economic, environmental, and/or social co- benefits. Annual Report - measures: Qualitative information on what was achieved through the initiatives undertaken to build water sector understanding of, and/or deliver, efficient carbon sequestration projects in Victoria.
E2 Adaptation to climate change and variability Demonstration of reasonable progress in integrating climate change adaptation into planning and decision- making across the business.	Corporate Plan - measures: Qualitative information and/or case studies on initiatives to achieve actions or measures outlined in CMA climate change, climate adaptation, and/or catchment strategies. Annual Report - measures: Qualitative information and/or case studies on the progress made implementing initiatives outlined in CMA climate change, climate adaptation, and/or catchment strategies to adapt to climate change.

LOE 3: Waterway and Catchment Health

Provide leadership in delivery of programs to improve the health of priority waterways and catchments.

Outcome Indicators	Measure
CH2 Improved catchment and waterway health and resilience.	CH2.1 Coordinate the implementation and reporting of your regional catchment strategy and regional waterway strategy. CH2.2 Deliver waterway and integrated catchment management in line with Water for Victoria, Our Catchments, Our Communities-Building on the legacy for better stewardship, and Victorian Waterway Management Strategy. CH2.3 Report on Catchment Partnership Agreements for your region in accordance with the Framework for Catchment Partnership Agreements.

LOE 4: Water for Agriculture

Support a productive and profitable irrigation sector and vibrant and resilient regional communities.

Outcome Indicators	Measure
WA1 A productive and profitable irrigation sector and vibrant and resilient regional communities that adapt.	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.

LOE 5: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Ensure that all aspects of service delivery will be customer and community centred.

Outcome Indicators	Measure
CE1 A strong community engagement focus that is a cornerstone of all CMAs' 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.

LOE 6: Recognise and support Aboriginal cultural and spiritual values and economic inclusion in the water sector

Promote self-determination of Traditional Owners, including by supporting the Treaty process as required. Support the implementation of Water is Life: Traditional Owner Access to Water Roadmap by building genuine partnerships with Traditional Owners in waterway and environmental water management and decision-making and promote access to waterways and water for cultural, spiritual and economic purposes.

Outcome Indicators	Measure
AC1 Demonstrate effective and genuine partnerships with Traditional Owners.	AC1.1 Number of effective engagements and partnerships with Traditional Owners in water planning and management that have led to increased input into planning and management decisions.

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

LOE 7: Recognise recreational values	
Support the wellbeing of communities by considering recreational values in waterway planning and management. Where appropriate, support planning for the delivery of the Victoria 2026 Commonwealth Games.	
Outcome Indicators	Measure
RV1 Water services that explicitly consider recreational values, within existing frameworks.	RV1 Evidence that recreational values were considered in waterway health and environmental water planning and management.
RV2 Engagement with the community to identify and prioritise opportunities to deliver recreational objectives relating to the management of water and waterways.	RV2 Evidence 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 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 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, memberships of relevant working groups, partnerships with other organisations or agencies in site-based or regional projects, and/or amounts of co-investment with other organisations.
LOE 8: Resilient and liveable cities and towns	
Contribute to healthy communities and support resilient, liveable environments.	
Outcome Indicators	Measure
LC1 Healthy communities and resilient, liveable environments	<p>LC1.1 Actively 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).</p> <p>LC1.2 Participating in the development and implementation of integrated water management plans, particularly through prioritising measures to enhance urban waterway values.</p>
LOE 9: Leadership, diversity and culture	
Reflect the diverse needs of the community.	
Outcome Indicators	Measure
G1 Diversity and inclusion	<p>G1.6 Developing strategies and goals that will increase cultural diversity in the workforce and gender equity in executive leadership and throughout the organisation.</p> <p>G1.7 Encouraging staff participation in the Victorian Public Sector Commission "People Matter Survey" or equivalent survey.</p>

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 (Figure 6).
- Contribution to the Victorian and Australian Government policies and priorities.
- Confidence in our ability to secure lasting environmental, social, and economic outcomes.
- Genuine and meaningful partnerships with Traditional Owners to care for Country.
- Our partners and communities are engaged throughout the life of the project.
- 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 2023-24 to reflect changes to state and federal government confirmed funding and resources.

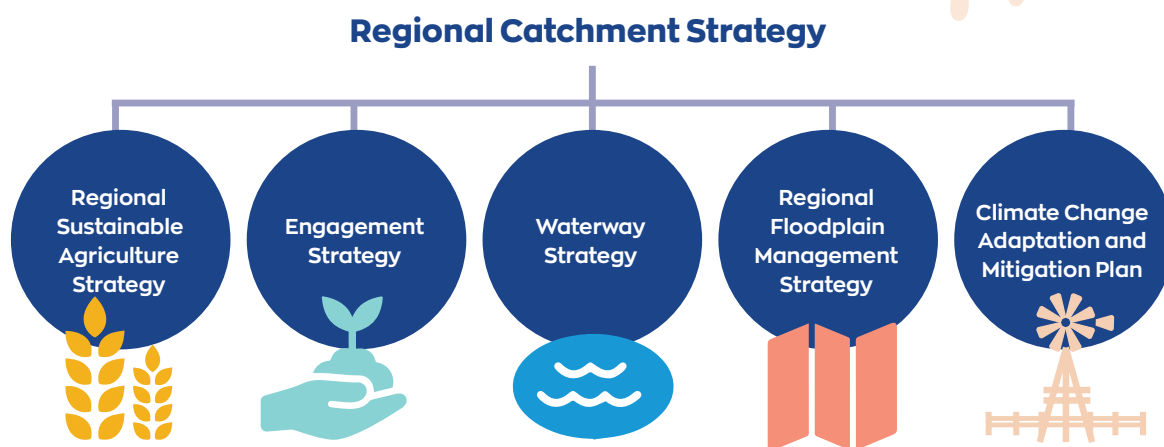


Figure 6 **Sub-strategies of the North Central Regional Catchment Strategy**

5.1 North Central Regional Catchment Strategy and sub-strategies

The North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 (RCS) is developed on behalf of the region. There are a range of sub-strategies (Figure 6) that underpin the RCS. 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.

North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27

The North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 (RCS) 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.

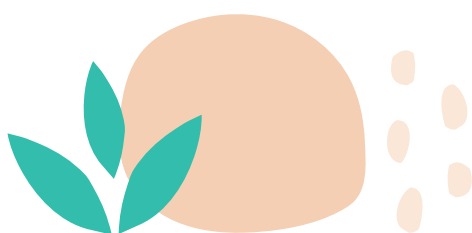
The web-based RCS has a focus on climate change and Traditional Owner self-determination and incorporates the statewide RCS Outcomes Framework.

While much of the organisation's activity is managed through separate programs (refer to 5.2), an integrated approach is taken to the management of NRM assets consistent with the objectives of the North Central RCS.

Furthermore, RCS Monitoring Evaluation Reporting and Improvement (MERI) Plan will support reporting on RCS implementation at key points during the life of the strategy.

Regional Sustainable Agricultural Strategy 2015

The foundation of our Sustainable Agriculture program, the strategy sets the strategic direction to seize growth opportunities by increasing the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices, addressing increasing climate variability; declining soil health; water reform and irrigation modernisation; technological advances; consumer demand for quality food and organic products; high animal welfare standards and expectations and protecting the natural resource base on which agriculture depends.



Engagement Strategy 2022-27

The renewed strategy sets our engagement direction for the next six years and is informed by our vision that will deliver RCS aspirations and supporting objectives. The strategy has a deliberate focus on three key areas: Innovation, Aboriginal Self-Determination and Diversity and Inclusion. Our values of Care, Courage and Connection also provide the basis of our engagement work and ensure we continue to deliver environmental, recreational, and economic outcomes that create enduring benefits and lasting relationships.

Regional Waterway Strategy 2014-22

The strategy provides a framework for the North Central CMA, in partnership with other government and non-government organisations, Traditional Owners and the community to protect and enhance waterways. It is a sub strategy to the Victorian Waterway Management Strategy (VWMS) and the North Central RCS.

A final review of the strategy implementation has found 88% of strategic actions are complete or satisfactorily progressed, and 83% of outputs/activities in the work program either partially or fully completed.

A renewed strategy will focus on higher level outcomes to better enable an adaptive approach to delivery.

Regional Floodplain Management Strategy 2018-28

The strategy was developed in 2018, to apply policies, actions, and accountabilities of the Victorian Floodplain Management Strategy at a regional and local scale over the ten-year life of the strategy.

The strategy provides a single, regional planning document for floodplain management for the North Central CMA region including to guide investment priorities.

At the mid-way point of implementation, 194 actions identified in the accompanying workplan; 53 actions complete, 32 actions currently in progress with funding secured. In summary, 44% or 85 priority actions are complete or in progress. A mid-term review is currently underway to identify.

A mid-term review is currently underway and will include a review of the workplan to ensure actions are appropriate for the next five years of the strategy including priority actions from learnings from the October 2022 flood events.

Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Plan

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.

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

Priority initiatives include:

- Supporting staff to champion climate change from across the CMA, to increase capacity, and support action.
- Review and renew North Central Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation 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
- Water for the Environment
- Sustainable Agriculture
- Strategy and Partnerships
- Major Projects
- Statutory Functions and Floodplain Management

The following tables provide an overview of each Business Unit's project and programs and reference to four areas of which they mostly contribute:

1. Victorian policy area outcome indicator(s) and our Business Outcome Framework outcome indicator(s).
2. Traditional Owner involvement.
3. Relevant CMA strategies and Victorian and Australian government strategies/initiatives.
4. Business Outcome Framework outputs.

The North Central CMA recognises and supports Traditional Owner self-determination. We have developed the following high-level assessment criteria (Table 3) to demonstrate the inclusion of cultural values and economic opportunities in the planning and implementation of projects and programs to achieve better outcomes for Traditional Owners.

It should be noted that detailed Traditional Owner involvement in project and programs, is guided by the North Central CMA's Reconciliation Action Plan and is reported in our Annual Report and other investor reporting.

Table 3 **Traditional Owner involvement assessment criteria**



Established		Partnership and engagement with Traditional Owners is meaningful and well-established. Traditional Owners are represented on partner and/or community groups to ensure cultural values and economic benefits are included in the planning, decision making and are directly involved in the implementation and/or delivery of programs and project activities. Traditional Owner self-determination is an outcome of the partnership and engagement.
Progressing		Partnership and engagement with Traditional Owners is progressing. There is often Traditional Owner representation on partner and/or community groups and cultural values and economic benefits are often included in the planning, decision making and implementation and/or delivery of programs and project activities. Working towards Traditional Owner self-determination.
Early Stages		Partnership and engagement with Traditional Owners is in the initial stages or yet to be developed. Consideration of cultural values and economic benefits in the planning, decision making and implementation and/or delivery of programs and project activities rely on existing CMA (and Traditional Owner) knowledge.




Environmental Assets

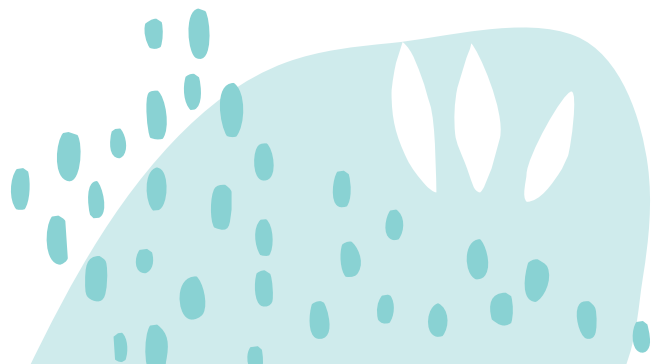
The Environmental Asset program is responsible for delivering a broad range of projects aimed at improving the health of waterways, wetlands, and biodiversity within our region. The program delivers on the priorities identified within the RCS, the North Central Waterway Strategy 2014-22, and a range of national and international environmental obligations. The program also works closely with the broader north central Victorian community and Traditional Owner groups to help build capacity for delivering shared benefits across the region.



Projects	Outcome Indicators	Traditional Owner Involvement	CMA Strategy	External Strategy	Outputs
Native Fish Recovery					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restores native fish populations through the Murray and Loddon Floodplain Native Fish Recovery project through delivery of a range of on-ground works and activities to improve riparian, waterway and wetland health and increase the abundance and complexity of instream habitats. Collaborates with agencies, fishing clubs, schools, and community groups to build community awareness and capacity. Collaborates with Traditional Owners on initiatives that support their aspirations, through the sharing of ideas and knowledge. Improves the trajectory of Threatened small-bodied native fish through the Small fish, Big Impact project. Identifies and protects refuge pools in the upper-west catchment through the Avoca Chain of Ponds project. Collaborates with partner agencies in NSW and South Australia through the Mid-Murray Recovery Reach project to deliver on-ground works, engagement events and conservation stocking projects to improve the trajectory of Threatened small-bodied native fish. 	PE1, E2, CH2, CE1, AC1, RV1, RV2, RV3, RV4, LC1 a, b, d, h		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Central Regional Catchment Strategy North Central Regional Waterway Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water for Victoria Regional Riparian Action Plan Victorian Waterway Management Strategy MDBA's Native Fish Recovery Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fence Vegetation Weed control Water storage Waterway structure Grazing Management Agreement Engagement event Partnership Publication Assessment Plan

Projects	Outcome Indicators	Traditional Owner Involvement	CMA Strategy	External Strategy	Outputs
A Healthy Coliban Catchment					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improves the health of the upper Coliban River and its tributaries and fosters greater catchment stewardship and improved land management across the upper Coliban catchment through implementation of the Upper Coliban Integrated Catchment Management Plan, in partnership with Coliban Water and Dja Dja Wurrung. Works with landholders, agencies and community groups to deliver a range of riparian protection works including willow and woody weed control, fencing and revegetation. Supports the Practical Regenerative Agricultural Communities Program to help farmers throughout the catchment identify and implement practical land management practices to improve grazing, productivity, soil health, biodiversity, and waterway health. Partners with Traditional Owners and through employment of Djaara project staff and collaboration on key projects such as rehabilitation of Lauriston Reserve. 	PE1, E2, CH2, CE1, AC1, RV1, RV2, RV3, RV4, LC1 a, b, d, h		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 North Central Regional Waterway Strategy 2014-22 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water for Victoria Regional Riparian Action Plan Victorian Waterway Management Strategy Our Catchments, Our Communities Integrated Catchment Management Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fence Vegetation Weed control Water storage Grazing Management Agreement Engagement event Partnership Publication Assessment Plan
Tullaroop Catchment Restoration					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improves riparian and waterway health of Birch's and Tullaroop Creeks through the implementation of the Tullaroop Integrated Catchment Management Plan in partnership with Dja Dja Wurrung, Central Highlands Water and Goulburn Murray Water. Works with private and public land managers to deliver willow and woody weed control, fencing and revegetation along waterways and the tributaries. Collaborates with Traditional Owners, recreational fishing clubs and landholders to increase instream woody habitat to support river blackfish populations. 	PE1, E2, CH2, CE1, AC1, RV1, RV2, RV3, RV4, LC1 a, b, d, h		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 North Central Regional Waterway Strategy 2014-22 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water for Victoria Regional Riparian Action Plan Victorian Waterway Management Strategy Our Catchments, Our Communities Integrated Catchment Management Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fence Vegetation Weed control Water storage Waterway structure Grazing Management Agreement Engagement event Partnership Publication Assessment Plan

Projects	Outcome Indicators	Traditional Owner Involvement	CMA Strategy	External Strategy	Outputs
Plains Wanderer Predator Control and Monitoring					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increases our knowledge about the impact of introduced predators (foxes and cats) on the Critically Endangered plains wanderer through deployment of an extensive network of camera traps to estimate density and activity of predators across the Northern Plains grasslands, Partners with Trust for Nature and Yorta Yorta Traditional Owners to reduce the impact of foxes through implementation of a strategic fox baiting program. 	PE1, E2, CH2, CE1, AC1, RV1, RV2, RV3, RV4, LC1 b, d, g, h		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Australian Government Threatened Species Strategy Australia's Biodiversity Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment Pest animal control
Kerang Wetlands & Gunbower Forest Ramsar Site Management					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improves the ecological character of the Kerang Wetlands and Gunbower Forest Ramsar sites through on-ground works such as weed control, pest animal control, fencing and revegetation Monitors the 'Critical Components, Processes and Services' of the Ramsar sites to ensure they are within limits of acceptable change. Strengthens regional partnerships, including with Traditional Owners, to deliver effective monitoring and management of these internationally important wetland habitats. 	PE1, E2, CH2, CE1, AC1, RV1, RV2, RV3, RV4, LC1 a, b, d, g, h		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 North Central Regional Waterway Strategy 2014-22 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Victorian Waterway Management Strategy Australia's Biodiversity Strategy Australian Pest Animal Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fence Vegetation Weed control Pest animal control Assessment Partnership Waterway structure Management Agreement Engagement event
Protect Investment, Improve Capacity					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	PE1, E2, CH2, CE1, RV1, RV2, RV3, RV4, LC1 a, b, d, g, h		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 North Central Regional Waterway Strategy 2014-22 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Victorian Waterway Management Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment Vegetation Weed control Fence Water storage Information management system Partnership



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	Traditional Owner Involvement	CMA Strategy	External Strategy	Outputs
The Living Murray Gunbower Forest					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide water for the environment to Gunbower Creek and restore regular flooding to the Gunbower Forest floodplain through operation of infrastructure. • Extensive annual ecological monitoring program, meaningful Traditional Owner partnership programs and community engagement are core to this project. 	PE1, E2, CH2, CE1, AC1, RV1, RV2, RV3, RV4, LC1 a, b, d, g, h	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 • North Central Regional Waterway Strategy 2014-22 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water for Victoria • Victorian Waterway Management Strategy • Murray Darling Basin Plan • Gunbower Forest EWMP (MDBA produced) • Water is Life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water • Assessment • Engagement event • Partnership • Plan
Environmental Water Management					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • Collaborates with key partners, provide input to water policy and deliver technical investigations. • Ensures Traditional Owner Groups have input into planning processes to incorporate cultural values. • Ensures shared benefits for key recreational users and the regional economy. • Manage flow related issues in unregulated catchments as required. 	PE1, E2, CH2, CE1, AC1, RV1, RV2, RV3, RV4, LC1 a, b, d, g, h	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 • North Central Regional Waterway Strategy 2014-22 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water for Victoria • Victorian Waterway Management Strategy • Murray Darling Basin Plan • Water is Life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water • Waterway structure • Engagement event • Partnership • Plan



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	Traditional Owner Involvement	CMA Strategy	External Strategy	Outputs
Regenerative Agriculture					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increases the capacity of north central Victorian agricultural communities to adopt to emerging practices to improve soil, biodiversity and vegetation. 	PE1, E2, CH2, WA1, CE1, RV2, RV3, RV4, LC1 d, e, g, h	○	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 Regional Sustainable Agriculture Strategy 2015 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Soil R, D & E Strategy Victorian Soil Health Strategy Australia's Biodiversity Strategy Draft National Soil Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement event Plan Assessment Partnership
Plan2Farm					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote and utilise the Irrigation Farm Business Plan - Plan2Farm workbook to assist farmers to plan for their future. 	PE1, E2, CH2, WA1, CE1, RV2, RV3, RV4, LC1 d, e, g, h	○	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 Loddon Campaspe Irrigation Region Land and Water Management Plan 2020-2030 Regional Sustainable Agriculture Strategy 2015 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water for Victoria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership Assessment Plan Engagement event
Regional Agricultural Landcare Facilitator					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Directly supports rural, regional, and urban communities, including Traditional Owners, to improve ecological conditions, farm sustainability and build resilience around a changing climate and market demands. 	PE1, E2, CH2, WA1, CE1, RV2, RV3, RV4, LC1 d, e, g, h	○	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 North Central CMA Landcare Support Plan 2018-23 Regional Sustainable Agriculture Strategy 2015 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Australian Pest Animal Strategy Australian Weeds Strategy Australian Framework for Landcare Community Call for Action Threatened Species Strategy EPBC Act 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement event Partnership Publication

Projects	Outcome Indicators	Traditional Owner Involvement	CMA Strategy	External Strategy	Outputs
Healthy Productive Irrigated Landscapes					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the Loddon Campaspe Irrigation Region Land and Water Management Plan. Complete the LMIR Surface Water Management Strategy (LMIR SWMS) Finalise LCIR Traditional Owner and Aboriginal Landholder Engagement Plan. Support the development and management of water- use licences and associated Ministerial determinations. Takes responsibility for changes to Water-Use Objectives and Standard Conditions. Implement Irrigation Development Guidelines. Partner with key organisations to ensure the State Environment Protection Policy (Waters)/GED obligations are met. 	PE1, E2, CH2, WA1, CE1, AC1, RV2, RV3, RV4, LC1 d, e, g, h		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 Loddon Campaspe Irrigation Region Land and Water Management Plan 2020-30 Loddon Murray Irrigation Region Surface Water Management Strategy (LMIR SWMS) final draft 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Murray Darling Basin Salinity Management Strategy 2030 Murray Darling Basin Plan Water for Victoria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approval and advice Assessment Partnership Plan Publication
Reporting and Accounting for Salinity					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contributes to the implementation of the Murray Darling Basin Salinity Management Strategy (BSM2030). Manages accountable actions for MD BSM2030 Salinity Register entries within the north central Victoria. Contributes to Victoria's Annual Murray Darling Basin Salinity Management Strategy Report. Assess the salinity impact of environmental watering within the Murray River floodplain. 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. 	PE1, E2, CH2, CE1, RV3, RV4, e, h		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 Loddon Campaspe Irrigation Region Land and Water Management Plan 2020-30 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Murray Darling Basin Salinity Management Strategy 2030 Murray Darling Basin Plan Water for Victoria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approval and advice Assessment Partnership Publication



Strategy and Partnerships

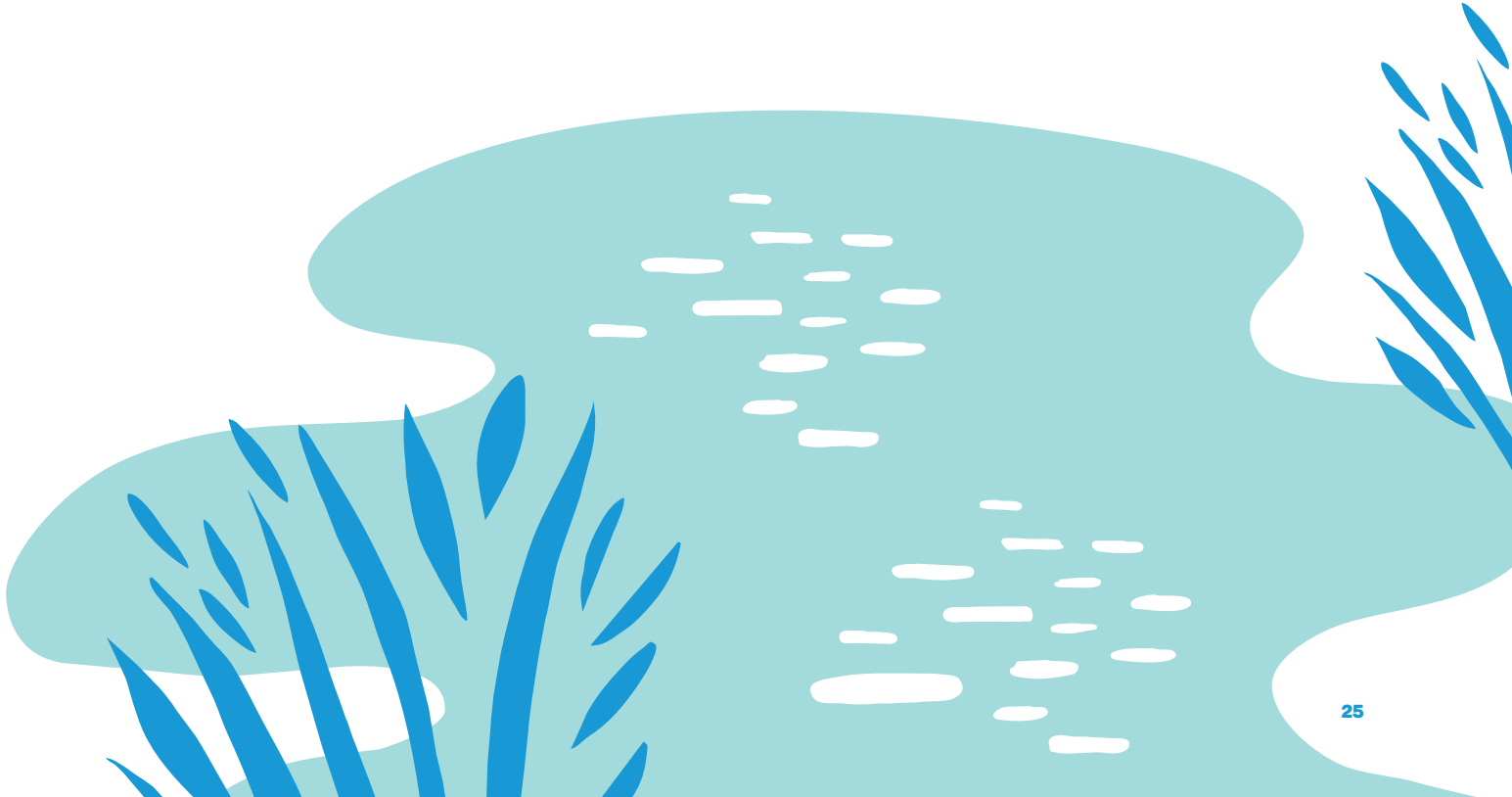
The Strategy and Partnerships program provides support and leadership across community focused projects and programs.


A key part of the program is overseeing implementation of the Engagement Strategy, supporting Landcare networks and groups, administration of Landcare grants, delivering the Waterwatch and Citizen Science program, Statewide River Detectives Program and coordinating the North Central CMA Aboriginal Partnerships and Projects Program.

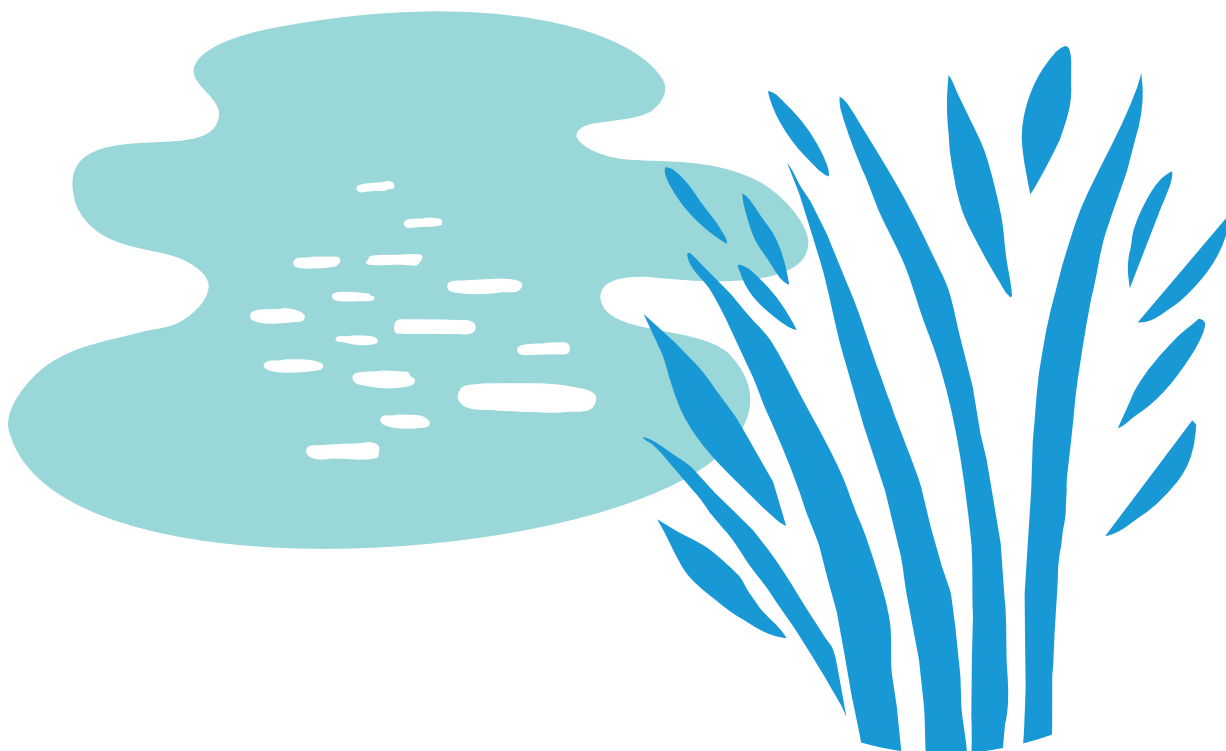


Projects	Outcome Indicators	Traditional Owner Involvement	CMA Strategy	External Strategy	Outputs
Victorian Landcare Grants & Regional Landcare Coordinator					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A rigorous process enables funding through the Victorian Landcare grants to local Landcare groups. Supports Landcare groups and Landcare networks to undertake local NRM activities. 	PE1, CH2, CE1, AC1, RV1, RV2, RV3, RV4 b, d, f, g, h		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 Engagement Strategy 2022-27 North Central CMA Landcare Support Plan 2018-23 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Victorian Landcare Program Review Action Plan Australian Pest Animal Strategy Australian Weeds Strategy Australian Framework for Landcare Community Call for Action Threatened Species Strategy EPBC Act 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fence Vegetation Weed control Pest Grazing Engagement event Visitor facility Publication
Waterwatch and Citizen Science Program					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports people to actively care for their environment by participating in programs that monitor and report on the health of the region's land, water and biodiversity resources. Provides opportunities for people to participate in training programs that raise awareness and improve skills. Supports broader community to participate in activities that relate to the ecological health of the region. 	PE1, CH2, CE1, AC1, RV1, RV2, RV3, RV4 b, d, g, h		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 Engagement Strategy 2022-27 North Central Regional Waterway Strategy 2014-22 North Central Waterwatch and Citizen Science Action Plan 2020 - 2025 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water for Victoria Victorian Waterway Management Strategy Protecting Victoria's Biodiversity 2037 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment Engagement event Plan Publication Information management system

Projects	Outcome Indicators	Traditional Owner Involvement	CMA Strategy	External Strategy	Outputs
Statewide River Detectives Program					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports youth across the region to participate in educational programs. Raises awareness and improves our future leaders' skills and knowledge in natural resource management. 	PE1, E2, CH2, CE1, AC1, RV1, RV2, RV3, RV4 b, d, g, h		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 Engagement Strategy 2022-27 North Central Regional Waterway Strategy 2014-22 North Central Waterwatch and Citizen Science Action Plan 2020 - 2025 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water for Victoria Victorian Waterway Management Strategy Agnico Eagle Mines Ltd, Sustainability Plan, Our approach and Commitments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment Engagement event Plan Publication Information management system
Our Catchment, Our Communities					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Works with the community, government agencies and stakeholders to identify, plan and deliver integrated catchment management outcomes that align to the Regional Catchment Strategy. Working in partnership with Traditional Owners to deliver on mutual priorities with reference to Country Plans and the North Central Regional Catchment Strategy. 	PE1, E1, E2, CH2, CE1, AC1, RV1, RV2, RV3, RV4, LC1 a, b, d, e, f, g, h		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 Engagement Strategy 2022-27 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our Catchments, Our Communities Integrated Catchment Management Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fence Vegetation Weed control Management agreement Assessment Engagement event Partnership Plan



Projects	Outcome Indicators	Traditional Owner Involvement	CMA Strategy	External Strategy	Outputs
Aboriginal Partnerships and Projects Program					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works with Traditional Owners to improve participation in the Victorian water planning and management frameworks. • Identifies and leverages opportunities for cultural heritage monitoring and mapping, through consultative structures that address the rights and interests of Victorian Traditional Owners. • Supports self-determination of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within our region. 	PE1, CH2, CE1, AC1, RV1, RV2, RV3, RV4, LC1 a, b, d, f, g, h		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 • Engagement Strategy 2022-27 • North Central Regional Waterway Strategy 2014-22 • North Central CMA Reconciliation Action Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water for Victoria • National Water Initiative • The Living Murray • Water is Life: Traditional Owner Access to Water Roadmap • Aboriginal Participation Guidelines • Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework • Dhelkunya Dja, Country Plan • Yorta Yorta Whole of Country Plan • Taungurung buk dabagi, Taungurung Country Plan • Barapa Barapa Country Plan • GROWING WHAT IS GOOD, Barengi Gadjin Land Council, Country Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water • Cultural Assessment • Publication • Engagement event • Plan • Partnerships



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.

An Environment Report has been prepared by North Central CMA and is ready for public exhibition and assessment by the Victorian Minister for Planning. Further work on the VMFRP project has been paused in April 2023 pending the confirmation of funding for final approvals steps and future construction works. North Central CMA remains committed to delivering the project for its environmental and community benefits and stands ready to recommence the project when funding is confirmed.



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. A co-investment of \$1.6 million has been provided through the Commonwealth Environmental Actions Framework to complete the construction of a fishway at Taylors Weir, Gunbower which is the priority construction project.

Projects	Outcome Indicators	Traditional Owner Involvement	CMA Strategy	External Strategy	Outputs
Guttrum Benwell Forest Floodplain Restoration Project					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reinstate 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. 	PE1, CH2, CE1, AC1, RV1, RV2, RV3, RV4, LC1 a, b, d, g, h		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 North Central Regional Waterway Strategy 2014-22 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water for Victoria Victorian Waterway Management Strategy Murray Darling Basin Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment Water Waterway structure Partnership Plan Engagement event
Gunbower Forest Floodplain Restoration Project					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. Provision of infrastructure to enable the deployment of water to land that can currently not be watered by any other infrastructure. 	PE1, E2, CH2, WA1, CE1, AC1, RV1, RV2, RV3, RV4, LC1 a, b, d, g, h		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 North Central Regional Waterway Strategy 2014-22 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water for Victoria Victorian Waterway Management Strategy Murray Darling Basin Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment Water Waterway structure Partnership Plan Engagement event

Projects	Outcome Indicators	Traditional Owner Involvement	CMA Strategy	External Strategy	Outputs
Native Fish Stimulus Package					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addressing the highest priority remaining barriers to fish passage in the organisation's Native Fish Recovery Plan – Gunbower and lower Loddon. Undertake construction of or improvements to fishways within the Gunbower and lower Loddon Systems to improve fish passage. Works complement and contribute to the North Central CMA's Native Fish Recovery Plan to increase native fish populations. 	PE1, E2, CH2, WA1, CE1, AC1, RV1, RV2, RV3, RV4, LC1 a, b, d, g, h		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 North Central CMA Native Fish Recovery Plan – Gunbower and lower Loddon 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Victorian Environmental Water Holder (funded \$4.6 million) Victorian Waterway Management Strategy Murray Darling Basin Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed designs Construction Installation Approvals Engagement Communications



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 while 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 Regional Floodplain Management 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. Following the widespread flooding in late 2022, North Central CMA has undertaken a mid-term review of the strategy to evaluate progress and reprioritise actions including flood studies, planning scheme amendments and flood warning reviews. Outcomes from the review will inform an updated workplan for the remaining five years of the strategy.

Projects	Outcome Indicators	Traditional Owner Involvement	CMA Strategy	External Strategy	Outputs
Administration of Statutory Functions					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide advice to the community, development industry and local government about the potential impacts of flooding. Protect waterways from the impacts of third party works through the Works on Waterway Permit Scheme. 	CE1, LC1 c, g	○	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 North Central Regional Floodplain Management Strategy 2018-28 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Victorian Floodplain Management Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approval and advice Information Management System
Regional Floodplain Management Strategy Implementation					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support local government, DELWP, VicSES and the community to implement the priorities of the Regional Floodplain Management Strategy (RFMS). Deliver projects that support the priorities of the RFMS. 	CE1 LC1 c, g	○	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Central Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 North Central Regional Floodplain Management Strategy 2018-28 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Victorian Floodplain Management Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement event Plan Publication Partnership



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 while others are shorter term.

The initiatives below identify the approaches and strategies that support our business direction and natural resource management activities and are informed by various sources including the Minister's Letter of Expectations.

Table 4 **Business Improvement Program initiatives**

Initiatives	Timeframe
Embedding Traditional Owner and Aboriginal self-determination	
<p>Guided by the North Central CMA's Galkungu Reconciliation Action Plan, continue to build and maintain meaningful relationships and partnerships with the seven Traditional Owner groups in our region to support Traditional Owner self-determined input, participation and leadership in natural resource management planning and delivery.</p> <p>Priority initiatives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement Galkungu, our Reconciliation Action Plan. • Seek feedback from First Nations people about the experience working with the CMA. • Develop self-determination opportunities with Traditional Owners guided by key drivers including Recognition and Settlement Agreements, Country Plans, and our Galkungu Reconciliation Action Plan. • Where appropriate, develop or renew MOUs with TO groups to better inform working relationships and delivery of Government commitments (e.g., Water is Life). 	<p>Ongoing 2023-24</p> <p>2023-24</p> <p>2023-25</p>
Climate Change	
<p>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.</p> <p>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 2021-27 North Central RCS and will continue to shape regional NRM programs.</p> <p>Priority initiatives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing implementation of our CMA Climate Change Action Plan, including our climate change risk assessment. • Renew the North Central Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Strategy. • Commence a communications campaign to raise awareness and our work to respond to climate change. • Pilot the Community Carbon project to generate local carbon and co-benefits. 	<p>Ongoing 2023-24</p> <p>2023-24</p> <p>2023-25</p>
New stewardship approaches	
<p>The North Central CMA is committed to creating lasting change. Our on-ground work is the first step in a trajectory of change and to continue a positive trajectory it is essential that work-site 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 innovative approaches to supporting landholder stewardship over the long term.</p> <p>Priority initiatives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of a system to effectively manage stakeholder relationships post works. • Develop and implement Post-works Site Stewardship Policy. 	<p>2023-25</p> <p>2023-24</p>

Table 4 **Business Improvement Program initiatives**

Initiatives	Timeframe
<p>Natural Capital</p> <p>The North Central CMA recognises the emergence of natural capital accounting frameworks and the potential of environmental markets, such as carbon and biodiversity, to help quantify, validate and fund important NRM projects across our region from new sources of funding.</p> <p>Priority initiatives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position the organisation as an ‘honest broker’ in natural capital through capability development and a regional information program. • Assess emerging natural capital frameworks for potential application within the region. • Secure a private sector partnership to trial the application of natural capital approaches. 	<p>2023-24</p> <p>2023-24</p> <p>2023-25</p>

7. Business Development Program

Our Business Development Program (BDP) continues to provide opportunities for the CMA to proactively develop project concepts and business cases that respond to the region's needs that align with local priorities identified in the North Central RCS and Victorian government key policy areas and outcome indicators.

The BDP confidently demonstrates how the CMA can link with the private sector and existing environmental markets to enable and extend the amount of investment available for the region and is supported by our Regional Catchment Partners Forum. The forum developed a regional NRM Prospectus that presents a compelling picture of a concise list of 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 a 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 e.g., Carbon Offsets; Connected Nature; Soil Health; Sustainable Farming Model and Traditional Owner Engagement further position the CMA for new natural resource management opportunities in the region.

Since the beginning of the program, the North Central CMA has submitted more than \$25 million worth of project proposals- with more than \$10 million in projects successfully funded. An example of success is securing support from the Agnico Eagle Mines Limited Community Partnership program to fund our River Detectives program when Victorian government funding ended in 2021.

River Detectives is an educational, cross-curricular, citizen-science program that engages 6,000 students from 220 schools across five CMA regions to learn about and protect local waterways.

Furthermore, the CMA collaborated with Australian National University (ANU), Department of Climate Change, Energy, Environment, Water (DCCEEW) and other NRM agencies across Australia to support the delivery of the Federal Government's Agriculture Biodiversity Stewardship Package. The North Central region was chosen with six other regions to participate in the Carbon + Biodiversity (C+B) and the Enhanced Remnant Vegetation (ERV) pilots, both of which are components of the broader Stewardship package. The C+B component has resulted in more than 3,000 hectares of plantings across the country with 680 hectares located in Victoria. It is estimated that these pilot projects will bring ~\$4-5 million worth of NRM investment to our region.

'Nature Positive' investment (where companies agree to improve the quality of nature under their control) is also an area of interest for the BDP as strategically this could be an opportunity to extend the reach of CMA projects utilising private sector funding that is aligned to Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG) principles with outcomes verified using natural capital accounting frameworks.

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 specifies objectives and measures that will define success (Table 5).



Table 5 **Business Development Program outcomes table**

Objective	Measure	Achievements
<p>Attracting new investment to the north central region to solve NRM problems.</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>Aspirational target: 5% of North Central CMA budget funded through the Business Development Program OR ~\$1m in 2023/24.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than \$25 million worth of project proposals submitted. • \$10 million in projects successfully funded. • Private sector funding through the Agnico Eagles Mines Limited Community Partnership program has now funded our River Detectives program for the next three years. • Our Community Carbon Pilot collaboration has been developed with a range of stakeholders including four local councils and will enable investment in biodiversity utilising the carbon market across the catchment.
<p>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.</p>	<p>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?”</p> <p>Aspirational target: North Central CMA demonstrating leadership in Natural Capital and in linking ‘nature positive’ private sector funding with innovative projects and collaborations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive partner testimonials available on the North Central CMA’s website. • An external developmental evaluation of the Business Development Program found that the program has ‘provided a more strategic approach to business development’ and that progress has been made towards the achievement of objectives.
<p>Additional profitable NRM projects, attractive to private investors. Readiness of the North Central CMA to respond to emerging funding opportunities.</p>	<p>Number of projects with a dedicated effort on the best prospects, number of business cases developed and number of funding opportunities that the BDM has responded to - considering depth and breadth of opportunities.</p> <p>Aspirational target: Aligning project concepts with funding opportunities that allows the Business Development Program to achieve its aspirational funding target.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than 100 project concepts are 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. • Development of a project shortlist to advance the best opportunities. • All project concepts align to the RCS. • A gap analysis framework ensures we are responding to the depth and breadth of opportunities across our catchment, including across geographical regions and projects across all RCS themes. • Developing a carbon concept that aligns to our key medium-term RCS outcomes around Biodiversity to develop 11,000 ha of revegetation in priority locations for habitat connectivity and a range of community co-benefits.

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.

Returning to our roots

Rural landholders continue to be the foundation for landscape-scale natural resource management in the region.

With 87% of the land in the North Central CMA region 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 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 natural resource management works and outcomes on private land.

The future of the Murray Darling Basin Plan

Developments in the delivery of the Murray Darling Basin Plan continue to be of interest – and concern – as it nears some critical decision points. The Basin Plan requires water recovery offset projects to be complete by 30 June 2024 although it is clear that many will not be due to recent impacts of COVID and floods and there are currently insufficient projects to realise the offset opportunity provided by the Plan. We observe that there is work underway to review the status of Basin Plan (e.g. the Productivity Commission's 2023 Implementation Review) and seek new ideas for how to deliver it (e.g. the Australian Government's public call for innovative ideas to deliver the plan and support healthier rivers and more sustainable communities) that will shape the final stages of delivery.

Depending on the appetite to change the settings of the Plan there are a range of pathways possible from this point – proceed with buybacks, extend the deadline for project delivery, negotiate a new approach across stakeholders. It is unclear which direction will be taken however expect this to become clearer as the June 2024 deadline looms. Of note, these pathways present different challenges and opportunities for the north of our region given its intrinsic link with an irrigation system built on 'natural carriers' (e.g. rivers, creeks and lakes). It is possible that a buy back approach which reduces the pool of consumptive water and increases competition for water could significantly change this system and the communities and natural resources that rely on it.

The CMA could bring together stakeholders with an interest in the northern irrigation region to investigate potential scenarios of change and identify interventions to respond to challenges and opportunities.

Climate-ready natural resource management

Floods and droughts are more likely to be part of the region's future and it is essential that resilience to these extremes becomes part of our approach to natural resource management.

This drives where we work in the region. For example drought refuges will be critical to support environmental values under a climate change future and in some cases we understand where these sites are (e.g. the region's irrigation systems with reliable water supplies). However, in other instances our knowledge of drought refuges is incomplete and we must work to fill this knowledge gap with the assistance of partners and the community.

This also drives the work we do. We have already progressed our approach to climate-ready revegetation recognising that a hotter and drier climate will better suit certain species and provenances of vegetation and we must adjust our approaches to give our work the best chance of survival in these conditions. However, the floods of 2022 demonstrated that resilience is required across all of our onground work to all conditions. In some parts of our region we have seen riparian fences damaged by floods for the second time in just over 10 years. It is not viable for the CMA or the landholder to regularly rebuild flood damaged fences, which prompts the consideration of alternative approaches to our work to improve flood resilience. This may involve relocating works away from flooding, adopting more flood resilient design or adjusting cost-share arrangements where the work is exposed to flood damage.

The CMA could work with land and water managers and the community to identify and improve the quality of drought refuges and adopt climate-ready works standards for all NRM activities.

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 various stages of their life cycles. Across the North Central CMA region many of these habitats are 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.

9. Organisational Performance Framework (OPF)

The Organisational Performance Framework (OPF) is primarily for internal audiences, to demonstrate the North Central CMA’s success and how it is measured. This is focused on medium term measures, across the entire range of organisational activities. The recently updated OPF 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.

Figure 7 describes the structure of the Organisational Performance Framework and articulates the fifteen selected measures. Reporting against these measures is part of the Annual Report process.

In addition, many of the Organisational Performance Framework measures align with the Business Outcomes Framework (Table 1).

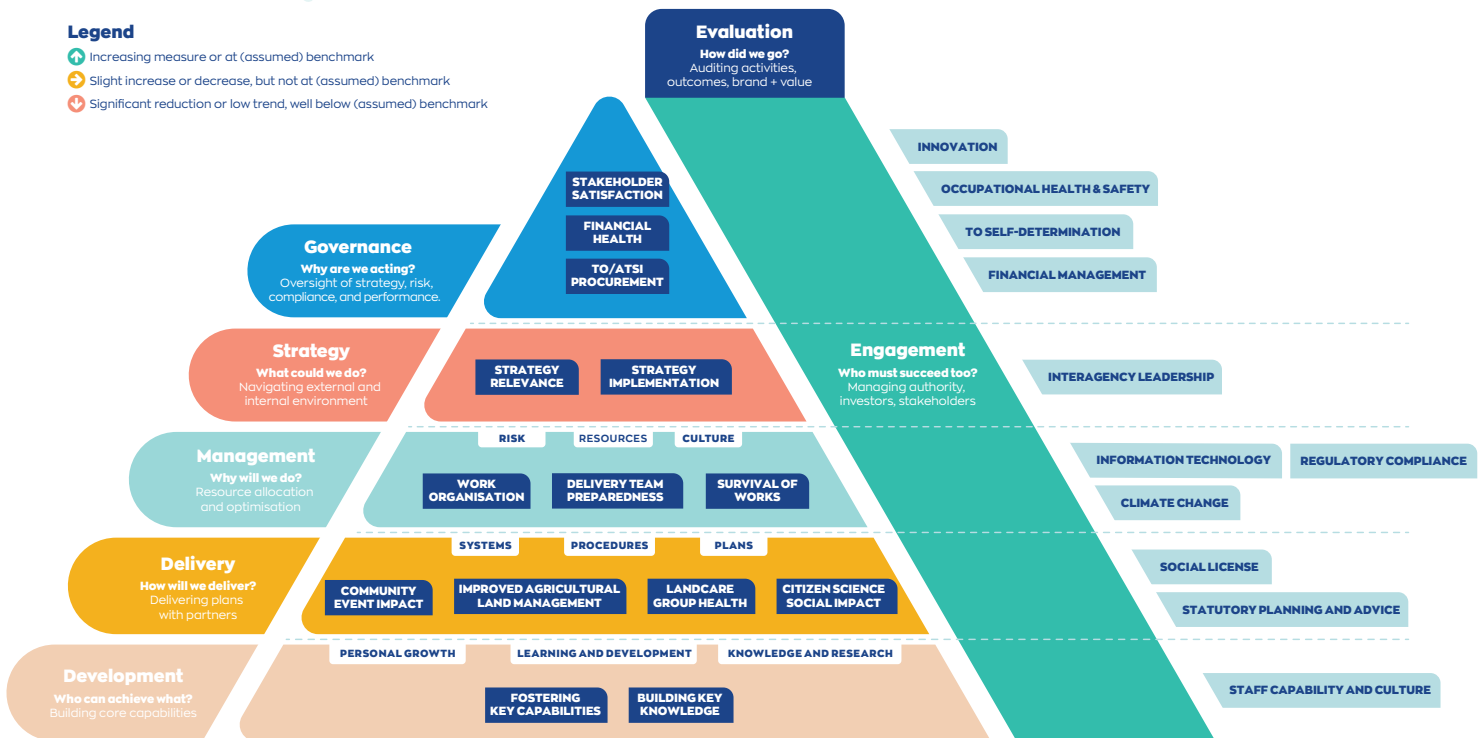


Figure 7 Organisational Performance Framework

9.1 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.

9.2 Risk appetite statement

For more than 25 years, the 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 and participation.

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 is 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.

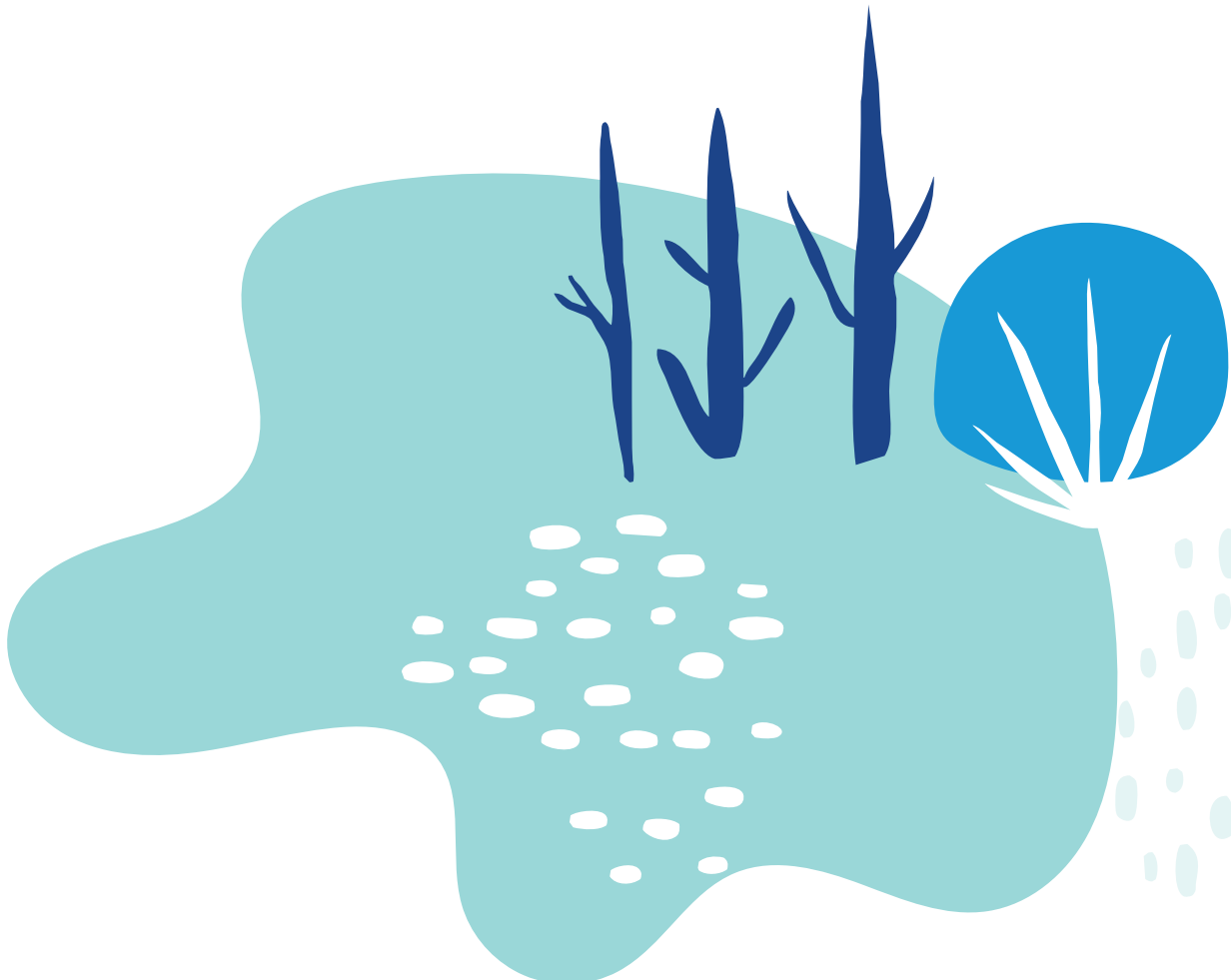


Table 6 **Summary Risk Appetite View**

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. 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. 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 2023-24 expected to be \$15.2 million, of which \$9.1 million relates to state-based funding initiatives.

Total project expenditure is expected to be \$18.7 million. The excess expenditure over revenue is reflective of project funding from previous years being spent on project delivery in 2023-24.

Total corporate expenditure (including salaries) for 2023-24 is estimated at \$5.6 million. The focus on corporate cost efficiencies continues with future growth expected to come predominantly from wage inflation per Enterprise Bargaining Agreement.

No 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.

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	S2, S9, S11, C3, O1	\$2,447	\$3,067	\$450	\$404	\$6,368	\$6,283	\$85
Environmental Water	S1, C1	(\$63)	\$1,163	\$1,247	\$0	\$2,347	\$2,247	\$100
Sustainable Agriculture	S3, C4, O4	\$1,405	\$788	\$450	\$15	\$2,658	\$1,884	\$774
Community Engagement and Strategy	S2, S4, S6, S7, S8, C2, O3	\$613	\$1,425	\$450	\$253	\$2,741	\$2,697	\$44
Floodplain Management and Statutory Functions	S4,S5,S13, O3	\$1,854	\$2,099	\$0	\$127	\$4,080	\$2,700	\$1,380
Major Projects	S11, C5	\$1,955	\$561	\$350	\$0	\$2,866	\$2,866	\$0
Total		\$8,211	\$9,103	\$2,947	\$799	\$21,060	\$18,677	\$2,383

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

			Total
Investor Program Reference	Victorian Government	Program Title	\$000
S1	DEECA	Environmental Water Program	\$1,163
S2	DEECA	Our Catchments Our Communities	\$660
S3	DEECA	Sustainable Irrigation Program	\$788
S4	DEECA	Floodplain and Waterway Management Strategies	\$186
S5	DEECA	Statutory Functions	\$952
S6	DEECA	Regional Landcare	\$592
S7	DEECA	Aboriginal Water	\$270
S8	DEECA	Upper Avoca Reconnection	\$127
S9	DEECA	Victorian River and Wetland Management Program	\$2,728
S10	DEECA	Risk & Resilience Grants	\$53
S11	DEECA	Floodplain Restoration	\$561
S12	DEECA	Native Fish Recovery	\$79
S13	DEECA	Flood Studies Program	\$944
Sub Total			\$9,103
Investor Program Reference	Australian Government	Program Title	\$000
C1	Murray Darling Basin Plan	The Living Murray	\$1,247
C2	National Landcare Program 3	Core Services	\$450
C3	National Landcare Program 3	To be determined	\$450
C4	National Landcare Program 3	Regenerative Agriculture in North Central Victoria	\$450
C5	Dept of Industry, Science & Resources	Taylor's Fishway Construction	\$350
Sub Total			\$2,947
Investor Program Reference	Other	Program Title	\$000
O1	Coliban Water	Healthy Coliban Catchment	\$404
O2	Local Government	Risk & Resilience Grants	\$127
O3	Private Sector	River Detectives	\$238
O4	Other	Other	\$30
Sub Total			\$799
Total			\$12,849



Operating statement

Operating Statement	Actual 2020/21 \$ 000's	Actual 2021/22 \$ 000's	Estimate 2022/23 \$ 000's	Budget 2023/24 \$ 000's	Forecast 2024/25 \$ 000's	Forecast 2025/26 \$ 000's
Income						
Statutory Operations						
Corporate Funding	\$843	\$853	\$777	\$644	\$644	\$644
Interest Received	\$26	\$38	\$453	\$498	\$250	\$250
Other (includes staff secondments)	\$1,455	\$1,686	\$1,257	\$507	\$500	\$500
Recovery from Project programs	\$7,787	\$7,014	\$7,527	\$8,682	\$8,855	\$9,032
Total Revenue	\$10,111	\$9,590	\$10,013	\$10,331	\$10,249	\$10,426
Expenditure						
Corporate and Statutory Operations						
Board	\$238	\$234	\$235	\$268	\$276	\$284
Chief Executive Officer and support	\$606	\$604	\$828	\$1,099	\$881	\$907
Corporate Services	\$1,955	\$2,129	\$2,158	\$2,493	\$2,570	\$2,647
Fleet and Accommodation	\$600	\$367	\$598	\$640	\$624	\$643
Engagement and Strategy	\$847	\$869	\$864	\$1,126	\$1,110	\$1,143
Project Staffing	\$5,267	\$4,793	\$5,314	\$5,000	\$4,788	\$4,801
Total Expenditure	\$9,513	\$8,996	\$9,998	\$10,627	\$10,249	\$10,426
Surplus/(Deficit)	\$598	\$594	\$16	(\$296)	\$0	\$0
Profit/(Loss) on Disposal of Assets	\$61	\$102	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Surplus/(Deficit)	\$659	\$696	\$16	(\$296)	\$0	\$0

Cashflow statement

Cash Flow Statement	Actual 2020/21 \$ 000's	Actual 2021/22 \$ 000's	Estimate 2022/23 \$ 000's	Budget 2023/24 \$ 000's	Forecast 2024/25 \$ 000's	Forecast 2025/26 \$ 000's
Cash Flows from Operating Activities						
Receipts						
Corporate Funding	\$843	\$853	\$777	\$644	\$644	\$644
Interest	\$26	\$38	\$453	\$498	\$250	\$250
Net GST Received from ATO	\$41	\$484	\$59	\$42	\$142	\$146
Other	\$1,255	\$3,047	\$1,257	\$507	\$500	\$500
Grants						
Receipts from State	\$15,808	\$12,498	\$12,338	\$9,146	\$11,050	\$10,050
Receipts from Commonwealth	\$3,797	\$3,923	\$4,541	\$3,615	\$3,450	\$3,450
Receipts from Other Investors	\$490	\$894	\$753	\$800	\$900	\$900
Payments						
Payments to suppliers	(\$13,166)	(\$9,531)	(\$14,682)	(\$11,467)	(\$8,278)	(\$7,118)
Payments to employees and staff costs	(\$7,373)	(\$7,211)	(\$7,637)	(\$8,167)	(\$8,331)	(\$8,498)
Net cash provided/(used) in Operating	\$1,721	\$4,995	(\$2,141)	(\$4,384)	\$327	\$324
Cash Flows from Investing Activities						
Payments for purchase of fixed assets	(\$204)	(\$36)	\$0	(\$300)	(\$300)	(\$300)
Proceeds from disposal of fixed assets	\$15	\$124	\$0	\$150	\$150	\$150
Net Cash used provided/(used) in investing	(\$189)	\$88	\$0	(\$150)	(\$150)	(\$150)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held	\$1532	\$5,083	(\$2,141)	(\$4,534)	\$177	\$174
Cash at the beginning of the financial year	\$6,253	\$7,785	\$12,868	\$10,727	\$6,193	\$6,370
Cash at the end of the financial year	\$7,785	\$12,868	\$10,727	\$6,193	\$6,370	\$6,544

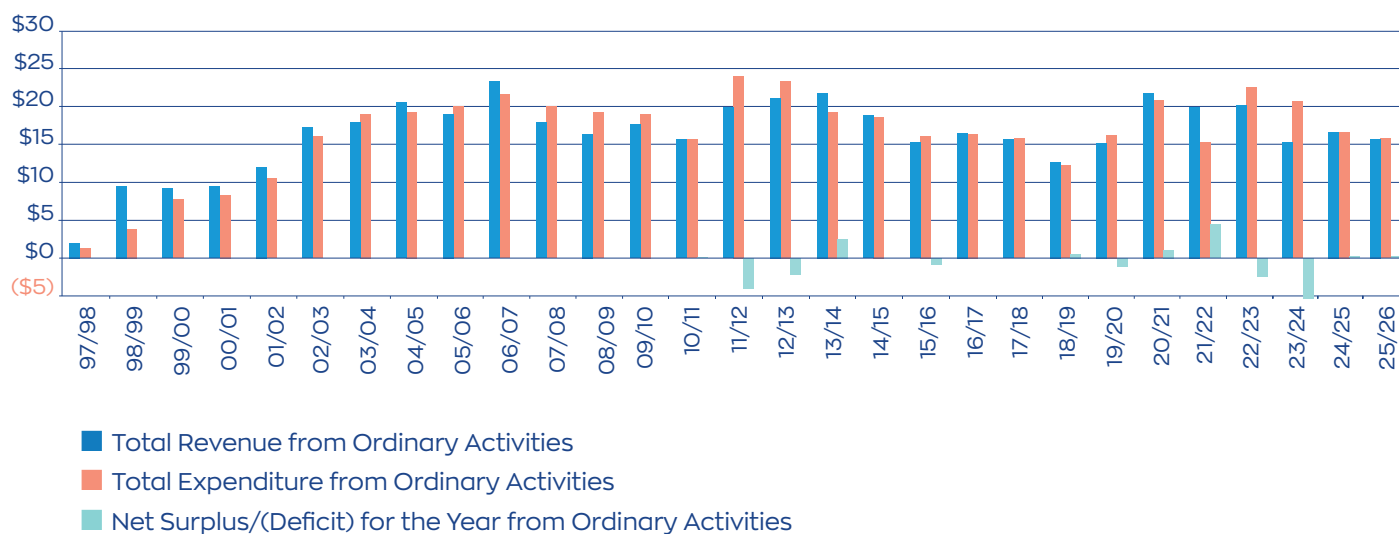
Balance sheet

Balance Sheet	Actual 2020/21 \$ 000's	Actual 2021/22 \$ 000's	Estimate 2022/23 \$ 000's	Budget 2023/24 \$ 000's	Forecast 2024/25 \$ 000's	Forecast 2025/26 \$ 000's
Assets						
Current						
Cash/Deposits	\$7,785	\$12,868	\$10,727	\$6,193	\$6,370	\$6,544
Receivables & Accrued Revenue	\$1,013	\$324	\$389	\$300	\$300	\$300
Prepayments	\$192	\$219	\$200	\$200	\$200	\$200
AASB15 Contract Assets	\$589	\$661	\$700	\$0	\$0	\$0
Non-Current						
PP&E	\$2,601	\$2,699	\$2,476	\$2,399	\$2,321	\$2,251
Total Assets	\$12,180	\$16,771	\$14,492	\$9,092	\$9,191	\$9,295
Liabilities						
Current						
Accounts Payable & Accrued Expenses	\$1,056	\$825	\$774	\$700	\$700	\$700
Employee Provisions	\$1,594	\$1,662	\$1,720	\$1,806	\$1,896	\$1,991
AASB16 Right of Use Lease Liability	\$22	\$13	\$5	\$0	\$0	\$0
Non-Current						
Employee Provisions	\$126	\$132	\$175	\$181	\$190	\$199
Total Liabilities	\$2,798	\$2,632	\$2,674	\$2,687	\$2,786	\$2,890
Net Assets	\$9,382	\$14,139	\$11,818	\$7,045	\$6,405	\$6,405
Contributed Capital	\$8,756	\$8,756	\$8,756	\$8,756	\$8,756	\$8,756
Reserves	\$1,468	\$1,628	\$1,628	\$1,628	\$1,628	\$1,628
Retained Earnings/(Deficit)	(\$1,897)	(\$842)	\$3,755	\$1,434	(\$3,979)	(\$3,979)
Current Year Earnings/(Deficit)	\$1,055	\$4,597	(\$2,321)	(\$5,413)	\$0	\$0
Equity	\$9,382	\$14,139	\$11,818	\$6,405	\$6,405	\$6,405

Estimated capital expenditure

Estimated Capital Expenditure	Actual 2020/21 \$ 000's	Actual 2021/22 \$ 000's	Estimate 2022/23 \$ 000's	Budget 2023/24 \$ 000's	Forecast 2024/25 \$ 000's	Forecast 2025/26 \$ 000's
Opening Written Down Value	\$2,009	\$2,601	\$2,699	\$2,476	\$2,399	\$2,321
Depreciation	(\$217)	(\$76)	(\$223)	(\$227)	(\$228)	(\$221)
Additions	\$204	\$35	\$0	\$300	\$300	\$300
Revaluation	\$620	\$160	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Disposals at Written Down Value	(\$15)	(\$21)	\$0	(\$150)	(\$150)	(\$150)
Closing Written Down Value	\$2,601	\$2,699	\$2,476	\$2,399	\$2,321	\$2,251

Summary of financial results and forecasts 1997-98 to 2025-26 (\$ millions)



New project funding

New Project Funding	Actual 2020/21 \$ 000's	Actual 2021/22 \$ 000's	Estimate 2022/23 \$ 000's	Budget 2023/24 \$ 000's	Forecast 2024/25 \$ 000's	Forecast 2025/26 \$ 000's
State Government						
DELWP	\$14,638	\$12,345	\$12,228	\$9,092	\$11,000	\$10,000
Department of Justice	\$41	\$153	\$110	\$53	\$50	\$50
Department Jobs, Precincts & Regions	\$1,129	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Commonwealth Government						
Murray Darling Basin Plan	\$1,736	\$1,678	\$1,292	\$1,597	\$1,500	\$1,500
National Landcare Program	\$2,061	\$1,942	\$1,999	\$1,668	\$1,950	\$1,950
DISR Fishway	\$0	\$0	\$1,250	\$350	\$0	\$0
Other	\$0	\$303	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other Funding						
Water Corporations	\$484	\$355	\$394	\$404	\$400	\$400
CMA's	\$6	\$6	\$116	\$0	\$0	\$0
Local Government	\$0	\$20	\$0	\$142	\$0	\$0
Other	\$0	\$513	\$243	\$253	\$500	\$500
Total Project Funding Received	\$20,095	\$17,315	\$17,632	\$13,560	\$15,400	\$14,400
Project Programs Expenditure	(\$19,100)	(\$13,037)	(\$19,969)	(\$18,677)	(\$15,400)	(\$14,400)
Net Programs (Expenditure)/Carry	\$995	\$4,278	(\$2,337)	(\$5,117)	\$0	\$0
Opening Balance	\$4,422	\$5,417	\$9,695	\$7,358	\$2,241	\$2,241
(Expenditure)/Carry	\$995	\$4,278	(\$2,337)	(\$5,117)	\$0	\$0
Closing Balance	\$5,417	\$9,695	\$7,358	\$2,241	\$2,241	\$2,241

Notes

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 \$0.6 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 five 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 were 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 was affected in the Balance Sheet at 30 June 2021 with the offset presented as an increase in the Asset Revaluation Reserve.

Capital

Capital investments planned are the replacement of motor vehicles in-line with Government Standard Motor Vehicle policy and safety requirements. The Plan includes an allocation of \$300k 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 two per cent in-line with the endorsed Enterprise Agreement plus additional 0.5% superannuation contribution.
- Corporate costs remain flat overall, factoring in expected savings targets.
- Growth in FTEs limited to project demand and support of consolidation of GIS services for the CMA sector.
- Corporate cost recovery targeted towards a break-even position.
- Interest rates to remain steady.

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



