

Ramsar PAEC Inquiry

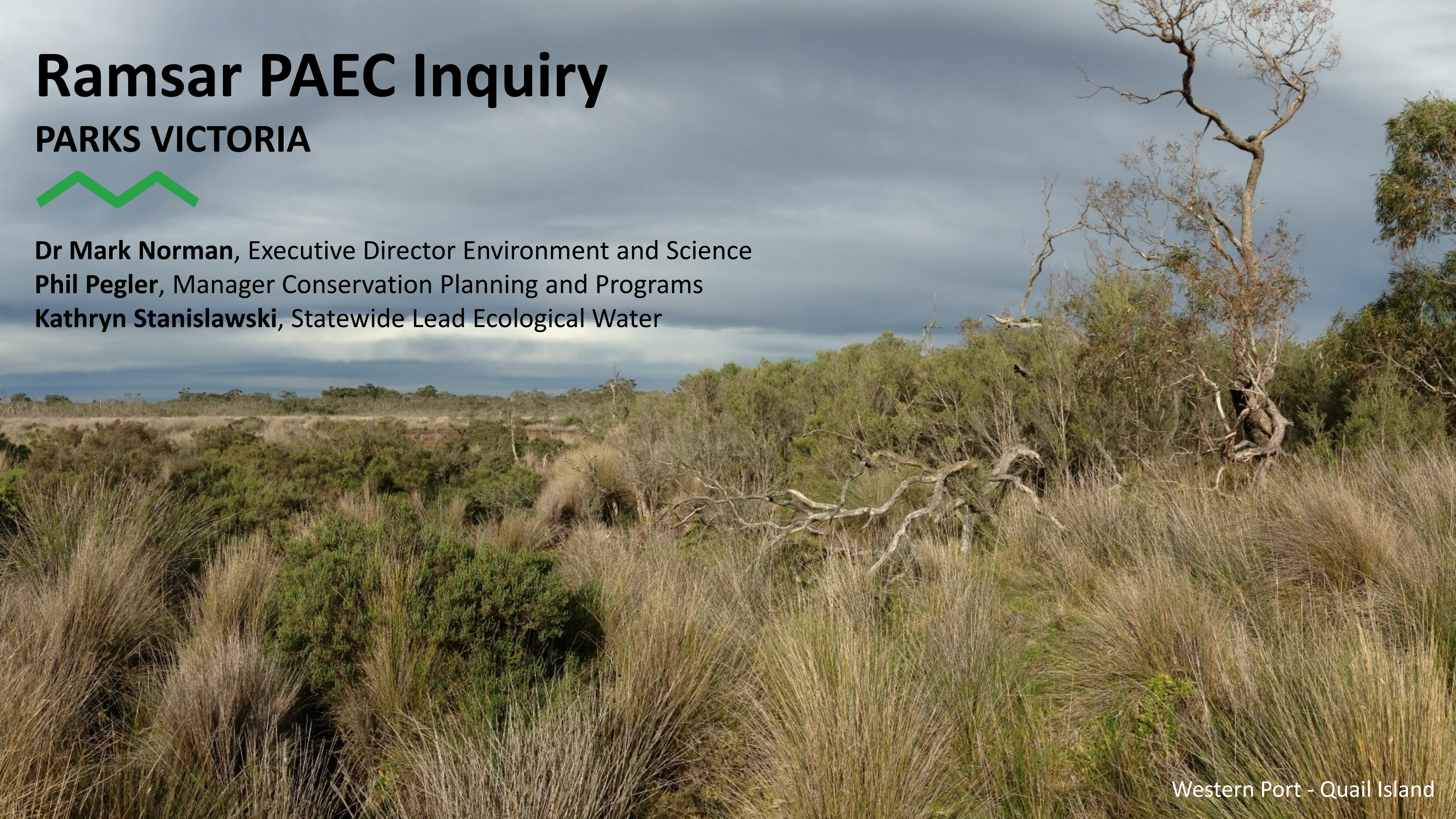
PARKS VICTORIA



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Western Port - Quail Island



Parks Victoria's core business



- Protection and conservation of
 - natural values
 - cultural values
- Recognise and support Traditional Owner knowledge and interests
- Provision of opportunities for public and visitor enjoyment and involvement

Ramsar sites managed by Parks Victoria

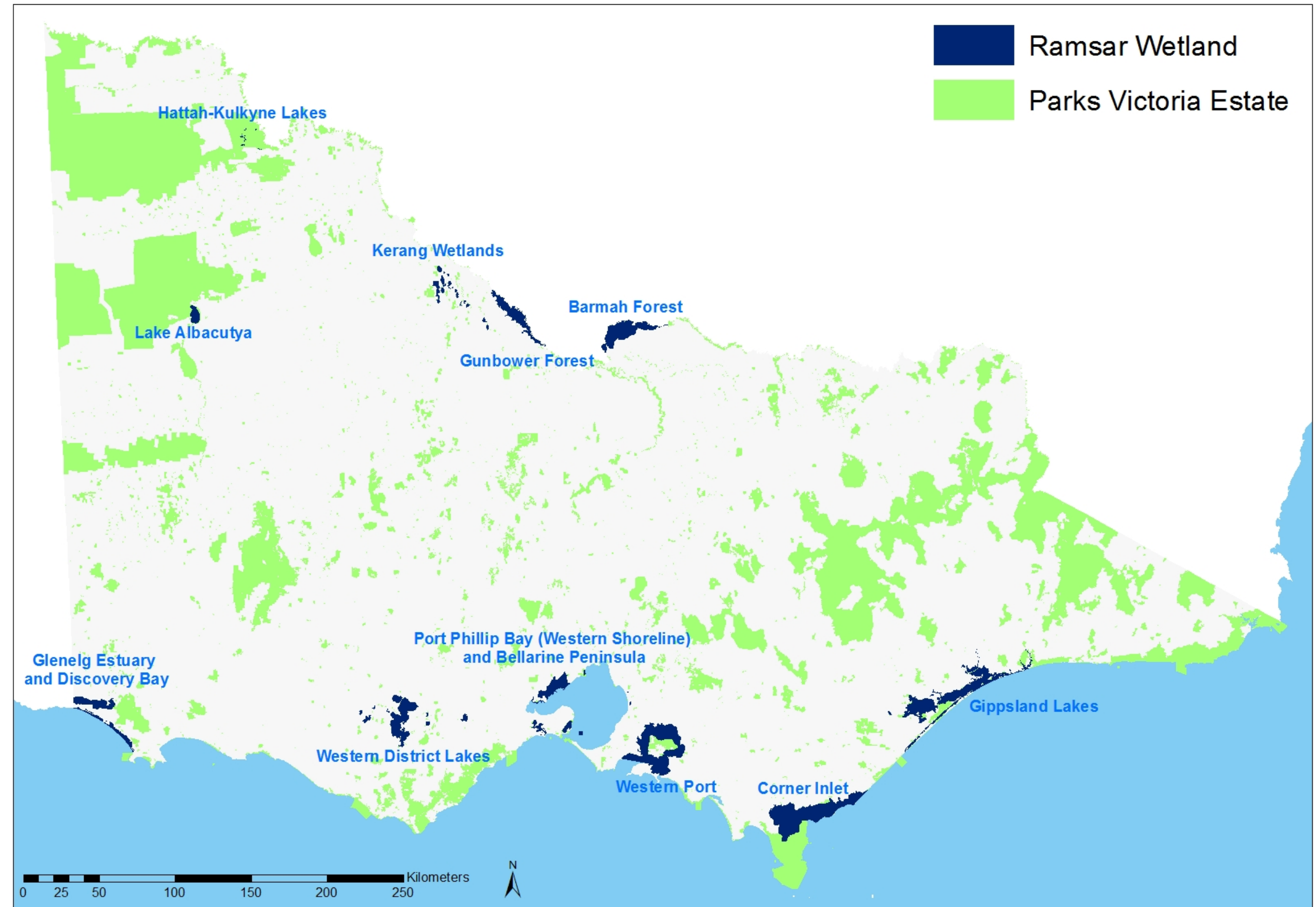


Total Ramsar area:
~330,000 ha

Total PV Ramsar area:
~250,000 ha

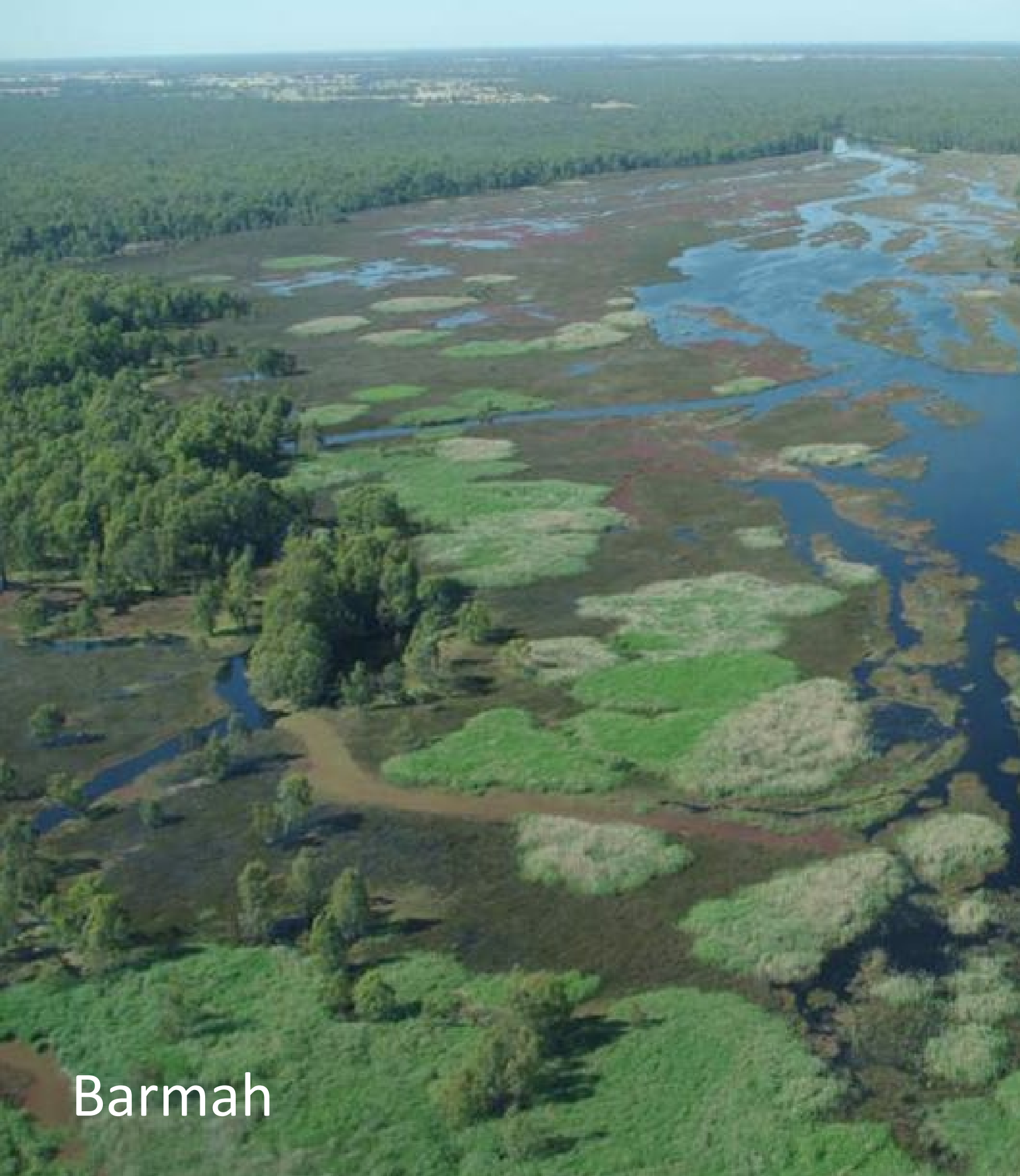
Other site managers:

- Traditional Owners
- DELWP
- Melbourne Water
- Water authorities
- Local government





Barmah



Barmah







Gunbower



Gunbower







Kerang



Kerang







Hattah-Kulkyne Lakes



Hattah-Kulkyne Lakes







Lake Albacutya



Lake Albacutya







Glenelg Estuary and Discovery Bay



Glenelg Estuary and Discovery Bay





Port Phillip Bay and Bellarine Peninsula



Port Phillip Bay and Bellarine Peninsula







Gippsland Lakes



Gippsland Lakes







Corner Inlet



Corner Inlet





Progress since the 2016 VAGO audit (PAEC Q1 & 3)

VAGO Rec. 1(a) Robust governance arrangements

- Improved role clarity and responsibilities
- Coordinated partnership approach to site management

VAGO Rec. 1(b) Strengthened implementation of management plans

- Annual action plans and prioritised on-ground actions
- Aids in seeking and securing resourcing (funds, NGO's, volunteers)

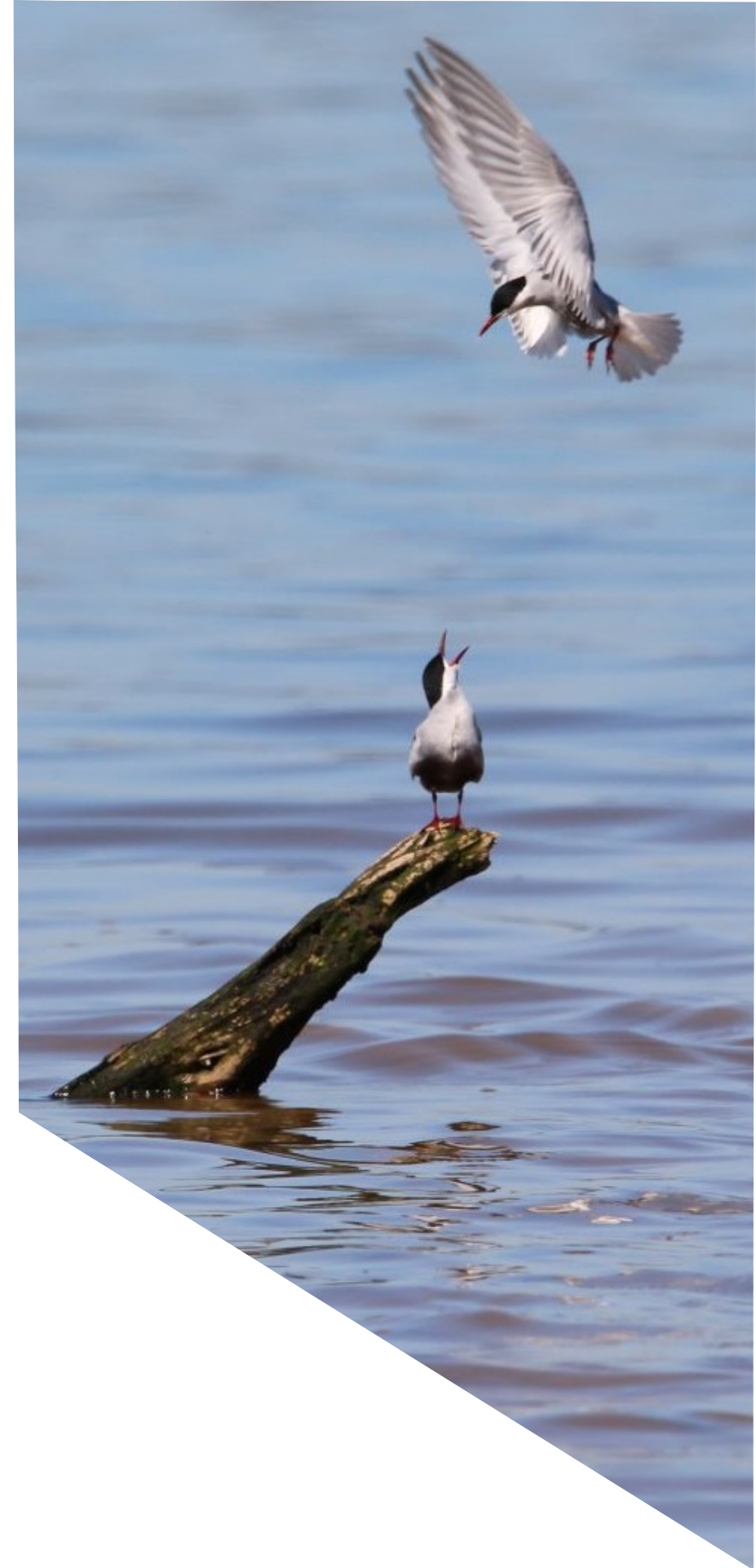
Other Parks Victoria progress

- Key membership on **Site Coordinating Committees**
- Improved onground program support and delivery
- Establishment of dedicated and ongoing **Statewide Lead Ecological Water**
- Representation on **Inter-Agency Governance Group**
- Implementation of MERI framework
- Enhanced reporting through PV geospatial system improvements
- **Strong Traditional Owner relationships** and Joint Management
- PV has led development of the Barmah Strategic Action Plan
- Good progress on roll out of Conservation Action Plans (CAP) across state
- Continue to seek and secure funding (recent success with BRP, NLP2)
- **Complementary activities** adjacent to Ramsar sites with collective benefits

Site management planning (PAEC Q 4, 7 & 9)



- Historical baseline condition knowledge (ECD)
- 4 sites with stand-alone Ramsar site management plans
 - Gippsland Lakes, Port Phillip, Western Port, Glenelg
- Site management plans contained within regional waterway strategies for other sites
- PV Conservation Action Plans and Strategic Action Plans
 - Landscape-scale context for environmental management
 - Incorporate Ramsar sites as explicit assets within plans
 - Consistent application of performance measures for outcomes



Annual action plans (PAEC Q8)



- Priorities agreed using MERI program logic
 - Focus on outcomes
- Annual action plans for all sites
 - Agreed priority actions and responsibility for delivery
 - Using various State and Commonwealth funding and resources, as well as from other NGO partners
 - Delivery of diverse onground programs

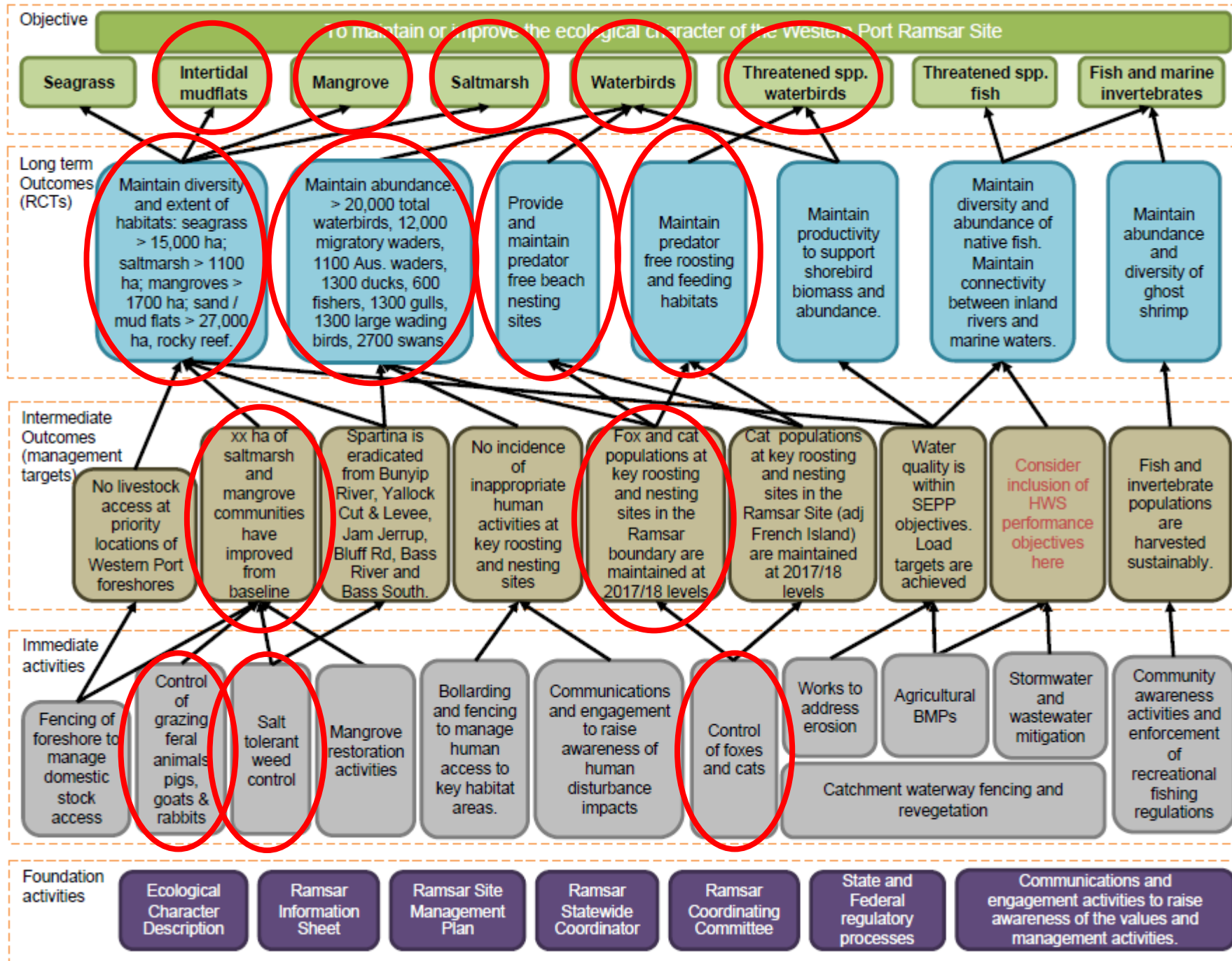


Hattah Lakes -
Pig Trap



Western Port -
Pre-aerial shooting briefing

Line of sight: On-ground activities link to outcomes



Western Port MERI – Program Logic

Western Port – Red necked avocets



Western Port – Red necked stint



Western Port – Pied oyster-catcher



Western Port – White mangrove





Western Port

ON-GROUND DELIVERY TO CONTROL PRIORITY THREATS

- Aerial shooting of feral pigs and goats on French Island and Quail Island.
- Feral cat control program across French Island National Park.
- Control of boxthorn around bird rookeries at Tortoise Head.
- Fox baiting around Northern Western Port NCR to protect migratory birds.
- Gorse control in the areas between private and public land.
- Woody and herbaceous weed control aimed at eradication from Quail Island.



Corner Inlet - Sea urchins



Barmah Forest - Deer



Gunbower Forest - Foxes



Kangaroos – Hattah-Kulkyne

Pest animal control



All Ramsar sites

Labour-intensive programs

- Surveillance
- Trapping
- Ground shooting
- Aerial shooting
- Baiting
- Fencing
- Ripping
- Hammers

Ongoing actions & needs

Invasive plant control



All Ramsar sites

Labour-intensive programs

- Spraying
- Burning
- Mulching
- Manual removal

Ongoing actions and needs



Western Port – Boxthorn



Corner Inlet - Spartina



Barmah - Giant Rush



Barmah - Arrowhead

Protecting threatened species



Broad-scale invasive species control required to:

- protect many threatened species listed as critical components of sites
- complement hydrological management



Monitoring (PAEC Q6)



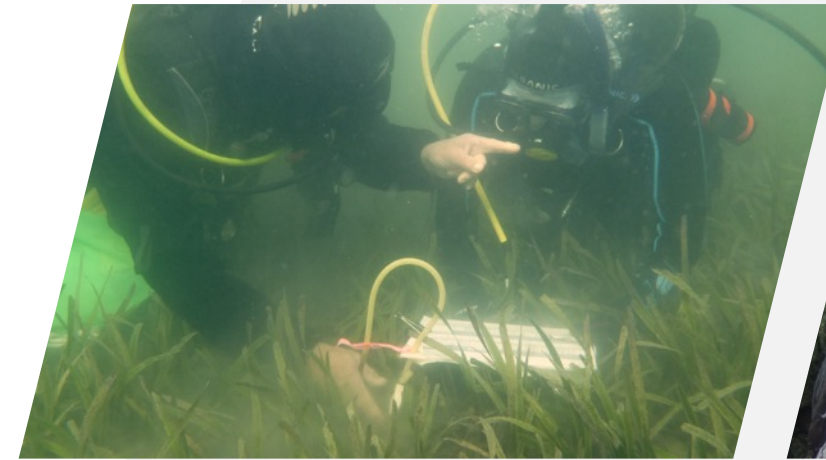
Support delivery of monitoring through partnerships with CMA's, DELWP, NGOs and volunteers

Input into online tracking system (Ramsar Management System - RMS)

- implementation of site management plans
- trends in ecological character (condition monitoring)
- results of management effectiveness monitoring

Improved PV Environmental Information System

Through SCC, **greater data input** from PV-led community and volunteer programs



Reporting potential character change (PAEC Q5)



- Parks Victoria directly reports any indication of potential change to Site Coordination Committees
- Three sites identified with potential change (from 2014/15 Rolling Review)
 - **Western District Lakes** – less water, more saline
 - **Gippsland Lakes** – changes in salinity
 - **Barmah** – reduced extent of floodplain marsh vegetation (Moirra grass)



Strategic Action Plan

Protection of floodplain marshes in Barmah
National Park and Barmah Forest Ramsar Site
2019-2023 (Draft)

Barmah Forest (PAEC Q5)

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

Direct response to a potential change in ecological character:

- **Extent of Moira grass**

Four conservation management strategies:

1. Water management
2. Control program for feral horses
3. Control programs other introduced animals
4. Control programs for invasive plant species

- Extensive public consultation (2,394 responses on Engage Vic + direct consultation)



Challenging times



- Increasing climate change impacts
- Drought and fires across landscapes
- Increased need for emergency interventions
- Increasing recreational pressures
- Tricky creatures



Summary

- **Robust coordination process** now in place
- **Outcome-focused** planning process
- Priority actions coordinated **across agencies**
- Priority indicators being measured
- **Ramsar Management System** set up to record management effectiveness and outcome performance
- **New system and processes** provide evidence to support decision making