

20 September 2017

RE: Submission to the Parliamentary Environment, Natural Resources and Regional Development Committee Inquiry into the Management, Governance and Use of Environmental Water

The Corangamite CMA currently manages two environmental entitlements in accordance with Victoria's Environmental Water Framework within the Barwon and Moorabool river systems. The framework, which is overseen and coordinated by the Victorian Environmental Water Holder (VEWH) provides for the development of annual Seasonal Watering Proposals. The development of these proposals allows the region's communities to provide advice and input into the delivery of environmental water at a local scale.

From the Corangamite CMA's experience, this robust process ensures that communities are part of the decision making process at the right scale, and allows for the achievement of shared environmental and community benefits. The existing framework also provides a strong foundation to ensure equitable and transparent environmental water use within the region.

The Corangamite CMA offers the following additional comments in response to the specific Inquiry Terms of Reference:

1. The assessment of the role of environmental water management in preventing or causing 'blackwater' events.

The Corangamite CMA works closely with the VEWH, delivery partners and the community to manage the risk of potential blackwater events. The main risk the Corangamite CMA faces is the small volume of water available, resulting in regular "cease to flow" events and increased risk of poor water quality. Environmental water releases aim to improve river connectivity and water quality under drought/dry conditions to reduce these risks. This is achieved by identifying the most effective and efficient use of environmental entitlements.



2. How environmental water and environmental water managers interact with, and utilise, management tools such as carryover and whether the carryover of environmental water impacts on the availability of water for irrigators.

In the Corangamite CMA region, the rules for all entitlement holders (including environmental entitlements managed by the VEWH) are the same providing equal security, and equitable management rules.

3. Consideration of what barriers exist to the more efficient use of environmental water and how these may be addressed.

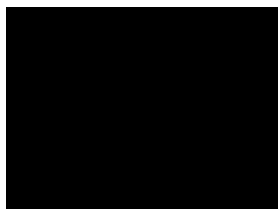
In the Corangamite CMA region water use is prioritised each year based on seasonal conditions, and integrating environmental watering activities with releases of water to meet urban water supply needs. This maximises environmental outcomes and reduces evaporative losses for the environment and urban water users. All environmental water planning activities undertaken with government and community stakeholders aim to maximise the outcomes achieved within the limited amount of environmental water available.

4. Assessment of fees and charges applied to environmental water and whether these differ from those imposed on other water users.

The Corangamite CMA acknowledges and supports the government's policy for clear and transparent charging arrangements as detailed under Action 3.7 of the 2016 Water for Victoria – Water Plan.

Please contact our Strategy and Planning Manager, Jayden Woolley, on [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] if you have any questions in relation to the Corangamite CMA submission, or would like further information about environmental water delivery in our region.

Yours sincerely,



Graham Phelps
Chief Executive Officer