

VICTORIAN CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

2001 – 2002

Victorian
Catchment
Management
Council



TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>1. INTRODUCTION.....</u>	<u>3</u>
Chairperson’s Report	3
Council Members	4
Council Staff 2001-2002.....	5
VCMC Role	5
VCMC Sub-Committees	5
<u>2. OPERATION OF THE CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK</u>	<u>7</u>
Comment on the Framework.....	7
Operations of the VCMC	8
VCMC Finance Report.....	13
Major State Activities	14
<u>3. REPORTING ON CATCHMENT CONDITION</u>	<u>17</u>
<u>4. STATUTORY OBLIGATIONS.....</u>	<u>18</u>
VCMC Meetings.....	18
Freedom of Information.....	18
Consultancies	18
National Competition Policy	18
Multi-Cultural Statement	18
Pecuniary Interest	18
Whistleblowers Protection Act.....	18
Merit and Equity	18
Publications	18
<u>APPENDIX 1</u>	<u>19</u>
Committees and Working Groups That Include A Representative of the VCMC	19
<u>APPENDIX 2</u>	<u>20</u>
Catchment Stakeholder Forum Members	20

1. INTRODUCTION

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

The Victorian Catchment Management Council (VCMC) reports annually to the Parliament of Victoria on the operation of the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994*. Every five years Council is required to include with the Annual Report a report on the condition and management of Victoria's land and water resources and that assessment has been carried out this year.

The Health of our Catchments - a Victorian Report Card will be tabled in Parliament with this report. It reports against some 32 indicators grouped into eight themes:

- Changing socio-economic landscapes;
- Biodiversity;
- Rivers, wetlands and estuaries;
- Managing water resources;
- Managing land;
- Managing pest plants and animals;
- Greenhouse gas emissions and climate change;
- Community attitudes and involvement in natural resource management.

These indicators were established since the Council's last assessment - *Know Your Catchments 1997* - through a major project jointly funded by the State and the Natural Heritage Trust. The information behind the report can be accessed through the Indicators website at www.nre.vic.gov.au/vcio. The Council reports that, while much of our land, water and biodiversity resources are stressed, significant effort at the State and regional level has been expended in developing and implementing a range of strategies and plans to alleviate this stress.

Key strategies such as the Victorian River Health Strategy, the Landcare Action Plan, Frameworks for Native Vegetation Management and Pest Management were finalised during the year. The Water Act (Irrigation Farm Dams) amendment was a significant piece of legislation designed to ensure sustainable management of our water resources.

Catchment Management Authorities and the Port Phillip and Westernport CALP Board commenced review and renewal of Regional Catchment Strategies during the year and these will form the basis of investment plans for the National Action Plan for Salinity, Water Quality and related Biodiversity and the next phase of the Natural Heritage Trust as well as ongoing State investment.

The NAP funded RCS renewal in relevant regions as well as a number of priority projects. VCMC has had a particular interest in two NAP non-regional projects. The first of these is a major project by the Municipal

Association of Victoria to harmonise regional and municipal planning, and identify ways that local government and the catchment management framework can work together to achieve mutual objectives. Council is also managing a Land Stewardship project which we hope will identify the way forward for innovative approaches to purchase and trade a range of catchment and ecosystem services.

Both these projects could inform a statewide integrated catchment management strategy which will address opportunities and challenges identified in the 2002 *Health of Our Catchments* report.

The Glenelg-Hopkins CMA held a successful Catchment Management Forum *Linkages with Local Government* in Hamilton in November 2001 which further developed the working relationship between the catchment management framework and local government.

Development of protocols for involvement of Indigenous people in land and water management was a key focus of Council this year. Generic protocols have been drafted and the North Central CMA is working with the Yorta Yorta Nation and North West Nations with a view to adopting protocols for their continuing relationship on land and water management issues.

This report has been compiled thanks to the cooperation of a large number of people from CMAs, the Port Phillip CALP Board and the Department of Natural Resources and Environment. Thanks also to Suzanne Shoemark, Council's Project Officer for the first part of the year, and to Marian Pernat, who has ably taken up this position for the latter half of the year in review.

Council is also indebted to its Executive Officer, Cullen Gunn, without whom we would not have been able to achieve the objectives of our Business Plan or complete the accompanying report on the *The Health of our Catchments: A Victorian Report Card*.

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Council consists of up to 10 members appointed by Governor in Council on the basis of their skills, experience and knowledge of land protection, water resource management, primary industries, environment protection, conservation and local government.

MS CHRISTINE FORSTER – CHAIRPERSON

- Former Director, National Land and Water Resources Research and Development Corporation.
- Former Director, Rural Water Corporation.
- Sessional Member of Victorian Planning Panels.
- Woolgrower in Western Victoria.
- Governing Board Member, CRC for Catchment Hydrology.

MR ALEX ARBUTHNOT, AM

- Director, Landcare Australia Limited.
- Director, Gippsland Agri-business Forum.
- Director, Gippsland Farm Plantations.
- Gippsland dairy farmer.
- Past President, Victorian Farmers Federation.
- Member, VFF Land Management Committee.
- Member, VFF Landcare Sub-committee.
- Member, WGCMA Wellington Implementation Committee.

DR SARAH EWING

- Geographer, Honorary Fellow, Dept of Civil & Environmental Eng., University of Melbourne.
- Churchill Fellow.
- Member, former State Landcare Committee.
- Former Member, Murray-Darling Basin Ministerial Council Community Advisory Committee.

MS PATRICIA GERAGHTY (NRE REPRESENTATIVE)

- Former Member, Environment Council of EPA.
- Former Chair, Program Management Committee, Riparian Management, Land & Water Australia.
- National Organising Committee World Water Congress.
- Co-Chair, Regional Catchment Strategy Accreditation Coordinating Committee.

PROFESSOR BARRY HART

- Director, Water Studies Centre, Monash University
- Professor of Environmental Chemistry, Monash University.
- Director of Research, Cooperative Research Centre for Freshwater Ecology.
- Member, Board of Environment Protection Authority Vic.

- Extensive experience in water quality research and management.
- Expertise in river health, water quality management and ecological risk assessment.

MS MONICA MORGAN

- Manager, Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation.
- Indigenous person with an active interest in furthering indigenous land management issues.

MR DOUG NEWTON (EPA OBSERVER)

- EPA Assistant Director Operations – Catchments.
- Major focus on catchment management and agriculture.
- Key programs - Victorian Stormwater Action Program, SEPP WoV Implementation, Western Port Action+ Program, Dairy & Irrigation Improvement.
- 16 years with EPA in senior management positions covering policy, operations and special projects.
- Expertise in recycling, waste management, strategy development, catchment management, project management, community engagement and partnership development.

MS DIANA PATTERSON

- Management Consultant.
- Chairman Mt Buller Resort Management Board.
- Former Chief Executive Officer, Surf Coast Shire.
- Former Director of Flora and Fauna Statewide Programs, Department of Natural Resources and Environment.
- Former Manager, Land Protection Branch, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.
- Adjunct Professor, Graduate School of Business Management, Swinburne University of Technology.

DR JOHN RUSSELL

- Lecturer, Civil and Environmental Management Engineering, La Trobe University, Bendigo.
- Charter Professional Engineer.
- Fellow of the Institution of Engineers, Australia.
- Former Technical Manager, Melbourne Water.
- Former Director of Mid-Goulburn Regional Water Authority.
- NHT 1998 Technical Assessment Panelist Water/Soils.
- Member, School Board, La Trobe University, Bendigo.
- Expertise in catchments, water/wastewater, soil fertility and farming practices.

MR BILL SHARROCK

- Deputy Chairman, Portland Coast Water Authority.
- Timber Farmer, including value-adding operations and milling and construction. General farming 35 years in Western Victoria.
- Treasurer, South West Regional Housing Council.
- Many years experience on Regional Development Boards including Green Triangle and Shire of Glenelg.
- Ag Science and Commerce teaching experience.
- Former Commissioner, Port of Portland Authority.

MS ALISON TEESE

- Farmer in North Central Victoria.
- State Assessment Panel Member.
- Member of NHT Advisory Bodies - Australian Landcare Council and Council for Sustainable Vegetation Management.
- Member of International Landcare Conference 2000 Steering Committee.
- Director, Central Highlands Rural Water Authority.

COUNCIL STAFF 2001-2002

CULLEN GUNN

Executive Officer

SUZANNE SHOEMARK

Project Officer to December 2001

MARIAN PERNAT

Project Officer from December 2001

VCMC ROLE

The VCMC is the State Government's peak advisory body on catchment management. Catchment management involves the sustainable use and management of land and water resources at a catchment level.

The VCMC was established in 1997 by the Victorian Government under the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994*. The Council is uniquely placed, independent of government agencies, regional catchment authorities and non-government organisations, to take a long term view and influence change in working towards its vision for catchment management –

'Victoria will have healthy rivers flowing through ecologically sustainable and productive catchments.'

Council takes a statewide view on land and water issues and priorities related to catchment management. It facilitates integrated and coordinated catchment

management through Victoria's catchment management framework.

The VCMC works closely with the Department of Natural Resources and the EPA. Council is also working to strengthen strategic catchment management planning by increasing collaboration with Local Government and the Department of Infrastructure.

The VCMC also encourages cooperation of bodies such as Non-Government Organisations involved in the management of land and water resources.

STATUTORY ROLES

The major statutory roles of the VCMC include:

- providing advice to the Minister for Environment and Conservation (and any other Minister) on matters relating to catchment management in Victoria;
- developing an Annual Report to the Minister and State Parliament on the operation of the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994* ;
- provision of five-yearly reports on the environmental condition and management of land and water resources in Victoria. The VCMC report on the condition and management of land and water resources is a companion document to this annual report. Please refer to *The Health of Our Catchments: A Victorian Report Card*.

VCMC SUB-COMMITTEES

The past year has seen the VCMC establish and continue to operate a number of internal sub-committees and working groups. Members of Council are also involved individually in a range of other external committees. A list of all relevant Committees appears in Appendix 1. The nature and function of internal VCMC sub-committees are as follows:

INDIGENOUS LAND AND WATER MANAGEMENT PROTOCOLS COMMITTEE.

Constituted by Monica Morgan, Sarah Ewing, Christine Forster and Doug Newton, this committee has supported the development of protocols for indigenous participation in land and water management planning at a CMA level.

WEED POLICY COMMITTEE

Chaired by Alex Arbuthnot and including Bill Sharrock, Alison Teese and Christine Forster. Provides advice on weed issues and management to the Minister for Environment and Conservation.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE

Constituted by Christine Forster, Diana Patterson, Bill Sharrock and Monica Morgan and working to foster cooperation between local government and CMAs.

HEALTHY LANDSCAPE VISION

Christine Forster, Sarah Ewing and John Russell have been working to develop a vision for healthy landscapes to inform the development of a State Catchment Strategy and priorities.

FLORA AND FAUNA REFERRALS GROUP

Group convened to provide comments on flora and fauna action statements and species listing under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988. Group includes Bill Sharrock, Alison Teese and specialist support from Felicity Farris and Julie Kirkwood (Threatened Species Network, Vic).

LAND STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

The VCMC with NRE Catchment and Water is actively pursuing a land stewardship project for the State through the NAP program. As part of this project the VCMC has established a small sub-committee to review activities and provide comment on behalf of Council. Members involved include Christine Forster, Bill Sharrock and Sarah Ewing.

CATCHMENT CONDITION REPORT COMMITTEE

This group comprising Christine Forster (Chair), John Russell, Barry Hart and Diana Patterson has been involved in the planning and design of the 2002 report *The Health of Our Catchments: A Victorian Report Card*.

2. OPERATION OF THE CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

COMMENT ON THE FRAMEWORK

The Catchment Management Framework has faced and addressed many challenges throughout the past year. The review of the Regional Catchment Strategies (RCS) has been a major focus for all regions, especially those with access to the National Action Plan (NAP) Program to address salinity water quality and biodiversity decline.

The six NAP regions (Wimmera, Mallee, North Central, Goulburn-Broken, Corangamite and Glenelg Hopkins) have been supported through NAP 'foundation funding' to develop the RCS documents and NAP investment plans for draft completion around August-September 2002. This investment has been employed to further develop community and stakeholder engagement in planning and decision-making processes at a regional level. The complexity and comprehensive nature of this new range of RCS documents will surpass the original 1997 RCS documents.

North East, Port Phillip, East Gippsland and West Gippsland are the CMA regions without access to NAP funding. These regions have moved at a more conservative pace and on a smaller scale in developing their new RCS documents. These regions are now relying on support through the NHT 2 program and State funding to provide the supplementary funding required to undertake the extensive task of RCS renewal.

In addition to State Government funding all CMAs rely on access to initiative funding provided individually or jointly by the Commonwealth and State Governments. While the VCMC acknowledges that initiatives such as NHT, NHT 2, NAP, State Government Landcare and pest management funding are absolutely vital, there continue to be difficulties correlating long-term planning with generally short-term initiative funding cycles and processes.

The RCS documents set the strategic direction for natural resource management at a regional level. Management of environmental issues involves planning measured in timeframes that cross generations. In Victoria, this long-term planning is supported through a process of adaptive management that includes comprehensive review and renewal of RCS documents every five years. Long-term planning constitutes a 20 – 50 year vision and plan.

Future sustainable resource management at a statewide and regional level requires a dedicated long-term consolidated and efficient process of raising and allocating funding.

There is a need to develop a strategic plan for the future management of resources at a statewide level. Victoria needs a vision for its rural landscape underpinned by a State investment plan and whole of government implementation plan.

The release of the Metropolitan Strategy provides clear opportunities to link the implementation of the urban strategy with the development of a rural strategy.

A State integrated natural resource management strategy for the future must focus on designing catchments and landscapes for sustainability. The planning timeframe for such an activity will need to be long-term to allow the community to adapt and adopt new ideas and management paradigms.

Currently NRE is undertaking the first steps in developing a statewide Integrated Natural Resource Management (INRM) investment framework. The scope of the framework is still being finalised. The VCMC is fully supportive of this initiative and further information on this topic is provided in the *Health of Our Catchments: A Victorian Report Card*.

OPERATIONS OF THE VCMC

The VCMC continued the implementation of its 2000/03 Business Plan with some minor adjustments to reflect the establishment of the Nation Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality (NAP). The following activities reflect priorities in that Business Plan.

ADVICE TO MINISTERS

Over the last year the VCMC has continued to actively communicate with Victorian Ministers and Ministerial representatives as appropriate.

In 2001 – 2002, the Chairperson and other members of VCMC held meetings with the Minister for Environment and Conservation, Minister for Agriculture and Aboriginal Affairs, Minister for Planning, Minister for Local Government and the Victorian Treasurer.

VCMC BUSINESS and WORKPLAN

The VCMC Business Plan and Workplan for 2002 outlined 16 priority topics to be addressed throughout the year. Activities of Council are reported below under priority headings.

HEALTHY RIVERS

VCMC members Christine Forster and Barry Hart actively contributed and supported NRE Catchment and Water Division to develop the Victorian River Health Strategy. The final document is due for release in August 2002.

The VCMC also implemented the Minister for Environment and Conservation's recommendation to establish a new State Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Committee (see *Data Coordination and Catchment Condition Reporting* for further details).

HEALTHY LANDSCAPES

The VCMC has been actively involved in the implementation of the NAP program through 2001-02. Members were involved in the assessment process and the VCMC Chair also chairs the NAP Stakeholder Reference Group. During the year the VCMC completed its draft vision for healthy landscapes and has continued to pursue discussion regarding the need for a statewide integrated natural resource management strategy.

As part of supporting regional efforts the VCMC and NRE produced guidelines for the development of Regional Catchment Strategies. Council approved the guidelines in October 2001.

BIODIVERSITY

Referrals

The Flora and Fauna Referrals Group comprises two VCMC members who have provided comment on 99

recommendations made by NRE for listing or not listing under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*. In addition, VCMC has offered advice on 20 *Action Statements* developed for species and threatening processes already listed under the Act. Overall, VCMC has been strongly supportive of the recommendations made by NRE. The Threatened Species Network should be recognised for their contribution throughout the year.

Conservation

In 2001, the VCMC engaged Chandris Pty Ltd to undertake a review of roadside management and conservation in the State. Following discussion of the options presented, VCMC recommended to the Minister for Environment and Conservation that NRE establish a new advisory roadside committee. In response the Minister suggested NRE review and explore implementation of the recommendations.

Discussions are continuing and an outcome is expected late in 2002.

LANDCARE

The VCMC has continued to support Landcare activities at a statewide level. Members have participated in the implementation of the Landcare in the 21st Century Project. Members Alison Teese and Alex Arbuthnot participate as members on the Australian Landcare Council and the Board of Landcare Australia Limited respectively. Alison Teese was also a member of the Second Generation Landcare Taskforce that developed the *Victoria Action Plan for Second Generation Landcare*. The Action Plan was released in April 2002.

LAND STEWARDSHIP

In October 2001, the VCMC was granted funding through NAP to explore the possibilities for establishing a statewide framework for land stewardship in a project entitled *Land Reform - Rural Land Stewardship*. The project provides an impetus to address complex land use, land capability and rural adjustment issues necessary to ensure that outcomes of salinity management, improved water quality and conservation of biodiversity can occur at a catchment and regional scale.

The project is being conducted by NRE under the auspices of VCMC, and in conjunction with the NAP office. Three groups of representative stakeholders have been established to assist in the development of the project: the Project Team, the Project Contact Group and the Project Steering Committee. The involvement and partnering of a broad range of stakeholders from landholders to local government and the broader community is intrinsic to the project.

The next step for the project will be to develop an Issues and Options Paper to scope potential mechanisms for land use change. Reviewing available options and their

potential application in Victoria will be an important step in the Land Stewardship Project.

WEED POLICY COMMITTEE

The VCMC Weed Policy Committee (WPC) was first established to implement activities detailed in the Victorian Weeds Strategy. This document has since been superseded by the Victorian Pest Management Framework which was launched by the Minister for Environment and Conservation in June 2002.

One of the strategic actions in the Victorian Pest Management Framework (VPMF) is to formally establish the Weeds Sub-Committee of the VCMC under the *CaLP Act 1994* and to report annually to the Minister on key weed issues. Funding for administrative support and to assist the implementation of strategic actions will, once again, be provided by NRE.

The WPC's main purpose is to advance the VCMC's key responsibility for strategic actions outlined in the Victorian Weed Management Strategy of the VPMF. VCMC has 10 key responsibilities in the Weed Management Strategy, and 24 responsibilities in partnership with NRE and other agencies.

GOVERNANCE

NRE, in collaboration with the VCMC and Catchment Management Authorities, initiated a governance improvement project to review Victoria's integrated catchment management framework. Consultants KPMG were contracted to report on the catchment management framework in Victoria from a governance point of view.

KPMG has reported its findings. The report reviews governance practices, compares current practice with leading practice and provides guidance on future arrangements to strengthen the governance system. While the report found the catchment system was soundly established, the review also proposed some recommendations for improvements in the system. The GIP made recommendations on three themes: Better Standards, Better Business and Relationships and Better Framework.

The Chair of the Council, along with other representatives from NRE and Catchment Management Authorities, constituted the Project Reference Group for the Project. Progress has already been made on implementing recommended actions under the themes of Better Standards and Better Business. These include the introduction of new Governance Guidelines for CMAs, a new Operating Agreement between NRE and the CMAs to improve business, and the renewal of the Regional Catchment Strategies to improve strategic focus.

A Taskforce constituted by CMAs, NRE and VCMC representatives has been established to oversee the next

stages in implementing the project and discussing options for theme three, Better Frameworks.

RESOURCING

The VCMC has continued to explore the opportunities, constraints and inefficiencies in the resourcing of the Catchment Management Framework. Over the year the VCMC has met with the Minister for Environment and Conservation and the Secretary of NRE to discuss resourcing requirements at a statewide level. There have also been other specific regional issues upon which the VCMC has offered minor support and advice as requested.

DATA COORDINATION AND CATCHMENT CONDITION REPORTING

Data Coordination

In late 2001, the Minister established a State Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Committee (SWQMAC). The Committee was appointed and first convened in January 2002. The Committee is chaired by Prof. Barry Hart (VCMC) and includes representation from NRE, EPA, Melbourne Water, Parks Victoria, Monash University, CMAs and water authorities.

This Committee has replaced the Environmental Water Quality Monitoring Committee. In addition, the Committee's terms of reference have been extended to include additional areas of focus such as review, interpretation and advice regarding Index of Stream Condition (ISC) assessments, biological assessment, environmental flow indicators, estuarine health assessment and wetland health assessment.

The primary role of SWQMAC is to formulate a statewide position on the monitoring and assessment of environmental quality of Victoria's aquatic environment and to facilitate the implementation of a coordinated framework for data collection, information sharing and reporting.

The SWQMAC has adopted the following strategic goals and objectives:

1. To develop, recommend and facilitate the implementation of a coordinated statewide monitoring and assessment program that will form the basis for reporting on the condition or health of the State's rivers and streams, wetlands, estuaries and marine environments;
2. To promote and facilitate the introduction and use of ecological assessment tools;
3. To facilitate R&D that will result in new and improved monitoring and assessment techniques;
4. To contribute to further enhancement of the capability of the State Water Data Warehouse and to promote linkages to other data repositories in order to meet community information needs;

5. To provide an annual report card outlining progress on water quality monitoring and assessment programs to the Minister (via the VCMC annual report);
6. To facilitate a greater understanding of the importance of the role of community in monitoring and assessment.

Generally the task of coordinating data requires further action by Council. Despite the success of the SWQMAC, few other data sets have the same level of coordination and commitment to processing of information. This issue has impacted upon the *Catchment Indicators Online* Project which has not serviced community needs as intended. Internal process and commitment issues in gathering and updating data for the site need to be addressed. This topic has been extensively covered in the 2002 VCMC *Health of Our Catchments* report.

Catchment Condition Reporting

Every five years the Victorian Catchment Management Council is required under the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994* to report to the Minister for Environment and Conservation and to Parliament on the condition and management of Victoria's land and water resources. The 2002 Report is titled *The Health of Our Catchments: A Victorian Report Card*. Please refer to this document for the full report and findings on the condition and management of natural resources in Victoria.

STATEWIDE PRIORITIES

The VCMC has for many years identified the lack of an overarching statewide natural resource management (NRM) strategy as a key gap in integrated catchment management. This has manifested itself in a lack of transparent statewide priorities and processes for investment. As Council is responsible for advising on statewide catchment management priorities, the development of a statewide NRM strategy is a key element in the VCMC Business Plan.

In 2001, NRE committed to establish a new Integrated Natural Resource Management (INRM) project team. The first stage of the project involves scoping the scale of the task, developing a project plan, completing a review of INRM practice, developing an issues paper in consultation with key stakeholders, and developing and applying an INRM framework for endorsement.

Next steps in the project will be subject to the successful completion of stage one and attainment of whole of NRE support for the project.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT NEEDS

The VCMC has continued to convene the Catchment Management Framework Research and Development Committee to develop and provide advice on R&D needs. The Committee comprises VCMC members, representatives of the CMAs, and NRE.

The work of the committee over the past year has concentrated on providing advice and feedback on research strategies and frameworks under development by NRE and the NAP office. The committee has worked to ensure the research related requirements of the CMAs are considered within the NRE and NAP research processes.

Additionally, the VCMC assisted in the organisation of an R&D Discussion Forum with Land and Water Australia in March 2002 which was attended by 30 representatives.

DEVELOPMENT OF INDIGENOUS PROTOCOLS

The VCMC sponsored a meeting of Aboriginal Nations in November 2000. This meeting agreed to the need for a set of protocols being developed between Indigenous Traditional Owners and CMAs. The need for protocols between Traditional Owners and CMAs was also discussed and endorsed at the Victorian Catchment Management Conference held in Ballarat in November 2000.

The VCMC received partnership investment from Aboriginal Affairs Victoria and the EPA to initiate the first stages of a Protocols project.

In 2001, the VCMC successfully applied for Natural Heritage Trust funding to carry out a project to establish a statewide framework of protocols between CMAs and Traditional Owners for Indigenous engagement in land and water management. Initially it was proposed that the generic framework would be used to inform the development of specific protocols between individual CMAs and individual Traditional Owner Groups in accordance with joint aspirations and expectations. The project has now moved to focus on the development of model protocols between the North Central CMA and Traditional Owner groups (Yorta Yorta Nation and North West Nations) overlapping the NCCMA region.

The first stage of the project, involving review and collation of existing information, is complete. The second stage of the project is progressing well and discussion and negotiation between stakeholders is underway. A presentation and "signing off" ceremony is being planned for the Victorian Catchment Management Conference in Bendigo in November 2002.

CATCHMENT PLANNING

Local Government Collaboration

A Local Government Forum held on July 11 2001 addressed the need to develop a practical and applicable project to help foster harmonisation of planning activities between CMAs and local government organisations at a regional level.

As a consequence, the VCMC and Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) initiated the *Local Planning - Regional Catchment Planning* Project for the 9 CMAs and the Port Phillip CALP Board region. The aim of the project is to achieve greater integration of regional catchment management planning and land use planning by consistent interpretation of RCS in municipal planning schemes across Victoria. The Minister for Environment and Conservation launched the project at the Rural and Regional Mayors Summit over the 10-12 September 2001.

Stage one of the project, which successfully received funding through NAP, has been completed. Project consultants Maunsell MacIntyre undertook gap analysis of municipal planning schemes which revealed inconsistent incorporation of catchment values across the levels of each planning scheme. Similar analysis of RCS revealed a general lack of articulated land-use outcomes, creating a difficulty for local government to include regional outcomes in planning schemes. Two distinct models were developed to help address some of these gaps.

Stage two of the project is currently in progress. This involves engaging with stakeholders in regional forums to discuss and learn about the model frameworks and foster cooperation in implementation. The workshops will also address local government resourcing and capacity issues for consideration in the development of new RCSs. The project has attracted a great deal of interest.

It is hoped that the outcomes of this project will not only be a model framework for better integration of landuse planning and regional catchment strategies but improved relationships and understanding between local governments and CMAs. An important challenge for both is to ensure that local government initiatives and also local government priorities for capacity building, technical assistance and on-ground works are supported and aligned with the Regional Catchment Strategies.

Water Authority Collaboration

The VCMC have held preliminary discussions with NRE regarding opportunities for closer collaboration between the CMAs and water authorities. It was agreed that, while there is a close working relationship between CMAs and some water authorities, there is scope for further collaboration. This should be pursued when arrangements for the role of the Essential Services Commission in the water industry are in place. Specifically, there is an opportunity to explore the purchase and provision of environmental services in respect of water quality management.

COMMUNICATING WITH STAKEHOLDERS

VCMC continues to convene the Catchment Stakeholders' Forum to provide an opportunity for organisations with a statewide natural resource management focus to come together to share information

on relevant catchment management projects and activities occurring throughout the State. The meetings are held every quarter and cover a wide range of topics. Some of the topics discussed throughout the year included various statewide frameworks and strategies, RCS, Local Government – Regional Planning Project, NAP/NHT 2, Indigenous Protocols for Land and Water Management, and presentations on member organisations.

In 2001 - 02, 22 organisations were represented at the Forum. A list of participating forum members is attached in Appendix 2.

The VCMC has continued to meet with Ministers of other relevant portfolios to discuss the Catchment Management Framework. As noted earlier, the Chair and Executive Officer met with the Minister for Planning, the Treasurer, the Minister for Local Government, the Minister for Environment and Conservation and the Minister for Agriculture and Aboriginal Affairs in the past year. The VCMC has continued to participate in broader framework activities of the Chairs/CEOs Forum and the CEOs meetings.

The Victorian Catchment Management Forum held in Hamilton on 15 and 16 November 2001 was hosted and coordinated by Glenelg-Hopkins CMA with support from VCMC and a range of other stakeholders. The Workshop was well attended by over 200 delegates representing a wide range of organisations including VCMC, CMAs, local government, non-government organisations, the EPA, DoI and MDBC. It provided an opportunity to strengthen partnerships, particularly in relation to strategic/statutory landuse planning and management, and hold discussion on processes and benchmark information to be used in the review of RCS and Council planning schemes in 2002.

The NAP Stakeholder Reference Group is an independent body established for the purpose of providing external advice on the development and implementation of the National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality in Victoria. The Group reports through the NAP Steering Committee, NRE. The role of the Group is to:

- Advise the Steering Committee and the Minister on the stakeholder requirements for planning and implementation of the NAP;
- Advise the Steering Committee and the Minister on statewide priorities;
- Disseminate information on NAP planning, implementation and evaluation to stakeholders.

VCMC Chair, Ms Christine Forster, is chair of the Committee and membership includes representatives of CMAs, EPA, Environment Victoria, VFF, Departments

of Infrastructure and Innovation, Industry and Regional Development. Representatives of Rural Water Authorities and Indigenous Peoples are yet to be appointed.

In February 2002 the VCMC convened a meeting of Statewide Councils involved in natural resource management. Representatives from the following organisations attended:

- Parks Victoria Board;
- Fisheries Co-management Council;
- The CMA Chairs/CEOs Forum;
- The Victorian Environmental Assessment Council;
- Private Forestry Council;
- The Victorian Coastal Council.

The meeting was convened as an exercise in introducing the roles and responsibilities of the various groups. The meeting provided a clear understanding of the different roles and possible opportunities for collaboration between the stakeholder organisations.

The VCMC initiated the organisation of a *Big Picture* conference held in Bendigo on 21 and 22 March 2002. The purpose of the conference, funded under the National Action Plan special support package, was to provide assistance with the preparation of the Regional Catchment Strategies.

CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE

The 2002 Catchment Management Conference is due to be held in November. As of June 2002 the VCMC were negotiating to jointly hold the Conference with the North Central CMA in Bendigo during November.

SUBMISSIONS

In the last year, VCMC has provided comment on:

- Firewood Strategy Discussion Paper – NRE;
- Towards a National Framework for Environmental Management Systems in Agriculture (draft) – AFFA;
- Draft SEPP (Waters of Victoria) – EPA;
- Draft Victorian River Health Strategy – NRE;
- Victorian Water Recycling Strategy Background Paper – NRE;
- Infrastructure Planning Council's (IPC) Interim Report – IPC, Department of Premier and Cabinet;
- Draft Healthy Landscapes – Sustainable Communities – Landcare Taskforce, NRE;
- Victorian Coastal Strategy – Victorian Coastal Council;
- Victorian Pest Management Framework, NRE;
- Box-Ironbark Report – Victorian Environmental Assessment Council;
- Planning for the Future of our Water Resources – Melbourne Water;

- Biodiversity Outcomes and Targets Discussion Paper – Environment Australia.

VCMC FINANCE REPORT

The following table outlines operating revenue and expenditure for the 1998/1999, 1999/2000, 2000/2001 and 2001/2002 financial years.

TABLE 1

VCMC Financial Report				
	1998/ 1999	1999/ 2000	2000/ 2001	2001/ 2002
Operating Revenue	\$	\$	\$	\$
NRE Allocation	238,900	256,000	278,546	315,753
RCAC Service Fee			50,000	
Trust Funds	32,253	52,219	41,187	40,908
Natural Heritage Trust				43,200 ¹
National Action Plan				147,000 ²
Total Revenue	271,153	308,219	369,733	546,861
Expenses				
NRE Allocation	238,900	256,000	329,545	314,984
Trust Funds	109,157	71,394		-14,152
Natural Heritage Trust				14,177
National Action Plan				2,642
Total Expenses	348,057	327,394	329,545	317,651
Notes:				
(1) Unspent Natural Heritage Trust - Indigenous Protocols funding will be carried forward to 2002-03.				
(2) Unspent National Action Plan - Land Stewardship funding will be carried forward to 2002-03.				

RESULTS

As indicated, unspent revenue is committed to the completion of the VCMC Indigenous Protocols Project, due for completion December 2002 and the VCMC Land Stewardship Project due for completion in September 2003.

MAJOR STATE ACTIVITIES

IRRIGATION FARM DAMS

The Water (Irrigation Farm Dams) Bill to amend the Water Act 1989 and complete Victoria's water allocation system was passed by Parliament on 26 March 2002. The legislation, which came into operation on 4 April 2002, requires new dams used for irrigation or commercial use to be licensed and farmers with existing dams have been given the opportunity of obtaining a standard licence, or of registering their dam. The Bill helps to ensure that water use across Victoria is sustainable. It will essentially protect the health of our rivers and streams and ensure that the reliability of existing license use is not reduced.

The VCMC Chair was a member of the Irrigation Farm Dams Steering Committee.

NATIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR SALINITY AND WATER QUALITY AND NATURAL HERITAGE TRUST STAGE TWO

The National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality (NAP) and Natural Heritage Trust Stage Two (NHT 2) have been drawn together under the one program office and now have the same joint Commonwealth-State steering committee.

Investment from the NAP and NHT 2 will be delivered at a regional level through the Victorian Catchment Management Authorities. The VCMC has also been involved at a number of levels, providing advice, participating in meetings and workshops, involvement in the Independent Assessment Panel and NAP Stakeholders Reference Group, and being indirectly implicated in a number of other matters.

NAP

The Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) was signed by the Premier on 13 July 2001, laying the groundwork for negotiations on a Bilateral Agreement. The Bilateral Agreement committing joint funds to the fight against salinity and deteriorating water quality was signed by the Prime Minister and Premier on 2 October 2001.

Foundation funding was provided to participating CMAs for RCS development and additional priority actions in each region were funded in the latter part of this financial year. A second year NAP package was developed and submitted for funding.

There will be one joint accreditation process by both State and Commonwealth for the RCS process. Accreditation is being managed by a coordination group to ensure one contact point and one voice to CMAs.

The assessment of 2002/2003 NAP applications will require input from an independent assessment

panel/SAP. The membership of this panel is yet to be determined.

Environment Australia has approved the continued funding of Waterwatch, Coastcare and Bushcare positions until June 30 2003. At this stage it is expected that in following years these activities would be funded directly from regional budgets.

AFFA have agreed to fund up to 450 Facilitators and Coordinators across Australia. The funds for these positions will come from the AFFA landcare budget.

Three major NAP reports are under development: Draft Monitoring & Evaluation Strategy, Capacity Building Strategy, and Communications Strategy. These strategies are due to be finalised early in the next financial year.

NHT 2

The Victorian government received \$37 million NHT funding in 2001 - 02. This marked the final year of the program. All projects are due to be completed by 30 September 2002.

The Natural Heritage Trust Extension (NHT 2) has a different structure to the initial Trust package. The Commonwealth has announced that the NHT 2 package will total \$1 billion over the next 5 years, with 55% going to regional activities, 40% going to State National activities and 5% going to Envirofunds. 2002 - 03 will be a transitional year to accommodate the move to the new structure, and regional funding will initially be a major focus.

The assessment of 2002 - 2003 NHT 2 regional applications will require input from an independent assessment panel/SAP. The membership of this panel is yet to be determined.

Envirofund applications closed on 5 June 2002. The State Assessment Panel advised on the allocation of funding.

STATE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION POLICY (WATERS OF VICTORIA)

On 5 December 2001, a new draft State Environment Protection Policy (SEPP) (Waters of Victoria) was released for public comment by the Victorian Environment Protection Authority. This document is an update of the 1988 SEPP.

The 1988 SEPP was successful in enabling improvements in waterways and reducing wastewater discharges to make waterways cleaner, healthier and safer. But times have changed. Use of natural resources has increased, new bodies have been established for coastal and catchment management and diffuse sources of pollution are now a

critical issue. The new SEPP will provide a statutory framework for the next ten years to continue to protect Victoria's water environments.

The draft Policy draws on the Australian and New Zealand Environment Conservation Council's (ANZECC) guidelines entitled *Australian and New Zealand Guidelines for Fresh and Marine Water Quality* (2000) and the most recent scientific research to set out objectives and indicators which describe the environmental quality required to protect the beneficial uses of Victoria's water environments. It will also provide guidance to communities, businesses and government agencies in order to protect and rehabilitate water environment.

The SEPP Waters of Victoria Reference Panel was chaired by the Chair of VCMC.

REGIONAL CATCHMENT STRATEGIES

The *CALP Act 1994* provides for the development and review of Regional Catchment Strategies (RCS) with the VCMC responsible for endorsement of guidelines for this activity. This year the guidelines were developed in the context of NAP and will be the accredited strategies for that program within NAP regions. RCS will inform Regional Investment Plans for NAP, NHT and State programs. The guidelines were finalised and released in December 2001.

Steering Committees, Task Forces and other focus groups are operating in all regions. RCS Project Plans have been completed by all CMAs and draft RCSs are at various stages of development. Timelines for submitting draft and final RCSs have been scheduled over the next 12 months.

Commonwealth involvement in RCS development in NAP regions is ongoing, and will extend to all ten regions through NHT 2. Facilitation and support activities are increasing through NRE policy divisions, the NAP program office, and the Specialist Support Package, etc.

An RCS Accreditation Coordinating Group has been established, including representation from the NAP Office, AFFA, Environment Australia and NRE.

VICTORIAN ACTION PLAN FOR SECOND GENERATION LANDCARE

The Landcare movement is vital to the success of natural resource management in the State. For the past 15 years, its members have made the wider community, the Government and many organisations aware of specific environmental issues and have become involved in action to address these. In recognition of the need to continue supporting Landcare into the future, the Minister for Environment and Conservation formed the Second Generation Landcare Taskforce.

The Taskforce considered the issues raised at the International Landcare 2000 Conference and the State Landcare Workshop held in March 2001, as well as the issues raised by Landcare communities and research. Based on these considerations, the Taskforce completed the draft *Victorian Action Plan for Second Generation Landcare*.

The Victorian Second Generation Landcare Action Plan *Healthy Landscapes - sustainable communities* was released by the Minister on 17 May 2002. The report offers a framework of actions that will maintain Victoria's leadership in community-based natural resource management. The Victorian Government has committed \$1.5M pa to implement the recommendations of the Landcare Taskforce. This is additional to the current \$4.8M Second Generation Landcare Grants Program.

VCMC members were directly involved in the development of the action plan and were represented on the following panels: the Landcare Taskforce, Australian Landcare Council, Australian Landcare Peak Chairs, Landcare Australia Limited, Landcare Foundation Victoria.

VICTORIAN COASTAL STRATEGY

The Victorian Coastal Strategy (VCS) was launched by the Minister on January 25, 2002. The Strategy was developed by the Victorian Coastal Council following extensive consultation with peak user groups, State MPs, government agencies, local government community groups and the general public.

The Victorian Coastal Strategy provides a vision for the Victorian coast and the actions Victorians need to take today to achieve that vision. The Strategy recognises the relationship between catchment management and the impacts of this management on coastal areas.

The Victorian Catchment Management Authorities that border the Victorian Coastline will have an active role in linking complimentary catchment and coastal planning initiatives.

VICTORIAN PEST MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

The VPMF was launched by the Minister on Friday 7 June 2002 in Benalla. This document was developed by NRE in consultation with the community and comprises the overall strategic principles and direction-setting framework for pest management in Victoria for the next five years. The Framework offers a consistent approach towards pest management on public and private land and water, and is complemented by specific management strategies relating to weed, fox, rabbit, feral pig and feral goat, wild dog and public land management.

Desired outcomes of the VPMF are to achieve a standard of land and water management which meets State biodiversity objectives and enhanced profitability on private land and fisheries; prevent new and emerging pests from having significant impacts on natural and productive resources; decrease the impact of established pests on natural and productive resources; and increase community capacity to successfully respond to new and existing pest problems.

The VCMC Weeds Policy Committee (WPC) has been established under the VPMF to advance relevant strategic actions contained therein (see *Weeds Policy Committee* section).

VICTORIAN RIVER HEALTH STRATEGY (VRHS)

In December 1999, VCMC with the assistance of NRE, developed a vision for Victorian rivers in the document *Rivers - 2050: The future of rivers in Victoria*. This was a starting point for the development of the Victorian River Health Strategy (VRHS).

The Strategy is being developed by NRE, with advice from a Reference Committee of all major statewide stakeholder groups including the VFF, ACF and Environment Victoria. The Committee is chaired by Christine Forster (VCMC Chair).

A Scientific Panel, chaired by VCMC member Professor Barry Hart, was established to ensure that the scientific basis of the Strategy is sound and that it meets its ecological objectives. Expertise on the Panel includes ecology, water quality, hydrology, geomorphology and channel hydraulics.

Furthermore, the VRHS was developed in close consultation with the EPA which is undertaking the review of the State Environment Protection Policy (Waters of Victoria), to ensure complementarity of these policy instruments.

This strategy provides the framework for the integrated management and restoration of Victoria's rivers and associated floodplains and wetlands. It outlines the Government's policy approach on a number of specific management issues including over-allocated or flow stressed rivers, water quality and river frontages. In addition, the VRHS provides guidance on priority setting for the use of Government funds on river management and restoration with the aim of generating the maximum environmental and community benefits.

The VRHS will be underpinned at a regional level by Regional River Health Strategies. These documents will be supported by more detailed regional action plans with targets and work schedules.

A draft of the strategy was released in February 2002 and comments were received from a range of stakeholders including local government, CMAs, Rural Water Authorities, Urban Water Authorities, recreation, conservation and industry groups, and individuals. The final VRHS is expected to be released by the Minister in August 2002.

3. REPORTING ON CATCHMENT CONDITION

VICTORIAN CATCHMENT INDICATORS

The idea of a project to develop Catchment Indicators for the State was conceived in 1995 - 96 but did not begin until 1998. Victoria now has 30 indicators upon which to base monitoring, evaluation and reporting. The 30 Catchment Indicators were presented in the document *Victorian Catchment Indicators 2001*.

These indicators and the data supporting them were released to the Victorian community through an interactive website launched by the Minister for Environment and Conservation in December 2001. Data can be viewed through Victorian Catchment Indicators Online (VCIO). At present, VCIO is not fully populated with appropriate data but this is being addressed through NRE with support from CLPR Bendigo. The VCIO is located at <http://www.nre.vic.gov.au/vcio>.

In the 2002 *Health of Our Catchments Report* the VCMC use 27 of the original 30 developed indicators. Since 1998 around 260 people have been involved in consultation on the development of the 30 original Catchment Condition Indicators at a State and regional level.

CATCHMENT CONDITION REPORT

Every five years the Victorian Catchment Management Council is required by the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994* to report to Parliament through the Minister for Environment and Conservation on the condition and management of Victoria's catchments.

The Sub-Committee chaired by Christine Forster and comprising Barry Hart, John Russell and Diana Patterson has been overseeing the development of the 2002 report to the Victorian Parliament on the condition and management of the State's natural resources. The document is titled *The Health of Our Catchments: A Victorian Report Card* and is a companion document to this annual report. As the basis for reporting upon condition the VCMC has used the Catchment Condition Indicators developed over four years and completed in 2001 by the Resource Assessment and Monitoring Committee.

Health of Our Catchments - Report Synopsis

The report finds that our natural resources are under pressure and, in many cases, will not be passed on to the next generation in good condition. The Government has in place many strategies, plans and programs to encourage sustainable use of resources. Most of these, if given

adequate resources, will make a significant impact on the health of our catchments.

Under current resourcing and management paradigms our efforts to protect and sustainably manage natural capital are not keeping pace with the breadth of degradation symptoms depreciating the natural capital base. One of the key hindrances to community and government efforts in this area is knowledge. In compiling this report we have found it difficult to answer questions on the condition of the States' resource base.

New knowledge is helping and we have made great strides in the last five years. This knowledge coupled with experience and efforts over the past two decades tell us much about what we need to do. It is clear that best management practices will not be enough to ensure sustainable use of the land and water in many parts of the State. Major change will need to be made in the management of many areas to offset the impact of issues such as dryland salinity and soil acidity. If we are to protect and enhance the natural capital of the State, revolutionary change is required in the way we manage much of Victoria's landscape. The 'continue as we are' scenario will not ensure a long-term economic and environmental future for agriculture in Victoria.

Current trends for resource condition across Victoria do not reflect the definition of sustainability offered in this report. To reach a level of sustainability a comprehensive new approach is required. The range of strategic documents developed by the State to manage specific degradation issues is impressive. However, we are lacking a coherent system for allocating resources between individual management programs at state level and between different regions at CMA level.

The next step must focus on designing catchments and the landscape for future sustainability. The planning time-frame for such an activity will need to be long-term, probably 30-50 years, to allow the community to adapt to and adopt new ideas and management paradigms.

The ability to make hard long-term decisions would be greatly enhanced through the development of an integrated catchment management strategy across the State.

In the long run, it is cheaper to manage our natural resources properly than to pay the exorbitant repair bill we are accumulating: prevention is always cheaper.

Please refer to *The Health of Our Catchments: A Victorian Report Card* for the full report and findings on the condition and management of natural resources in Victoria.

4. STATUTORY OBLIGATIONS

VCMC MEETINGS

VCMC met eight times throughout the year, on the third Thursday of each month except November, January, March and May. Council members also participate on the various sub-committees outlined in Section 1. The Sub-committees meet as required.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

During 2001 - 2002, no requests were received for access to documents under the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*.

CONSULTANCIES

The VCMC used three consultants in 2001 - 2002.

- Marjorie Thorpe – for engaging with CMAs and Indigenous Nations in the development of Indigenous protocols for land and water management. Overall cost - \$15,000.
- Sarah Ewing – for preparation of a draft Landcare Support Strategy for Victoria. Overall cost - \$11,600.
- Chandris Pty Ltd – for preparation of Roadside Conservation and Advisory Committee review. Overall cost - \$11,654.

NATIONAL COMPETITION POLICY

National Competition Policy requirements have been taken into account when reporting to the Minister.

MULTI-CULTURAL STATEMENT

The Victorian Catchment Management Council is committed to policies, programs and strategies aimed at delivering culturally appropriate services to all Victorians. No special initiatives were needed by the Council to meet its statutory obligations.

PECUNIARY INTEREST

Declarations of pecuniary interests have been duly completed by all relevant members and officers.

WHISTLEBLOWERS PROTECTION ACT

The *Whistleblowers Protection Act 2001* came into effect on 1 January 2002. The Act is designed to protect people who disclose information about serious wrongdoing within the Victorian Public Sector and to provide a framework for the investigation of these matters.

The protected disclosure coordinator for the Department of Natural Resources and Environment (NRE) acts as an agent for the Authority to receive disclosures under the Act, and applies NRE procedures in managing disclosures. Disclosures of improper conduct by the Authority or its employees may be made to the following:

Deidre Egan, Protected Disclosure Coordinator
NRE, PO Box 500, East Melbourne Vic 3002.
Telephone: 9637 8575 Facsimile: 9637 8129 Email:
Deidre.Egan@nre.vic.gov.au

The Ombudsman Victoria
Level 22, 459 Collins Street, Melbourne Vic 3000.
Telephone: 9613 6222 Toll free: 1800 806 314.

MERIT AND EQUITY

Victorian Public Service merit and equity principles are applied in the appointment and management of staff.

The VCMC follows the merit and equitable principles used by NRE, in accordance with Government directives.

Four primary goals have been assumed by NRE with regard to people management practices:

- Develop and sustain an organisational culture in which policies, practices and services are adapted to the needs of the community;
- Ensure that the diversity of the workforce reflects the diversity of the community;
- Ensure a workplace free from policies and practices that discriminate against staff or potential staff;
- Ensure that staff have access to a fair and efficient grievance review process to resolve perceived breaches of merit and equity.

PUBLICATIONS

During the period 2001 - 2002, the following publication was produced by VCMC:

- Annual Report 2000 – 2001.

Copies are available through VCMC.

APPENDIX 1

COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS THAT INCLUDE A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE VCMC

Group Name	VCMC representative
Australian Landcare Council	Alison Teese
Australian Landcare Council Peak Chairs	Christine Forster
Box-Ironbark Implementation Committee	Alison Teese
Central Highlands Rural Water Authority	Alison Teese
CMA CEOs	Cullen Gunn
CMA Chairs and CEOs	Christine Forster, Cullen Gunn
Council for Sustainable Vegetation Management	Alison Teese
Environmental Water Monitoring Committee	Barry Hart
EPA Victoria Board	Barry Hart
Gippsland Agri-Business Forum	Alex Arbuthnot
Infrastructure Planning Council	Christine Forster
Irrigation Farm Dams Steering Committee	Christine Forster
Land Stewardship Project Steering Committee	Christine Forster, Sarah Ewing, Cullen Gunn
Landcare Australia Limited	Alex Arbuthnot
Landcare Foundation Victoria (LFV)	Alex Arbuthnot
Landcare Taskforce	Alison Teese
Local Planning – Regional Catchment Planning Steering Committee	Christine Forster, Cullen Gunn
Mt Buller Resort Management Board	Diana Patterson
Portland Coast Water Authority Board	Bill Sharrock
Resource Monitoring and Assessment Committee	Diana Patterson, Christine Forster, Barry Hart
State Assessment Panel	Christine Forster, Alison Teese
VFF Land Management Committee	Alex Arbuthnot
Victorian Blackberry Task Force	Alex Arbuthnot
Victorian Environmental Assessment Council	Sarah Ewing
Victorian Greenhouse Strategy, Agriculture and Sinks Reference Group	Alison Teese
Victorian Pest Management Strategy Steering Committee	Christine Forster
Victorian River Health Strategy and SEPP Waters of Victoria Steering Committee	Christine Forster (Chair)
VRHS Reference Committee	Christine Forster
VRHS Scientific Panel	Christine Forster
VRHS Technical Advisory Committee	Barry Hart

APPENDIX 2

CATCHMENT STAKEHOLDER FORUM MEMBERS

Members of the forum in 2001 - 2002 were:

Australian Conservation Foundation
Australian Water Association
Conservation Volunteers
Environment Victoria
Friends of the Earth
Greening Australia Victoria
Indigenous Flora and Fauna Association
Landcare Australia Victoria
Marine and Coastal Community Network
Mirimbiak Nations Aboriginal Corporation
Municipal Association of Victoria
Natural Resources Conservation League
River Basin Management Society
Threatened Species Network
Trust for Nature (Victoria)
Victorian Association of Forest Industries
Victorian Farmers' Federation
Victorian Minerals and Energy Council (formerly Victorian Chamber of Mines)
Victorian National Parks Association
Victorian Water Industry Association
Victorian Wine Industry Association
VR Fish (Victorian Recreational Fishers' Peak Body)