



EAST GIPPSLAND
CATCHMENT
MANAGEMENT
AUTHORITY

CORPORATE PLAN

2021/22 - 2025/26

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CHAIRPERSON'S FOREWORD

On behalf of the Board, I am pleased to submit the East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority's (the Authority) Corporate Plan for the period 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2026. The scope of the Plan extends to five years with a particular focus on the next year's requirements to achieve our strategic goals.

This Plan satisfies the Corporate Plan requirements under the *Water Act 1989* (Water Act), the Business Plan requirements under the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994* (CaLP Act), the Ministerial Guidelines, the *Statement of Obligations for Catchment Management Authorities* and the *Letter of Expectations*.

Importantly it provides transparency to our community, the government and other stakeholders about the outcomes we aim to achieve with government investment and provides the framework for reporting on the Authority's corporate performance in the Annual Report.

The East Gippsland Region has experienced significant challenges over recent years. Notably, rainfall has been well below average during the past four years, which was exacerbated by the unprecedented 2019/20 bushfires that impacted large parts of the land area in the region. At the time of preparing this Plan, the community is also in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic. Collectively, these challenges have had a widespread and significant impact on the region, the community and our catchments.

Aboriginal people across Gippsland have been on a long journey of healing and re-establishing their culture and lore practices since European settlement during the 1800s. The dispossession has had generational impacts on the community and Country, and while some recent improvements have occurred, there is still a long way to go. The recent bushfires, compounded by the coronavirus pandemic, have added additional burdens on the Aboriginal community to heal, support their families and connect with culture.

Natural assets and the Authority's physical assets have been dramatically impacted in rivers and catchments that are already suffering from reduced flows. The community have expressed concerns regarding the condition and management of our public land. Matters such as the introduction and spread of invasive pests and animals is a major concern heard often.

Never before have we experienced the scale of concern regarding our preparation for future droughts and fires. Community conversation is filled with concern to ensure we are better prepared for managing and reducing climate impacts such as drought and fire. Preparedness and prevention are key words in our community voices over the past few years. The efforts of the Authority have never been more important in collaborating with our partners and stakeholders in regional recovery efforts in the coming years.

There have been some variations to program planning for next year to ensure strict adherence to coronavirus rules. For example:

- Variations to some of the Authority's community grant programs have been necessary as partners have not been able to conduct community-based events.
- Numbers of Authority community events have been reduced.

Staff have maintained strong and regular connections with each other and community partners during this time. Telephone and online meetings have supported conversations and connections at both informal and formal levels. Work plan priorities have been reviewed, flexible working arrangements supported, and leave provided when required to accommodate the current coronavirus restrictions and the impacts these are having on all staff.

The existing uncertainties associated with the coronavirus pandemic and the Authority's ability to achieve strategic outcomes through its programs and initiatives has been a consideration in the preparation of this Plan. Community engagement and collaborative effort, which is a critical success factor in achieving the Authority's strategic objectives, has been necessarily curtailed through the pandemic control initiatives and remains a significant uncertainty in the months ahead.

Despite this uncertainty, the Authority remains committed to delivering on the nine statewide priorities that are described in the *Letter of Expectations*. The following summary describes the major programs and projects of the Authority for next year under each state-wide priority heading:

1. Improved performance and demonstrating outcomes

- Achieving statutory function efficiencies through shared services arrangements. The focus this year is to expand floodplain statutory arrangements to other Catchment Management Authorities and complete an efficiencies and effectiveness review of all statutory functions this year.
- The East Gippsland CEOs (EG CEOs) forum, chaired by the Authority CEO, is also achieving efficiencies through sharing services and staff. The forum is also developing joint positions and actions on the following priorities:
 1. Helping understand and implement Gunaikurnai Land and Water Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC) regional cultural priorities.
 2. Identifying and implementing Climate Adaptation initiatives.
 3. Multi-agency commitment to:
 - a. Safety in the Workplace
 - b. Community Safety
 - c. Cultural Safety
- The Authority's flagship program monitoring and reporting framework provides a monitoring system for all past works which consistently evaluates site condition and compliance with landholder agreements. The information aggregates to provide reach and landscape scale assessments of our progress.

- The Gippsland Environment Agencies (GEA) forum, chaired by the Authority CEO, has set the following priorities for this year:
 1. Full implementation support for Gunaikurnai Joint Management Plan.
 2. Establishing a standing emergency recovery framework for emergency events in Gippsland.
 3. Improving fire prevention in Gippsland.
 4. Implementing the Gippsland Lakes - Room to Move project.

2. Climate Change

Three major climate change initiatives are planned for the coming year:

- Addressing climate change implications for the Gippsland Lakes through the “Room to Move” initiative, which is seeking to manage impacts on the lake environment, adjoining rivers and wetlands, lakeside town infrastructure planning and cultural heritage protection.
- Continuation of the Lakes Entrance Growth and Adaption Strategy to plan for the potential future impacts of sea-level rise and riverine flooding on Lakes Entrance Township, in collaboration with East Gippsland Shire Council, Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning (DELWP).
- Achieving net zero carbon emissions through implementation of solar panel installations across all owned buildings. This project is in the statutory approvals phase presently.

3. Waterway and Catchment Health

The Authority has completed all obligations for the fourth Environmental Contributions Levy (EC4) tranche of funding programs and submitted a proposal for the fifth Environmental Contributions Levy (EC5) tranche of funding to be considered by government in 2021. Key priorities for the new tranche are:

- Continuation of the Flagship programs including the Mitchell River, the Cann River, and the Gippsland Lakes.
- Continuation of willow and woody weed control programs in the upper catchment streams.
- Continuation of the Gippsland Lakes program, overseen by the Gippsland Lakes Coordinating Committee (GLCC).
- Scaling up the lower Mitchell rehabilitation works in line with the Water for Victoria listing as a flagship priority, with a focus from Glenaladale bridge at the top of the floodplain to the mouth.
- Completing landscape program status reports for the Gippsland Lakes and the Red Gum Plains.
- Continuing to implement the bushfire recovery projects assigned to the Authority.
- Consulting with community on the review and renewal of the East Gippsland Regional Catchment Strategy (RCS).

4. Water for Agriculture

The Authority has three major priorities for the coming year:

- Contribution to development of the Central and Gippsland Sustainable Water Strategy.
- Implementation of the “Sowing the Gap” project funded by the future drought fund. The project is working with partners to trial drought resilient pastures and crops and document successful methods utilised by East Gippsland farmers to sustain the latest drought.
- Membership of the East Gippsland Shire Agricultural Advisory Committee, participating in developing strategic initiatives to improve agriculture in East Gippsland.

5. Community Engagement and Partnerships

High levels of effective engagement are fundamental to the success of the Authority in delivering our programs. The Authority’s annual engagement and participation plan guides engagement at all levels to ensure that as many partners as possible are working together on common RCS priorities. Examples of related initiatives are:

- Membership of Vic Catchments, a collegiate body of all Catchment Management Authority (CMA) Chairs and CEOs, which focusses on high-level state-wide relationships with partners such as Landcare, Greening Australia and Trust for Nature.
- Renewing and continuing administrative support to the GLCC.
- Membership of the EG CEOs and GEA forums, focussing on review and implementation of the East Gippsland Catchment Partnership Agreement.
- Facilitating a range of Program Working Groups, comprising partner agencies, groups and individuals, to coordinate and implement landscape priority programs in East Gippsland and Cross-Border.
- Consulting with community on the review and renewal of the East Gippsland Regional Catchment Strategy.

6. Recognise and support Aboriginal cultural values and economic inclusion in the water sector

- Partnering with GLaWAC together with other Gippsland water agencies to host water officers is helping to further identify cultural values and future management options along our waterways.
- Also in partnership with GLaWAC, developing future waterway programs such as Gippsland Lakes “Room to Move” program and the flagship Mitchell River Rehabilitation program. Important cultural priorities are being identified as part of these processes.

- Our long-term partnership with Moogji Aboriginal Corporation on the Snowy River will continue this year. The program has assisted Moogji to develop its skills and reputation, meeting competitive tender criteria for other agencies in East Gippsland.
- Assisting the development of the “Parks as Products” initiative of the Gunaikurnai and Victorian Government Joint Management Plan, which aims to identify and leverage cultural knowledge and stories relevant to the ten parks and reserves under Joint Management.

7. Recognise recreational values

Communities utilise our natural environments for recreational purposes such as enjoying nature, camping, fishing and paddling. The Authority will continue to work with community groups to increase involvement and participation in improving the environment through:

- A range of community grants programs such as Gippsland Lakes Community, Landcare, Riparian Action Plan, and Angler Riparian grants.
- Supporting community initiatives such as the Bairnsdale Rowing Regatta, held on the Mitchell River and community group clean up days.
- Incorporating recreational values into regional landscape plans, such as provision of community spaces in the Lower Mitchell Rehabilitation plan.

8. Resilient and liveable cities and towns

The Integrated Water Management (IWM) Forum has been well integrated with the EG CEOs forum to provide seamless support from key partner agency leaders. IWM funding has been approved by the Minister for Water for several projects in East Gippsland including a water re-use project at the Bairnsdale Sale Yards and recreation reserve.

9. Leadership, diversity and culture

- Continuing to chair the GEA forum and lead implementation and review of the partnership agreement between GLaWAC and the member agencies, which targets aboriginal workforce development, increased participation in decision making on Country, implementation of the Joint Management Plan and growing cultural knowledge and understanding.
- Through the GEA, continuing to host the Women Leadership Team (GEA WLT). Led by women in Gippsland, the team is about developing and fostering leadership at all levels. GEA WLT hosts an annual regional forum, a mentoring program, jointly convened training across agencies and has involved over 500 women in Gippsland to date.
- Implementing our Diversity and Inclusion Plan. Through our engagement processes, the Authority is also fostering greater adoption of diversity and inclusion by our partners.

- Continuing to provide administrative support services for Gunaikurnai Land and Water Traditional Owner Land Management Board (GKTOLMB). This sharing of services delivers efficiencies and utilises the Authority governance skills, systems and expertise to assist our partners.
- Implementing and expanding further, our leadership development programs right up to CEO level. This underpins our belief that leadership occurs at all levels.

The following sections set out in greater detail the strategic objectives, programs, initiatives, outputs, and outcomes to be delivered during the coming period along with the related Authority resource requirements. The Plan underpins the important role and activities of the Authority in the regional recovery effort from the devastating drought and bushfires and delivering on the State-wide priorities for catchment management.

1. BUSINESS DIRECTION

1.1. PURPOSE

The East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority is a government statutory authority whose role is managing waterways and influencing catchment management in partnership with the community.

1.2. VISION

“We are leaders in integrated catchment management, partnering with our communities to enhance East Gippsland’s landscapes, biodiversity and cultural heritage.”

1.3. OUR CONTEXT

The East Gippsland Catchment Management Region (Figure 1) covers 2.2 million ha of land, lakes, and coastal waters out to 5.5 km, in the eastern-most part of Victoria. It is entirely south of the Great Dividing Range and includes the catchments of streams from the Mitchell River eastwards. The region covers about ten per cent of Victoria.

The region includes most of the East Gippsland Shire, the northern part of the Wellington Shire, and that part of the Alpine Shire south of the Great Dividing Range. It abuts the Wangaratta Shire and the New South Wales Shires of Snowy River, Bombala, and Eden Valley.

The Victorian Alps and mountains of the Great Dividing Range extend from the west to east across the northern boundary of the region. Foothills, lowland forests, and coastal complexes to the south also extend from west to east, while rivers generally run north to south through the region, dissecting these landforms. Some catchments, such as the Mitchell, Tambo, Snowy and Cann River catchments include deep, mid-catchment, mountain basins, which have been extensively cleared for dryland agriculture.

Major land uses and industries include conservation, agriculture, tourism, native forestry, plantation forestry and fisheries. About 80% of the land of the region is in public ownership, mainly as State Forests and National Parks.

Most freehold land is used for farming, ranging from large commercial enterprises to small ‘rural residential’ properties. Cities and towns occupy a small proportion of land in the region.

Some of the important features of East Gippsland are:

- The Gippsland Lakes, which have significant environmental, social, and economic value and are on the Ramsar List of Wetlands of International Importance.
- Its array of streams, especially the wild rivers, including the iconic Snowy River and Victoria's biggest unregulated stream, the Mitchell River.
- Its long coastal reach with undeveloped estuaries, ocean beaches and spectacular headlands.
- Its mountains and forests, which provide great scenery, clean air, clean water, recreational opportunity, and forestry products.
- Its scenic and productive farming lands, especially in the river valleys.
- Its living wealth in the form of native plants and animals, some of which occur only in this region.
- The region's rich Aboriginal cultural history with Aboriginal people caring for country.

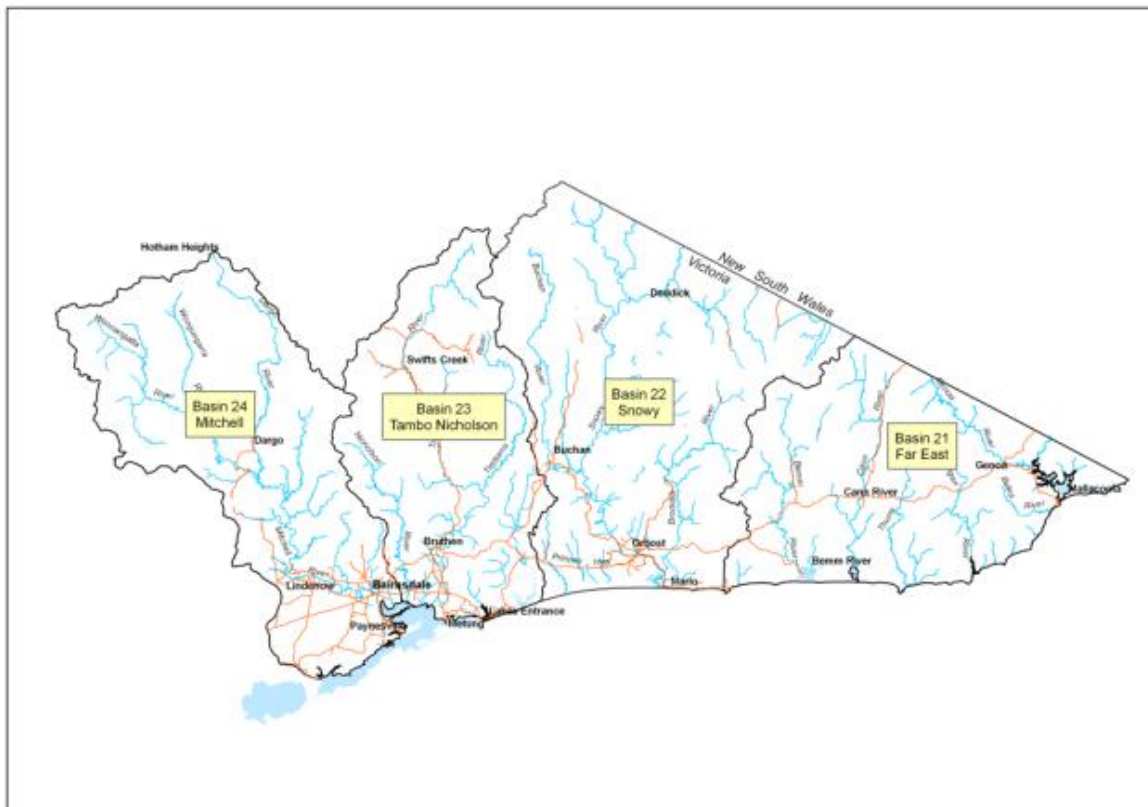
The Aboriginal community in East Gippsland is represented by Gunaikurnai, Bidwell, and Ngarigo Monero. GLaWAC is a Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) in East Gippsland. Aboriginal people have a strong connection to country in East Gippsland.

In October 2010, the Federal Court made a determination (FCA1144) that native title exists over much of Gippsland and is held by the Gunaikurnai people (those persons who identify as Gunai, Kurnai, or Gunai/Kurnai). The court recognised the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation as the sole holder and representative body of these native title rights and interests on behalf of all Gunaikurnai people. At the same time, the State of Victoria entered into a recognition and settlement agreement with the corporation under the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010*.

The agreement includes:

- a number of cultural recognition and strengthening initiatives.
- the transfer of 10 parks and reserves to the Gunaikurnai as 'Aboriginal title' and establishment of a Traditional Owner Land Management Board for joint management with the state rights to use crown land for traditional purposes, the Joint Management Plan is currently in implementation phase.

Figure 1



1.4. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The Authority's strategic objectives directly reflect those of the Victorian Government Integrated Catchment Management Goals (ICM goals) articulated through the policy statement "Our Catchments Our Communities, Integrated Catchment Management in Victoria (OCOC)". The 5 goals of the policy are:

- Effective community engagement in catchment management
- Better connections between state, regional and local planning
- Strengthened implementation of regional catchment strategies
- Clearer roles, strengthened accountability and coordination
- Improved monitoring, evaluation, and reporting

There are a number of other state-wide policies and frameworks that determine our planning approach. The Authority has ensured that its strategic direction aligns with the state-wide strategies such as:

- Water for Victoria – Water Plan (2016)
- Protecting Victoria’s Environment - Biodiversity 2037
- Regional Riparian Action Plan
- Victorian Floodplain Management Strategy
- Victorian Waterway Management Strategy
- Gippsland Region Sustainable Water Strategy
- *Climate Change Act 2017*
- *Marine and Coastal Act 2018*

Integral to these policies and frameworks, the Minister for Water’s Letter of Expectation sets out the following nine priority policy areas to be addressed by the Authority:

- Improved performance and demonstrating outcomes
- Climate change
- Waterway and catchment health
- Water for agriculture
- Community engagement and partnerships
- Recognise and support Aboriginal cultural values and economic inclusion in the water sector
- Recognising recreational values
- Resilient and liveable cities and towns
- Leadership, diversity, and culture

The planned programs and initiatives and the associated outcomes to be achieved in progressing the priority policy areas are detailed in Section 2 of this Plan. Having regard to the ongoing commitment necessary for integrated catchment management and achieving sustainable and beneficial outcomes, all of the initiatives and programs are being progressively implemented over the medium to long term. The Plan also brings a focus to the related near term activities to be implemented over the coming year.

2. PLANNED PROGRAMS, SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY

2.1. MAIN BUSINESS UNDERTAKINGS

The Authority provides for the integrated management of land, biodiversity and water resources in the region. It also has responsibility for the planning and delivery of river health works and several statutory activities. The main Authority business undertakings as set out in governing legislation are:

CALP Act 1994

Coordinating the Regional Catchment Strategy and supporting plans

We complete the RCS and associated action plans and oversee implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Community Engagement

We help build government and community cooperation in maintaining our natural resources.

Water Act 1989 - Caretaker of River Health

On-ground river health works

We oversee river health works guided by the East Gippsland Waterway Strategy through our own contractors, partner agencies and organisations.

Statutory Functions

We license works on waterways and assess planning referrals on floodplains.

Community Engagement

We help build government and community cooperation in maintaining and improving the health of our rivers.

2.2. NATURE AND SCOPE OF ACTIVITIES

It's not possible to describe the many activities the Authority undertakes contributing to the nine state-wide priority policy areas listed below. Service level agreements describe the detail of all actions the Authority undertakes, which are reported against regularly.

The following describes the major activities that we will undertake next year.

2.2.1. Improved performance and demonstrating outcomes

Achieving statutory function efficiencies through shared services arrangements. The focus this year is to expand floodplain statutory arrangements to other Catchment Management Authorities and implementing the roll out of a shared financial system. The state-wide CEOs forum is completing an efficiencies and effectiveness review of all statutory functions this year.

The EG CEOs forum, chaired by the Authority CEO, is also achieving efficiencies through sharing services and staff. The forum is also developing joint positions and actions on the following priorities:

- Helping understand and implement GLaWAC regional cultural priorities.
- Identifying and implementing Climate Adaptation initiatives.
- Multi-agency commitment to:
 - Safety in the Workplace
 - Community Safety
 - Cultural Safety

The Authority's flagship program monitoring and reporting framework provides a monitoring system for all past works which consistently evaluates site condition and compliance with landholder agreements. The information aggregates to provide reach and landscape scale assessments of our progress.

The GEA forum, chaired by the Authority CEO, has set the following priorities for this year:

- Full implementation support for Gunaikurnai Joint Management Plan.
- Establish a standing emergency recovery framework for emergency events in Gippsland.
- Improving fire prevention in Gippsland.
- Implementing the Gippsland Lakes - Room to Move project.

2.2.2. Climate Change

Three major climate change initiatives are planned for the coming year:

- Addressing climate change implications for the Gippsland Lakes through the “Room to Move” initiative, which is seeking to manage impacts on the lake environment, adjoining rivers and wetlands, lakeside town infrastructure planning and cultural heritage protection.
- Continuation of the Lakes Entrance Growth and Adaptation Strategy to plan for the potential future impacts of sea-level rise and riverine flooding on Lakes Entrance Township, in collaboration with East Gippsland Shire Council and DELWP.
- Achieving net zero carbon emissions through implementation of solar panel installations across all owned buildings. Project is in statutory approvals phase presently.

2.2.3. Waterway and Catchment Health

The Authority has completed all obligations for the EC4 tranche of funding programs and submitted a proposal for the EC5 tranche of funding to be considered by government in 2021. Key priorities for the new tranche are:

- Continuation of the Flagship programs including Mitchell River, Cann River, and the Gippsland Lakes.
- Continuation of willow and woody weed control programs in upper catchment streams.
- Continuation of the Gippsland Lakes program, overseen by the GLCC.
- Scaling up the lower Mitchell rehabilitation works in line with the Water for Victoria listing as a flagship priority, with a focus from Glenaladale bridge at the top of the floodplain to Bairnsdale.
- Completing two landscape program status reports for Gippsland Lakes and Red Gum Plains this year.
- Continuing to implement the bushfire recovery projects assigned to the Authority.
- Working in partnership with community, agencies and Traditional Owners to renew the Regional Catchment Strategy.

2.2.4. Water for Agriculture

The Authority has three major priorities for the coming year:

- Contribution to development of the Central and Gippsland Sustainable Water Strategy.
- Implementation of the Ag. Futures project funded by the future drought fund. The project will work with partners to trial drought resilient pastures and crops and document successful methods utilised by East Gippsland farmers to sustain the latest drought.

- Membership of the East Gippsland Shire Agricultural Advisory Committee, participating in developing strategic initiatives to improve agriculture in East Gippsland.

2.2.5. Community Engagement and Partnerships

High levels of effective engagement are fundamental to the success of the Authority in delivering our programs. The Authority’s annual engagement and participation plan guides engagement at all levels to ensure that as many partners as possible are working together on common RCS priorities. Examples of related initiatives are:

- Membership of Vic Catchments, a collegiate body of all CMA Chairs and CEOs, focusses on high-level state-wide relationships with partners such as Landcare, Greening Australia, and Trust for Nature.
- Renewing and continuing administrative support to the GLCC.
- Membership of the EG CEOs and GEA forums, focussing on review and implementation of the East Gippsland Catchment Partnership Agreement.
- Facilitating a range of Program Working Groups, comprising partner agencies, groups, and individuals, to coordinate and implement landscape priority programs in East Gippsland and Cross-Border.
- Consulting with community on the review and renewal of the East Gippsland Regional Catchment Strategy.

2.2.6. Recognise and support Aboriginal cultural values and economic inclusion in the water sector

- Partnering with GLaWAC together with other Gippsland water agencies to host water officers is helping to further identify cultural values and future management options along our waterways.
- Also, in partnership with GLaWAC, developing future waterway programs such as Gippsland Lakes “Room to Move” and the flagship Mitchell River Rehabilitation. Important cultural priorities are being identified as part of these processes.
- Our long-term partnership with Moogji Aboriginal Corporation on the Snowy River will continue this year. The program has assisted Moogji to develop skills and reputation, meeting competitive tender criteria for other agencies in East Gippsland.
- Assisting the development of the “Parks as Products” initiative of the Gunaikurnai and Victorian Government Joint Management Plan, which aims to identify and leverage cultural knowledge and stories relevant to the ten parks and reserves.

2.2.7. Recognise recreational values

Communities utilise our natural environments for recreational purposes such as enjoying nature, camping, fishing, and paddling. The Authority will continue to work with community groups to increase involvement and participation in improving the environment through:

- A range of community grants programs such as Gippsland Lakes Community, Landcare, Riparian Action Plan, and Angler Riparian grants.
- Supporting community initiatives such as the Bairnsdale Rowing Regatta, held on the Mitchell River, East Gippsland Field Days and community group clean up days.
- Incorporating recreational values into regional landscape plans, such as provision of community spaces in the Lower Mitchell Rehabilitation plan.

2.2.8. Resilient and liveable cities and towns

The IWM Forum has been well integrated with the EG CEOs forum to provide seamless support from key partner agency leaders.

IWM funding has been approved by the Minister for Water for several projects in East Gippsland including a water re-use project at the Bairnsdale Sale Yards and recreation reserve.

2.2.9. Leadership, diversity, and culture

- Continuing to chair the GEA forum and lead implementation of the partnership agreement between GLaWAC and the member agencies, which targets Aboriginal workforce development, increased participation in decision making on Country, implementation of the Joint Management Plan and growing cultural knowledge and understanding.
- Through the GEA, continuing to host the GEA WLT. Led by women in Gippsland, the team is about developing and fostering leadership at all levels. GEA WLT hosts an annual regional forum, a mentoring program, jointly convened training across agencies and has involved over 500 women in Gippsland to date.
- Implementing our Diversity and Inclusion Plan. Through our engagement processes, the Authority is also fostering greater adoption of diversity and inclusion by our partners.
- Continuing to provide administrative support services for the GKTOLMB. This sharing of services delivers efficiencies and utilises the Authority governance skills, systems, and expertise to assist our partners.
- Implementing and expanding further, our leadership development programs right up to CEO level. This underpins our belief that leadership occurs at all levels.

2.3. PROGRAM THEMES (OUTPUTS)

The Authority follows the Victorian Government Output Data Standards. Outputs for the Victorian Government and Commonwealth Government funded programs are:

Victorian Government Outputs

The outputs for 2021/22 are based on the proposed output deliverables outlined in the EC5 funding submissions and bushfire recovery. The Authority is progressing through the funding proposal process; therefore, the outputs are estimates only.

Table 1: Victorian Government funded outputs planned to be delivered in 2021/22

Output	Output type	Unit of Measure	Target
Approval and advice	Advice	No.	134
Approval and advice	Permit	No.	40
Approval and advice	Referral	No.	66
Assessment	Cultural	Ha	2
Assessment	Ecological	Ha	122
Assessment	Fauna	No.	7
Assessment	Flora	No.	2
Assessment	Invasive Species	No.	1
Assessment	Property	Ha	155
Assessment	Soil	Ha	1
Assessment	Surface Water	No.	56
Engagement Event	Conference	No.	150
Engagement Event	Field Day	No.	105
Engagement Event	Meeting	No.	586
Engagement Event	Presentation	No.	50
Fence	Fence	Km	15
Grazing	Riparian	Ha	79
Information Management System	Database	No.	3
Management Agreement	Binding (non-perpetual)	No.	14
Monitoring Structure	Measuring Point	No.	5
Partnership	Agency	No.	113
Partnership	Community	No.	25
Pest Animal Control	Terrestrial	Ha	4000
Plan	Engagement	No.	1
Plan	Management	No.	14
Plan	Strategy	No.	1
Publication	Audio	No.	2
Publication	Visual	No.	3
Publication	Written	No.	143
Vegetation	Native	Ha	40
Water Storage	Tank	No.	14
Waterway Structure	Fishway	Point	1
Waterway Structure	Large Wood	Point	5
Weed Control	Non-woody	Ha	908
Weed Control	Woody	Ha	389

Commonwealth Government Outputs

Based on current project proposals, the deliverables for 2021/22 are expressed in the table below.

Table 2: Commonwealth Government funded outputs planned to be delivered in 2021/22

Output	Output Type	Unit of measure	No.
Pest animal control	Terrestrial	Area treated (ha)	300
Assessment	Fauna	Survey	8
Weed control	Woody/Non-woody	Hectares	90
Management Agreement	Binding non-perpetual	Agreement	1
Plan	Management	Plan	1
Pest animal control	Terrestrial	Area treated (ha)	2
Engagement Event	Community groups	Group	5
Waterway structure	Large wood	Structures	50
Vegetation	Native indigenous	Kilometres	1
Engagement Event	Workshop	Workshop Event	2
Assessment	Geospatial	Data Sets	1
Plan	Management	Plan	1
Assessment	Geospatial	Data Sets	51
Approval and advice	Permit	Approval	1

2.4. OUTCOME INDICATORS

The outcomes provide the broader context within which the Authority operates and sets our focus and key directions over the medium term. This includes the Authority's contribution to shared government objectives and collaboration with partners to achieve the Authority's broader objectives.

Table 3: Improved performance and demonstrating outcomes

Priority Area	Outcome Indicators	Regional Outcome Indicators	Regional Outcome Measure
Improved performance and demonstrating outcomes	Improved performance and demonstrated results against outcomes	Collaborate with DELWP to improve reporting systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish Corporate Plan, Annual Report and Engagement Plan on an annual basis. Participate in state-wide programs and systems development
		Demonstrate outcomes of Government investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement Flagship rivers program on the Mitchell River. Collaborate with agencies and community, including East Gippsland CEOs and GEA.
		Deliver efficiency through shared services, procurement, and technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review statutory functions and moving towards shared services model across the State.
		Work collaboratively with Vic Catchments to strengthen collaboration and performance across the sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to work with Vic Catchments.

Table 4: Climate Change

Priority Area	Outcome Indicators	Regional Outcome Indicators	Regional Outcome Measure
Climate change	Active investigation into new opportunities to sequester carbon	Explore opportunities to sequester carbon and generate carbon offsets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Net zero carbon emissions through implementation of solar panel installations across all owned buildings.
		Progress on climate change adaption initiatives outlined in climate change and catchment strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuation of the Lakes Entrance Growth and Adaptation Strategy jointly with East Gippsland Shire Council and DELWP. Addressing climate change implications for the Gippsland Lakes through the "Room to Move" project.

Table 5: Waterways and Catchment Health

Priority Area	Outcome Indicators	Regional Outcome Indicators	Regional Outcome Measure
Waterway and Catchment Health	Improved catchment health and resilience.	Develop and implement the new RCS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop the RCS in collaboration with community, partner agencies and Traditional Owners.
		Deliver integrated catchment management with strengthened performance across environmental, social, and economic outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key initiatives to be delivered through EC5 include Gippsland Lakes, Flagship waterways, Integrated Catchment Management along the Mitchell River, upper catchments woody weed control and bushfire recovery.
		Report on catchment partnerships agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In collaboration with GEA, review and renew the East Gippsland Catchment Partnerships Agreement.

Table 6: Water for Agriculture

Priority Area	Outcome Indicators	Regional Outcome Indicators	Regional Outcome Measure
Water for agriculture	A productive and profitable irrigation sector and vibrant and resilient regional communities that adapt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote sustainable irrigation management practices to support community Plan and coordinate activities to improve water quality Provide flexibility for agriculture to continue to adapt to change and do more with less water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to the Central and Gippsland Sustainable Water Strategy. Work with East Gippsland farmers to implement the Ag Futures project. Continue to be an active member on the East Gippsland Shire Council Agriculture Advisory Committee.

Table 7: Community engagement and partnerships

Priority Area	Outcome Indicators	Regional Outcome Indicators	Regional Outcome Measure
Community engagement and partnerships	A strong community engagement focus that is a cornerstone of CMAs functions	Continue to build extensive, effective, and consistent approaches to community engagement and partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement Plan implemented, reviewed, and renewed annually.

		Continue to work collaboratively with organisations and communities to strengthen engagement approaches and capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative support to the Gippsland Lakes Coordinating Committee. • Chair GEA and the East Gippsland CEOs forum. • As part of the development and implementation of the RCS, program working groups are established and working together collaboratively to achieve priority actions.
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Table 8: Recognise and support Aboriginal cultural values and economic inclusion in the water sector

Priority Area	Outcome Indicators	Regional Outcome Indicators	Regional Outcome Measure
Recognise and support Aboriginal cultural values and inclusion in the water sector	Effective engagement with Traditional Owners	Effective engagements and partnerships with Traditional Owners in water planning and management that have led to improved outcomes for Aboriginal communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to partner with GLaWAC to plan, deliver and report on projects, including the Gippsland Lakes, Mitchell and Tambo Rivers. • Continue to partner with Moogji Aboriginal Council to plan, deliver and report on the Snowy River Rehabilitation Program. • Engage with Traditional Owners in Far East Gippsland as part of the RCS priority setting process. • Working with GEA (including GLaWAC and GKTOLMB) deliver key priorities in the Joint Management Plans.

Table 9: Recognise recreational values

Priority Area	Outcome Indicators	Regional Outcome Indicators	Regional Outcome Measure
Recognise recreational values	Water services that explicitly consider recreational values within existing frameworks	Evidence that recreational values were considered in planning and management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community grants to be provided through the following programs, Gippsland Lakes, Landcare, Angling Clubs and Bushfire Recovery. Community events supporting recreational events will continue to be supported, including the Bairnsdale Rowing Regatta held on the Mitchell River and East Gippsland Field Days. Incorporating recreational values into regional landscape plans, such as provision of community spaces in the Lower Mitchell Rehabilitation plan.
	Engagement with community to identify and prioritise recreational opportunities	Number of engagement processes with community and organisations to consider recreational values	
	Accessible and user-friendly information for recreational users	Evidence of improvement to information sources	
	Collaboration with other organisation and community to explore and progress opportunities to support recreational values	Evidence of collaboration to support recreational values	

Table 10: Resilient and livable cities and towns

Priority Area	Outcome Indicators	Regional Outcome Indicators	Regional Outcome Measure
Resilient and livable cities and towns	Healthy communities supporting resilient environments	Collaboration with water corporations and local government to enhance public spaces through IWM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to support the IWM Forum to deliver priorities as outlined in the East Gippsland IWM plan, including a water re-use project at the Bairnsdale Sale Yards and recreation reserve.
		Participating in the development and implementation of IWM plans	

Table 11: Leadership, diversity, and culture

Outcome	Outcome Indicators	Regional Outcome Indicators	Regional Outcome Measure
Leadership, diversity, and culture	Diversity and inclusion	Develop strategies and goals that will increase cultural diversity in the work force and gender equity in executive leadership throughout the organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to Chair GEA to lead the implementation of the GEA GLaWAC Partnership Agreement to increase opportunities for Aboriginal people; and the GEA Women Leadership Team to provide opportunities for women in leadership. • Expand our leadership development programs. • Continue to implement the Authority's Diversity and Inclusion Plan.
		Encourage staff participation in the 'People Matter Survey'	

2.5. REPORTING AND REVIEW OF THE CORPORATE PLAN

The Board monitors progress against objectives of the Corporate Plan at each meeting. Shortly after completion of the planning year, the Board again reviews organisational performance against the Corporate Plan and reports the results in the Annual Report to the Minister.

In the event that the Board identifies the need for a significant change in direction and/or changes to key strategies, it will amend the Corporate Plan at any time during its life as required.

3. FUTURE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

3.1. FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES INCLUDING KEY RISKS FOR THE NEXT 12 MONTHS.

The Authority has identified a range of opportunities through its strategic planning processes that are embodied in this Plan and detailed in Section 2.4. Underpinned by community engagement and partnerships, the outputs and outcomes range from on country projects with GLaWAC and other Aboriginal groups, “Our Catchment Our Communities” deliverables, recovery from the impacts of drought and bushfires and building and sustaining a resilient region. While many of the initiatives planned have a shorter term 12-month focus, a number, like bushfire recovery will necessarily require a longer-term commitment over the life of this Plan.

The Authority has also recognised some key challenges, risks, and actions that we will focus on over the next 12 months and beyond as follows:

3.1.1 Bushfire Recovery

Recovery plans are now in place and will be a key focus for Authority efforts. The Authority has received an additional \$4.4 million funding for the following fire recovery activities:

- Control of emergent woody weeds in burnt areas. After fire, woody weeds such as English Broom and Willow can establish at a quicker rate than natural plants. The Authority will complete weed control after the weeds set seed this spring and summer. This is a major initiative, vital for control of emerging weed threats in the upper catchments.
- Emergency debris removal and monitoring after heavy rain events. The Authority still has concerns regarding heavy rain events, especially in the Tambo, Snowy and Mitchell Rivers. The Authority is considering establishing a graduate student position to continue monitoring rain events and collate and address any significant debris issues that arise.
- The Authority intends to continue close engagement with all people affected by fire. When able to do so, we will continue local events and meetings aimed at connecting people together.
- The Authority will also support the recovery hubs through provision of information on progress of our recovery tasks and discussing any priority recovery options with the community.

3.1.2 Bushfire prevention

The Authority is working with partner agencies to ensure bushfire prevention becomes a major focus.

The GEA has agreed to bushfire prevention action development as one of its major priorities this year. This is a significant step in garnishing greater support for our strategic priority. The detail of developed actions will test this agreement during the year.

The Authority is in the process of engaging a bushfire prevention expert to provide an initial paper for consideration by the Board after review by the Board working group.

3.1.3 Continuing impacts of drought on East Gippsland Communities

The region has faced the driest three-year period on record and communities are still recovering from these events. Our focus is shifting on agriculture initiatives described in the priorities above.

3.1.4 Supporting communities through impacts of coronavirus

The Authority plays a key role locally to help discuss and resolve key issues within East Gippsland. The Authority has increased our community engagement activities through formal and non-formal mechanisms to help re-connect our community and support recovery.

3.1.5 Leadership development and succession

The Authority has implemented actions to ensure leadership succession in middle and senior management as follows:

- The middle managers have been appointed and are in place.
- All senior managers have development plans in place and are being implemented.
- The Authority is considering a framework to provide development opportunities through targeted secondments.
- The Authority has set a succession plan for the incumbent CEO and is considering a CEO development program for the coming years to prepare the Authority for the end of contract for the incumbent in 2023.

3.2. RISK MANAGEMENT

The Authority considers risk management as an important aspect of corporate governance and therefore a significant contributor to embedding our culture and values and in turn, delivering on our vision.

The Authority's Risk Management Framework is reviewed regularly and encompasses:

- the context for organisational risk management at the Authority.
- the overarching documentation structure and risk review requirements.
- the governance structure and accountabilities that are in place.
- the procedure for identifying and assessing enterprise risks, and the response required in order to mitigate risks that may impact the organisation.

The Authority's risk appetite has the following core risk appetite themes:

- Compliance and Governance (areas of low tolerance to risk; averse).
- Sustaining our Business (areas that balance risk and reward outcomes).
- Leadership, Collaboration and Empowerment (areas of increased appetite for risk taking; high rewards).

The Authority's Audit and Risk Committee meets each quarter to review risks and associated mitigating controls. Risks assessed with a consequence rating of catastrophic and major that may affect Authority objectives are included in the Authority's risk register. These areas of risk include:

- Community Engagement and Relationships
- OH&S
- Strategic Planning and Delivery
- Cultural Heritage and Environmental Impact
- Statutory Planning Advice
- Government Financial Support
- Landscape Scale Environmental Damage

The framework provides for the monitoring of controls, implementation of treatments and review processes to mitigate these risks and their potential impact on the Authority achieving its strategic objectives. Risk considerations are integral and embedded in the various Authority strategies and plans, including this Corporate Plan. A number of the planned activities set out in this Plan, such as the community engagement and cultural heritage priority policy areas, link explicitly to and contribute to controlling these risks. Other controls are embedded in the risk register and addressed through other linking strategies and plans.

4. ESTIMATES OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE

At present the Authority does not have a clear understanding of our income and expenditure position for the 2021/22 financial year. This is understandable as DELWP has deferred some funding decisions in relation to the EC5 tranche until the end of June 2021.

For the purposes of this plan the Authority has completed the following:

1. Provided income for next financial year based on some known contracted amounts such as Commonwealth grants.
2. Estimated Victorian Government revenue based on confirmed funding for some EC5 projects and one-off grants, and estimated funding based on submissions for the remaining EC5 projects.
3. Carried forward any forecast unspent project expenditure into 2021/22.
4. Estimated expenditure by category based on expenditure in the last financial year.

When the Authority receives written advice on actual funding to be received, we will re-submit a budget variance if that variance is greater than 10%.

A. OPERATING STATEMENT ('000)

	2021/22 Forecast	2022/23 Forecast	2023/24 Forecast
Revenue			
Local			
Interest	33	33	33
Other	552	565	560
Grants			
State	6,925	6,794	7,421
Commonwealth	893	915	0
Total Revenue	8,402	8,306	8,014
Expenditure			
Labour	3,042	3,134	3,228
Overheads	556	572	590
Depreciation	422	431	441
Amortisation	75	75	75
Authority Projects	4,176	2,179	1,922
Partner Projects	3,350	2,282	2,128
Total Expenditure	11,621	8,674	8,383
Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	(3,218)	(367)	(370)

B. CASHFLOW ('000)

	2021/22 Forecast	2022/23 Forecast	2023/24 Forecast
Cash and cash equivalents and term deposits at the beginning of the financial year	11,055	7,873	7,631
Revenue			
Local			
Interest	33	33	33
Other	552	565	560
Grants			
State	6,925	6,794	7,417
Commonwealth	893	911	0
Total inflows	8,402	8,302	8,010
Expenditure			
Labour	3,042	3,127	3,228
Overheads	556	572	590
Authority Projects	4,176	2,169	1,912
Partner Projects	3,335	2,276	2,112
Net Capital Outflow	475	400	400
Total outflows	11,584	8,545	8,242
Net inflow (outflow)			
Cash and cash equivalents and term deposits at the beginning of the financial year	(3,182)	(242)	(232)
Cash and cash equivalents and term deposits at the end of the financial year	7,873	7,631	7,399

C. BALANCE SHEET ('000)

	2020/21 Forecast	2021/22 Forecast	2022/23 Forecast	2023/24 Forecast
Assets				
Current				
Cash and cash equivalents	11,055	7,873	7,631	7,399
Receivables & Prepayments	207	211	215	220
Total Current	11,262	8,084	7,846	7,618
Non-Current				
Fixed Assets @ Fair Value	2,056	1,537	1,509	1,483
Intangible Assets	385	308	231	154
Other Financial Assets	20	20	20	20
Total Non-Current	2,461	1,865	1,760	1,657
Total Assets	13,723	9,950	9,607	9,275
Liabilities				
Current				
Creditors & Accruals	780	796	812	828
Employee Provisions	734	734	741	764
Borrowings Lease Liability	296	296	296	279
Total-Current	1,810	1,530	1,553	1,591
Non-Current				
Provisions	55	62	62	62
Borrowings Lease Liability	280	0	791	512
Total Non-Current	335	62	853	574
Total Liabilities	2,145	1,592	1,615	1,653
Net Assets	11,578	8,359	7,992	7,622
Equity				
Contributed Capital	6,987	6,987	6,987	6,987
Reserves	842	842	842	842
Accumulated Funds at beginning of Year	1,721	3,748	530	162
Net Result for the Period	2,027	(3,218)	(367)	(370)
Total Equity	11,578	8,359	7,992	7,622

NOTES

Assumptions underpinning the financial forecasts

- All financial statements prepared for the Corporate Plan are from accounts kept on a basis consistent with the *Financial Management Act 1994* and comply with Australian Accounting Standards.
- State and federal government policy continue to support the funding of natural resource management projects. State and federal funding has been based on details of forward funding amounts that have been received by the Authority, and estimations of funding for EC5 projects from DELWP.
- The Victorian Government continues to provide resources to support the Authority to fulfil statutory obligations and corporate responsibilities.
- Expenditure, including salaries and wages, has been increased year on year by a forecast CPI of 2.5%.
- Project costs have been estimated to increase by 5.0% per year

Corporate overheads allocated to projects

The cost of operating and maintaining the plant, equipment and vehicles owned by the Authority is budgeted to be \$213k for the 2021/22 year.

The open-door cost of operating the Authority is budgeted to be \$789k for the 2021/22 year. This cost includes occupancy, IT support, printing, telephones, training and depreciation of information technology and office equipment.

The key cost driver for incurring plant and vehicle overhead is the employment of people to manage the affairs of the Authority and deliver the projects we are funded for. Open door costs are variable but more stable in nature than project costs. The Authority works with key partners to control costs through areas such as shared occupancy arrangements, shared services with other agencies, information management platforms, internet service providers and staff training.

The financial objectives of open door and plant cost recovery are twofold: to fully recover the Authority's actual costs against current projects; and, to ensure that the method of allocation fairly distributes costs to individual projects based on how they are incurred.

The most appropriate method is the allocation of overheads to projects based on a rate per labour hour. In the case of vehicles, a role based in the office using a pool car will be different to a role in the field with an allocated vehicle. As the Authority has a plan to employ 25.1 FTEs over 2021/22, on average each FTE will cost the organisation \$31,450 in open door costs and \$8,495 in vehicle and plant expenses.

By following this principle through, an FTE employed to deliver a single project will allocate all their time to, and thus incur open door and plant costs, against that project. As a result, this project will bear its appropriate share of the Authority's total costs. In the case of an employee who contributes to the delivery of multiple projects the varied

allocation of their time will result in their total plant and open-door cost being spread appropriately across these projects.

The Authority plans to utilise 5% of State funded water program projects to provide sufficient resources to fund our engagement, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting obligations. The Authority is committed to the State-wide Reporting framework.

Project Costing Principles

The Authority project costing principles include:

- Maintaining transparency within our costing model
- Keeping overhead costs to a minimum
- Nominating staff hours required by the project
- Allocating specific staff to the project
- Applying individual staff costs per hour including salaries and overheads (as described above)
- Allocating contractors from the Authority's approved panel at agreed rates
- Paying incentives to partners with agreed deliverables via service level agreements
- Identifying and costing other direct project costs, including MER.

Corporate Allocation

The Authority expects to receive \$843k in the 2021/22 year as a contribution towards the following governance, management, and operating functions:

- The Board
- Sub Committees and Reference Groups
- The CEO and Support
- Corporate Services
- Meeting the statements of obligations for both the CaLP Act and Water Act.

The functions funded by the corporate allocation are essential to the sound governance, management, administration and financial control of the organisation. Many of the activities undertaken within these functions fulfil the expectations of the Authority under the Statement of Obligations.

Capital Expenditure

The Authority plans to spend \$495k on capital items in 2021/22. This spend includes the implementation of the Authority's Net Zero Emissions project, replacement motor vehicles and software for improved cyber security.

5. ACRONYMS

CaLP Act	<i>Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994</i>
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CMAs	Catchment Management Authorities
DELWP	Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning
EC4	Environmental Contributions Levy 4
EC5	Environmental Contributions Levy 5
EG CEOs	East Gippsland Chief Executive Officers
GEA	Gippsland Environment Agencies
GEA WLT	Women Leadership Team
GKTOLMB	Gunaikurnai Land and Water Traditional Owner Land Management Board
GLaWAC	Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation
GLCC	Gippsland Lakes Coordinating Committee
IWM	Integrated Water Management
RCS	Regional Catchment Strategy
Water Act	<i>Water Act 1989</i>