

# BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY SUMMARY



## WHY HAVE A BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY?

To increase our understanding of the difference we are making to improve and protect our environment, understand what still needs to be done and how we're going to achieve this, a biodiversity strategy has been developed for the Goulburn Broken Catchment.

This strategy helps us do a better job at conservation because it focuses the energy, resources, and time of everyone involved, in the same direction. It outlines what we want to do and how we will do it. It helps us understand what we are achieving through measurable targets, track this progress and understand gaps in knowledge or actions.

The Goulburn Broken CMA has had a Biodiversity Strategy since 2010, and in 2016 it was updated to keep us on track until 2021. This update has allowed us to assess how we are going so far and incorporate new information and ideas.

## WHAT'S THE CONDITION OF BIODIVERSITY IN OUR CATCHMENT?

Biodiversity asset	Status
<b>Native vegetation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– More than 60% of the catchment has been cleared, mainly in the plains where land has high agricultural value.</li> <li>– There are 3,061 native plant species of which 385 (13%) are threatened.</li> <li>– 64% of ecological vegetation classes are listed as endangered or vulnerable.</li> </ul>
<b>Wetlands</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Most wetlands are in good (38%) and moderate (40%) condition and a small proportion are in excellent (6%), poor (15%) and very poor (2%) condition.</li> </ul>
<b>Rivers and streams</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– 22% (1,645 km) of the catchment's 7,336 km of streams and waterways are rated as poor/very poor, 62% (4,534 km) rated as moderate and 15% (1,107 km) rated as good/excellent.</li> </ul>
<b>Native fauna</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– 546 species of vertebrate fauna of which 136 (25%) are threatened with extinction. Relatively little is known about our invertebrate fauna and fungi.</li> </ul>
<b>Soil biodiversity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Below-ground flora and fauna represents one of the most species-rich components of terrestrial ecosystems and there is a strong link between above-ground and below-ground biodiversity.</li> </ul>

# SO HOW DID WE GO DURING THE LIFE OF THE PREVIOUS STRATEGY (2010-2015)?

## THE GOOD NEWS:



**1,651 sites**

where works were undertaken



**14,038 ha**

of on-ground works (eg revegetation, remnant enhancement, riparian)

## WE COULDN'T HAVE DONE THIS WITHOUT:

### Farmers

Collectively, rural landholders are custodians of much of the catchment's biodiversity, with their management of land and water being a significant determinant of biodiversity condition.

“ *Not only do paddock trees provide shelter for stock, they are home for the birds, and it's the birds that eat the insects and keep the whole system in balance.*

Russell Ellis, Chesney Vale farmer

### Collaboration

We have developed and delivered projects with a range of community groups, other CMAs and government agencies, ensuring efficient and effective projects.

Each year about \$2 million is distributed to community groups and other organisations to deliver projects that improve and protect the environment.

### Working with scientists

Scientists help us learn about what we have achieved and how we can do things better. For example, we learnt that our revegetation works are increasing the number and diversity of birds at the landscape scale. However, for existing remnants of native vegetation, if there are noisy miners present they will drive out many of the smaller birds reducing the number and diversity of birds in that remnant. Through other research projects, we have improved our revegetation techniques through better understanding of seed genetics, direct seeding methods and site preparation.

### Indigenous Biocultural Knowledge

We are increasingly partnering with Yorta Yorta Nation and Taungurung Clans to deliver projects, through works crews carrying out fencing, weed control and revegetation activities, as well as identifying sites of cultural significance.

“ *For Yorta Yorta people, the land and the world view in which they live is an extension of themselves. The land and water is the embodiment of their identity and existence, as river based people, passed on by the great creation spirit Biami.*

Dr Wayne Atkinson, YYNAC, 2012



## WORKING WITH THE COMMUNITY

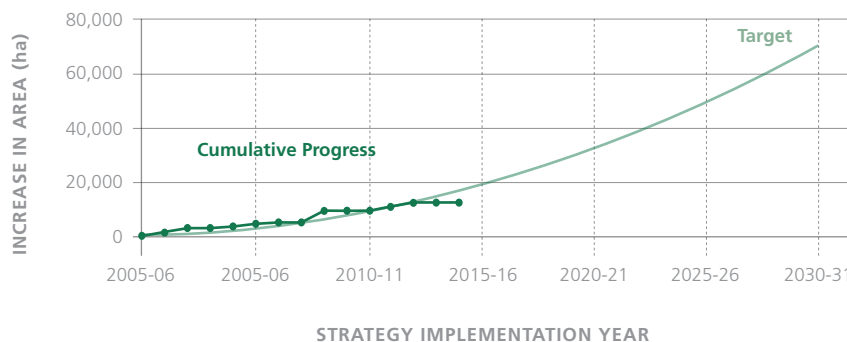
The Land and Biodiversity Implementation Forum (LaBif) was created out of an action in the strategy, and has now been going for over five years. It gets together a diverse group of practitioners (eg Parks Victoria, Local Government, Landcare and CMN facilitators, DELWP and 'friends' groups) to discuss ideas, learn from each other, identify priorities and work together on projects. It also provides training on a range of topics such as plant identification, wetland management and how to write funding applications.

# WHERE TO NEXT (2016-2021)?

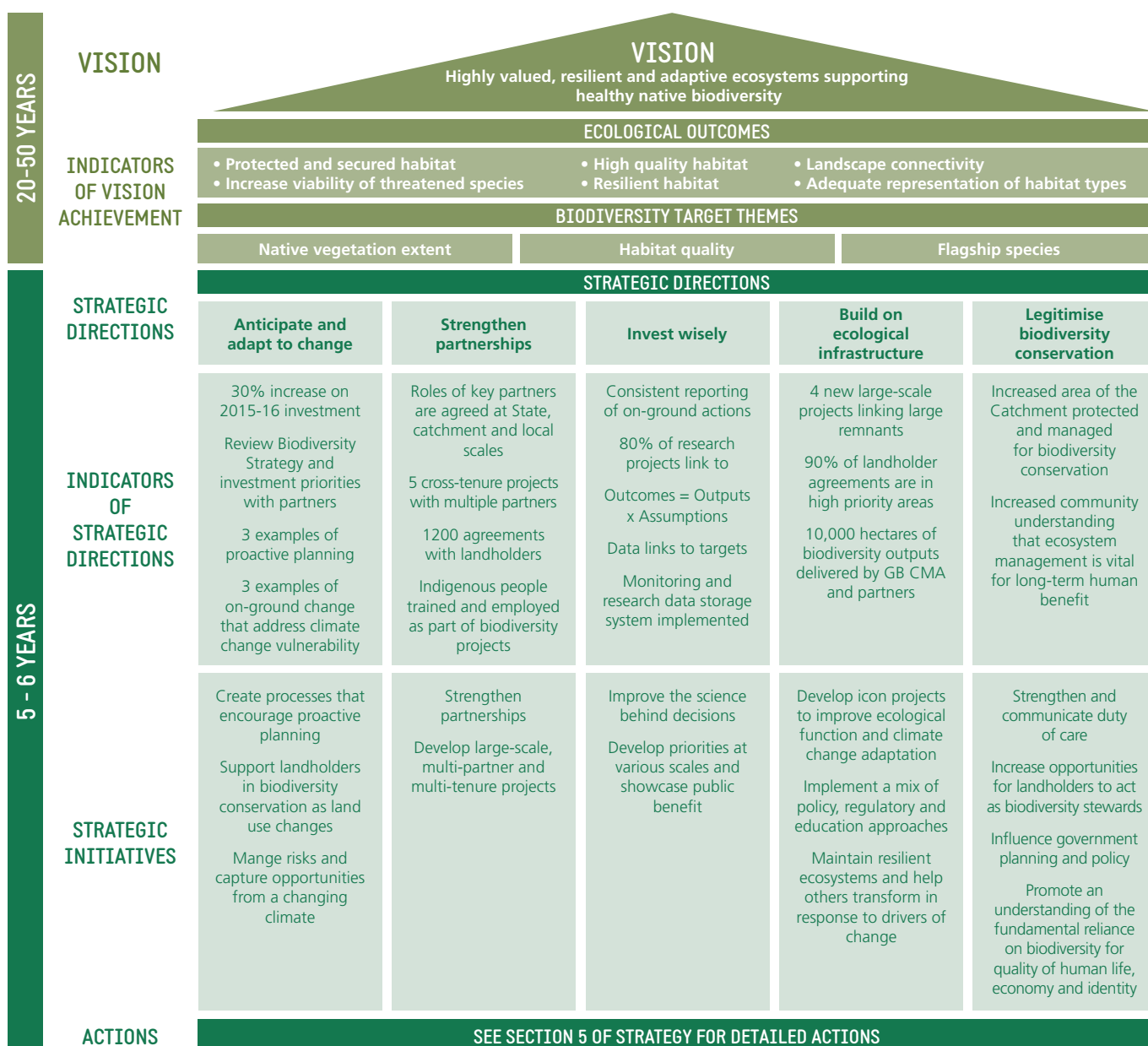
## OUR LONG-TERM TARGETS:

1. Increase the extent of native vegetation in fragmented landscapes by 70,000ha by 2030.
2. Improve the quality of 90% of existing habitat by 10% by 2030.
3. Increase the population viability of 20 flagship species by 2030.

The graph below shows progress towards the revegetation target.



## HOW ARE WE GOING TO GET THERE?





## WHAT'S NEW IN THIS STRATEGY?

### Resilience

This term for us means that when we make plans about how to conserve biodiversity we think about biodiversity as part of a broader system that necessarily includes people and production. Within this systems approach, we can think about ecological systems and how they function and what factors might “tip them over” into an undesirable system. For example, if having healthy rivers that support native fish is important, we can determine what sorts of actions we can take before waterways become ‘rivers without fish’.

### Planning for climate change

Changes in rainfall, where, how much and when, and increased temperatures are likely to be major threats to our biodiversity. There is likely to be more extreme events of flood, drought and wildfires. However, changes that affect biodiversity will occur in a variety of complex and interconnected ways. Therefore we need to plan for these changes, and we’re doing this through the local planning process.

### Better integration of biodiversity and farming

Biodiversity conservation can sometimes be perceived as a threat to prosperity however biodiversity and farm prosperity are inextricably linked. Therefore, we will continue to increase our knowledge of how managing for biodiversity across the whole farm can increase production. This can be done through projects that focus on ecosystem services such as soil health, pollination, insect control, shade and shelter. Conveying this information to farmers will be a priority.

## SO WHAT'S NEXT?

We’re going to continue to work with farmers, communities, Traditional Owners, scientists, all levels of government, industry and a range of other stakeholders to:

1. **Anticipate and adapt to change**
2. **Strengthen partnerships**
3. **Invest wisely**
4. **Build on ecological infrastructure**
5. **Legitimise biodiversity conservation**

You can find out more about these actions in the Biodiversity Strategy.