

Victorian NRM

Community Engagement & Partnering Framework



Why a Framework

- ◆ The Catchment and Land Protection (CaLP) Act (1994), Water Act (1989) and respective Statement of Obligations (2007, 2006) outline responsibilities for CMAs:
- ◆ in relation to facilitating and coordinating the management of catchments in an integrated and sustainable manner and
- ◆ to engagement and consultation with communities and stakeholders.
 - ◆ They are generally not, however, prescriptive of the expectations and requirements of CMAs.

What it is

- ◆ This framework outlines a common approach
- ◆ It presents a shared understanding of our community engagement responsibilities so that we can work together with our communities, partners and stakeholders with confidence.
- ◆ The Framework sets out:
 - ◆ key principles,
 - ◆ clarifies expectations and
 - ◆ provides an approach to measurement and evaluation of community engagement and partnership practice, effectiveness and efficiency.

Two Components

Community Engagement and Partnerships Framework for Victoria's Catchment Management Authorities

Recognising the value of effective engagement and partnerships in achieving the best outcomes for natural resource management

Prepared by the Community Engagement and Partnerships Working Group for the Victorian Catchment Management Forum, November 2012

Endorsed by the Victorian Catchment Management Forum – 27 November 2012

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Implementation Support Pack

Prepared by the Community Engagement and Partnerships Working Group for the Victorian Catchment Management Forum, August 2013

Plus Indigenous Engagement Guidelines

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A principles based approach

The following principles underpin our approach to community engagement and the establishment and management of our partnerships. They reflect our focus on achieving integrated natural resource management through effective facilitation and coordination. Our CMA strategies, initiatives, programs and projects will all evidence these principles at work.

- 1 We will embed community engagement and build partnerships in all that we do
- 2 Our people will be actively supported to engage communities and to build partnerships
- 3 Our community engagement and partnership approaches will be well planned, tailored, targeted, and evaluated
- 4 We will provide meaningful opportunities for our communities and partners to contribute to strategies and initiatives
- 5 We will work transparently and respectfully with our communities and partners, and establish clear roles and expectations

Achieving and Measuring Success

It is important that we measure and evaluate our community engagement work and our partnerships in order to assess the benefits of our investment and its impact on contributing to the achievement of improved catchment health and positive natural resource outcomes. The following pages outline in further detail a number of measures that CMAs can use to assess and evaluate our success. This Framework does not prescribe the extent or scope of monitoring and evaluation which CMAs will have in place, but rather serves to provide a common set of guidelines to develop local programs for measurement of success. In summary, they require that we:

- 1 Have a Community Engagement and Partnerships **Strategy** in place to drive and guide our work
- 2 Review our **practice and approach** to community engagement and partnerships as part of regular monitoring and reporting frameworks
- 3 Assess the **value and effectiveness** of our community engagement and partnerships

Measuring the Success of our Community Engagement

Measuring the Success of our Partnerships

We can monitor and assess the **practice** and **approach** of our engagement using the following elements*:

E1	Adequate scoping and planning is undertaken
E2	Early and sufficient engagement occurs
E3	The diversity of communities is well represented
E4	Suitable information and materials are provided
E5	Feedback is provided to participants on the value of their input
E6	The engagement is transparently and respectfully conducted
E7	Roles and expectations are clear
E8	The influence of communities on the project outcome is captured
E9	Cost and time is considered properly
E10	Promises are kept

We can monitor and assess the **practice, approach and health** of our partnerships using the following elements:

P1	The purpose of the partnership is clear
P2	Membership of the partnership is appropriate for the task
P3	Leadership and governance of the partnership is functioning well
P4	Decision-making processes are considered rigorous and reasonable
P5	Partners are clear on their roles and responsibilities
P6	There are suitable support resources in place for the partnership
P7	The partnership remains valuable and mutually beneficial
P8	The partnership allows all members to contribute

*Adapted from the DSE guide, *Introduction to Evaluation for Engagement and Communications*, developed by Dr Jess Dart, Clear Horizons.

Measuring the Value and Effectiveness of our Community Engagement and Partnerships

While our ongoing practice and approach to community engagement and partnerships is important, we can also take a targeted and longer term approach to evaluating the value and effectiveness of our work. This form of evaluation of activity can be time and cost intensive occurring over a multi-year period, and as such, CMAs will plan in advance which initiatives, partnerships, business areas or specific geographic areas would benefit from this approach.

We can measure the **value** and **effectiveness** of our engagement in supporting the achievement of natural resource outcomes against any of the following statements:

V 1	Communities are further informed and engaged in NRM
V 2	New partnerships or relationships have been established
V 3	There is evidence of practice change in the community
V 4	Partnerships are healthy and productive
V 5	There is facilitation of an integrated approach to NRM

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Implementation Support Pack

Range of Case Studies, Guidance notes and background information

Implementation Checklist

This checklist is designed to support each CMA to consider its approach to adopting and implementing the Community Engagement and Partnerships Framework. Actions are provided as a suggestion only, and each CMA may develop their own implementation approach.

Align

- ☐ Do your existing strategies align with this Framework? Which of your local strategies might require updating or a planned refresh to improve and clarify alignment?
- ☐ Do your organisation's vision and values reflect organisational commitment to community engagement and partnerships?
- ☐ Are there processes that should be updated to ensure the Framework is considered as part of normal business practice? For example, do project planning and management, grant submission development, risk framework and resourcing processes consider Framework principles?
- ☐ What governance arrangements do you have in place to oversee CMA community engagement and partnerships practice? How is this actively undertaken and evaluated?
- ☐ How might you incorporate Framework measurement and evaluation into existing performance management, reporting and audit plans?
- ☐ Is there a need to consider traditional communication channels (such as websites) and whether they are still aligned and effective in delivering the framework?



Consider how you might capture alignment activities in a single action plan for consideration by the Board and senior management team.

Implement

- ☐ Does your Board support and understand the intent of the Framework?
- ☐ Does your senior management team feel comfortable and confident with the Framework?
- ☐ Do your people have the capability and confidence to undertake community engagement and partnership activities? What training or development opportunities might be appropriate?
- ☐ How might you embed responsibility for community engagement into each CMA team and role?
- ☐ How will you disseminate the Framework and make it available both internally and publicly?
- ☐ Does the launch of the Framework provide you with opportunities to promote and publicise the good work of your CMA or to refresh the aims or progress of particular committees or working groups?
- ☐ How might you capture and promote 'early adopter' examples of the Framework principles in action?



Consider developing documents to assist teams to plan and execute their engagement and partnerships work. A PESTER workshop to identify economic, social, technological, environmental and regulatory factors relevant to your organisation might be helpful. A 'stakeholder matrix' social profiling or a visual way of thinking through the various communities, partners and people who might need to be considered during planning might be helpful, and would avoid unnecessary re-work on a per project basis.

Consolidate

- ☐ Have you considered taking out IAP2 (International Association of Public Participation) membership for your CMA (or for specific individuals) to keep up to date with current approaches, and to more readily access expertise?
- ☐ The Framework calls for evaluation of engagement value and effectiveness which requires good planning right from the beginning of projects. What approach will your CMA take to evaluation, and how might this add value?
- ☐ How will you recognise and celebrate small and big achievements in engagement and partnerships? Have you considered entering a CMA project for an IAP2 engagement award or similar recognition opportunity?
- ☐ How will you manage continuous improvement of the CMA's community engagement and partnerships approach? If your CMA has undertaken an organisational performance excellence review, could this be shared with colleagues?
- ☐ What are the expectations of your Board for ongoing reporting of community engagement and partnerships work? Might this area be a 'theme' for discussion on agendas from time to time, or built into Board paper templates?



Consider an annual event such as an 'engagement and partnerships day' to sustain organisation focus on the Framework's principles. This might provide an opportunity to recognise or further develop staff, project teams and committees. It might also provide a focus on ensuring that local media and communication at that time promotes the work of your CMA.

Western CMA (NSW)– Culture, values and structure

Framework Principle 1 - 'We will embed community engagement and build partnerships in all that we do'

What was this initiative about?

Western CMA 's vision is 'Dynamic, viable communities and enterprises which support and sustain diverse natural environments and cultural values.' The culture, values and area based team structure of Western CMA all support this vision.

Ensuring that our commitment and approach to community engagement and partnerships is outlined in all key organisational strategies and formal agreements including Regional Catchment Strategies

As part of the Catchment Action Plan (CAP) review, Western CMA collected information about what people value about their catchment and their vision for the future. Targeted workshops with landholders, government staff, local government and other stakeholders were held in November 2011 as an initial assessment into community views on NRM.

Workshops were also held at 17 locations to engage the diverse Aboriginal communities regarding what they believe are the big issues in terms of NRM and cultural heritage.

In October 2012 the CMA visited 14 towns to discuss the draft CAP with the community. Feedback received was incorporated into the final draft. The CMA Board also holds bi-monthly meetings. Catchment residents are actively encouraged to raise any concerns directly with Board members.

Building community engagement into all projects and initiatives as a mandatory planning step

Western CMA operates from five offices to support optimum area based engagement and partnership. In the eight years since its establishment in 2004, the Western Catchment Management Authority (CMA) has established more than 700 partnerships with land managers, community groups, schools, government departments and agencies as well as industry to foster understanding and adoption of best practice in sustainable NRM.

Western CMA has also embedded the development of case studies into its approach. Case studies are used to further build upon benefits by encouraging the sharing and emulation of good practice NRM activity.

What was the approach taken?

Acknowledging the limit of CMA resources relative to the size of the catchment which spans North Western NSW, Western CMA's approach is to empower the community to achieve natural resource outcomes – engagement and partnership does not just 'support' what the organisation does, it 'is' what the organisation does.

Recognition and investment in the development of sustained relationships and partnerships

Approximately 20% of the Western Catchment population are Aboriginal people. In order to tap into the wealth of knowledge about managing natural resources and passion about caring for country that Aboriginal communities have, Western CMA has established the Western Catchment Aboriginal Reference Advisory Group (ARAG). Members of the Western Catchment ARAG represent the 13 current Aboriginal language groups in the catchment and communities with large Aboriginal populations.

The ARAG formally coordinates the input of Aboriginal communities into natural resource planning activities in the Western Catchment. The group is also working towards developing an Aboriginal-based knowledge system: a web-enabled database which will link users to relevant organisations, documents and audio and video files. The CMA has also established four Aboriginal Community Support Officer positions representing the large Aboriginal communities within the catchment.

In May 2012, Western CMA undertook targeted consultation with Aboriginal communities to guide the development of the revised CAP. A total of 90 people attended 17 'a yarn about your place' meetings across 15 communities. Participants were asked to provide their views on values of country, changes to natural resources, impacts of changes and strategies to move forward. Through the targeted consultation that was undertaken the Aboriginal community was able to articulate the elements of country they hold valuable, as well as describe the changes to natural resources and culture they have witnessed. The community offered potential solutions to problems they identified, including the role Western CMA could have in delivering these.

Find out more

Western CMA – 1800 032 101

West Gippsland CMA – Use of social research

Framework Principle 3 – ‘Our community engagement and partnership approaches will be well planned, tailored, targeted, and evaluated’

What was this initiative about?

West Gippsland CMA sought to improve their approach to understanding stakeholders and with this information, design tools, programs and initiatives which could better influence decision making within the community.

Carefully plan and consider the purpose and type of engagement to be undertaken and partnerships to be used

Wanting to focus on driving behavioural change, West Gippsland CMA (WGCMA) recognised a need to better plan and consider their approach to understanding and working with stakeholders in order to influence decision-making and action. WGCMA commissioned Ipsos Social Research to undertake stakeholder profiling and to develop easy to use engagement planning resources. Qualitative and quantitative methods were used including in-depth interviews and workshops.

Ensure that engagement and consultation occurs as early as possible and include sufficient engagement

WGCMA has focused on transforming the organisation away from reliance upon specialist Engagement Officers, to design programs where everyone has the basic skills and confidence to engage and consult. This integration of engagement into everyday business adds value to WGCMA programs and projects, and ensures that connection with stakeholders is considered well before a project even kicks off, and throughout the life of the project, and is not just a ‘tick the box’ engagement activity.

Target efforts to reach the community members most impacted by our strategies and initiatives

WGCMA utilises the social profiling research resources to scope projects in a far more dynamic and adaptive manner. A framework for community engagement and set of key questions have been developed to better identify community members most impacted. The questions are easy to incorporate in regular conversation and take a subtle approach. Through these conversations, staff can understand the motivations and views of their

What approach was taken?

An independent Social Research Institute was commissioned to undertake stakeholder profiling and develop easy to use engagement planning and ‘diagnostic’ resources for better identification of stakeholders. Work included both qualitative and quantitative planning.

stakeholders and target engagement activities.

Understand our communities, and tailor our approaches to suit, including consideration for place-based engagement, and engagement of diverse and indigenous communities

Using the social research, question sets and tools, WGCMA teams can tailor their approaches for successful behaviour change.

As an example, initial engagement with landowners around an on-farm nutrient reduction program (Core4) identified that long term farmers would respond more positively to a respected and independent agronomist than they would to government agents, while newer farmers would more likely welcome WGCMA support and advice. In short, staff recognised that they had the right message, but for some stakeholders they would be the wrong messenger. Project communication and engagement was strongly guided by these different profiles and tailored to suit each stakeholder group.

Evaluate our engagement and our partnerships to understand the effectiveness and efficiency of our approach and continue to improve our practice

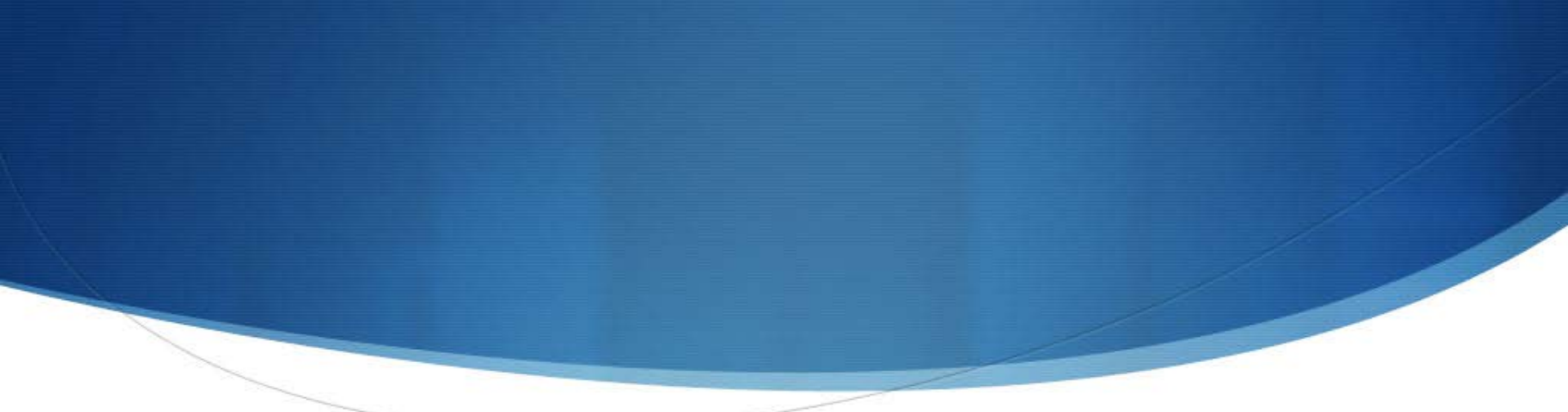
In the case of the Core4 program, evaluation was conducted before and after the project work and included enquiry about the project delivery itself. The value of the social research to inform targeted engagement has been endorsed through this evaluation.

A focus on the future is also possible as the social research forecasts social and land use changes over the next two decades. This means that ongoing practice improvement can continue to be well informed. WGCMA believes that there is value in repeating the research after 5-10 years to sustain and evolve.

Find out more
West Gippsland CMA - 1300 094 262

Indigenous Engagement Guidelines

- ◆ Draft
- ◆ In final consultation with key TO's and Agencies
- ◆ Support pack in development
- ◆ Expected to be approved by October 2015

A large, curved, blue graphic element that spans the top of the page, resembling a stylized horizon or a wave. It has a gradient from a darker blue on the left to a lighter blue on the right.

Victoria's Catchment Management Authorities (CMAs) acknowledge and respect Aboriginal people, communities and organisations. We recognise the diversity of their cultures and the deep connections they have with Victoria's lands and waters.

The CMAs and their staff pay their respects to Aboriginal Elders past and present, and they acknowledge the obligations that Traditional Owners have in caring for their Country.

Objectives

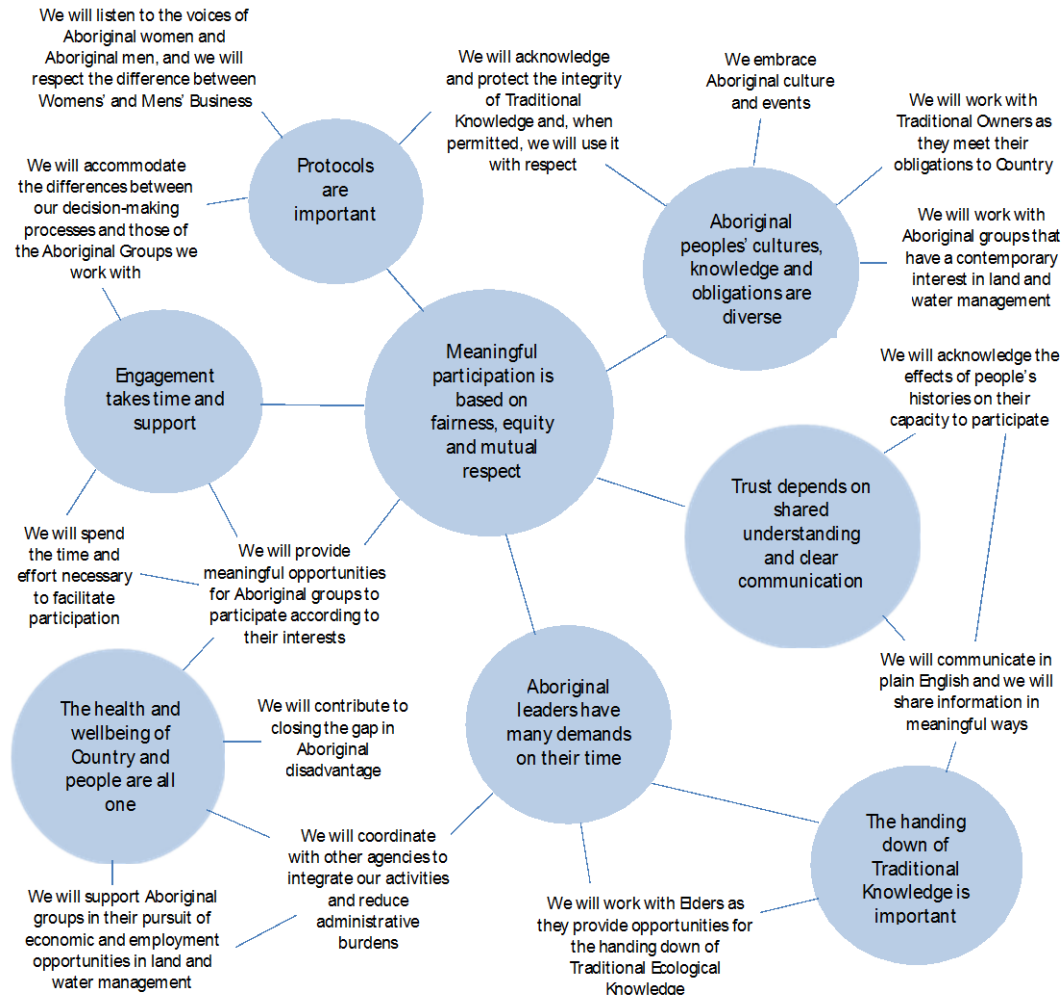
“The Guideline will be a succinct, plain language, visually appealing, stand-alone document (4 pages max.) but linked to the broader framework with the following primary objectives:

- ◆ “Provide clarity to the role and responsibilities of CMAs in Indigenous engagement and participation;
- ◆ “Describe the specific principles that Indigenous people and CMAs identify as critical to achieving effective engagement and participation.
- ◆ “Provide clear practical guidance for NRM practitioners, describing the mechanisms and processes that need to be established to make Indigenous engagement effective and enduring.”

Critical Principles

What does this mean for the CMA organisation?

- We will integrate Aboriginal engagement and participation in the governance, planning, implementation and review of programs and projects in which they have an interest
- Our people will be actively supported to engage Aboriginal communities and to build partnerships
- Our Aboriginal engagement and participation approaches will be well planned, tailored, targeted and evaluated
- We will provide meaningful opportunities for Aboriginal people to contribute to strategies and initiatives
- We will work transparently and respectfully with Aboriginal people, and establish clear roles and expectations



What does this mean for the individuals (staff & contractors) working for the CMA?

- Our induction procedures and training programs will build our cultural competency
- Our workplace arrangements will support proper engagement with Aboriginal people
- We will seek advice from people with experience in Aboriginal engagement
- We will seek to actively involve Aboriginal people in programs and projects in which they have an interest
- We will involve Aboriginal people from the outset in programs and projects where they have interest
- We will be clear and open in our discussions about aspirations and resources
- We will recognise and celebrate the mutual benefits of working with Aboriginal communities

Summary

- ◆ Legislative basis
- ◆ Designed to enable innovation
- ◆ Enables emergence of new concepts
- ◆ Provides basis for Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting