

# SGRF AGENDA

## Meeting no. 47

10.30am, Friday 2 December 2022  
via Video Conference

*'We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which we are meeting.  
We pay our respects to their Elders, past and present, and the Elders from other communities  
who may be here today.'*



**Southern  
Rural Water**

Managing Water. Serving Communities.

# Our Vision

Great value for customers and community through excellence in rural water management



## Our Trademark Behaviours

- Always Safe
- United
- Customer First
- Ambitious
- Results Driven
- Innovative
- Respectful

# **Southern Rural Water's Groundwater and Rivers Strategic Focus Areas**

**June 2022 – June 2023**

There are five strategic focus areas for SRW in the Groundwater and Rivers area over the next 12 months:

1. Continued advocacy for sustainable access to water for irrigators via the implementation of GM2030, policy reforms in surface water management and key stakeholder groups.
2. Continue to encourage a flexible trading market through improved internal procedures and Government policies.
3. Provide more real time information for customers on water usage following the integration of meter reading data with mySRW portal to improve decision making.
4. Undertake more detailed water resource assessment across our systems through investment of unregulated water sales funds and the continuation of the Supply/Demand projects.
5. Understanding the implications of rapidly evolving cultural water policy on customer aspirations for improved access to water.

An update on what SRW is doing in relation to these focus areas is provided in the Manager Groundwater and Rivers Update at each meeting.

Southern Rivers and Groundwater Forum Friday 2 December 2022 Agenda Items:			
		<b>OPENING 10:30am</b>	
1		Acknowledgement of country	Chair
2		Welcome and apologies - <i>Customer Engagement Review overview</i> - <i>Managing Director</i>	Chair
3		Declaration of conflicts of interest	All
4		Confirmation of minutes - Meeting 46	Chair
	4.1	Attachment - Draft Minutes SGRF Meeting 46, 2 September 2022	
5		Business arising	Chair
	5.1	Attachment – Business arising from previous meetings	
6		<b><u>GUEST SPEAKERS</u></b>	
	6.1	Irrigation Development Guidelines	Anthony Goode – WGCMA Christine Reid - GHCMA
	6.2	Struber – Customer Engagement Review - <i>Consultants from Struber will join the meeting to run a workshop.</i>	Omi Koulas Bill Hansen
	6.3	Source, Demand and Values	Matthew Hudson
7		<b><u>PRINCIPAL MATTERS - FOR DISCUSSION</u></b>	
	7.1	Board update	Jane Doolan
	7.2	Morwell River Diversion	Bryce Morden
8		<b><u>PRINCIPAL MATTERS - FOR NOTING</u></b>	
	8.1	Manager Groundwater and Rivers update - Approved Strategic Focus - Operational updates (LVS, SWS, Compliance and enforcement) - DELWP funding agreements - Compliance and Enforcement of rate of take licence conditions for groundwater	Bryce Morden
	8.2	Public Release of Central Gippsland Region Sustainable Water Strategy	Cameron FitzGerald
	8.3	Water is Life Launch	Cameron Fitzgerald
	8.4	Communications report	
9		<b><u>COMMITTEE MATTERS</u></b>	

	9.1	Important issues from other customer committees	Cameron FitzGerald
	9.2	Matters referred by/to the Board/board committee	Jane Doolan
<b>10</b>		<b><u>GENERAL BUSINESS</u></b>	All
	10.1	2023 Meeting schedule	Chair
<b>11</b>		<b><u>MEETING EVALUATION</u></b>	Chair
<b>12</b>		Next meeting	
<b>13</b>		Close	

Item No: 1

Subject: **Acknowledgement of Country**

*'We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which we are meeting. We pay our respects to their Elders, past and present, and the Elders from other communities who may be here today.'*

---

Item No: 2

Subject: **Welcome and Apologies**

The Chair will welcome attendees and note any apologies for this meeting.

The Managing Director will address the committee and provide an overview of the Customer Engagement Review Project

---

Item No: 3

Subject: **Declaration of Conflicts of Interest**

The Chair will ask forum members to declare any conflicts of interest relating to the business of this meeting.

---

Item No: 4  
Subject: Confirmation of minutes – Meeting 46  
Action: For approval  
Author: Hayley Taylor – Executive Assistant  
Date: 11/11/2022

---

## PURPOSE

1. To ensure that the minutes taken of committee meeting 46 are an accurate and sufficient record of discussions held and decisions made at the meeting.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the committee approves the minutes of meeting 46 held on Friday 2 September 2022.

## PREVIOUS COMMITTEE CONSIDERATIONS

2. Minutes are confirmed at each committee meeting.

## BACKGROUND

3. Draft minutes are circulated after each committee meeting. Any suggested changes are captured as track changes, for consideration and confirmation at the following meeting.

## REPORT

4. Draft minutes of meeting 46, held via video conference on Friday 2 September 2022 are provided in attachment 4.1.
5. **Budget impact:** Nil
6. **Link to strategy:** Nil.
7. **Risk:** Committee meeting minutes are a public record and may be subject to release under Freedom of Information. Directors should ensure that minutes accurately and appropriately reflect the discussion and decisions of the meeting.

## NEXT STEPS

Who	Action
Meeting Secretary	Once confirmed, a hard copy of the minutes will be signed by the committee Chairman and saved on the board portal and Southern Rural Water Website.

**GIPPSLAND AND SOUTHERN RURAL WATER CORPORATION  
SOUTHERN GROUNDWATER and RIVERS FORUM**

**MINUTES of MEETING 46**

**Held 9.30am, Friday 2 September 2022**

**Virtual meeting via Microsoft Teams**

**PRESENT:**

Mr Ross Ingram	Chair
Ms Josie Zilm	Forum member, Deputy Chair
Mr Bruce Vallance	Forum member
Mr Daniel Hammond	Forum member
Mr Stephen Marshall	Forum member
Mr Matt Gleeson	Forum member
Mr Damian Moore	Forum member
Mr Stephen Marshall	Forum member

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Ms Jane Doolan	Board Director, SRW
Mr Cameron FitzGerald	Managing Director, SRW
Mr Hugh Christie	General Manager Service Delivery, SRW
Mr Bryce Morden	Manger Groundwater and Rivers, SRW
Ms Taryn Price	Executive Assistant, SRW (Scribe)

**APOLOGIES:**

Mr Daniel Toohey	Forum member
Mr Tom Wallace	Forum member
Mr Kevin Stark	Forum member
Mr Norm Drew	Forum member

**GUESTS:**

Mr Daniel Miller	Chief Executive Officer, GLaWAC
Ms Danica Jobson	Research Executive, Instinct & Reason Pty Ltd
David Donnelly	Director, Instinct & Reason Pty Ltd
Clifford Lewis	Head of NSW consulting, Instinct & Reason Pty Ltd
Alison Dexter	Head of Australian consulting, Instinct & Reason Pty Ltd
Stuart Critchell	Senior Manager Water Recovery and Compliance, DELWP

**1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

The Chair acknowledged the Traditional Owners of the land on which the meeting was held.

**2 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting.

The Chair **noted** the apologies.

Bryce Morden introduced Simon Wilkinson, General Manager Service Delivery, replacing Hugh Christie in the role. Simon provided an overview of his career and the lead up to taking this role.



### **3 DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

The Chair asked attendees to declare any conflicts of interest relating to the business of this meeting.

There were no new conflicts raised.

### **4 CONFIRMATION MINUTES**

The minutes No. 45 held on 3 June 2022 were **approved**.

**Moved:** Bruce Vallance      **Seconded:** Josie Zilm

### **5 BUSINESS ARISING**

The report was taken as read.

### **6 GUEST SPEAKERS**

#### **6.1 DELWP Aboriginal Water Program - nation statement and TO water policies**

Daniel Miller, CEO of the Gunaikurnai Land and Water Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC) joined the meeting. Daniel provided an overview of GLaWAC, stating that the corporation has Native Title, a Traditional Owner Settlement Agreement with the State, and has Registered Aboriginal Status (RAP) with legislative responsibility.

Daniel advised water management is an emerging space for GLaWAC, and they are strengthening their position. Daniel confirmed that GLaWAC are wanting to grow their partnerships within the water sector. There is currently a project with DELWP helping to connect community members to the river systems, often to places community members are not aware of, to rebuild the connection to the rivers and waterways.

The future for GLaWAC in the water space is that it will be structured, with formal documentation and processes, and will continue to speak with government about recognition. The precedent set by the Mitchell will generate options in other waterways, assessing what works best for country, Traditional Owner groups and the broader community.

Jane Doolan asked whether their intended use of their entitlements would align with the focus on waterway management and whether they intend to partner would in the development of the Regional Waterway Strategy when it is due for renewal.

*Daniel stated that GLaWAC are good at strategy and that GLaWAC won't take on a role that can't be managed. Daniel advised that what GLaWAC choose to undertake is dependent on such things as timing. There may be small involvement or great involvement, depending on what is occurring. Daniel stated that these items will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, to work out principles and to take it from there.*

Jane also asked whether GLaWAC had developed their Nation Statement in line with the draft Water is Life presentation and whether it would be available.

*Daniel stated that some work has been undertaken on GLaWAC's Nation Statement and this will link back to broader expectations and GLaWAC will be part of the process to the best approach around implementation of Water is Life.*

Jane asked Daniel about GLaWAC's expectations of SRW and their processes.

*A challenge for SRW is the geographic breadth of the organisation, and GLaWAC will support SRW to ensure work can be done in the Aboriginal space. GLaWAC can have structured chats, meet targets together, and provide advice about the best way to work with Aboriginal people in general and best practice work from the GLaWAC perspective. Daniel advised GLaWAC can act in a broker role for SRW and provided an example of working with a shire within the GLaWAC footprint.*

- A member stated that the 2 GL to GLaWAC came from left of field and noted that the SGRF was advised at the previous meeting that Traditional Owners didn't want broader consultation on the Water is Life process. The member stated this could have a negative impact on the wider community, noting it is important that people communicate with each other including education about values.

*Daniel advised that the statement of no consultation was incorrect. He advised that notification is often short, in some instances GLaWAC hear about announcements only days in advance limiting the opportunity to consult but agreed that consultation and discussions together are important.*

The member stated that Traditional Owners should have a greater say on the water that is not currently allocated and the health of the system.

*Daniel confirmed that anything that can be done to assist GLaWAC's understanding would be greatly appreciated.*

Daniel thanked SRW and the SGRF for the opportunity to join the meeting and welcomed any invitations to assist with understanding and communication between SRW, the community and GLaWAC.

Cameron thanked Daniel for attending the session and for providing an opportunity to understand GLaWAC's achievements, noting he sees there are opportunities to help keep communications open and build a coalition of people seeking great outcomes for the community and Traditional Owners.

## **6.2 DELWP Water Compliance**

Stuart Critchell, Senior Manager Water Recovery and Compliance at DELWP thanked the members for the opportunity to attend and provide information on the project. Stuart advised that the last time social research on compliance was conducted was 2015, noting that a lot has changed since that time. This includes changes to the Water Act, technology and demographics of landholders. Stuart advised that the aim of this project is to provide evidence-based analysis of compliance and enforcement, as well as the behaviours of landholders. The findings of this project will inform communication approaches and to establish a baseline on landholders' understanding of compliance. Stuart introduced staff from Instinct and Reason - the consultancy leading the work.

Stuart Critchell left the meeting at 10.38am citing the need for independence and confidentiality of the project is paramount.

David Donnelly, Director of Instinct & Reason Pty Ltd advised that discussions will occur around the state. This is to understand where people are coming from and what the view is of the people using the water, where issues of compliance occur and to raise an understanding of compliance within the community.

David opened the forum for discussion.

The following topics were discussed:

- Overuse in southern Victoria
- Farmer consultation
- Restrictions creating pressure
- New farm owners unaware of rules relating to water management
- Stock and domestic (D&S) water and its use in non-compliant ways
- Types of non-compliance

David thanked the committee for their time and feedback.

Daniel Hammond left the meeting at 11.12am.

The committee discussed their perspectives and how I&R will best meet with SRW's customers, noting that SRW has a high level of compliance with authorised take.

## **7 PRINCIPAL MATTERS – for discussion**

### **7.1 Board Update**

Jane Doolan advised that the focus for the Board has been on the following:

- Pricing Submission – which was discussed later under a separate agenda item.
- Corporate Plan and Annual Report – which has been sent to DELWP and Department of Treasury and Finance.

The next board meeting is next Tuesday 6 September. Jane advised that the strategic priorities for the SGRF were signed off on. The board appreciated the work of this group and accepted the priorities that will be covered in the Manager Groundwater and Rivers report.

The committee did not raise any questions, however a member stated that the job that the staff performed regarding the Pricing Submission was brilliant. The member questioned the value of the external facilitators when staff did such a great job. The member noted that he didn't think the facilitators were needed.

Cameron FitzGerald welcomed the positive feedback. Cameron noted that there is consistent feedback that the PREMO model is based on customer engagement and stated that it has become quite costly with the independent process. There will be further reflections on the feedback to the ESC to find the right balance between independence and assurance and the cost of this process, ensuring efficiencies.

### **7.2 Pricing Submission Update**

Cameron presented on the Price Submission 2023-28 and provided an overview on the process and deliberations. Cameron noted there have been significant efforts in getting people involved in the engagement.

Cameron advised that the proposal was tabled with the Board in August, and SRW are now finalising the submission which will be submitted to the Essential Services Commission in September of this year.

The following items were noted:

- Compliance
- Proposed new tariffs

The committee raised the following questions (*responses from management provided at the meeting follow each question*):

- A member questioned the independent assessment and what take the Board has – do they query on price increases or is the focus more towards keeping the business profitable?

*Jane Doolan advised that the Board is aware of the long-term financial position of SRW. There is a long-term strategy (25 years) that the board is looking to, to become fully financially sustainable - subject as to endorsed price increases and achievement of proposed productivity gains, some of which are based on the adoption of new technology.*

*In addition, government funding for modernisation was dependent on cost-sharing with irrigators, which is the reason for proposed price increases in some of those areas.*

- A member asked if there is a price level to profitability? What other ways will we look at achieving infrastructure projects?

*Jane advised that it is a holistic approach, incorporating prices increases, water sales and productivity savings, noting that if price was our only lever there would need to be a much greater increase.*

*Cameron stated that when there are long lived assets, that 25 years is a short timeframe. When modernisation was started, SRW had a big focus on investment to improve services to end customers, but some critical assets that connect to customer's infrastructure was not focussed on, so a more holistic view is important.*

## **8 Principal Matters – for noting**

### **8.1 Strategic focus and Manager Groundwater and Rivers Update**

The report was taken as read.

Strategic focus:

Bryce Morden provided an overview of the report.

It was noted that:

- First strategic focus area: GM2030 has been released by DELWP and is available on their website. The link will be provided to this committee to review.  
[https://www.water.vic.gov.au/\\_data/assets/word\\_doc/0022/592042/DELWP0222\\_Groundwater\\_Management\\_2030\\_Accessible\\_v2.docx](https://www.water.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/word_doc/0022/592042/DELWP0222_Groundwater_Management_2030_Accessible_v2.docx)
- Glenelg Water Supply Protection Area: The Ministerial orders to abolish the WSPA will be published next week. This is a positive step for removing a redundant

regulation and will allow permanent trade.

- Safety reporting for end of water year meter reads demonstrates very high performance for safety: 14 field officers and 3 supervisors have attended close to 4,000 customer sites and no injuries have been reported.

No questions were raised, however a member noted that they have some concerns that people visiting their property act in a safe manner and appreciated the safety outcomes.

## **8.2 Unregulated Systems Report**

The report was taken as read.

Ross Ingram thanked SRW for the report.

## **8.3 Communications Report**

The report was taken as read.

# **9 COMMITTEE MATTERS**

## **9.1 Important issues from other customer committees**

Cameron FitzGerald advised that the main discussions with the WBMCCC and MCCC have been about matters that relate to each on the Price Submission. There has also been some discussion on drainage for the WBMID, and discussions about modernisation in the MID.

Communications will be sent to customers for Newry/Nuntin for the modernisation project about to commence.

## **9.2 Matters referred by/to the Board/board committee**

Jane Doolan confirmed the following matters to be taken to the Board:

- Sustainability of the organisation
- Evaluation of independent facilitators in the process of the Price Submission
- Strong interest in building partnerships with Traditional Owners.

A member noted that they had recently spoken with the Minister and that it was a good conversation. The member was pleased that counsel was sought.

The members requested that the board advocate for DELWP to attend the regions to educate their staff and to communicate with regional people.

# **10 GENERAL BUSINESS**

Ross Ingram advised the committee members of the visits to Bon Accord and Bulmer Farms by SRW and DELWP staff this week to educate them on what is occurring within the Mitchell system, including the level of investment involved with water infrastructure.

Daniel Hammond appreciated the visit and interest shown in the history of the farm and where the business stands now. Daniel reiterated the importance of communication, extending further invitations to attend at a busier time.

Bryce Morden noted the positive feedback from DELWP staff and further interest to visit SRW customers. Bryce stated that the visits were impactful for showing the effects of policy decisions and scale of investment and economic development associated with their policy and regulatory decisions.

A member reiterated the importance of DELWP clarifying information provided and getting further detail, whether by email, phone or further visits.

- A member stated they are interested in an Avon Irrigation District update and queried if SRW has any projects that the community should be aware of with regards to drought preparation.
- A member queried the DELWP funding agreement for the peri-urban catchment review noting the relevance to the Mornington Peninsular.

*Bryce advised that SRW and GMW will review D&S impacts. The focus will be on understanding the issues around people taking more D&S than they should and what the drivers are either side of the Great Divide. Bryce stated he will connect with Steven Marshall when relevant.*

- A member stated that the MRD and water use, and the potential flooding upstream is an ongoing topic.

*Cameron stated that this was for emergency purposes to secure the energy supply for the state. SRW are clear that once the MRD is fixed that the licensing regime is strict, ending in June 2023. SRW has been pushing hard in the Latrobe system to expanded access and is expecting some announcements soon on this matter.*

*Bryce advised that the temporary arrangements are working to protect Yallourn and reiterated that they are temporary. If Engie want to retain the structure as part of a potential future Mine Closure and Rehabilitation Plan, Engie will need to demonstrate that risks to upstream properties are effectively managed.*

Cameron advised that he met with the Federal Agriculture Minister recently, Murray Watt, who seemed keen to be a positive force for agriculture.

Action	Action officer	Due date
Provide an overview of the MRD at the next meeting (including graphics)	MORDEN	02/12/2022

## 11 **MEETING EVALUATION**

The Chair sort feedback on the effectiveness of this meeting.

A member stated that the meeting pack is great, and the meetings are always well facilitated.

Members confirmed that 9.30am is a good starting time for the meetings.

**12 NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Southern Groundwater and Rivers Forum is Friday 2 December and will be held by video conference.

**13 CLOSE**

With no further business the meeting was declared closed at 12:11pm.

DRAFT

	<b>March 2020</b>	<b>June 2020</b>	<b>Sept 2020</b>	<b>Dec 2020</b>	<b>March 2021</b>	<b>June 2021</b>	<b>Sept 2021</b>	<b>Dec 2021</b>	<b>March 2022</b>	<b>June 2022</b>	<b>Sept 2022</b>
Ross Ingram	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<b>Apol</b>	✓	✓	✓
Tom Wallace	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<b>Apol</b>	<b>Apol</b>
Josie Zilm	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<b>Apol</b>	✓	✓
Daniel Hammond	✓	<b>Apol</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Liz Clay	✓	<b>Apol</b>	✓	<b>Apol</b>	<b>Apol</b>	<b>Apol</b>					
Bruce Vallance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<b>Apol</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Damian Moore	✓		✓	<b>Apol</b>	✓	✓	<b>Apol</b>	<b>Apol</b>	<b>Apol</b>	<b>Apol</b>	✓
Kevin Stark	<b>Apol</b>	<b>Apol</b>	<b>Apol</b>	<b>Apol</b>	✓	<b>Apol</b>	<b>Apol</b>	<b>Apol</b>	✓	✓	<b>Apol</b>
David Hotchkin	<b>Apol</b>										
Philip Wratten	<b>Apol</b>										
Matt Gleeson	<b>Apol</b>	✓	✓	✓	<b>Apol</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Steven Marshall	<b>Apol</b>	✓	✓	✓	<b>Apol</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Norm Drew			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<b>Apol</b>
Daniel Toohey			✓	✓	✓	✓	<b>Apol</b>	✓	✓	✓	<b>Apol</b>

- ✓ - Attended Meeting
- Apol** - Notification of apology
- Blank - Did not attend



Item No: 5  
Subject: **Business arising from previous meetings**  
Action: **For noting**  
Author: **Hayley Taylor – Executive Assistant**  
Date: **11/11/2022**

---

## **PURPOSE**

1. To allow the forum to assess management progress on items identified for action from Southern Groundwater and River Forum meetings.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the forum **notes** the status of business arising action items, including:

- two action items will be discussed within this agenda, and
- one action item remains open:
  - Action 24248 – Awaiting suitable DELWP representative

## **PREVIOUS COMMITTEE CONSIDERATIONS**

2. Business arising is considered each meeting.

## **BACKGROUND**

3. Actions are captured in the minutes each month and transposed into risk wizard where base and aspirational dates are added along with the responsibility for completion.

## **REPORT**

4. Attachment 5.1 describes each action item, its status, and a comment on its progress.

# BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS - Southern GWR forum

## Action progress: This agenda

Action	Source	Due date	Completed date	Accountable officer	Status comment	
24858	Matt Hudson to attend a future forum to discuss supply and demand works	SGRF meeting 45 - 3 June 2022, Agenda item 7.2 Review of Groundwater and Rivers Strategic Outlook	02/12/22	24/11/22	Bryce Morden	Refer to agenda item 6.2
24906	Provide an overview of the MRD at the next scheduled meeting (including graphics)	SGRF meeting 45 - 2 September 2022, Agenda item 10. General Business	02/12/22	24/11/22	Bryce Morden	The SGRF members would like to see information on MRD and water use and the potential flooding upstream as it is an ongoing topic of interest to the forum.  Refer to agenda item 7.2

## Action progress: Future items (include a status comment when due date prior to next meeting)

Action	Source	Due date	Completed date	Accountable officer	Status comment
24248	Invite a suitable DELWP representative to discuss Traditional Owner water policies, with the intention of a presentation at the March SGRF meeting.	SGRF meeting 39 - 3 December 2020	02/03/23	Bryce Morden	Management note the Board has also requested a suitable person to attend a board meeting to speak about Traditional Owner Water Policies.  Management propose the same person is invited to attend an SGRF meeting once they have met with the board.  At the June 2021 meeting , the committee noted this item and confirmed that they would value a briefing, but that they don't expect management to organise this by a specific due date.  Management will leave this item on the Business Arising Report and once a suitable person is identified and has the capability, management will extend an invitation for them to attend a committee meeting.

Item No: **6.1**

Subject: **Irrigation Development Guidelines**

Anthony Goode and Shayne Haywood from WGCMA along with Christine Reid and Chris Solum from GHCMA will attend to discuss the Gippsland Irrigation Development Guidelines and the South West Irrigation Development Guidelines.

The draft Gippsland Irrigation Development Guidelines and draft South West Irrigation Development Guidelines along with Irrigation Development Guidelines Fact Sheets for both areas are included as discretionary reading.

---

Item No: **6.2**

Subject: **Struber – Customer Engagement Review**

Consultants from Struber will join the meeting to run a workshop.

---

Item No: **6.3**

Subject: **Source, Demand and Values**

Matthew Hudson, Principle Hydrogeologist will attend to discuss supply and demand works.



# Source, Demand and Values Project Overview

Matt Hudson - Principal Hydrogeologist

December 2022



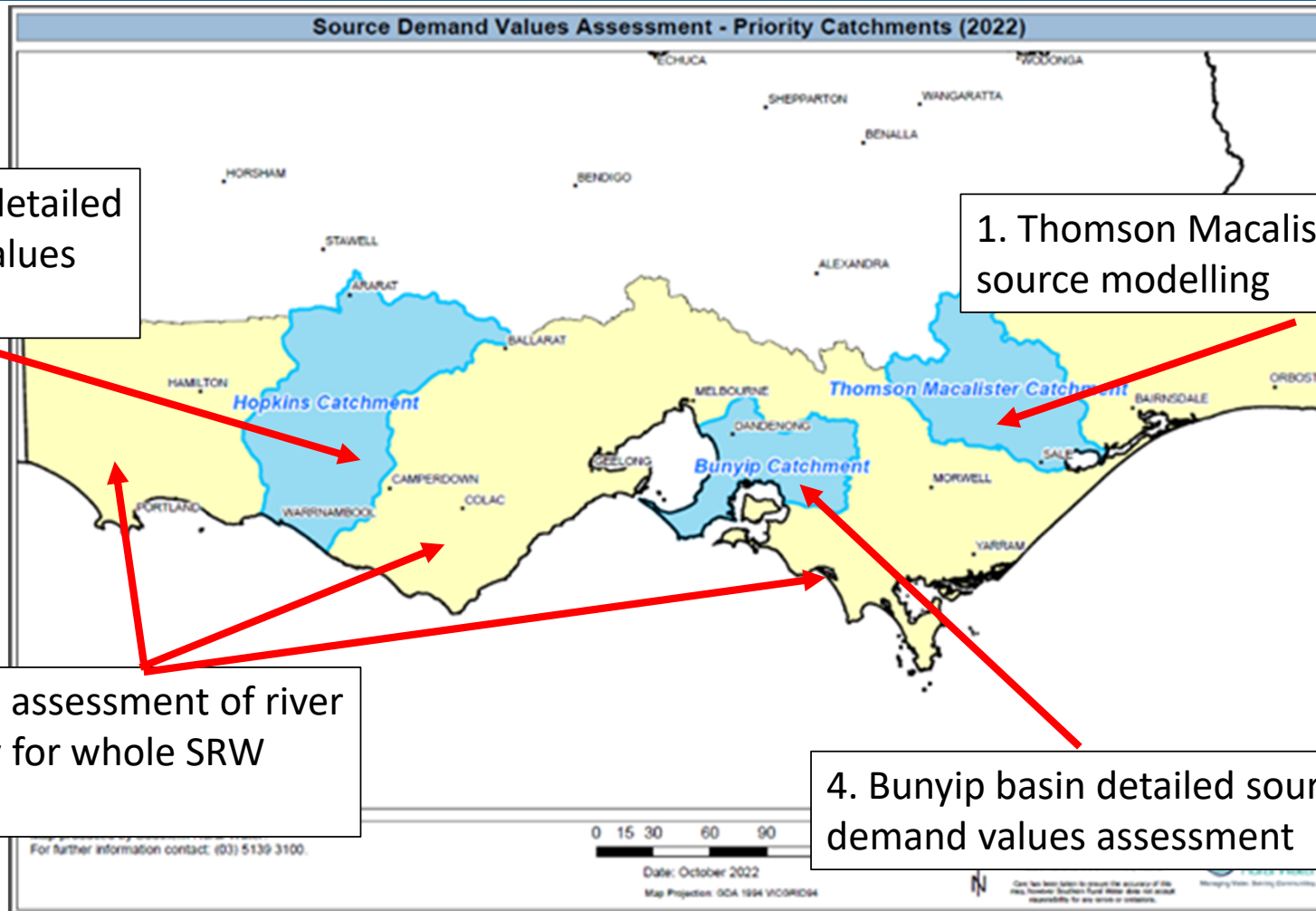
# Project Objective



To inform SRW's Climate Adaptation Plan which includes key actions to address outstanding knowledge gaps in water resources and climate change, to enable SRW and our customers to adapt to the challenges ahead.



# Project Scope (2022) – 4 components



3. Hopkins basin detailed source demand values assessment

1. Thomson Macalister climate source modelling

2. Climate change assessment of river diverter reliability for whole SRW area

4. Bunyip basin detailed source, demand values assessment

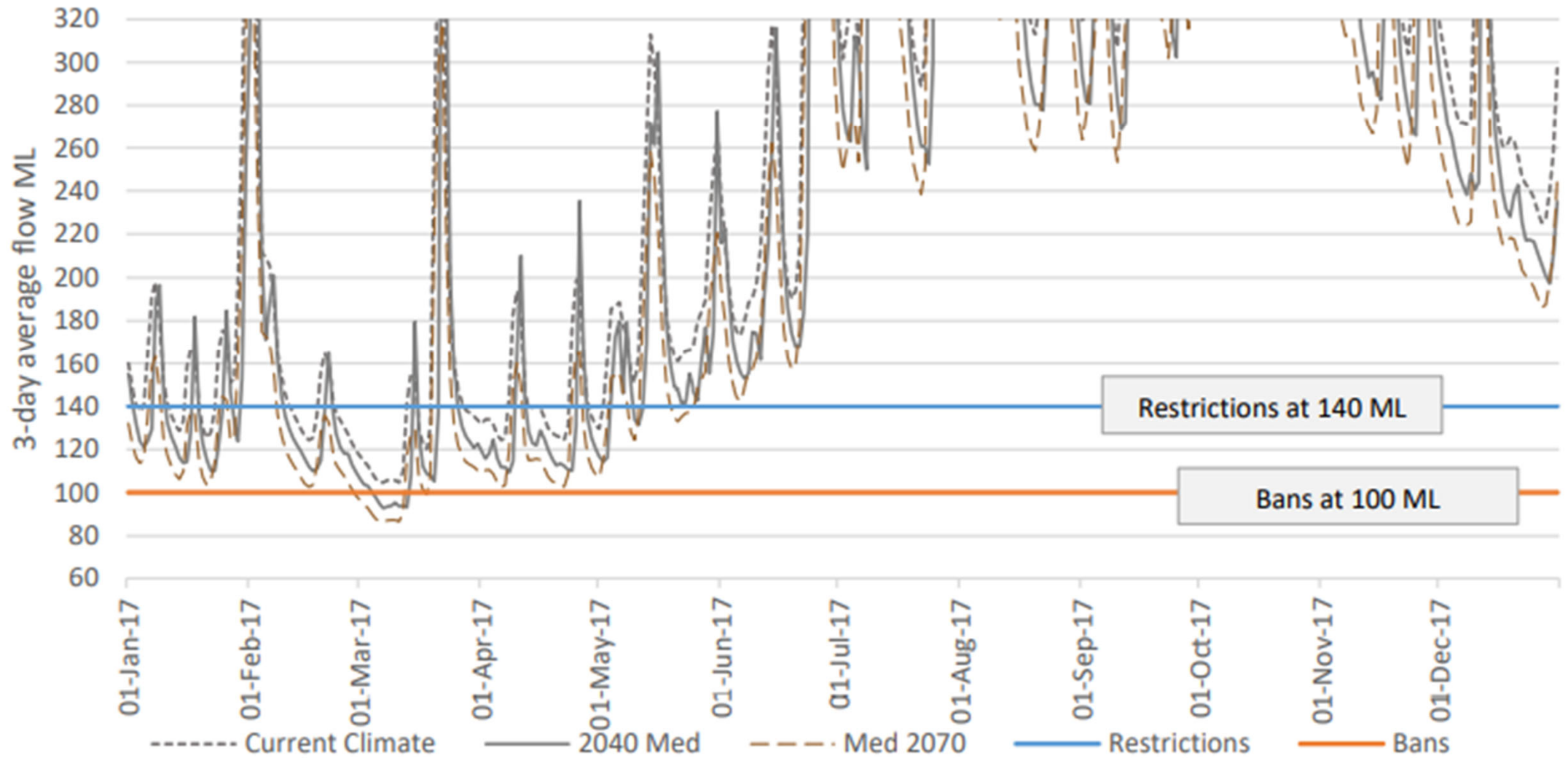
# Unregulated Surface Water



- Impacts of CC assessed on key unregulated surface water systems
- Using DELWP (2020) guidelines
- Gauged flow was amended using the DELWP transformation Tool
- Applied to gauging stations SRW use in our Local Management Rules
- Customer bans/restrictions used to define reliability

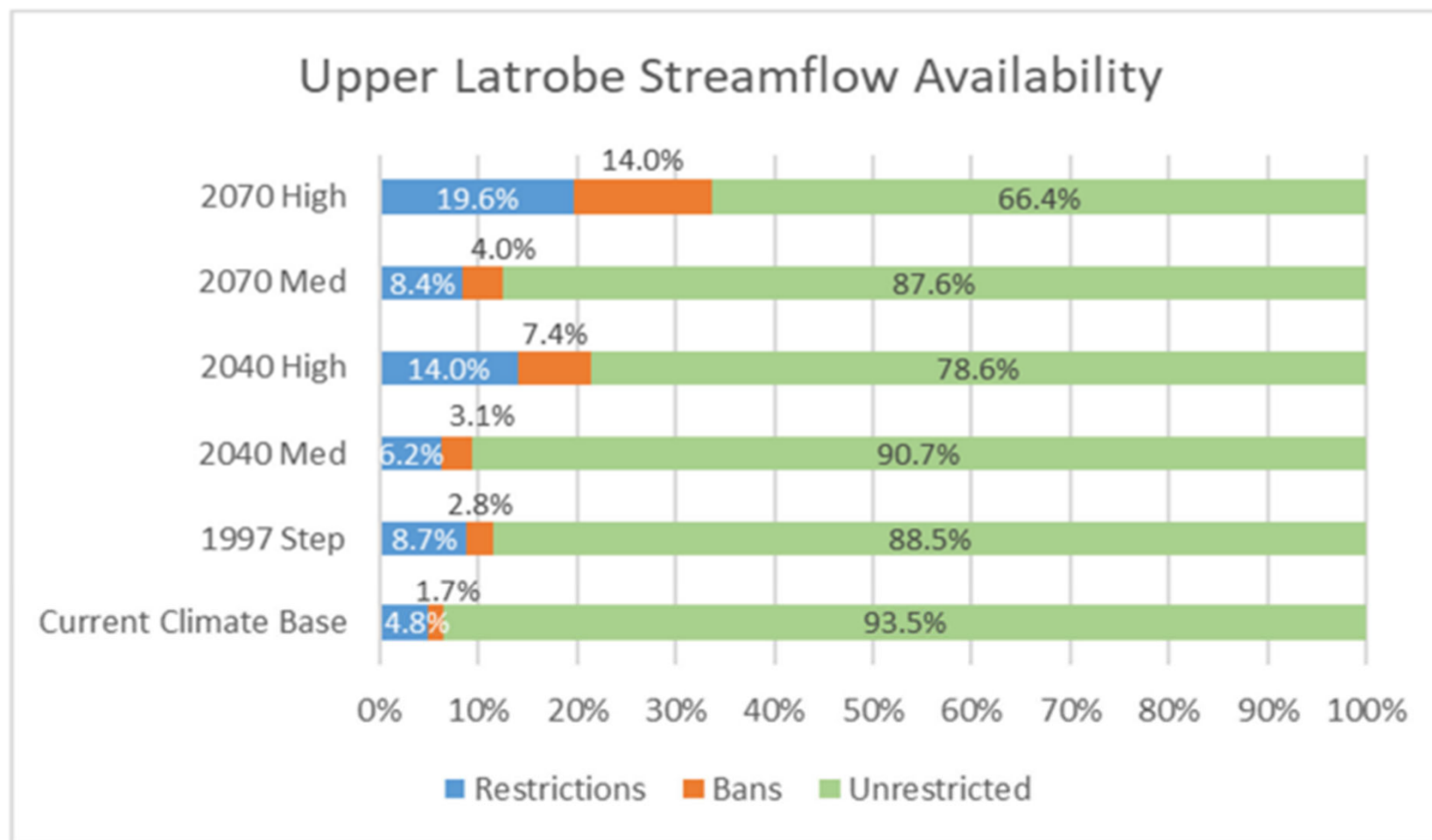


# Hydrograph with water take limits applied to the 3-day average flow rate





# Unregulated Surface Water



**Figure 3** Standard output plot showing proportion of time with restrictions and bans under different climate scenarios

# Examples – Avon River

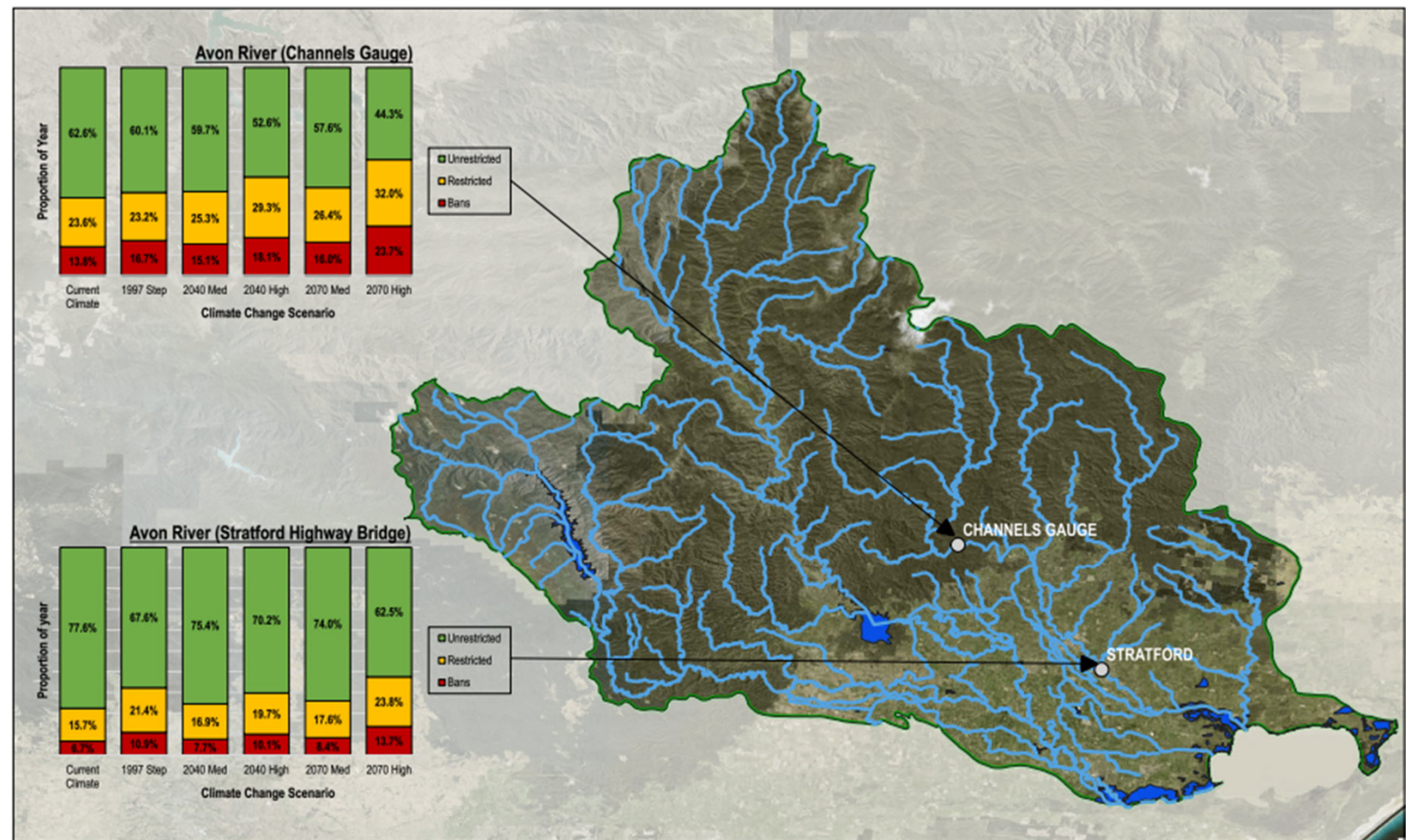


Avon River  
Channels gauge  
Availability decreases from  
62% to 44%

Stratford Bridge gauge  
Availability decreases from  
77% to 62%

Medium CC scenario results in  
small impacts on availability

Generally a resilient system



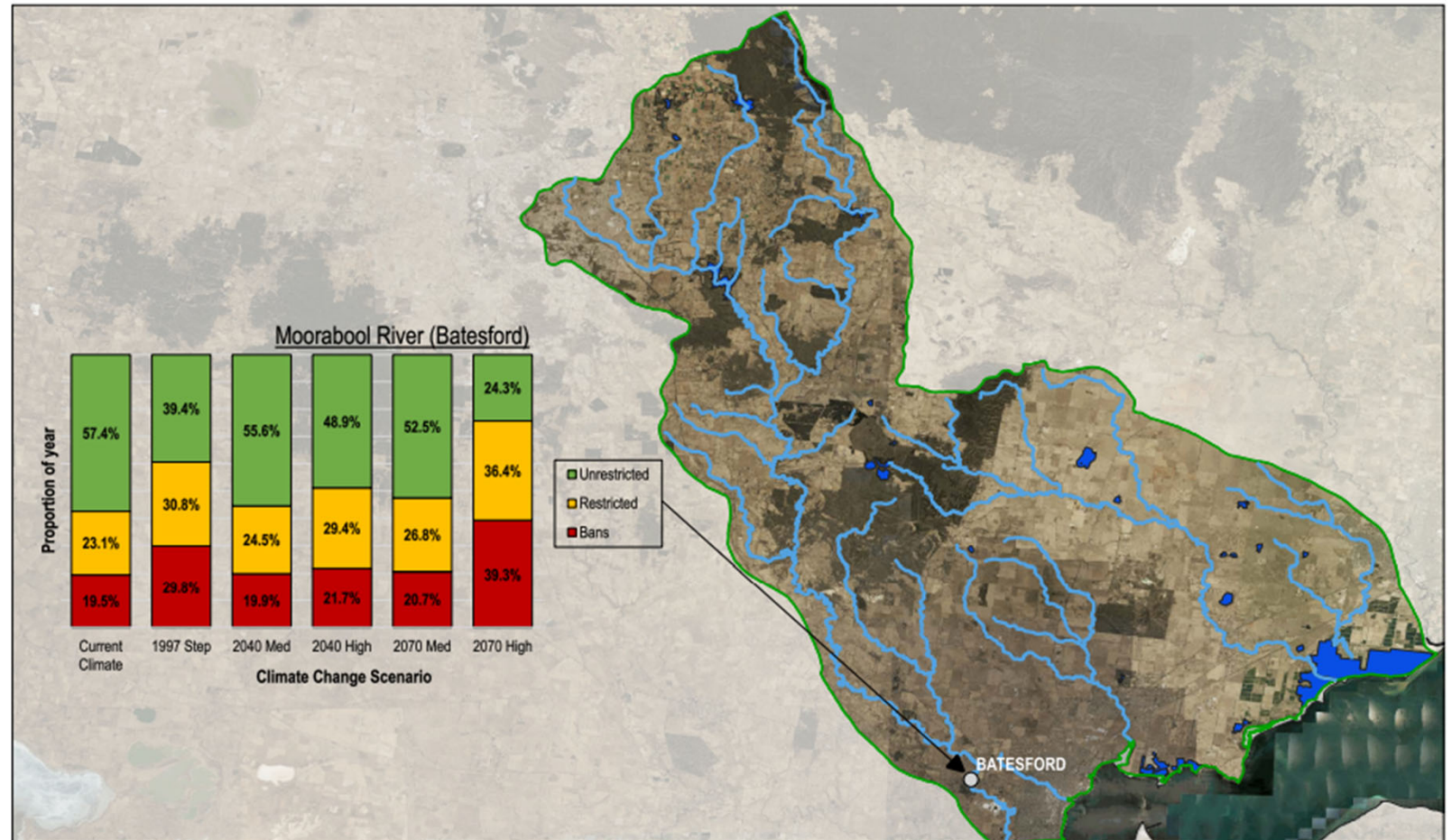
# Examples – Moorabool River



Moorabool River  
Batesford gauge  
Availability decreases from  
57% to 24%

Medium CC scenario only  
Minor impacts on availability

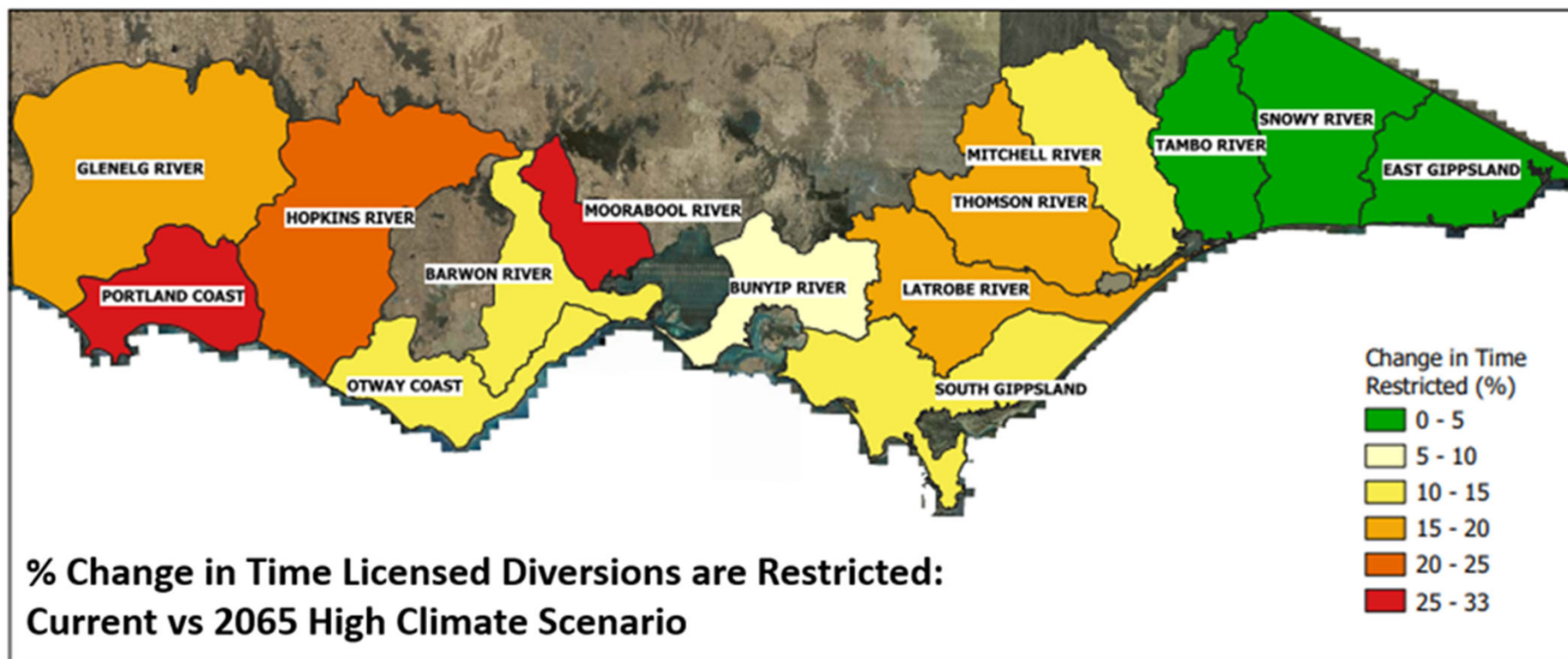
Step and High CC significant  
impacts



# Unregulated Surface Water assessment



Customers in some catchments may be restricted by an additional 25-33% by 2065 under the High climate change scenario.



# Key conclusions



- Current system water availability has been defined
- Western region systems, and West Gippsland systems have the lowest water availability and are most impacted by CC
- <10% reduction in availability under Medium CC scenarios
- 15-30% reduction in availability typical under High CC scenarios



# Hopkins and Bunyip detailed assessments



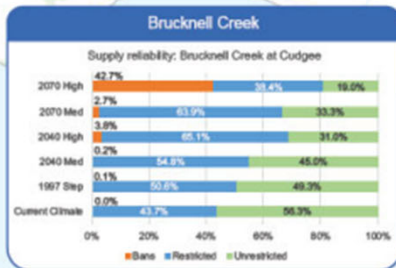
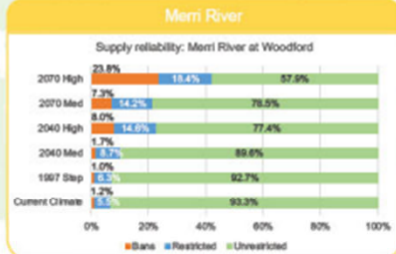
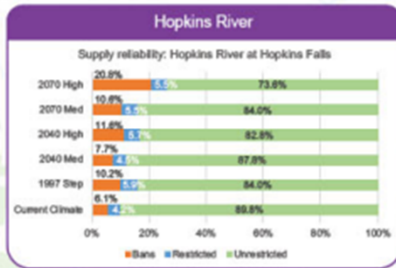
- Source assessment
- Demand assessment
- Values assessment
- Integrated assessment



## Surface Water Source Assessment - Hopkins Basin

The Hopkins basin has no major storages and comprises the following unregulated supply systems: Hopkins River, Mount Emu Creek, Merri River and Brucknell Creek.

For Hopkins basin overall,  
**3%** of available water has been allocated to consumptive users.  
**97%** of water is available to the environment.



**Hopkins River**  
 Current supply availability\*  
**90%**  
 of days

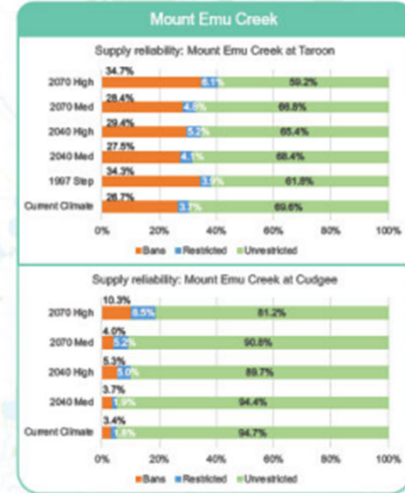
**Mount Emu Creek**  
 Current supply availability\*  
**70%**  
 of days

**Brucknell Creek**  
 Current supply availability\*  
**56%**  
 of days

**Merri River**  
 Current supply availability\*  
**93%**  
 of days

**Potential climate change impact**  
 Merri River and Brucknell Creek  
 Moderate to high sensitivity:  
 More pronounced changes under the more severe climate change scenarios

**Potential climate change impact**  
 Hopkins River and Mount Emu Creek  
 Low sensitivity:  
 Small to moderate changes under the more severe climate change scenarios.



\* Current supply availability and supply availability under climate change scenarios based on streamflow-based local management rules.

Figure 14 Schematic overview of surface water supply availability assessment for the Hopkins basin

## Bunyip Basin - Cultural and Environmental Values

**←** Aboriginal heritage values are dominant along waterways and permanent sources of water. They are also largely located along the coast and within the historic swamps around Cranbourne.

**X** Defence sites with historic heritage values:

- HMVS Cerberus
- HMAS Cerberus
- Point Nepean Defence Sites

**◆** Growth of Victoria is shown through a range of historic sites including:

- Point Nepean Quarantine Station
- The Collins Settlement Site
- Swamp land that was drained to increase pastoral land use

**🌊** **Cannibal Creek and Manton Creek**

These creeks are in good condition under the 3rd Index of Stream Condition report due to their intact streamside zone and physical form.

**⊕** Natural heritage values are associated with:

- HMAS Cerberus Marine and Coastal site

Environmental and cultural values are dependent on healthy flowing waterways. A drying climate will create risk via reduced waterway flows. At least some periodic flow is important for supporting good water quality and aquatic habitat connectivity.

**Registered Aboriginal Party**

The Bunurong are the Registered Aboriginal Party for the majority of the basin, with Wurundjeri and Guanikurnal also located within the basin.

**Aboriginal Cultural Heritage**

The presence, extent, and nature of Aboriginal cultural heritage places, cultural landscapes and/or intangible heritage values requires further investigation and consultation with the different Traditional Owner groups.

Tarago Reservoir allows for **managed flow** releases which provide environmental benefits such as flows for grayling and black fish populations in the Tarago and Bunyip rivers.

**Y** **Yallock Creek Floodplain Wetlands**

One of the top 20 wetlands for priority actions in the Healthy Waterways Strategy

**🌿** **Wetlands**

Wetland sites include:

1. Coolart Wetland
2. Tootgarook Swamp
3. The Briars Wetland
4. The Western Port and the Edithvale-Seaford Wetlands

Ramsar Sites comprise wetlands of international significance.

**🌊** **Estuaries**

Estuary sites include:

1. Stony Creek,
2. Merricks Creek,
3. Olivers Creek,
4. Warringine Creek
5. Kings Creek

**🏠** **Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems (GDE)**

Groundwater provides important baseflows to waterways, wetlands and other ecosystems. This can become critically important during dry periods. GDEs include wetlands and terrestrial ecosystems particularly along the coast (Koo Wee Rup WSPA)

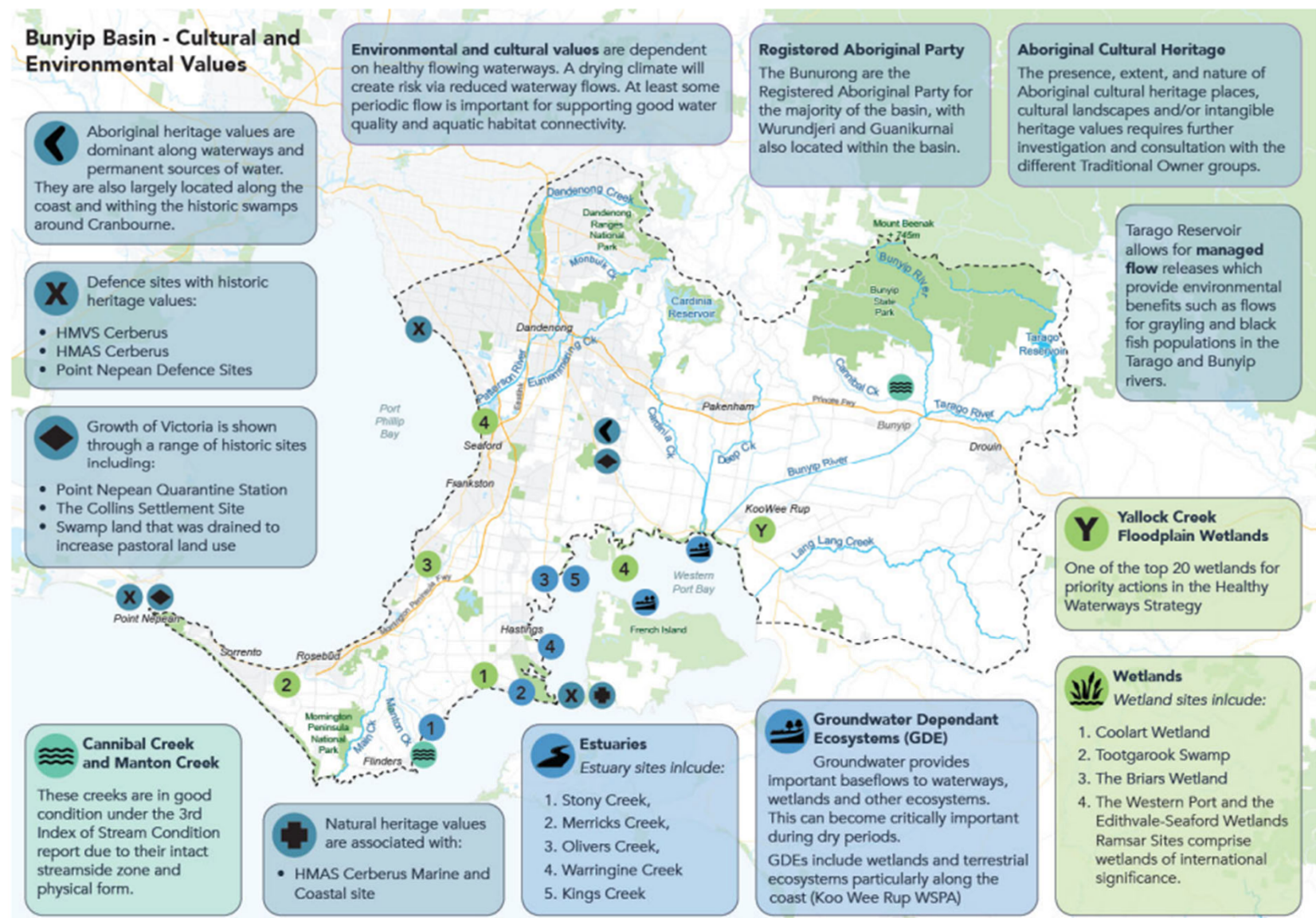


Figure 56 Schematic overview of environmental and cultural heritage values assessment in Bunyip Basin



## Economic and Social Values - Bunyip Basin

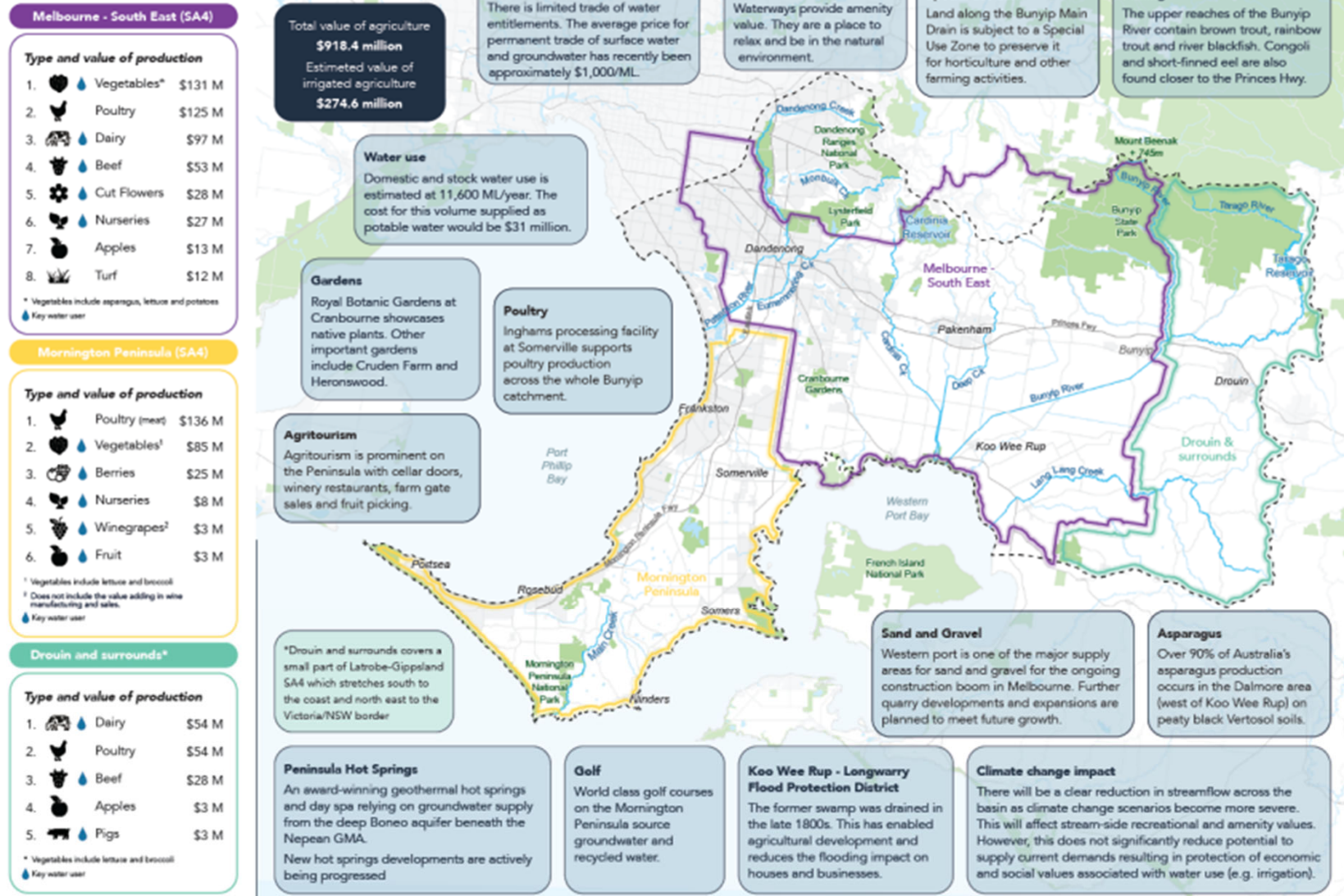


Figure 65 Schematic overview of economic and social values assessment in Bunyip Basin

# 3. Hopkins catchment



## Summary

- Lower river flows and increasing restrictions on customer access to surface water
- Greater stress on environmental and cultural values
- More demand for water likely with drying climate
- Limited adaptation opportunities:- off stream storages and deep groundwater
- More flexible and adaptable water management rules
- Improved understanding of sustainable limits, monitoring and reporting



## Hopkins Basin - Risks and Opportunities

The Hopkins Basin is an unregulated system with only 3% of total annual flows allocated to consumptive use.

Groundwater extraction occurs mainly in the south associated with the South West Limestone aquifer.

Agriculture is predominantly rainfed. Water supplies are important for stock and domestic purposes and some irrigation – mainly in the south of the basin for dairy production.

Climate change impacts may lead to a desire from the agricultural industry for increased access to groundwater from the limestone.

### Risks

#### Water supply

- Lower flows due to climate change, will increase the risk of restrictions on all systems, particularly the Brucknell Creek and Merri River as they are more sensitive to climate change.
- Decreased recharge to groundwater could lead to declining groundwater levels and reduced baseflows to rivers.

#### Surface Water Restrictions

Surface water restrictions currently occur on:

- |                               |                               |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Hopkins 10% of days         | • Hopkins 17% of days         |
| • Merri 7% of days            | • Merri 23% of days           |
| • Mt Emu Creek 30% of days    | • Mt Emu Creek 35% of days    |
| • Brucknell Creek 44% of days | • Brucknell Creek 69% of days |

With high climate change, by 2040 restrictions could increase to:

- |                               |
|-------------------------------|
| • Hopkins 17% of days         |
| • Merri 23% of days           |
| • Mt Emu Creek 35% of days    |
| • Brucknell Creek 69% of days |

#### Demand for Groundwater

A drying climate will increase demands for water. With lower waterway flows and increased restrictions, it is expected that there will be increased demand for groundwater. There is currently pressure from industry to enable more access to groundwater.

#### Waterway health

- Environmental, cultural and social values are dependent on healthy flowing waterways. Climate change will reduce flows, creating risk to these values.
- Lower waterway flows could impact on water quality, potentially increasing salinity, and the frequency of algal blooms.

### Opportunities

#### Improve water management

Surface water and groundwater management rules could be reviewed and improved to increase flexibility, enable trade and manage restrictions during dry climate conditions. e.g. the South West Limestone LMP

#### Improving water reliability

Reliability of existing water sources could be increased through addition of storage with winter fill licences, or through conjunctive use.

#### Enable access to deep groundwater

There is opportunity to access more groundwater from the lower tertiary aquifer, although cost of drilling is significant.

#### Groundwater monitoring

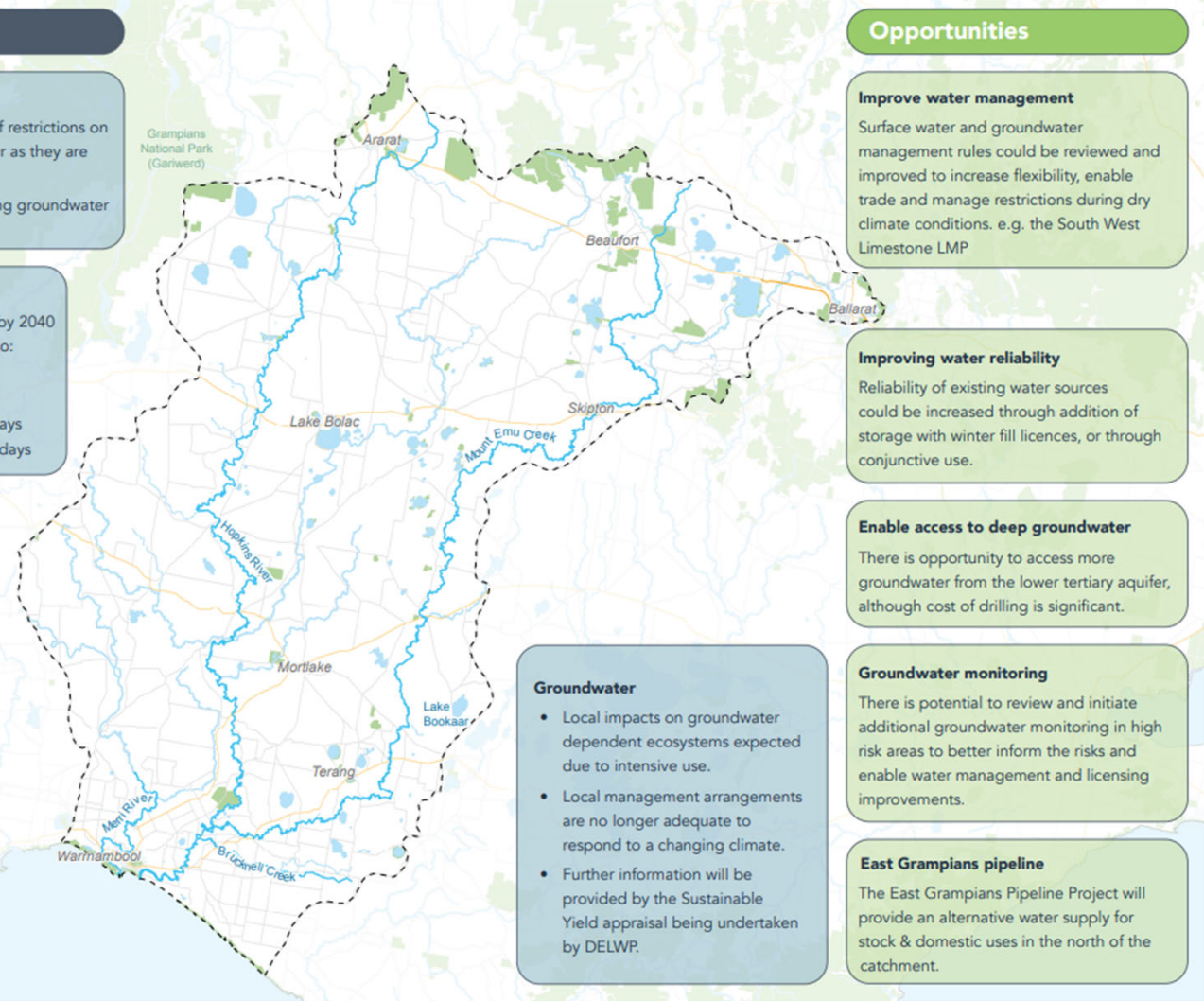
There is potential to review and initiate additional groundwater monitoring in high risk areas to better inform the risks and enable water management and licensing improvements.

#### East Grampians pipeline

The East Grampians Pipeline Project will provide an alternative water supply for stock & domestic uses in the north of the catchment.

#### Groundwater

- Local impacts on groundwater dependent ecosystems expected due to intensive use.
- Local management arrangements are no longer adequate to respond to a changing climate.
- Further information will be provided by the Sustainable Yield appraisal being undertaken by DELWP.



# 4. Bunyip catchment



## Summary

- Lower river flows and increasing restrictions on customer access to surface water
- Greater stress on environmental and cultural values
- More demand for water likely with drying climate, from agriculture & industry
- SRW bulk entitlement from the Tarago Reservoir less reliable
- Significant recycled water opportunities
- Other opportunities include increasing our bulk entitlement, more off stream storages, improving water monitoring and management



## Bunyip Basin - Risks and Opportunities

Agriculture creates significant economic value in the Bunyip basin and is dependent on both surface water and groundwater supplies.

Vegetable production in the Koo Wee Rup area is a core component supported by regulated flows in the lower Bunyip system and groundwater from the Koo Wee Rup Water Supply Protection Area.

As traditional water sources become more constrained by a drying climate, recycled water availability could meet future demands.

Significant growth in the aggregates industry and geothermal bathing (Boneo) present challenges to SRW as a regulator.

### Risks

#### Water supply

- Clear reduction in streamflow across basin as climate change scenarios become more severe. However, this will have limited impact to supply availability for consumptive users.
- Decreased recharge to groundwater could lead to declining groundwater levels and reduced baseflows to rivers. The Permissible Consumptive Volume is currently under review by DELWP.

#### Demand

A drying climate will increase demands for water. This could lead to increased focus on groundwater and recycled water use. It may create specific challenges for extractive industries and Peninsula hot springs.

#### Waterway health

- Environmental, cultural and social values are dependent on healthy flowing waterways. Climate change will reduce inflows, creating risk to these values.
- Lower waterway flows could impact on water quality, potentially increasing salinity, and the frequency of algal blooms.

#### Regulated system restrictions

Lower surface water flows increase the risk of the SRW Bulk Entitlement being depleted and interrupting supply to customers. SRW does not have adequate documented water sharing arrangements to respond with appropriate restrictions.

#### Groundwater

Risks of bore interference, seawater intrusion, and local environmental impacts.

#### Management

Risk that local management arrangements are no longer adequate to respond to a changing climate.

### Opportunities

#### Improving water security

There is opportunity to secure additional water sources, through access to recycled water and/or increased bulk entitlement. Recycled water could also substitute for current surface water and groundwater use.

#### Water reliability

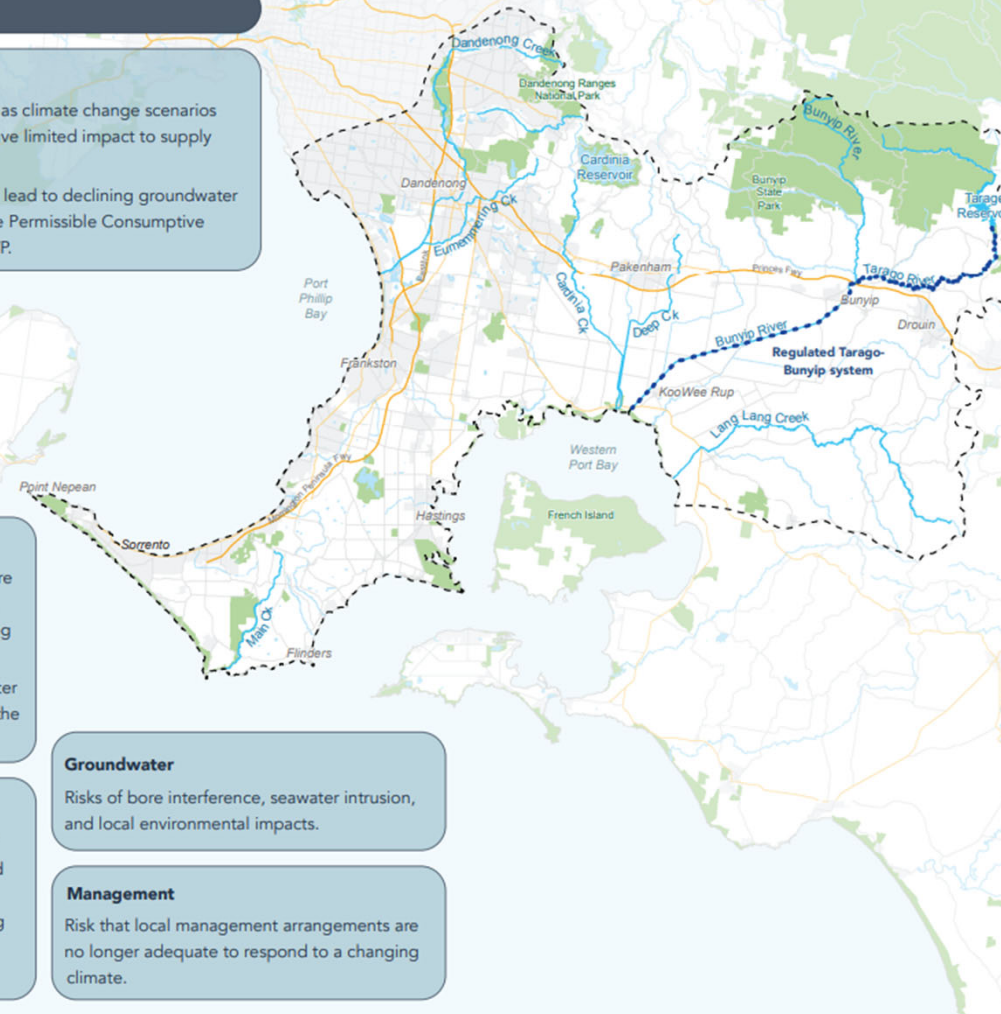
Reliability of existing water sources could be increased through addition of storage with winter fill licences, or through conjunctive use.

#### Water management

Surface water and groundwater management rules could be reviewed and improved to increase flexibility, enable trade and manage restrictions during dry climate conditions.

#### Streamflow gauging & groundwater monitoring

Streamflow gauging could be improved and there is potential for additional groundwater monitoring in high-risk areas, such as Lang Lang (falling groundwater levels) and Boneo (deepaquifer). This will provide better understanding of the system and aid management.



# Next steps



- Share key outputs and obtain feedback
- Feed key risks and opportunities into Climate Adaptation Plan
- Consider further work



# Questions

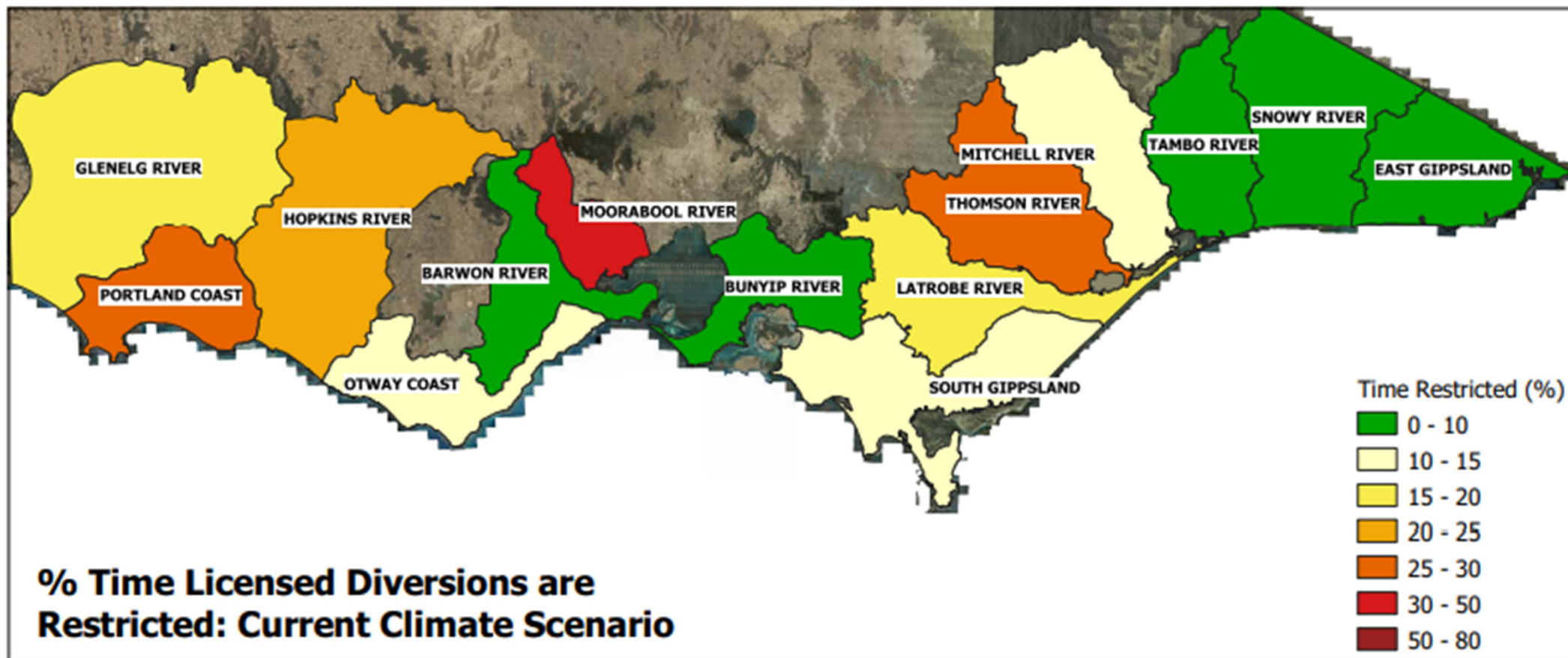


# Extra slides

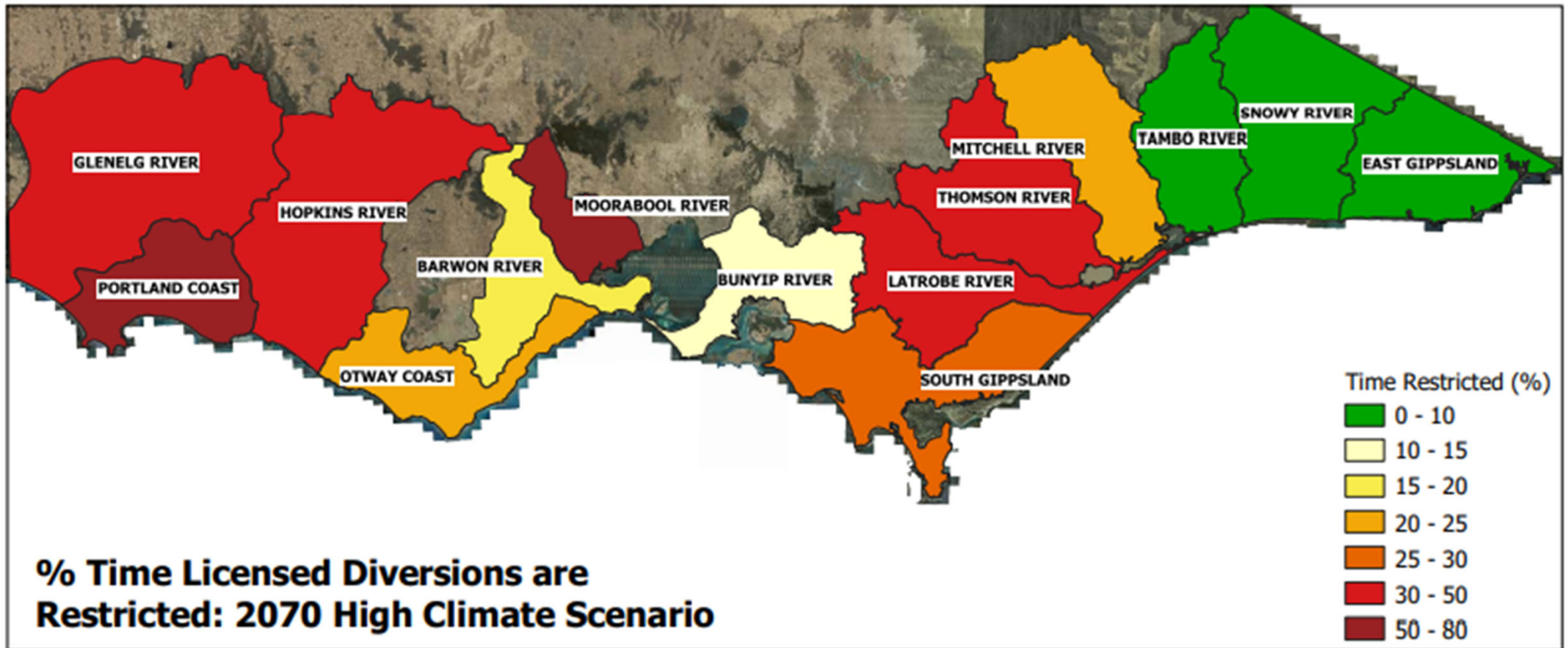




# Unregulated Systems Streamflow Availability



# Unregulated Systems Streamflow Availability



Item No: **7.1**

Subject: **Board Update**

Jane Doolan, Board member, will provide an overview of discussions at the most recent Board meeting.

---

Item No: **7.2**

Subject: **Morwell River Diversions**

Bryce Morden, Manager Groundwater and Rivers will provide an update on the Morwell River Diversion.

Item No: **8.1**

Subject: **Strategic Focus and Manager Groundwater and Rivers Update**

Action: **For noting**

Author: **Bryce Morden, Manager Groundwater and Rivers**

Date: **19/11/2022**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Commentary 2022-23</b>
Strategic focus 1. Continued advocacy for sustainable access to water for irrigators via the implementation of GM2030, policy reforms in surface water management and key stakeholder groups.	Food and Fibre Great South Coast will be meeting with DELWP Policy group on Tuesday 6 December 2022 to workshop actions from the 18 Point Plan for water reform.
Strategic focus 2. Continue to encourage a flexible trading market through improved internal procedures and Government policies.	Development of Irrigation Development Guidelines by CMAs to streamline referral process for new or expanding developments (presentation at this meeting).  Collaborating with Melbourne Water in the development of a spatial tool to support more timely and consistent trade referral responses
Strategic focus 3. Provide more real time information for customers on water usage following the integration of meter reading data with mySRW portal to improve decision making	New Taggle receiver masts to be installed at Bungaree to support Taggle role out in that area.  Two new Taggle receivers are proposed for installation in the Latrobe Valley.  No change on mySRW for the period.
Strategic focus 4. Undertake more detailed water resource assessment across our systems through investment of unregulated water sales funds and the continuation of the Supply/Demand projects.	Work recently completed on understanding changes in supply, demand and values across a sample of regulated, unregulated and semi-regulated surface water systems will be presented at this meeting.

Issue	Commentary 2022-23
<p>Strategic focus 5.</p> <p>Understanding the implications of rapidly evolving cultural water policy on customer aspirations for improved access to water.</p>	<p><b>See discussion point 8.2.</b></p> <p>Policy has been announced through the Central and Gippsland SWS <a href="https://www.water.vic.gov.au/planning/long-term-assessments-and-strategies/central-gipps-sws/traditional-owners">https://www.water.vic.gov.au/planning/long-term-assessments-and-strategies/central-gipps-sws/traditional-owners</a></p> <p>Water is Life has been released including nation statements <a href="https://www.water.vic.gov.au/aboriginal-values/the-aboriginal-water-program">https://www.water.vic.gov.au/aboriginal-values/the-aboriginal-water-program</a></p> <p>DELWP has provided funding for a 12 month role to help SRW establish assessment processes, develop an overall work flow for processing current applications and progress as many applications for assessment as possible.</p>
<p>Western region</p>	<p><b>Private dam failure:</b> a 60ML registration dam completely failed south of Cobden in October. No reported damage to infrastructure downstream. The site is subject to a Ministerial Direction requiring engineering and applications before it can be rebuilt.</p> <p><b>Small volume trades:</b> the latest round of billing has triggered some small volume trade activity of former dairy wash water licences. These volumes are typically less than 10 ML and rather than surrendering licences, trade of even small volumes is pursued in tightly held areas.</p> <p><b>Field officer areas:</b> as a result of recent recruitment, Field Officer areas are being adjusted slightly.</p>
<p>Central Region</p>	<p><b>Private dam failures:</b> Multiple partially failed dams are currently subject to Ministerial Directions issued by SRW. These dams are being closely monitored to ensure risks are managed through compliance with the Ministerial Direction.</p>
<p>Gippsland Region</p>	<p><b>Flooding:</b> Continued rainfall and flooding has resulted in very low levels of water use in the Gippsland region. It is expected that mid-year meter reads will commence in February rather than December as usual.</p>
<p>Staff movements</p>	<p>Field Services West team has appointed two new field officers; Denny Anderson will support customers in the central highlands area based from Ballarat.</p> <p>Alisha Clark is currently Acting Manager Applications. This role has been slightly changed and is now called Manager Water Licencing and will be responsible for overseeing licence applications, management of licence information and oversight of compliance.</p> <p>Leanne Watkins has not been renewed as a fixed term Metering Administration officer. Leanne finished with SRW in November. The metering administration roles oversee the</p>

Issue	Commentary 2022-23
	<p>asset management of meters and taggle along with automated and manual meter read data management.</p> <p>The Capital Delivery team have appointed Tim Donovan as project manager to deliver aspects of the SRW Metering Action Plan for supply and install pattern approved meters. Tim sits outside the Groundwater and Rivers Team but will play a significant role in this capital expenditure program.</p>
Water Sales	<p>A call for Expressions of Interest for winterfill water in the Tambo System has been completed. Total demand was within the volume available for allocation and water will be allocated on a fees basis rather than an auction. Parties that want to progress in the allocation process will be subject to a business as usual assessment process.</p>
Latrobe Valley Strategy	<p>There have been no meetings on the Latrobe Valley Strategy during the past three months.</p>
Compliance and enforcement	<p>With widespread and sustained wet conditions there has been very little water use year to date. There have been no instances of unauthorised take for season 2022-23.</p> <p>Investigations into potential unlicensed farm dams in the Moorabool Catchment are continuing.</p> <p>SRW staff have met with the NSW Department of Natural Resources Access Regulator about their data and information led compliance approaches. The NRAR is a national leader on water compliance matters – to see more go to <a href="https://www.nrar.nsw.gov.au/news">https://www.nrar.nsw.gov.au/news</a></p>

### Enforcement of rate of take licence conditions.

**Background:** A committee member has requested an overview of how ‘rate of take’ licence conditions are monitored and enforced. Rate of take conditions are prescribed to support equitable access by licence holders to shared water resources. These conditions can be expressly documented in licence conditions as a maximum daily rate and maximum continuous pumping threshold. They can also reference water sharing rules detailed in management plans such as rosters and restrictions. Hydrogeological tests undertaken as part of groundwater developments are used to determine maximum daily extraction rates to avoid interference with other licence holders or the environment.

**Discussion:** Some systems are sensitive to challenges around rate of take. These systems are typically sensitive to change as a result of limited storage capacity such as shallow unconfined aquifers. Licences in these areas have often been grandfathered into the licencing framework and have not been worked through contemporary processes to avoid interference with other users.

Enforcement of rate of take licence conditions has historically been in response to complaints. Field officers undertake detailed assessment of pump capacity and if capacity exceeds the maximum daily rate, direction is given to modify pumping infrastructure to bring it into compliance. Modifications are periodically checked.

Moving forward, Automated Meter Reading (AMR) will provide real time data around compliance with rate of take licence conditions including daily rate, rosters and restrictions. The current focus of AMR is on *Unauthorised Take* where allocation accounts move from positive to negative balances. Systems are still being refined to automate reporting of unauthorised take against annual volumes. Once those systems are operating consistently, we will work with DELWP to improve the sophistication of data interrogation to consider automation of compliance with other conditions.

#### **CASESTUDY:**

In early November 2022, a Field Officer was notified of a complaint by a stock and domestic user that a large-scale irrigator was causing interference with their bore. The Field Officer was able to remotely check the irrigator's usage with AMR data. The irrigator had not taken water for six months and was fully compliant with rate of take requirements. Within a few hours, the Field Officer was able to respond to the complainant. The Field Officer suggested that the complainant check for issues at their end. The issue was iron bacteria build up blocking the complainant's bore lines.

Item No: **8.2**

Subject: **Public Release of Central Gippsland Region Sustainable Water Strategy**

Cameron FitzGerald, Managing Director, to provide overview of the outcome of the Central Gippsland Region Sustainable Water Strategy.

Presentation is included as discretionary reading.

---

Item No: **8.3**

Subject: **Water is Life Launch**

Cameron FitzGerald, Managing Director, to provide overview of the Water is Life Launch.

---



Item No: **8.4**  
Subject: **Communications and Engagement report – November 2022**  
Action: **For noting**  
Author: **Kris Perkovic, Senior Community Engagement Adviser**  
Date: **10/11/2022**

---

## **PURPOSE**

- To update the Southern Groundwater and Rivers Customer Consultative Committee on recent communications and engagement activities.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The Committee note the report.

## **PREVIOUS COMMITTEE CONSIDERATIONS**

2. Communications and engagement activity is reported at each meeting.

## **BACKGROUND**

3. The Communications and Engagement team develops communications plans, issues media releases, manages the website and social media, customer and community engagement activities and looks after media enquiries.

## **REPORT**

### **4. Price Submission**

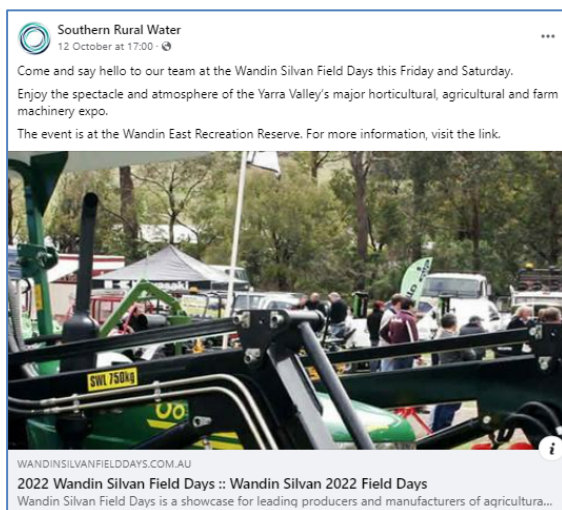
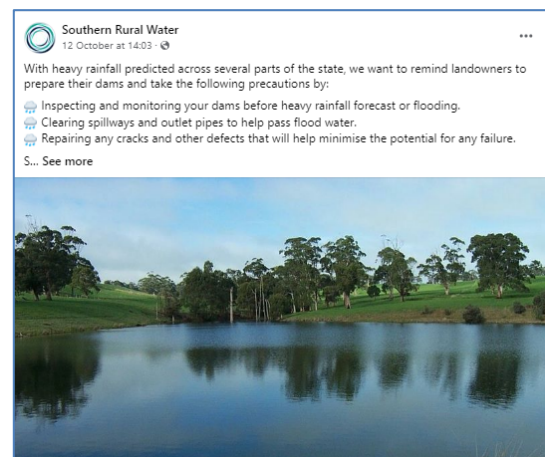
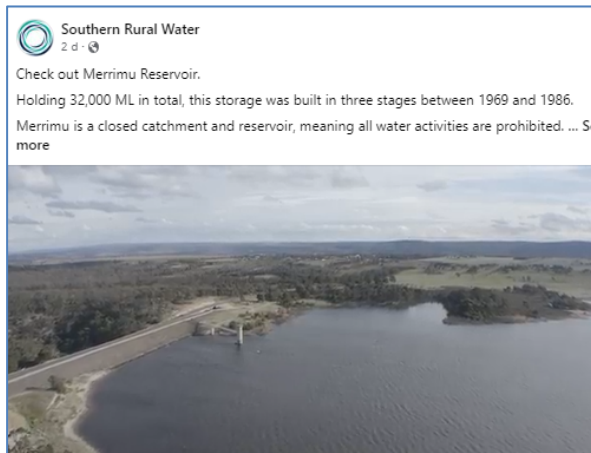
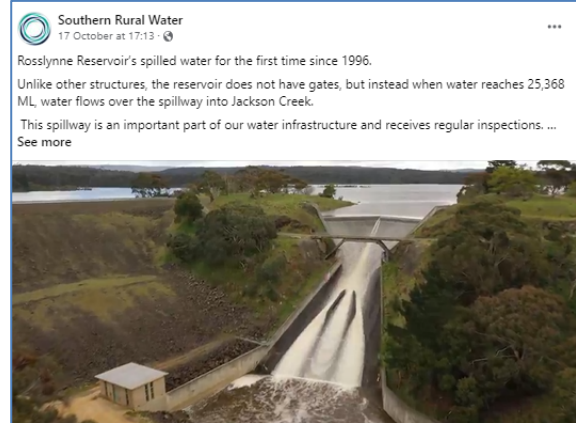
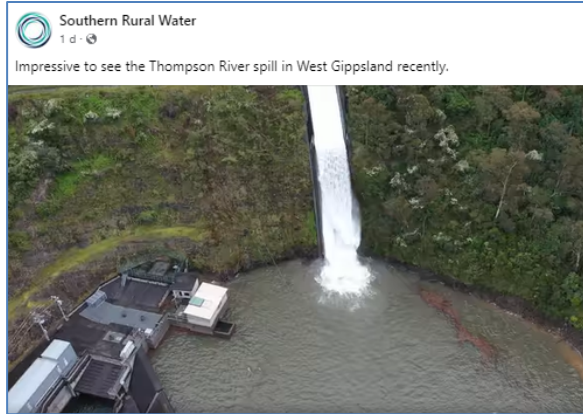
Our price submission has now been submitted to the Essential Service Commission.  
More info [here](#):

### **5. News and media**

[Celebrating women in the rural water sector](#)  
[Landowners urged to prepare dams for predicted heavy rains](#)  
[New Water is Life policy for Traditional Owners](#)  
[Alcoa's groundwater licence application refused](#)

## 6. Social media

Our social media campaigns have received good responses. Below are some examples of content since the last meeting. Please follow our social media pages to see more.



**NEXT STEPS:** A further update will be provided at the next SGRCCC meeting.

Item No: **9.1**

Subject: **Important issues from other customer committees**

Cameron FitzGerald, Managing Director, will provide a verbal update on important issues raised at other customer committees.

---

Item No: **9.2**

Subject: **Matters referred by the Board**

Jane Doolan, Board member, will discuss matters that have been referred by/to the Board.

---

Item No: **10**

Subject: **General Business**

The Chair will introduce any items of general business.

Item No: 10.1  
Subject: 2023 Meeting Schedule  
Action: For discussion  
Author: Bryce Morden - Manager Groundwater & Rivers  
Date: 23/11/2022

---

## PURPOSE

1. To discuss the 2023 Southern Groundwater and Rivers Forum meeting schedule.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the committee agree on the 2023 meeting schedule.

2. The SGRF meets quarterly on the first Friday of the relevant month.
3. Through COVID, the SGRF has moved from face-to-face meetings to online meetings using Teams.
4. A proposed schedule of meetings is provided below for discussion.

Date	Time	Location/online
03 March	10:30am – 1:30pm	Face to face – Melbourne
02 June	9:30am – 12:30pm	Online
01 September	10:30am – 1:30pm	Face to face – Melbourne
01 December	9:30am – 12:30pm	Online

## NEXT STEPS

Who	Action
MORDEN	To finalise the proposed schedules in light of discussions.

Item No: **11**

Subject: **Meeting evaluation**

The Chair will seek feedback on the effectiveness of this meeting.

The Chair will ask the forum to assess the performance of the committee at this meeting, using the below questions as a guide.

1. Do we think the committee is adding value?
  2. What's working?
  3. What's not working?
- 

Item No: **12**

Subject: **Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Southern Groundwater and Rivers Forum will be held on Friday 2 March 2023 at a time and location to be agreed upon by the committee during this meeting.

---

Item No: **13**

Subject: **Close**

The Chair will close the meeting.

---