

Natural Resources Report Card 2003

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Natural Resources Report Card 2003

Introduction

The Gippsland Integrated Natural Resources Forum is pleased to present the inaugural Natural Resources Report Card for the Gippsland region. Gippsland is the first region in Victoria to present an honest and independent appraisal of natural resource condition and stewardship in this way.

This document provides some information about the background and methodology of the Report Card development in 2003. We welcome comments that will assist us to strengthen the reporting process, ensuring that the Report Card presents a complete, comparable and timely picture of natural resources in the Gippsland region for years to come.

The Natural Resources Report Card represents the collective challenge that faces natural resource managers in the Gippsland region. An integrated effort is required to care for and manage our most precious natural assets. Most of the Gippsland region is in good environmental shape. This is a great reason to work together to protect those assets already in good condition, and improve the condition of assets that are currently environmentally unacceptable.

About the Gippsland Integrated Natural Resources Forum

The Gippsland Integrated Natural Resources Forum (GINRF) is a whole-of-Gippsland approach to the management of the region's natural resources under the slogan *Catchment Health – Gippsland's Wealth*. The role of the Forum is to achieve a cooperative and strategic approach to natural resource management in the region.

The vision of the Forum is to: *“Unify the efforts of Gippsland's natural resource managers, to ensure the cultural, economic and social activity of Gippsland is conducted in harmony with its environment.”*

The Forum has a membership of some sixty organisations including government departments, catchment management authorities, municipal councils, rural and urban water authorities, universities, private industry, regional development bodies, community based groups (such as Landcare), and cross agency groups (such as Gippsland Research Coordination Group). A Reference Group and Executive are drawn from the broader Forum membership, with an independent chair: Professor Barry Hart.

Purpose of the Natural Resources Report Card

The production of an annual report card is one of six strategic goals developed by the Reference Group of GINRF. The purpose of the report card is threefold:

1. Foster the strategic integration of natural resource management
 - Focus thinking, planning and action on collective natural assets that transcend organisational and geographical boundaries.
 - Provide a whole-of-Gippsland view of natural resource management
 - Evaluate the quality of existing strategic, management and research partnerships and identify synergies that would benefit from new partnership arrangements.
2. Provide a credible, independent and regular evaluation of natural resource management in Gippsland
 - Give an independent perspective on natural resource management in Gippsland
 - Provide accurate and timely information to members and other stakeholders
 - Identify gaps in knowledge, data, strategy and action
3. Cultivate a strong regional identity for Gippsland based on natural resources
 - Draw together existing information and present it in a useful and accessible format
 - Give a whole-of-Gippsland evaluation of performance against state, national and international indicators
 - Promote Gippsland's clean, green image to outsiders and to Gippslanders themselves

Key Stakeholders/Audience for the Report Card

- Members of the Gippsland Integrated Natural Resources Forum
- State and Federal Government
- Gippsland community
- Victorian community

Twelve Natural Assets of Gippsland

Twelve natural assets of Gippsland were chosen as the focus for this first report card:

- The Gippsland Lakes
- Corner Inlet/Wilson's Promontory
- Coastal Parks of Far East Gippsland
- Alpine National Park

- Snowy River
- Mitchell River
- Thomson River
- Forests of East Gippsland
- Coastal Living - Bass Coast & Phillip Island
- Macalister Irrigation District
- Dryland Dairy Farming of West and South Gippsland
- Brown Coal based Energy Industry

These natural assets are recognisable and represent Gippsland’s rich, diverse natural landscape. This approach focuses on integration of the natural resources themselves and the agencies, communities and processes involved in managing these assets.

Two criteria were used for selecting key natural assets in 2003:

1. Represents Gippsland’s identity; and
2. Requires integrated management effort for improvement or protection of natural values.

Report Card Development Process

A small working party was formed to develop this first Natural Resources Report Card in March 2003, from open invitation to GINRF Reference Group members. Report card development followed an eight step process outlined in Environment Australia’s “A Framework for Public Environmental Reporting”, the Australian interpretation of the Global Reporting Initiative. The eight steps follow a plan, measure, report and review cycle. The review phase will inform the future development of the Report Card, particularly in the measurement of and reporting on natural resources in the Gippsland region.

The focus of the report card development process was to report on both the condition and stewardship of Gippsland’s natural resources.

Natural Asset Condition

Rating System

An assessment is made about the overall environmental condition of each natural asset by measuring against indicators relating to land, water, biodiversity and air values. Both the immediate location of the asset and offsite impacts are considered.

Rating	Description	Definition
A	Excellent	Condition of all natural resource values meet targets set in National and/or State policies. No adverse offsite impacts
B	Good	Condition of more than one attribute of one value below target, but recovering or being restored. Secure and functional representation of all vegetation communities and species. Condition could be improved given current use and management, minimal offsite impacts
C	Reasonable	Condition of more than one attribute of one value poor but partially recoverable.

		Remaining vegetation is fragmented with some communities/species lost or threatened. Can be repaired/restored through management. Some offsite impacts
D	Poor	Representation of original vegetation is poor, and is fragmented with some communities/species lost or threatened. Potential or actual land use/management issues that need to be addressed to improve/protect natural asset. Several adverse offsite impacts
F	Degraded	Natural values degraded. Limited areas of intact original vegetation remain. Extensive adverse offsite impacts

Data Sources

Condition indicators and relevant data are sourced from two main documents:

1. Victorian Catchment Management Council “Health of our Catchments – a Victorian Report Card 2002”
2. West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority “Renewal of the West Gippsland Regional Catchment Strategy, State of the Catchment 2003” prepared by Sinclair Knight Merz

These two documents have collated data from a wide range of sources as a result of State and local consultative processes and are consistent with the National Land and Water Resources Audit and *Australia: State of the Environment 2001*.

The East Gippsland State of the Catchment report is under development and was not available for the Report Card preparation. A collection of documents were consulted for the East Gippsland assets including the Victorian River Health Strategy, Parks Victoria State of the Parks 2000, National Park management plans, and Comprehensive Regional Assessments completed for the Regional Forest Agreement process.

No new data collection, collation or interpretation has taken place to develop this report card.

Condition of 12 Key Natural Assets

The following section outlines the environmental condition of each of the twelve key natural assets in turn. A brief summary of the condition issues relating to each key natural asset is provided. The ratings were determined by collectively considering these issues in relation to the rating definitions. The key condition comments were drawn from the main issues for each asset for the purposes of communication on the brief, published report card.

The Gippsland Lakes

Rating: C

Key Condition Comments:

- Frequent algal blooms
- High nutrient loads

Bioregion reference: Gippsland Plain

Condition summary

The Gippsland Lakes maintains high recreation and tourism values based on the extensive and contiguous natural system of waterways. The area is listed as a Ramsar wetlands site, giving international recognition to the natural values and giving some indication of its ecological significance. The natural state of the Gippsland Lakes is under threat, with severe and frequent algal blooms being the most noticeable symptom. (SKM, 2003 p60) There are also high sediment and nutrient levels entering the Lakes system, some degradation of hinterland flora and fauna, and some indication of decline in fish numbers and seagrass (SKM, 2003 p61, p63, p103). Land values on the Lakes' shores are threatened by the high risk of wind erosion on the eastern margin of Lake Wellington and some dryland salinity in low lying areas around Lake Wellington (Bengworden, Area, Kilmany/Pearsondale and Lake Coleman) (SKM, 2003 p32, p29). There is also real concern about the capacity to protect indigenous cultural values in the Gippsland Lakes area, indicated by the loss of many sites of cultural significance (SKM, 2003 p20).

Corner Inlet/ Wilson's Promontory

Rating: B

Key Condition Comments:

- 83 - 100% of pre-European vegetation communities remain intact
- Some emerging issues with Corner Inlet: sediment & pollutant inputs; sea grass decline; environmental weeds; sea walls reducing fish breeding sites

Bioregion reference: Wilson's Promontory and Gippsland Plain

Condition Summary

Wilson's Promontory is one of the oldest National Parks in Victoria and has recently been joined by the Corner Inlet and Wilson's Promontory Marine National Parks. Corner Inlet is also listed as a Ramsar wetland. The long standing national park status of Wilson's Promontory has preserved 100% of pre-European vegetation in many areas and no less than 83% in other locations. It has also been declared a biosphere reserve under UNESCO's 'Man and the Biosphere' program. (SKM, 2003 p80) Despite the long-

standing protection, the Prom and Corner Inlet are threatened by human activity. Recent monitoring has recorded some sediments and nutrients entering Corner Inlet and there is real concern about the impacts of sea walls on fish breeding and habitat. (SKM, 2003 p56, p 59) Some decline in sea grass and environmental weeds such as Spartina also threaten biodiversity values (SKM, 2003 p83, p103) Indigenous cultural values are partly protected by Parks plans (SKM, 2003, p20)

Coastal Parks of Far East Gippsland

Rating: A

Key Condition Comments:

- Near pristine estuarine areas
- Very good water quality
- Listed as a State Natural Catchment Area and UNESCO Biosphere Reserve

Bioregion reference: East Gippsland Lowlands

Condition Summary

The main feature of this area is the Croajingalong National Park, which is recognised for protecting a significant representation of East Gippsland's diverse lowland forest, heath and coastal ecosystems. The park is part of a designated biosphere reserve under the UNESCO 'Man and the Biosphere' program. (Parks Victoria 2000, p 78). The Point Hicks Marine National Park adjoins Croajingalong NP. This area also contains one of several Natural Catchment Areas identified in East Gippsland and has a high concentration of near pristine estuarine areas. (Victorian River Health Strategy, p144 p. 27)

Alpine National Park

Rating: B

Key Condition Comments:

- Areas of high wilderness value
- Reduced representation of plant and animal communities due to grazing
- Impact of 2003 fires – potential for reduced water quality and yield, fragmentation of vegetation, increased erosion and threats to endangered species.

Bioregion reference: Victorian Alps and Highlands – Southern Fall

The area that the Report Card has identified is mostly the Wonnangatta-Moroka and Bogong Units of the Alpine National Park. (approximately 380,000ha). These areas boast several Wilderness Zones, Heritage Rivers and Natural Catchment Areas. (Parks Victoria

2000, p 14). Between 70% and 100% of remnant tree cover remains intact (VCMC 2002 p28). Issues for maintaining the land, water and biodiversity values of the park include controlling the high number of pest plant and animals, managing grazing to improve protection of threatened vegetation communities and species, and managing for wildfire. (Parks Victoria 2000, p 14) The 2003 Eastern Victorian Fires impacted on several areas in the Alpine National Park, having potential to reduce water quality and yield, fragment vegetation, increase erosion and threaten endangered species. The main types of natural environments that have been affected are the eucalypt forests of the upper and lower slopes and the alpine grassland, shrubland, heathland and sphagnum bog vegetation communities at higher altitudes. Plant communities and animal populations and habitats including rivers, creeks, wetlands and soil are being affected by the flush of nutrients (from the ash bed) and sediments (washed from bare areas by rain) that are occurring as a result of the fires. (Fire and the environment: <http://www.nre.vic.gov.au>)

Snowy River

Rating: C

Key Condition Comments:

- Flows significantly reduced
- Reduced ecological condition (habitat and water quality degraded)

Bioregion reference: East Gippsland Uplands and East Gippsland Lowlands

Condition Summary

The Snowy River has 51 – 70% of its length in excellent or good condition, but with flows significantly reduced by the Snowy Hydro-electric Scheme. (VCMC 2002 p34, p37). Agreement has been reached to restore flows to 21% over next 10 years, promised to increase to 28% thereafter. There is a build up of sediment, weed infestation and reduced habitat for native flora and fauna due to reduced flows. (VCMC 2002 p 37) The Snowy River National Park protects natural values along part of the river's length in East Gippsland. The 2003 Eastern Victorian Fires also impacted upon the Snowy River National Park.

Mitchell River

Rating: B

Key Condition Comments:

- Recognised as very high value river system
- Greater than 70% stream length in excellent to good condition
- Stream bank erosion in lower reaches

Bioregion reference: Highlands – Southern Fall and Gippsland Plain

Condition Summary

The Mitchell River is one of two river systems in Victoria recognised as having very high value, due to high conservation value, high level of naturalness of flows, relative intactness throughout the entire river system and significance for the Gippsland Lakes. (VRHS, 2002 pp 40-41) Greater than 70% of the stream length is in excellent to good condition. (VCMC 2002 p34). Tunnel erosion, sediment and nutrient impacts in parts of the lower catchment have real implications for the Mitchell's ability to contribute to the health of the Gippsland Lakes.

Thomson River

Rating: C-

Key Condition Comments:

- Flows reduced by Thomson dam and irrigation
- Upper reaches – good water quality, generally good habitat and high quality riparian vegetation
- Lower reaches – poor water quality, high nutrient loads, degraded habitat, reduced biological health, significant loss of riparian vegetation.

Bioregion reference: Highlands-Southern Fall and Gippsland Plain

Condition Summary

The Thomson River is dammed in the upper reaches, reducing flows which are further reduced by extraction for irrigation in lower reaches. (SKM, 2003 p49) It is classed as a heritage river, exhibiting good water quality, generally good stream substrate and instream habitat and high quality riparian vegetation in the upper reaches (between Lake Thomson and Cowwarr Weir). (Saddler and Doeg, 1998) The middle to lower reaches indicate high levels of phosphorus and turbidity, with increasing salinity (EC) in the lower reaches. (SKM, 2003 p36) Significant loss of riparian vegetation has occurred in the lower reaches, there are some issues about water course and bed/bank stability. (SKM, 2003 p49)

East Gippsland Forests

Rating: B

Key Condition Comments:

- Several ecosystems in pristine condition
- Protection of a range of plant and animal species in National Parks and Special Protection Zones

- Logging occurs under Regional Forest Agreement

Bioregion reference: Victorian Alps, East Gippsland Uplands, East Gippsland Lowlands and Monaro Tablelands

Condition summary

The area used to describe the forests of East Gippsland is the Forest Management Area (also used for the Regional Forest Agreement). The 1.2 million hectares of mostly forested area includes seven National Parks: Alpine (Cobberas – Tingaringy Unit), Snowy River, Errinundra, Coopracambra, Croajingalong, Alfred and Lind. (CRA East Gippsland Environment and Heritage Report, 1996 Map 1) Due to the identification of the Snowy River and Coastal Parks of Far East Gippsland as separate key natural assets for the Report Card, these two areas have been omitted from the East Gippsland Forests area for the purposes of rating, to avoid duplication.

Coopracambra National Park is recognised as one of the largest areas of high quality wilderness in southeastern Australia. (Parks Victoria 2000, p 73) Other natural values in the Forest Management Area are protected in Special Protection Zones. Some 350,000 hectares of State Forest is available for harvesting in the General Management Zone. (CRA East Gippsland Resource and Economics Report, 1996 p7) Logging now occurs in these areas under the Regional Forest Agreement and the Code of Forest Practices (1989). The Victorian State Government’s ‘Our Forests Our Future’ policy of 2002 reduced the estimated annual sustainable biological yield in the East Gippsland Forest Management Area by 43% in the light of updated forest inventory data. (State Government Victoria, Our Forests Our Future, 2002)

Coastal Living – Bass Coast and Phillip Island

Rating: C

Key Condition Comments:

- Potential development impacts such as waste water disposal, fragmentation of vegetation and dune erosion

Bioregion reference: Gippsland Plain and Strzelecki Ranges

Condition summary

Coastal living areas of Bass Coast and Phillip Island hold many natural values but increases in permanent and seasonal population brings with it pressure for development, potentially threatening land, water and biodiversity values. Bunurong and Churchill Island Marine National Parks fall within this area. The current environmental values and features found at Cape Liptrap Coastal Park indicate good condition. (SKM, 2003 p58) Some dryland salinity has been mapped in the Wonthaggi/Inverloch area (5500 Ha) with 12000 Ha of very high risk or high risk of salinity (SKM, 2003 p28). The main concern

for development of this area is the management of wastewater, stormwater and sewerage. (SKM, 2003 p60) Fragmentation of vegetation and dune erosion are also of concern. (Phillip Island and San Remo Design Framework – Feb 2003)

Macalister Irrigation District

Rating: D -

Comments:

- Little remnant vegetation
- High nutrient loads that contribute to poor water quality in lower reaches of Macalister, Thomson and Latrobe Rivers and algal blooms in Gippsland Lakes
- Salinity problems

Bioregion reference: Gippsland Plain

Condition Summary

Intensive irrigated dairy farming in the Macalister Irrigation District has resulted in poor environmental quality on site and significant offsite impacts including high nutrient loads entering lower reaches of Macalister, Thomson and Latrobe Rivers. Significant irrigation induced salinity exists (50000 HA with water table of 2m or less), exacerbated by extensive clearing and draining of wetlands (SKM, 2003 p 23, p54, p57 VCMC 2002 p28). Water quality is poor with elevated turbidity levels, upward trend in conductivity and increasing acidity. (VCMC 2002 p46, p40 p42 p66 p44 and SKM, 2003 p36, p37)

Dryland Dairy Farming of West and South Gippsland

Rating: C

Key Condition Comments:

- Little remnant vegetation, degraded riparian vegetation
- High erosion risk in many areas

Bioregion reference: Strzelecki Ranges and Gippsland Plain

Condition Summary

A long history of extensive clearing has left only between 10-50% of remnant vegetation in this area. (VCMC 2002 p28) Water quality standards are generally being met and 51-70% of river length is in excellent or good condition (VCMC 2002 p34, 2 p37). However water quality has a downward trend and there is a high risk of water erosion and some evidence of soil contamination (SKM, 2003 p31, figure 4.4, VCMC 2002 p64)

Brown Coal based Energy Industry

Rating: D

Key Condition Comments:

- Land subsidence issues
- High use of ground and surface water
- Greenhouse gas emissions

Bioregion reference: Strzelecki Ranges and Gippsland Plain

Condition Summary

Brown coal fired power stations in the Latrobe Valley produce around 90% of Victoria's total electricity generation, which accounts for over half of Victoria's total greenhouse gas emissions. (SKM, 2003, p90) Trends for air quality in the region indicate that harmful air pollutants are remaining at acceptable levels. Visibility-reducing particles remain an issue but have been decreasing over the past 20 years and are often dependent on the incidence of fires and the prevailing weather conditions. (SKM, 2003, p89) Power stations are high users of deep groundwater from Latrobe Group Aquifer (approx 25000ML/yr), along with offshore gas and oil miners, potentially resulting in land subsidence. (SKM, 2003 p65)

Stewardship of Natural Assets

Stewardship may be defined as: “The careful and responsible management of the natural asset by the range of agency, industry and community stakeholders entrusted with its care”. It is generally accepted that good stewardship requires genuine engagement across community, government and industry and an integrated approach to natural resource management.

An assessment is made about the completeness and quality of processes regarded as necessary for effective stewardship of each natural icon. The following processes and the links between them are believed to be the necessary components of effective stewardship:

- Assessment and Research
- Consultation, Extension, Education
- Policies, Management Systems
- Partnerships
- Strategies (including Regional Catchment Strategies)
- Management Plans
- Monitoring and Review

Rating System

Rating	Description	Definition
*****	Fully integrated	All parts of the stewardship process complete and of high quality, significantly impacting on the improvement or protection of condition. High level of government, community, industry engagement interacting through both formal and informal partnership arrangements.
****	Mostly integrated	Most parts of the stewardship process complete with average/good quality, having clear potential to improve/protect asset condition. Some evidence of partnership arrangements in operation
***	Some integration	Most parts of the stewardship process complete with average/poor quality, and unclear impacts on the condition. Government, community and industry engagement may be fragmented with partnership arrangements weak or non-evident.
**	Little integration	Gap in one or more of the processes and quality that is hampering effective stewardship of the natural asset. There is danger of contributing to asset condition decline
*	No integration	Significant gaps in the stewardship process. Contributing to decline in asset condition

Stewardship of 12 Natural Assets

Natural Asset	Values	Assessment & Research	Consultation on Extension, Education	Policies, Management Systems	Partnerships	Strategies	Management Plans	Monitoring & Review	Rating	Comments
Gippsland Lakes	Land	1, 2, 3,4,		5,6	B	46,	41,45,		**	Gippsland Lakes Taskforce in operation East and West Gippsland Regional Catchment Strategies yet to be aligned with Gippsland Lakes Future Directions and Actions Plan
	Water	16,28,29					17,			
	Biodiversity	26,27,28,32,		23,24,25,33,34,			11,33,35,41,43,			
Corner Inlet, Wilson's Prom	Land					46,			***	Potential to further integrate the various national park, marine/coastal park, Ramsar wetlands management plans and the Regional Catchment Strategy
	Water	16,								
	Biodiversity	32,		23,24,25,33,34,			33,37,38,40,42,			
Croajingalong NP	Land								***	Links not yet clear between National Park management plans and East Gippsland Regional Catchment Strategy (under development)
	Water									
	Biodiversity	32,		33,34,			33,			
Alpine NP	Land								***	Links not yet clear between National Park management plans and Regional Catchment Strategies
	Water									
	Biodiversity	32,		33,34,			33,			
	Land								***	Complex management task requiring interstate
	Water									

Snowy River	Biodiversity	32,		33,34,			33,				coordination Water and Federal/State funds committed to rehabilitate flow
Mitchell River	Land									***	East Gippsland Regional Catchment Strategy and River Health Strategy at draft stage
	Water						18,				
	Biodiversity	32,		33,34,			33,				
Thomson River	Land					21,	20, 22,			***	Environmental releases from Thomson Dam are under review by Thomson Macalister Task Force.
	Water	15,16,30,31,		13,14,19,31,			18,				
	Biodiversity	26,27,32,		33,34,39,			11,33,35,				
East Gippsland Forests	Land									****	Forest management planning process well advanced, potential for further linking to Regional Catchment Strategy, Parks and River Health Strategy
	Water										
	Biodiversity	32,		33,34,			33,				
Coastal towns	Land					21,46,	22,			**	Border strategy and management issues between West Gippsland and Port Phillip & Westernport Catchment Management Authorities
	Water	16,					18,	12,			
	Biodiversity	32,		33,34,39,			33,36,37,44,				
	Land	7,8,9,10				21,	11,20, 22,			***	Management plans implemented from
	Water	15,16,30,31,		13,14, 19,31,	A			12,			

Dairy (irrigation)	Biodiversity	26,27,32,		33,34,39,	C		11,33,35,51,			Gippsland Lakes Rescue Package and Gippsland Lakes Future Directions and Actions Plan Nutrient reduction targets have been established West Gippsland Regional Catchment Strategy (draft) features threats and targets relevant to MID
Dairy (dry land)	Land	7,8,10				21,	20, 22,		***	Potential for more coordinated planning and management
	Water	15,16,		14,	C			12,		
	Biodiversity	32,		33,34,39,			33,36,37,38,			
Energy (brown coal)	Land					21,	22,50,		****	All power stations have accredited licences and environmental management systems Potential to further integrate with broader catchment processes via the West Gippsland Regional Catchment Strategy
	Water	15,16,30,31,		13,14,19,31,			50,			
	Biodiversity	32,		33,34,39,			33,50,			
	Air	49,		47,48,	D		50,			

Source of document list: SKM, 2003

1. Register of the National Estate Database
2. Australian Heritage Places Inventory
3. Aboriginal Affairs Victoria Site Register
4. Map of Aboriginal archaeological sites on stream frontages
5. Archaeological and Aboriginal Relics Preservation Act 1972
6. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Heritage Protection Act 1984
7. Soils Map for Gippsland Region, Sargent and Rees 1999

8. Land Systems Studies – various
9. Land Capability Study for Kilmany and Kilmany South 2001
10. Salinity mapping for South Gippsland and the Macalister Irrigation District
11. Lake Wellington Catchment Salinity Management Plan (including review, 2001)
12. Gippsland Water Quality Monitoring Review
13. SEPP (Waters of Victoria) – Schedule F5: Waters of the Latrobe and Thomson River Basins and Merriman Creek Catchment 1996
14. Index of Stream Condition (ISC) Water Ecoscience 2002
15. Assessment of ISC
16. Water Ecoscience Water Quality assessment (Draft) 2002
17. Gippsland Lakes Future Directions and Action Plan DNRE 2002
18. Local Government Municipalities Storm Water Management Plans
19. Victorian Government Bulk Entitlements
20. West Gippsland Waterway Management Plan SKM, 2002

21. West Gippsland Regional Floodplain Strategy 1999
22. West Gippsland Regional Floodplain Management Plan 2000
23. RAMSAR Convention
24. Japan-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement JAMBA
25. China-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement CAMBA
26. An overview report on the wetlands of the Central Gippsland region, Birkin 1991
27. Lake Wellington Wetlands Resource Document National Parks Service 1995
28. Gippsland Lakes Environmental Audit – review of water quality and status of the aquatic ecosystems of the Gippsland Lakes 1998
29. Estimate of sediment and nutrient loads into the Gippsland Lakes
30. State Observation Bore Network
31. Ground Water Management Areas/Permissible Annual Volumes
32. Environmental Vegetation Class mapping; Fauna surveys
33. Victorian Rare or Threatened Species (VROTS) list and Action Plans
34. Victoria's Biodiversity – Directions in management: 'JANIS' 1997 Nationally agreed criteria for establishment of a comprehensive, adequate and representative reserve system for forests in Australia
35. Wellington Catchment Care projects
36. Powlett project
37. Hills to Ocean projects
38. Yarram Yarram Catchment Network projects
39. Planning and Environment Act 1987, Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994
40. Wilson's Promontory National Parks Management Plan 2002
41. Lake Wellington Wetlands Draft Management Plan 1997
42. Corner Inlet Ramsar Site Strategic Management Plan 2002
43. Gippsland Lakes Ramsar Site Draft Strategic Management Plan 2002
44. Integrated Coastal Planning for Gippsland – Coastal Action Plan 2002
45. The Lakes National Park and Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park Management Plan 1998
46. Victorian Coastal Strategy 2002
47. SEPP objectives for particles, EPA, 2002
48. SEPP air quality management, EPA 2002
49. Latrobe Valley Air Quality Monitoring
50. Generating businesses' environmental management systems (agreement with EPA)
51. MID Nutrient Reduction Plan 1998

Partnerships

- A Gippsland Regional Water Quality Monitoring Partnership
- B Gippsland Lakes and Actions Taskforce
- C Regional Biodiversity Network
- D Latrobe Valley Air Quality Monitoring Network

Where to from here?

It is clear that there is a considerable amount of work to be done on monitoring, data collection, data management, interpretation and the development of the reporting process.

It is recommended that a working group be formed for the on-going development of a comprehensive regional reporting system, of which an annual report card will be one component. Such a system will augment monitoring and evaluation processes of the Catchment Management Authorities and other relevant organisations. It is envisaged that the Report Card will be the central communication tool, drawing from a complex but integrated array of monitoring and reporting activity across the whole of Gippsland.

Feedback

The Gippsland Integrated Natural Resources Forum welcomes feedback on the report card development process.

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References

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CRA East Gippsland Resource and Economics Report, 1996 Prepared for Regional Forest Agreement process.

Environment Australia 2000 “A Framework for Public Environmental Reporting”

Natural Resources and Environment, 2003 Fire and the environment:
<http://www.nre.vic.gov.au>

Parks Victoria, 2000, “State of the Parks 2000 Volume 2 – Park Profiles”

Phillip Island and San Remo Design Framework – Feb 2003

Saddler, S. and Doeg, T. 1998 "The Fish and Aquatic Macroinvertebrate Fauna of the Thomson River: The Impact of 15 Years of a Modified Water Release from the Thomson Reservoir" Report to Melbourne Water

Sinclair Knight Merz (SKM), 2003 “Renewal of the West Gippsland Regional Catchment Strategy, State of the Catchment 2003” Report to West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority.

State Government Victoria, 2002 “Our Forests Our Future”

State Government Victoria, Natural Resources and Environment, 2002 “Victorian River Health Strategy”

Victorian Catchment Management Council (VCMC), 2002 “Health of our Catchments – a Victorian Report Card 2002”