

# Curdies River Consultative Committee Terms of Reference

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**REPORT NUMBER :**

REV	DESCRIPTION	ORIG	REVIEW	CCMA APPROVAL	DATE
A	Issued for Implementation	_____	_____	_____	{Insert Date}
		{Insert Name}	{Insert Name}	CEO	
		_____	_____	_____	



## **1. Purpose and Context**

The Curdies River is highly valued for the biodiversity it supports, the recreational opportunities it provides, its history and as a water supply source for stock and townships.

The Curdies River and its tributaries have a history of high nutrient inputs from the catchment. The estuary has a wide, shallow embayment that limits flushing. As such, it is prone to accumulation of sediment and nutrients.

A study was undertaken in 2005 by the then Department of Primary Industries and Department of Sustainability and Environment to investigate nutrient enrichment in the Curdies River Catchment. From this study, there is sufficient evidence to suggest that the following four factors contribute to diffuse movement of phosphorus:

- Dairy effluent
- Excess fertiliser runoff
- Stock rates and access (to wet areas and watercourses)
- Gully erosion and bank erosion in Scotts Creek / Cooriemungle catchment

In 2017 the CMA released the Curdies River Estuary Management Plan that aims to address threats to environmental, social and economic objectives defined within the plan.

In March 2021 and April 2022, blue green algal blooms were detected in the Curdies River estuary, indicating the reoccurrence of high nutrient concentrations in the surface water.

Everyone who lives, works and recreates in the Curdies River catchment has a role in improving the health of the Curdies River. A healthy river will benefit Traditional Owners, land managers, anglers and other recreational users, local business, farming, citizen scientists, Landcare volunteers and other community interests.

A range of government agencies have roles and responsibilities in relation to monitoring, communications, management and reporting on the health of the Curdies River. This includes working with and providing support to land managers and the broader community to undertake management actions that contribute to river health.

The Curdies River Consultative Committee (the Committee) has been established to provide a transparent and effective platform for knowledge sharing, consultation, and collaboration in relation to improving the health of the Curdies River and its tributaries.

## **2. Function of the Curdies River Consultative Committee**

The Function of the Committee is:

- to share research, monitoring, management and local knowledge that can contribute to improving the health of the Curdies River;
- to consult on the review and implementation of Management Plans and Strategies relating to the health of the Curdies River, including implementation of the 2017 Estuary Management Plan and 2005 Ecological Risk Assessment recommendation.
- to support collaboration and provide clarity across agencies and community on roles and responsibilities in relation to Curdies River management;

- to advise on communication materials and approaches associated with delivering information and updates to the broader community about Curdies River management; and
- The Function of the Committee is not to advocate or lobby for changes in government policy or investment. If members wish to do this, it should not be in their capacity as members of this Committee.

### **3. General**

#### **3.1. Chair**

The Chair will be a senior staff member of the Corangamite CMA. The Chair shall convene and conduct the Consultative Committee meetings.

Meetings of the Consultative Committee shall at all times be under the control of the Chairperson and shall be conducted generally in accordance with good meeting procedures.

#### **3.2. Membership**

Representatives from the following organisations and community will be invited to participate in the Committee:

- Corangamite Catchment Management Authority
- Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation
- Agriculture Victoria
- West Vic Dairy
- Wannon Water
- Parks Victoria
- Corangamite Shire
- Moyne Shire
- Environment Protection Authority
- Heytesbury District Landcare Network
- 5 x Community Representatives with community connection and involvement in the Curdies River
- Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

#### **3.3. Appointment and Tenure**

The term of membership is for 3 years, concluding June 2025.

The position of the Chair will be reviewed by the Committee at the mid-point of the program at the discretion of the Committee.

Member organisations will be invited to nominate a senior officer to represent their organisation on the Consultative Committee.

An Expression of Interest shall be called for the positions of Community Representative, with a maximum of 5 Community Representatives appointed (refer to Attachment 1). These positions are to be reviewed by the Committee at the mid-point of the program. Selection of Community Representatives will be based on:

- Familiarity with the Curdies River catchment and preferably to reside within it
- Breadth of community connection, networks and participation

- Diversity and inclusion principles
- A balance of skills, knowledge or community involvement in the Curdies River.

Note: The consultative committee will inform a range of additional community engagement efforts that will occur to ensure the other community members are kept informed and involved in the management of the Curdies River.

Membership of the Committee will be appointed by the CCMA Chief Executive Officer in consultation with the CCMA General Manager Community & Catchment Services.

### **3.4. Termination Criteria**

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

- a member completes a term of office and is not reappointed;
- a member resigns in writing to the Chair;
- a member becomes an employee of the Corangamite CMA (with the exception of the Corangamite CMA representative);
- 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 Committee without first obtaining permission to do so by the Chairperson;
- a member uses their Committee role to advocate or lobby for changes in government policy or investment.
- a member wants to become politically active in relation to the Curdies River; and /or
- a member is deemed to have a conflict of interest to which the Corangamite CMA CEO deems can not otherwise be managed in line with the Corangamite CMA Conflicts of Interest Policy COM POL 035 and Conflicts of Interest Procedure COM PRO 020.

### **3.5. Decision Making**

The Committee should aim to achieve consensus on any decisions regarding advice and recommendations to the Corangamite CMA. This may be done at the following meeting, if further advice is required or through out of session correspondence. Voting will only be used to accept minutes.

### **3.6. Values and Behaviours**

Members commit to the Terms of Reference and agree to:

- work collaboratively with each other;
- embrace best practice and innovative thinking;
- be respectful and receptive to the views of others

### **3.7. Support Officer**

The Corangamite CMA will provide an Officer to support the Committee. The Officer will:

- Coordinate the meeting via teleconference or venue as deemed appropriate by the Committee;
- Develop the meeting agenda in collaboration with the Chair;

- Arrange for guests to attend the meeting; and
- Distribute information required for the meeting (including minutes post meeting)

### **3.8. Agenda Items**

All Committee meeting agenda items should be forwarded to the Officer seven days prior to the scheduled meeting, with agendas to be distributed to members at least four days prior to the meeting. The meeting agenda will include outstanding action items from the previous meeting and any relevant new issues for consideration as submitted by members. Members may raise an item under 'Other Business' if necessary and where time permits. Pre-reading requirements will be kept to the minimum required to effectively operate the Committee.

### **3.9. Frequency of Meetings**

Committee meetings will occur at least four times in the first year and at least twice yearly in subsequent years throughout the duration of the program.

Meetings will take the form of both face to face, as well as online as appropriate, depending on the agenda, availability and location of members.

### **3.10. Minutes & Meeting Papers**

The minutes of each Committee meeting will be prepared by the Officer and approved by the Chair, prior to circulation to members. Minutes will be taken and provided to capture salient points of discussions, as well as action items and are not intended to be copious records. Copies of the minutes, including attachments, shall be provided to all Steering Committee members.

By agreement of the Committee, out-of-session decisions will be deemed acceptable. Where agreed, all out-of-session decisions shall be recorded in the minutes of the next scheduled Committee meeting.

The minutes of each Committee meeting will be monitored and maintained by the Officer as a complete record as required.

### **3.11. Remuneration**

Committee members who are not Government agency employees will not be remunerated unless otherwise agreed with the Corangamite CMA CEO.

Travel expenses will be paid in accordance with Victorian Government directions/policy. Out of pocket expenses can also be reimbursed with prior approval by the Officer. Tax invoices are to be provided for out of pocket expenses with a completed CCMA claim form.

### **3.12. Conflict of interest**

A conflict of interest declaration must be completed by all committee members before a committee member begins their appointment. The Corangamite CMA may not approve membership in line with the Corangamite CMA Conflicts of Interest Policy COM POL 035 and Conflicts of Interest Procedure COM PRO 020.

If a Committee member believes that he/she may have a conflict of interest in relation to a

particular agenda item or general business item, that member must notify the Chairperson and fellow members of the conflict of interest. This will not necessarily prevent the Committee member concerned joining in discussion on the subject issue, but does preclude the member from any voting rights.

### **3.13. Confidentiality**

Some information provided to the Committee may be of a confidential nature and the confidentiality of this information must be maintained by members.

### **3.14. Proxies**

Members may nominate another Officer of their organisation to attend in their place.

### **3.15. Quorum**

A quorum shall be at least one half of the appointed members.

### **3.16. Abbreviations**

CEO	Chief Executive Officer
Committee	Curdies River Consultative Committee
CMA	Catchment Management Authority