



TERMS OF REFERENCE

Lower Barwon Wetlands – Community Advisory Committee *Environmental water management in the Lower Barwon Wetlands, Victoria*

Preamble:

Under the Water Act 1989, environmental entitlements are to be used in *‘improving the environmental values and health of water ecosystems, including their biodiversity, ecological functioning and water quality, and the other uses that depend on environmental condition’.*

Policy 8.3 of the Victorian Water management Strategy states *‘Best practice, scientifically-based methods will be used to determine the required water regime for priority river, wetland and estuarine systems. This will include the use of quantitative data, multi-disciplinary expert panels and community-based consultative committees to identify environmental values, set environmental water objectives and specify a water regime (including wet and dry cycles where appropriate to support environmental values).’*

Policy 8.7 requires that waterway managers *‘in planning for and making discretionary environmental watering decisions, the primary purpose is to maximize environmental benefit. Where consistent with this objective, environmental water managers must also consider whether social and cultural benefits can be achieved’.*

CCMA is required to manage the Barwon River Environmental Entitlement 2011 on behalf of the Victorian Environmental Water Holder (VEWH) in a way that is based on the best available science and supported by evidence. In doing so it must accommodate stakeholder interests where ever that does not compromise ecological outcomes.

Purpose:

The Lower Barwon Wetlands Community Advisory Committee has been established to provide feedback on planned water management in the Lower Barwon Wetlands from a community perspective. The committee will provide an honest and open environment for concepts, issues and knowledge to be shared in a safe and collaborative environment.

The primary responsibilities of the group are to:

- Provide local knowledge and input into the Annual Seasonal Watering Proposal
- Provide knowledge and input on projects related to planned water management in the lower Barwon Wetlands.
- Be a conduit for community feedback.

In undertaking these functions, members of this group will agree to keep members of their own organisations/interest groups informed about management of the lower Barwon Wetlands.

Scope

The role of the group shall be limited to management of the Barwon River Environmental Entitlement 2011 and projects associated with the management of this entitlement.

The role of the CCMA

- To act as facilitators and provide the group with administrative support.
- To provide members with appropriate and relevant information.
- To respond to members' requests for information that are relevant to the role of the group
- To consider the feedback and advice from the group when evaluating options for future environmental flow management.

Membership

The size of the group taking into account diverse representation and manageable numbers will be no more than 10 community members. Government agencies with a relevant interest may also join.

Application

Please visit ([Insert link](#)) for more information and to fill in our online application form. If you are unable to submit an online application form a hard copy form can be downloaded ([here](#)).

Selection Criteria

The initial membership selection for this group was based largely on groups/individuals who provided feedback after the community information session or on the first Draft Seasonal Watering Proposal shortly after establishment of the Barwon River Environmental Entitlement 2011.

Into the future, group members must have:

- an active interest in the health and management of the lower Barwon River wetlands and/or represent a major user or user group;
- the ability to represent the community or major user group and be able to communicate with co-users of the Barwon River Wetlands and environs;
- commitment to work within the Terms of Reference.

Termination Criteria

A member's position will become vacant if one of the following scenarios apply:

Selection of members will be based on:

- A member resigns in writing to the CCMA.
- A member becomes an employee of the CCMA.
- A member is convicted in Victoria of an offence which is punishable by penal servitude or imprisonment for 12 months or more or is convicted elsewhere than Victoria of an offence that, if committed in Victoria, would be an offence so punishable.

- A member releases confidential information pertinent to the group without first obtaining permission to do so by the CCMA
- A member does not adhere to the Purpose and/or Code of Conduct.

If an individual representing a group wishes to resign, a new individual may be nominated by the group to take their place by completing an application form to CCMA.

Time Commitment

This group will meet on an as-needs basis with an estimated frequency of 1-2 times per year. Meetings can be requested by members, although will be determined by the CCMA. It is expected that members will devote time outside meetings for reviewing agendas, scientific reports and other material to be discussed at meetings. Every effort will be made to find a meeting time to suit all members, but it may not be possible to find a time that suits everyone. Where this occurs, the time that can accommodate the most members will be chosen. Meeting times could be held either inside or outside of office hours.

Agenda

Members may request agenda items in writing to the CCMA 14 days prior to the scheduled meeting. The agenda will then be compiled and forwarded to members before the meeting.

Notes

Notes will be taken at each meeting and consist of a record of key actions/resolutions. A copy of the notes will be distributed to group members within 3 weeks of a meeting taking place.

Meeting procedure and support

The CCMA will provide a Chair for the meetings. The CCMA will make effort to support members outside of meetings.

Attendance

Members unable to attend a meeting must notify the CCMA. If the CCMA is informed prior to the meeting, a proxy from the same organisation may be used. Commitment to regular attendance at these meetings along with pre-reading of meeting papers is requested.

Communication Protocols

- No member of the group will make statements to the media on behalf of the group without the approval of the Chief Executive Officer of the CCMA.
- Committee activities will be reported to the CCMA & Board, Victorian Environmental Water Holder, DELWP, relevant ministers/politicians and other organisations where necessary.

Code of Conduct

- Contribute to a candid and respectful atmosphere where issues and ideas can be tested.
- Be able to communicate productively and respectfully with other members of the Committee
- Where appropriate, ensure the confidentiality of information.

Rights

Members have the following rights:

- Right to constructively debate any issues.
- Right to be valued as a member of the committee.
- Right to know and be heard.

Conflict Resolution

If a conflict should arise, the CCMA's process for conflict resolution will apply (this can be made available on request).

Corangamite CMA contact representatives:

- Manager, Estuaries and Environmental Water- Jayden Wooley
Jayden.Wooley@ccma.vic.gov.au
- Senior Project Officer, Estuaries and Environmental Water – Sharon Blum-Caon
Sharon.Blum-Caon@ccma.vic.gov.au
- Communications Graduate- Olivia Brandimarti
Olivia.Brandimarti@ccma.vic.gov.au

*healthy and productive lands and waters
cared for by thriving communities*