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Vic Catchments Newsletter | Issue 16 | September 2021



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COMMUNIQUÉ

Message from the Chair

I hope you are all safe and well. We are certainly having our ups and downs with COVID. As a result of the restrictions, our last Vic Catchments meeting was again held on-line. While we are becoming adept at meeting online, we would much prefer to meet in person where we have greater opportunity for networking and informal discussion.

Presentations and news from the meeting are included in this Newsletter.

This is my first Communiqué as Chair of Vic Catchments after taking over from Sharyon Peart whose term ended in June. Sharyon brought a passionate and personable approach to fulfilling Peter Veenker's vision of a forum with a collegiate approach that ensures all CMAs benefit through the sharing of ideas and advocacy.

We thank Sharyon for her energy and leadership and for continuing in the Deputy Chair role to support a handover to me. I will keep the momentum that Sharyon has generated going by continuing to meet regularly with our partners and striving to strengthen those relationships.

CMAs are looking forward to implementing some exciting projects over the next three years funded under the Victorian Government's Environmental Contribution Tranche 5. We thank Helen Vaughan and her staff for their collaborative approach to this program.



We are also turning our minds to the review of the Australian Government's National Landcare Program. This is an important program for CMAs and our regions and we look forward to working with NRM Regions Australia to ensure Victoria is well represented in discussions.

In the meantime, please stay safe and enjoy reading Vic Catchments' Communiqué 16.

Peter Hilbig



Vic Catchments Forum Meeting

27 August 2021



NRM Regions Australia Update

NRM RA, our national representative body, plays a similar role to Vic Catchments at a national level. Alice Knight represents Victoria on the NRM RA Board, while our Executive Officer provides support at an operational level. We also have several CMA representatives on NRM RA communities of practice where specific topics are

discussed by NRM group staff from across Australia.

Emma Jackson (Chair) and Kate Andrews (EO) updated the Forum on the Australian Government's review of the National Landcare Program. They also outlined how we can be part of the process. We look forward to working with Emma and Kate and their staff in coming months.

[Learn more...](#)



WaterAble

Llewellyn Prain is the founder of WaterAble, the foundation she established to address the under-representation of people with a disability in the Water Industry.

Llewellyn has been involved in the Water Industry since 2015. She is now vision-impaired but for most of her life, had

normal vision. One of the things she has found most difficult to come to terms with, is not the loss of her sight, but other people's attitude to it. People see the disability before the person. This is why she established WaterAble. While the Water Industry has some good inclusion initiatives, she feels disability is often seen as too difficult.

WaterAble is a network for people in the Victorian Water Industry who have a disability or who would like to show their support for disability-inclusion in the Industry. It aims to provide resources, raise awareness and offer support.

The foundation conducts speaking engagements to debunk misconceptions and highlight unconscious bias against disability. Their flagship program is the Connections program which matches people with a disability to Industry leaders in "matched pairs".

Llewellyn encouraged CMAs to start talking about disability in their organisations, to 'keep it simple and do-able' but just get some runs on the board.

Vic Catchments' supports WaterAble's practical approach. We encourage our CMAs and others in the Water sector to reach out to Llewellyn and [learn more...](#)



Camping on Crown Frontages

Will Guthrie from DELWP updated the Forum on the progress of the Camping on Crown Frontages regulations which are due to be implemented on September 1.

The approach that is being adopted is to only allow camping in areas that have been through a DELWP and cultural heritage assessment process and have been formally designated as areas for camping.

As this is such a large task, the focus will initially be in three areas in Northern Victoria, including the Goulburn, Ovens, Campaspe, Loddon and Broken rivers. The rolling program of assessments will continue over the next 6-12 months.

CMAs can play a role in identifying areas that they think are appropriate for camping.



Insight - Executive Leadership for Women In Water

Helen Vaughan spoke to the Forum about the Insight - Executive Leadership for Women In Water program, and the review that had taken place. DELWP looks forward to supporting the continuation of the program with a focus on women that are currently in executive roles. We look forward to continuing to work with DELWP on this program to build our next crop of leaders. [Learn more...](#)



DELWP Update

With Karen Lau now Acting Deputy Secretary, Environment and Climate Change, Amber Clarke (left) is currently filling in for her as Executive Director, Catchments, Waterways, Cities and Towns. We wish Karen well in her new role and look forward to keeping in touch.

Amber announced first round funding for EC5 programs was now being distributed with second round funding to follow soon.

Further consultation would be conducted on the Central and Gippsland Sustainable Water Strategy.

Introductory meetings have begun with Traditional Owners with respect to renewal of the Vic Waterway Management Strategy.



Partnerships and collaboration

Vic Catchments is a point of contact for industry stakeholders seeking support and input.



Deakin University

Vic Catchments facilitated funding from multiple agencies to support Deakin University's Blue Carbon Lab prepare and submit an Expression of Interest 'Teal Carbon Methodology (inland waterways)' to the Clean Energy Regulator (CER). The submission proposed the development of 2 Teal Carbon Emissions Reduction Fund methods, one related to farm dams and one for wetlands.

If successful, funding will be provided by the CER for the development of the methodologies. These methodologies will be a big step forward in supporting land managers and the CMAs in the delivery of work restoring and protecting wetlands and supporting the management of farm dams for multiple values.

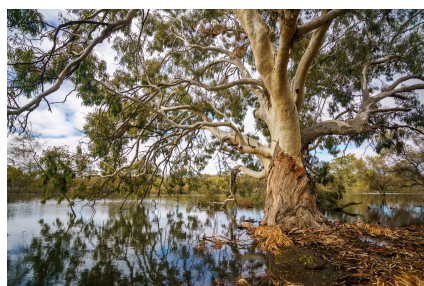
The partnership came about as a result of a long standing relationship with Blue Carbon Lab including work on Blue Carbon, investment by individual CMAs into Deakin Uni's data collection efforts and building on Vic Catchments' work with Blue Carbon Lab including the 2016 report *Carbon sequestration by Victorian inland wetlands*.



Landcare

We have recently renewed our MOU with Landcare Victoria Inc (LVI) and we met with their new Chair, Jane Carney and CEO, Andrew Maclean, in early August.

Numerous topics were discussed, including Regional Waterway Strategy renewal, the National Landcare Program review, camping on Crown frontages and the desire for LVI to develop a Landcare Plan for Victoria.



VEWH

We continue to build our relationship with the Victorian Environmental Water Holder (VEWH) and will be looking to review our MOU.

We have discussed opportunities to collaborate, including Sustainable Waterway Strategies and the Victorian Waterway Management Strategy.

[Find out more about VEWB >>](#)



MAV

We met with Municipal Association of Victoria President, David Clarke and Manager, Built and National Environment, Claire Dunn. Some of the topics discussed included:

- Planning and development
- Floodplain management
- Climate change adaptation and mitigation
- The protection of our natural resources such as water and biodiversity
- Community engagement.

We agreed to have further discussions, particularly about how we might work with DELWP on efficiencies in planning processes.

[Find out more about MAV >>](#)

A Stronger Industry

Executive Officer, Tony Baker and David Brennan, CEO Wimmera CMA, attended the AgVic Shaping Victoria's Biosecurity Future Workshop . There was a wide range of representatives amongst the approx 100 participants and a feeling that everyone was keen to do more but there were some legislative barriers to doing so. A more coordinated approach was needed. Tony and David discussed CMAs role and contributed a video clip explaining CMAs' approach.

[Learn more ...](#)

Paula Camenzuli, our State-wide Climate Change Coordinator along with our Executive Officer, developed a series of responses on the DELWP Climate Change Adaptation Actions Plans for water cycle, built environment, primary production, and natural environment in collaboration with the CMA. They are sound plans although we have suggested improvements for thoroughness and credibility and highlighted CMA work that can contribute.

Tony and Paula have also provided feedback to the Australian Government on the development of the new National Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy. [Learn more...](#)

Our People



We are very pleased with the use of the Water Sector Secondment Portal, housed on Vic Water's website. This portal is supported by a partnership involving Vic Catchments, Vic Water, VEWH and DELWP. The uptake is growing and is a great professional development tool for our organisations and employees.

Water Sector Secondment
Portal



We have been supporting Vic Water and DELWP in assessing Director development needs as we seek to continually improve the processes that support Board Director induction and training. This will be incorporated into the induction of new Board members to be appointed this October.

We are mindful of the cyclical nature of Vic Catchments' membership, with change occurring after CMA Board elections every October. A number of our Chairs and Board Directors are up for re-appointment and some will stand down, so there is always change around this time.

We thank the Chairs who may not be continuing in their role past October, for their contribution to Vic Catchments, and wish them all the best in their new pursuits.





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Vic Catchments

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the country we work on and pay our respects to their elders past, present and emerging.