



East Gippsland Regional Catchment Strategy Snapshot



EAST GIPPSLAND
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East Gippsland

Regional Overview

The East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority region covers 2.2 million hectares of land, lakes and coastal waters in eastern Victoria. About 83% of the region is in public ownership, mainly as state forests, national and coastal parks, and marine national parks, and virtually all of this retains extensive native vegetation cover. East Gippsland is the only place on mainland Australia where such continuity of natural ecosystems – from the alps to the sea – still exists.

The region contains significant natural assets like the declared Heritage Rivers of the Mitchell, Snowy, Bemm and Genoa River catchments, the Ramsar listed wetlands of the Gippsland Lakes, and many national parks and reserves, stretching from sub-alpine environments to the coast.

Private land covers 17% of the region. Grazing occupies the largest area, and there are significant productive areas of irrigated horticulture and dairying on the floodplains of the Snowy and Mitchell rivers. Variability in rainfall across the region gives rise to droughts and floods that have an effect on waterway health, fire frequency and intensity, and land management. This variability is likely to further increase under the influence of climate change.

The East Gippsland Regional Catchment Strategy

The Regional Catchment Strategy is the primary integrated planning framework document guiding natural resource management across the region.

The overall vision of the East Gippsland RCS is 'Working together to conserve and enhance East Gippsland's naturally wealthy landscapes, and the biodiversity and cultural heritage they hold, for now and into the future.'

The RCS was written in collaboration with Traditional Owners, our regional partners and the communities of East Gippsland. The East Gippsland Regional Catchment Strategy (2021–2027), the fourth since 1997, will guide priority environmental management across East Gippsland for the next 6 years.

Implementing the Regional Catchment Strategy - A Partnership Approach

Working in partnership is a key approach within East Gippsland and 'cross border' relationships form an important part of the management of natural resources within our region. This approach recognises the ability of values and threats to move across administrative boundaries, and that the most effective way to manage this is through shared outcomes and a shared vision delivered in partnership.

For more information visit
www.eastgippsland.rcs.vic.gov.au



Alpine Peaks



Partners
EGCMA, Parks Victoria, GLaWAC, TfN, DEECA

Our Vision
The ecological character, extent and condition of the Alps Natural Ecosystem and associated environments is maintained including alpine grassland and heathland mosaic, White Box Woodlands and wetlands. Communities are resilient, connected and value the unique alpine landscapes and farming districts.



Water - Weed control programs are undertaken to protect the Alpine Peatlands in the Wonnangatta-Moroka and Dargo High Plains areas, and pest animals are controlled to prevent erosion and damage to sensitive peatland environments.



Biodiversity - The health of our Alpine peak ecosystems are monitored through flora and fauna surveys and pest plant and pest animal control programs reducing pressure on the threatened species that depend on these ecosystems.



Land - Prevent illegal off-road driving on threatened ecosystems which supports the natural recovery of alpine environments post-bushfire.



Community - Working in partnership with Traditional Owners, promoting awareness of, and participation by, communities in the management of the Lakes including running educational field based events and boat tours. Work has also started mapping and protecting cultural heritage sites surrounding the Gippsland Lakes.

A 'Place-based' Approach

The East Gippsland Regional Catchment Strategy (RCS) provides a vision for the integrated management of natural resources across East Gippsland. The broad themes identified include water, land, biodiversity, coast and marine and community values. The RCS identifies these themes within five Priority Landscape Areas in our region. These five Landscape Areas capture the interconnected nature of the themes on a geographical scale, which highlights integrated priorities for natural resource management across East Gippsland.



Water
The water theme includes the rivers, wetlands, water resources and groundwater of East Gippsland.



Biodiversity
The biodiversity theme includes terrestrial plant and animal species, and the habitats that support them.



Land
The land theme includes all terrestrial (land based) environments of East Gippsland. Including agricultural, recreation and tourism values.



Community
The community theme aims to capture the profile of our community and their involvement in the management of our natural values.



Coast and Marine
The coast and marine theme includes the estuaries and coastal environments of East Gippsland, including the offshore ocean environments.

Protecting the Best



Partners
EGCMA, GLaWAC, Parks Victoria, TfN, DEECA, EGSC

Our Vision
The unique and connected landscapes of the Protecting the Best – Far East Gippsland Local Area with its extraordinary diversity of plants and animals, rare ecosystems, vast forested environments, and wild coastal places are valued and protected. The outstanding values of the marine environments and the diversity of plants and animals of the area are enjoyed and respected by the resilient communities of the area.



Water - Waterways and riparian zones are protected through the installation of fencing and revegetating riparian areas, particularly along the Bemm, Cann and Genoa rivers. These on ground activities improve the resilience and health of the waterway.



Biodiversity - Land managers across the region address established and emerging invasive species with a focus on supporting bushfire-impacted areas. Several grant programs are underway focusing on increasing the resilience of and supporting the recovery of threatened species.



Land - Supporting communities to implement best practice soil management on their properties, including maintaining appropriate ground cover across agricultural land by running trial sites demonstrating sustainable techniques to the agricultural community.



Community - Supporting community groups to become involved in natural resource management through environment-based grant programs. Sourcing directly from local First Nations groups for revegetation projects to maintain the health of Far East Gippsland's landscapes.



Coast and Marine - Estuary opening protocols and other jointly managed arrangements are being reviewed with land managers which serves a function in protecting fragile estuarine habitats and key species.

Forested Foothills



Partners
EGCMA, EGSC, TfN, GLaWAC, DEECA, AV

Our Vision
The resilience of natural assets, agriculture and communities in the Forested Foothills Local Area are increased and ecosystem services are maintained in the face of climate change and other stressors.



Water - Revegetation and weed management programs are undertaken along the waterways in the Forested Foothills region, particularly the Mitchell, Nicholson and Tambo catchments. These on ground works will protect and improve waterway health.



Biodiversity - The unique vegetation communities in this area are protected and supported through riparian vegetation fencing, revegetation projects and weed control projects.



Land - Sustainable agricultural techniques are demonstrated at trial sites for educational purposes and to increase resilience and production within the Foothills agricultural land.



Community - Community and Landcare Groups are collaboratively working with land managers and other partner agencies to be involved in fire and environmental management.

Redgum Plains



Partners
EGCMA, GLaWAC, Parks Victoria, TfN, DEECA, EGSC, AV

Our Vision
The resilience of natural assets, agriculture and communities in the Red Gum Plains Local Area are increased and ecosystem services are maintained in the face of climate change and other stressors.



Water - Seasonal Herbaceous Wetlands throughout this area are protected through the installation of fencing and revegetation activities.



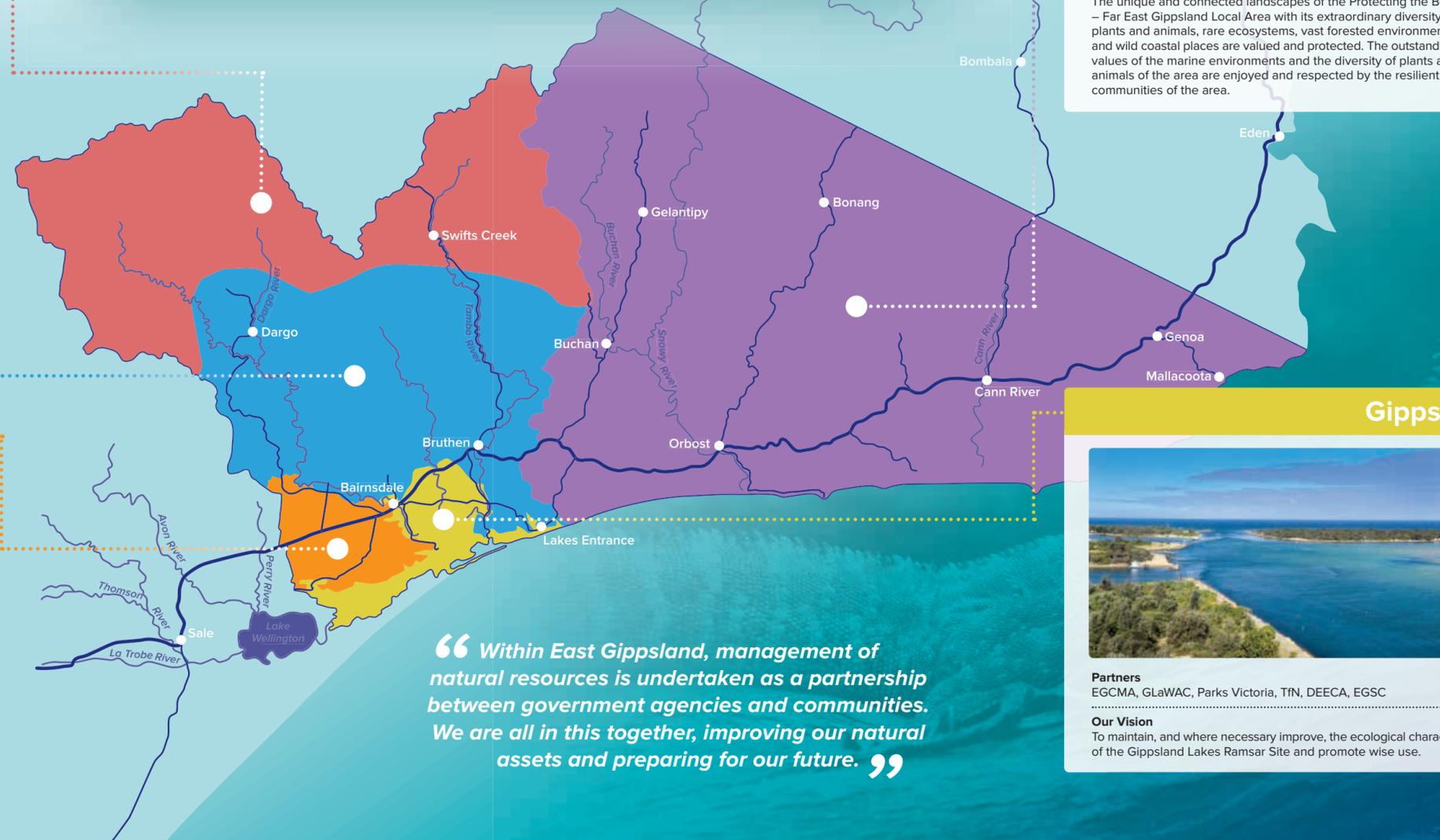
Biodiversity - Remnant native vegetation is protected and extended through projects which create or build upon existing wildlife corridors, linking existing habitat for various species to use.



Land - Farmer led educational events are supported in this area in which agricultural community share information on practices they have trialled to reduce erosion, increase soil carbon and increase soil health.



Community - Community actively involved in agricultural and Landcare groups. Communities are invited to participate in citizen science programs, such as bird, frog, turtle and water quality monitoring.



“ Within East Gippsland, management of natural resources is undertaken as a partnership between government agencies and communities. We are all in this together, improving our natural assets and preparing for our future. ”

Gippsland Lakes



Partners
EGCMA, GLaWAC, Parks Victoria, TfN, DEECA, EGSC

Our Vision
To maintain, and where necessary improve, the ecological character of the Gippsland Lakes Ramsar Site and promote wise use.



Water - Installation of stock exclusion fencing assists in managing excess nutrients and sediments being washed into the Lakes system.



Biodiversity - Aquatic habitats and ecosystems are improved by installing fish habitat structures and preventing erosion. Species monitoring surveys are conducted in freshwater wetland ecosystems including the significant McLeod Morass.



Community - Working in partnership with Traditional Owners, promoting awareness of, and participation by, communities in the management of the Lakes including running educational field based events and boat tours. Work has also started mapping and protecting cultural heritage sites surrounding the Gippsland Lakes.



Coast and Marine - Vegetation in fringing wetlands and shorelines of Lakes King and Victoria are improving by installing fencing and revegetating lake frontages.

Traditional Owners and First Nations People

Aboriginal Community

The Aboriginal community across the East Gippsland region is represented by:

Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation

The Registered Aboriginal Party and Native Title holder

Bidwell people

Ngarigo Monero people



East Gippsland is part of a tapestry of interwoven cultural landscapes that are the product of the skills, knowledge and activities of Aboriginal land managers over thousands of generations.

Cultural landscapes are reflections of how Aboriginal people engage with the world. Aboriginal people have an enduring connection to Country in East Gippsland. Aboriginal groups across East Gippsland have strong objectives to care for, be involved in, and collaborate in managing Country.

The EGCMA are deeply appreciative of their time, knowledge, and input to the strategy and are committed to continuing to work together through the implementation of the RCS over the next 6 years. Registered Aboriginal Parties across Victoria, worked hard to develop the Victorian Traditional Owner Cultural Landscapes Strategy. The key principles of the Cultural Landscape Strategy enable Traditional Owners to self determine their respective objectives for Country. The Victorian Traditional Owner Cultural Landscapes Strategy is a foundational document that has informed the development of the East Gippsland RCS and will help guide its implementation.

Climate Change

The influence of climate change on the natural environments and resources of East Gippsland likely poses the greatest threat to key values into the future. The changing climate is impacting our water resources, our coastal environments, important species and vegetation communities, the way we can use our land, and the resilience of our communities. Other threats including pest plant and animals in our landscape, and extreme events like drought, flood, and bushfire which will compound these impacts.

Variability in rainfall across the region gives rise to droughts and floods that have an effect on waterway health, fire frequency and intensity, and land management. This variability is likely to further increase under the influence of climate change. Increased hot and dry conditions will mean an increase in the frequency and severity of bushfires. In 2019–20, bushfires affected over 56% of the East Gippsland region, burning a large proportion of the native vegetation and killing or displacing large numbers of animals.

EGCMA will continue to work closely with our partners and community to build our collective resilience.

For more information on climate change in the East Gippsland Region, visit www.nrmclimate.vic.gov.au/regional-catchment-management-authority-information/325/

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Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners and First Nations People throughout East Gippsland and pay our respects to them, their Culture and their Elders past, present and future.



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