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Vic Catchments Forum Newsletter | Issue 17 | December 2021



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COMMUNIQUÉ

Message from the Chair

I write this message with the happy news that Victoria has reached 90% double vaccination rate and that we are returning close to normal society just in time for the summer holidays. This will be a great chance for our regions to welcome back visitors so they can enjoy what we have to offer including our waterways and nature.

Our November meeting was again online; however we are aiming for face-to-face in February where we will reconnect with our members and partners. This will be a chance to reinvigorate and reset.

During this period we welcome four new Chairs:

- Mikaela Power (West Gippsland CMA)
- Cath Jenkins (Corangamite CMA)
- Allison McTaggart (Mallee CMA)
- Chris Cunningham (North East CMA)

We welcome them to Vic Catchments and look forward to their contributions. Biographies for each later in

I would particularly like to acknowledge Alice, who was appointed to Corangamite CMA Board as Chair in 2011. Alice is a superior relationship builder and is respected by all colours of government and the most senior public servants. Alice has also represented Victoria's CMAs on the NRM Regions Australia Board. Alice remains on the Board of Landcare Victoria and is an active Landcarer so will remain an active part of the industry. We wish her well.



CMAs have now had their funding confirmed under the Victorian Government's Environmental Contribution Tranche 5. This is a pleasing outcome, and we are very excited to continue to deliver waterway outcomes with the community over the next three years.

We have also begun engaging with partners and decision makers to advocate the Regional Land Partnerships Program. We are working closely with our national body, NRM Regions Australia.

I would like to acknowledge all our CMAs' hard work

Communiqué.

We also say goodbye to our outgoing Chairs:

- Leanne Mulcahy who has now been appointed to the Board of North East Water.
- Peter Jennings who remains on the West Gippsland Board.
- Sharyon Peart who remains on the Mallee CMA Board but has also been appointed Chair of Lower Murray Water.
- Alice Knight who has retired.

during what has been a very challenging year, particularly in the east of the State where fire recovery is ongoing.

I will take this opportunity to wish you a safe and happy festive season and look forward to working with you in 2022.

Peter Hilbig



Vic Catchments Meeting 19, November 2021



VIC CATCHMENTS

A Collaboration of CMAs

Our November meeting was focused on updates and planning for our February strategic meeting where we will meet with our partners and plan our priorities for the next 12 months.

We took the opportunity to hear from our new Chairs and get an understanding of their background and skill sets. We look forward to getting to know them more when we meet face-to-face in February.

We also took the opportunity to pause our meetings so we could attend the Victorian Landcare Awards. More detail on the awards is included later in the Communiqué.

DELWP Update

Deb Brown is Acting Executive Director, Catchments and Waterways until May 2022 while Karen Lau is on secondment.

Deb provided an update at the Vic Catchments meeting on the status of Regional Catchment Strategies currently sitting with Minister Neville for final approval. Four others are going through the intergovernmental consultation process with others to follow as they are completed.



Vic Catchments appointments

With the changes within our Chairs ranks, we have had a couple of vacancies to fill. I'm therefore pleased to announce that Tony Ford, Chair of Glenelg Hopkins CMA, has been appointed Deputy Chair of Vic Catchments.



In addition, a process is being established for the appointment of the NRM Regional Australia Director (Victoria) position.

Partnerships and collaboration

Biodiversity

Vic Catchments has been meeting with Emily Garnett, Senior Advisor to the Minister for Environment and Climate Change, along with DELWP Biodiversity staff. We have had two meetings to date presenting on Vic Catchments' and CMAs' ability to deliver biodiversity and climate change outcomes.



Dr Helen Haines

In October, Vic Catchments had its second meeting with Helen Haines, who is the Independent Member for the Federal seat of Indi. Helen is also the Co-Chair of the Parliamentary Friends of Climate Action.



We took the opportunity to discuss Regional Catchment Strategies and their benefits in delivering Australian Government programs, the National Landcare Program Phase 2 review, our thoughts on the National Landcare Program (NLP) and our observations on the Carbon + Biodiversity Pilot that North Central CMA are involved in.

Major Transport Infrastructure Authority

Vic Catchments is working with the Major Transport Infrastructure Authority (MTIA) regarding the MOU CMAs signed with VicRoads in relation to the use of cleared timber in waterway environmental projects. We are seeking streamlined approaches to take timber from roads projects and use it for waterway restoration projects such as fish habitat restoration.



NRM Regions Australia

During November, our CEO and Chairs participated in National CEO and Chairs forums respectively. Coordinated by NRM Regions Australia, these provide an opportunity for Chairs and CEOs to collaborate on national issues and to coordinate national action.



A Stronger Industry



In recognition of our strong partnership with Vic Water, our Chair, Peter Hilbig, presented to the Vic Water Industry Director Induction event in November 2021. Coordinated by Vic Water, Peter outlined the role of Vic Catchments and CMAs to new CMA and Water Corporation directors.

Vic Catchments is currently undertaking an internal review. This review will involve conducting a survey of Chairs between November and March with the aim of delivering a report to the Forum in May 2022.

On behalf of our CEOs, Vic Catchments is conducting a review of CMAs Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) plans. This is being delivered in collaboration with the CMA HR Managers' Forum and is due to be complete by December 2021.

From 30 November to 1 December, the CMA CEOs met in Bendigo for their first face-to-face meeting in just under two years. In addition to their regular monthly meeting, the CEOs spent time exploring continual improvement opportunities for our industry. Vic Catchments will consider these ideas in February.

Since the last Communiqué, Vic Catchments has made several submissions including to the:

- Parks Victoria Land Management Strategy
- National Landcare Program Phase 2 review
- National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy.

Our People

We welcomed new Chairs to Vic Catchments whose biographies are outlined below.



Allison McTaggart

Allison is the new Chair of Mallee CMA. Born in Sydney, Allison has lived in the Sunraysia district for almost 38 years. Allison runs her own human resources and business consultancy firm.



Mikaela Power

Mikaela is the new Chair of West Gippsland CMA. A born and bred Gippslander, Mikaela holds qualifications in arts, education, business and company directorship. She has worked in the public and private



Chris Cunningham

Christine (Chris) is the new Chair of North East CMA. Chris is an experienced Non-Executive Director and Chairman with more than 15 years experience on health, social enterprise and education boards.



Cath Jenkins

Cath is the new Chair of Corangamite CMA. Cath and her family live on their farm in South Purrumbete where they operate a free-range egg business and livestock operation. Cath also works as an independent agribusiness consultant.

Previously Cath has

Allison is a Director of Western Murray Irrigation and her family owned earthmoving business. She has chaired the Murray Primary Health Network Community Consultative Committee for the past two years.

[Find out more >>](#)

sectors in Gippsland, Melbourne and overseas.

[Find out more >>](#)

She is currently Deputy-Chair Royal Children's Hospital (RCH) Board, Chair of the Quality and Population Health Committee and Chair of the Workplace Culture Review Committee.

[Find out more >>](#)

worked in roles as an Agribusiness manager with ANZ and as an Area Manager with Fonterra, where she worked closely with farming clients in the Colac and Cobden districts.

[Find out more >>](#)



2021 Victorian Landcare Awards

Congratulations to all those who were acknowledged during the 2021 Victorian Landcare Awards ceremony. Many receiving awards or acknowledgement have connections with CMAs. Congratulations to Tess Grieves, North Central CMA Regional Landcare Coordinator, who took out the Steadfast Young Landcare Leadership Award.

For a full list of award winners, click on the link.



[Find out more >>](#)

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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