



# Corangamite CMA delivers on climate action

Addressing climate change and providing leadership on climate adaptation is both a regional and global priority. From Ballarat in the north, to the Otway Forest in the south, and the coastline from Peterborough to Corio Bay, climate change will affect every part of the Corangamite region.

## OUR PLAN

In 2021 we developed the **Corangamite CMA Carbon Neutrality Action Plan 2021 – 2026** (our plan) and set ourselves a voluntary and ambitious target to achieve net zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions for our own operations by 2024. We were one of the first catchment management authorities in Victoria to do so. We also committed to sourcing 100% green power by the end of 2021.

In our plan, we proposed to meet our target by reducing our emissions as low as possible through clear and targeted action and then using carbon credits to offset our residual emissions.

Our plan described the emissions boundary (Scopes 1, 2 and some limited Scope 3) in our 2021 baseline year. It committed to tracking those specific emissions over the subsequent years to meet our 2024 target.

The plan included 44 actions to reduce our emissions with seven actions for Scope 1, six for Scope 2, and the remaining 31 for limited Scope 3 emissions.

## WHAT WE'VE ACHIEVED

Over the past three years, we have made meaningful and measurable progress in reducing our emissions with 41 of 44 actions in our plan now achieved or underway.



### Key highlights since 2021 include:

- Achieving our target of sourcing 100% green power.
- The installation of an electric vehicle charging station at our Colac office and purchase of five electric or hybrid vehicles, supporting the transition of almost half of our vehicle fleet to lower emissions options.



### Of the three actions not yet achieved:

- One action to convert our full vehicle fleet to low emissions options is not due until 2025.
- One action to develop a waste action plan for events on the Barwon River is on hold due to additional costs this would impose on community and volunteer groups.
- We have decided not to seek Climate Active certification while the Australian Government's review and recommendations are being completed. Instead, we will focus our efforts on updating and improving our GHG emissions boundary and inventory.

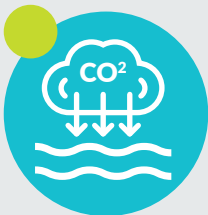
We have also achieved a reduction in actual emissions by approximately 27% compared to our 2021 baseline (which was 94 tCO<sub>2</sub>-e).

After implementation of the identified emissions reduction opportunities, our remaining emissions were approximately 69 tCO<sub>2</sub>-e for the 2023-24 financial year. This is based on the specific emissions boundary and GHG inventory we set up in 2021 and described in our plan. This is a strong result considering the baseline was set during COVID-19 when energy use was low compared to historical use. This reduction is largely a result of purchasing 100% green power since 2021 and continuing to transition to lower emissions fleet vehicles.

In 2024 we engaged Anthesis (Australia) to conduct a review of our 2023 GHG inventory and make recommendations on improvements and alignment with reporting and verification frameworks. Several recommendations for improving our GHG inventory have been identified, and our future work will focus on these

In the meantime, we will voluntarily retire 100 Australian Carbon Credit Units (ACCUs i.e., carbon credits representing 100 tCO<sub>2</sub>-e) for the financial year 2023-2024 to demonstrate our commitment to climate action. The credits are sourced from an environmental plantings project in northern Victoria through a partnership agreement with Wannon Water. The project has planted 450,000 blue mallee trees across 360 hectares on five properties in central Victoria.

Under the partnership arrangement with Wannon Water our respective organisations have agreed to work together to meet carbon credit needs until 2030, allowing us to ensure sourcing of high integrity carbon credits that also provide benefits within Victoria.



**We have reduced our actual emissions by approximately 27% compared to our 2021 baseline. This reduction is largely a result of purchasing 100% green power since 2021 and continuing to transition to lower emissions fleet vehicles.**

## WHAT'S CHANGED

Since the development of our plan in 2021, there has been significant progress and change in climate legislation, action and reporting both internationally and nationally. The Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) wrapped up its ground-breaking work in 2023 and the International Sustainability Standards Board (ISSB) published standards for climate-related disclosures and took on the role of supporting and monitoring implementation.

At the national level, there has been a review of the Australian Government's ACCU Scheme, an external consultation on the Climate Active program, and the passing of legislation in late 2024 mandating climate reporting/disclosures for large Australian companies. The final reforms for the Climate Active program are yet to be announced but are expected to have a stronger focus on direct emissions reductions with mandated annual minimum reduction requirements.

This is also mirrored by shifts in climate action within the corporate sector, towards emissions reduction and towards net zero, rather than carbon neutrality and an unrestricted use of carbon credits to achieve that goal. Investment preferences are for direct emissions reduction combined with high-integrity carbon credits to offset unavoidable emissions. Corangamite CMA is aligning with this policy shift and we seek to progressively work towards reducing our emissions and aligning our GHG inventory with current best practice standards.

Our vehicle fleet is our largest source of emissions, and we will continue to work towards transitioning our full fleet to hybrid or electric by 2025. Our biggest challenge will be finding suitable options to replace diesel 4WDs used for more remote and rugged field-based work.



## WHAT WE WILL DO NEXT

We are exploring a partnership on blue and teal carbon sequestration options across the Barwon South West region.

In 2025 we will commence feasibility and due diligence studies for self-generating carbon sequestration projects on land that we own with the aim to generate high integrity carbon credits (ACCUs) by 2030. Additionally, we will also update and improve our emissions boundary and inventory to better align with current best practice standards (GHG Protocol).

In 2025 we will also commence work to update our plan to include more specific near-term and longer-term targets to further reduce our actual emissions to the maximum extent possible. We will focus our investment and effort on direct regional action to reduce reliance on carbon credits over time, whilst recognising that nature-based solutions, including carbon projects, are a key pillar to solving the climate crisis. There can be no net zero without nature-based action.

We will commence additional voluntary climate disclosures in our 2024-25 Annual Report, beyond what is required for CMAs by the Victorian Government. This will include disclosing our carbon inventory, progress towards emissions reduction targets and use of carbon credits each year.

In addition to climate action, we are also leading the way on nature action, following strategic advice delivered by Anthesis (Australia) earlier this year on the applicability of the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD) framework to our organisation. Working with our catchment partners, we are developing a plan and projects to support progress towards the global nature positive goal to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030 and achieve full recovery by 2050.



## BACKGROUND

The Australian and Victorian governments have clear commitments to achieving net zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to help meet the goals of the global Paris Agreement.

The Victorian Government aims to reduce Victoria's emissions by 75 to 80 percent by 2035 and achieve net zero emissions by 2050.

For more information see [Victorian Government action on climate change](#).

The water sector is vital to this effort and Victoria's 18 water corporations have legislated commitments to achieve net zero (scope 1 and 2) GHG emissions by 2035 (or sooner). Victoria's catchment management authorities are supporting climate action in the water sector by exploring opportunities and delivering carbon sequestration initiatives plus leading regional work on climate adaptation.