



# Mallee Indigenous Participation Plan



This plan is supported by the Mallee Catchment Management Authority, through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme.



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### ***Note on terminology***

In this Mallee Indigenous Participation Plan (IPP), the Mallee CMA uses the term Indigenous in the title of the plan and to describe communities across the Mallee. The rationale for this stems from the Mallee CMA implementing programs supported by the Australian Government. It is intended to refer to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The term Aboriginal is used in the Mallee IPP when referring to documents or programs which include this term, or when describing direct comments received from people during the consultation process.

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Mallee Indigenous Participation Plan

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This document can be accessed at the Mallee CMA website: [www.malleecma.vic.gov.au](http://www.malleecma.vic.gov.au)

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Mallee Catchment Management Authority (CMA) acknowledges and respects Traditional Owners, Aboriginal communities and organisations. We recognise the diversity of their cultures and the deep connections they have with Victoria's lands and waters.

We value partnerships with them for the health of people and country.

The Mallee CMA Board, management and staff pay their respects to Elders past and present, and recognise the primacy of Traditional Owners' obligations, rights and responsibilities to use and care for their traditional lands and waters.



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Mallee Indigenous Participation Plan 1.

## 1. A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

There is strong and committed involvement by Indigenous people in natural resource management (NRM) in the Mallee; however, it is important to acknowledge there is always the opportunity to improve this.

As an organisation keenly focused on the integrated management of our catchment, the Mallee Catchment Management Authority (CMA) has a central role in supporting Traditional Owners, Aboriginal communities and organisations to participate in the management of our land, water and biodiversity. This is a responsibility we take seriously and we are proactively working with Traditional Owners, Aboriginal communities and organisations to put the right frameworks in place.

Through the development of this Indigenous Participation Plan (IPP), which is a central tenet of the organisation's Cultural Competency Framework, we hope to deliver on our commitment to support effective engagement of Traditional Owners and Aboriginal stakeholders in the decision making, planning and delivery of NRM projects. This includes a commitment to meaningful, culturally-appropriate and effective consultation and engagement with regard to both cultural heritage and NRM.

The primary focus of the IPP is collaboration; recognition and acknowledgment; improved relationship building; and strengthening the cultural competency of the Mallee CMA through respectful and mutually beneficial relationships with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal stakeholders.

The implementation of the IPP is an opportunity for the Mallee CMA to broaden the scope of Indigenous participation in NRM, while achieving progress towards Closing the Gap in Indigenous Disadvantage. Through this plan, we will have a strong and robust framework for increasing Indigenous involvement in NRM in the Mallee, which is in line with Indigenous aspirations for land and water management.

The role of the Mallee CMA Aboriginal Reference Group will also be strengthened through implementation of this plan. The Mallee IPP objectives and outcomes will be monitored and reviewed in collaboration with the reference group to ensure continued improvement in our approaches to participatory program planning and delivery; support for employment and educational opportunities; improving and improved engagement strategies.

We acknowledge the contribution of Traditional Owners, Aboriginal communities and organisations in the development of the IPP, and we thank them for their input. Their advice and feedback has led directly to the comprehensive aspirations, objectives and actions that form the basis of this IPP.

The Board and staff of the Mallee CMA look forward to implementing the Mallee IPP to increase involvement and participation of Indigenous people in the management of land, water and biodiversity in the Mallee region.



**Sharyon Peart**  
Mallee CMA Board Chair

2016

Board Resolution Number 2016/09/272

## 2. PURPOSE

The Mallee IPP has been developed through direct consultation with Traditional Owners, Aboriginal communities and organisations across the Mallee region. It is the first of its kind in the region and provides a framework for the incorporation of Indigenous land and water aspirations in the management of the Mallee's natural resources, together with the structure to improve the cultural competency of the Mallee CMA.

The Mallee IPP serves as a practical guide for the Mallee CMA to partner with and involve Traditional Owners, Aboriginal communities, individuals and organisations in the planning, consultation and implementation of NRM investment. This is done with the clear understanding that Traditional Land Owner Groups are the custodians of the land and we value their knowledge and expertise.

The development of the Mallee IPP is practical action that illustrates the Mallee CMA's acknowledgement of the importance of genuine and lasting partnerships with Traditional Owners, Aboriginal communities and organisations in order to work together to appropriately plan and manage our catchment.

The consultation process undertaken to develop the Mallee IPP was an important opportunity for the Mallee CMA to have meaningful conversations with Traditional Owners, Aboriginal groups and organisations about the most effective ways to increase and improve their involvement in managing the region's natural resources.

In particular, these consultation activities provided a way for Traditional Owners, Aboriginal groups and organisations to directly inform this plan by developing the plan's aspirations, objectives and actions. These are the elements that help ensure the the IPP will provide practical guidance for the Mallee CMA during implementation.

The Mallee IPP also provides a strong and applicable framework to improve the cultural competency of the organisation. This is essential to increasing the knowledge, capacity and confidence of the Mallee CMA's employees, which will in turn help to increase Indigenous participation and involvement in governance, planning processes and delivery of all programs.

The Mallee IPP relates specifically to the Mallee CMA region as illustrated by the map on the following page.



Photo: Kangaroo at Lindsay Island

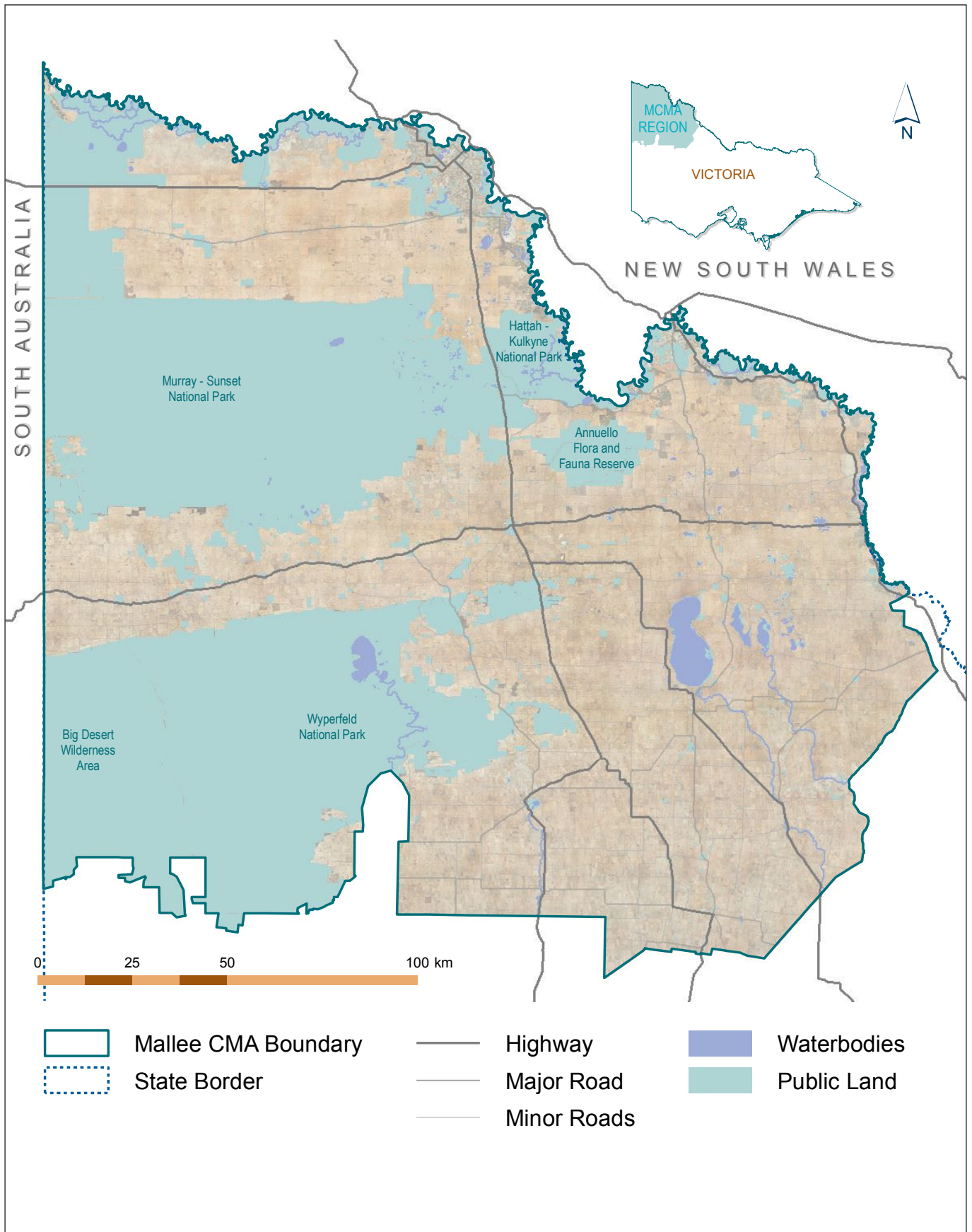


Figure 1: Mallee CMA region.

### 3. VISION

Mallee CMA Vision

*'Informed and active communities balancing the use of resources to generate wealth, with the protection and enhancement of our natural and cultural landscapes'*

The Mallee Regional Catchment Strategy 2013-19 (RCS) describes this vision as providing a long-term (50 year) statement of our communities' aspirations for the region. The vision is based on the following key principles:

- Recognising that our communities/people are crucial to the effective management of our regional assets, through the behaviours they adopt and support; and
- Recognising that to achieve widespread and sustained environmental improvements in our natural landscapes, our actions should also deliver social and economic benefits to the community.

The Mallee RCS defines long-term (20 year) objectives for each of nine regional asset types. Asset types of particular relevance to this Mallee IPP are cultural heritage; and community capacity.

The IPP will help to realise the existing vision of the Mallee CMA by providing a framework to increase Indigenous involvement in NRM and thus address the RCS objectives and strategic actions for these two regional asset types in particular (cultural heritage; and community capacity), however the IPP aims to involve Traditional Owners, Aboriginal communities and organisations in all aspects of the nine regional asset types outlined in the Mallee RCS.

The Mallee CMA acknowledges and recognises Traditional Land Ownership and we value Aboriginal heritage and customary practice. Our vision incorporates maximising Indigenous participation in NRM while creating awareness and understanding of cultural values. We aim to do this by ensuring our Aboriginal Reference Group (ARG) does not represent specific groups, but works jointly with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities across the Mallee to improve opportunities for meaningful participation, recognising the obligations, rights and responsibilities Traditional Owners have in caring for their traditional lands and waters.

### 4. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

#### 4.1 Background documentation

The context which informs the Mallee IPP includes the following documents:

##### 1. *Guidelines for Indigenous Participation in the Australian Government National Landcare Programme*

The Australian Government's National Landcare Programme provides guidelines for Indigenous participation which form the basis for development of this Mallee IPP.

Closing the Gap in Indigenous Disadvantage (Closing the Gap) is a commitment by all Australian governments to improve the lives of Indigenous Australians. Natural Resource Management (NRM) programmes contribute to the Closing the Gap goals and provide opportunities for stronger Indigenous participation in the planning and delivery of investment outcomes and contribute to wider social benefits<sup>3</sup>.

##### 2. *Munganin – Gadhaba 'Achieve Together'*

DELWP Aboriginal Inclusion Plan 2016-2020

The Victorian Aboriginal Inclusion Framework emphasises the need to embed inclusive, consistent and accessible services to Aboriginal people within government processes.

*Munganin-Gadhaba* is the next step toward building this inclusiveness into all aspects of the work undertaken by the Victorian Government's Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) and, as such, is of particular relevance to the Mallee CMA.

*Munganin-Gadhaba* sets out four key principles:

- We respect and acknowledge Aboriginal culture;
- We reject all forms of racism and intolerance;
- We recognise Aboriginal peoples' right to access and role in Caring for Country; and
- We work together to improve Aboriginal participation.

<sup>3</sup> National Landcare Programme guidelines

### 3. *Aboriginal Participation Guideline for Victorian Catchment Management Authorities 2016 and its Implementation Plan, Pathways to Participation 2016*

This guideline establishes a state-wide approach for use by Catchment Management Authorities (CMAs) to respond to regional variations in cultural diversity, experience in working with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities, and natural resource management priorities. The guideline has been adopted by CMAs across Victoria and it is supported by a comprehensive Implementation Plan.

Both the guideline and implementation plan complement the existing Community Engagement and Partnerships Framework for Victoria's CMAs (developed in 2012).

#### 4.2 *Legislative Context*

The Mallee CMA seeks to fulfil particular roles and responsibilities in enabling effective Aboriginal participation in natural resource management. These include:

- Supporting the Australian Government's commitment as a signatory to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;

- Responsibilities set out in Australian and Victorian legislation and policy, including Traditional Owner agreements, Native Title, Aboriginal Heritage, the National Water Initiative, *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act* as well as the *Catchment and Land Protection Act*;
- Existing and future Traditional Owner settlement arrangements;
- The Council of Australian Governments' commitment to closing the gap in Indigenous disadvantage;
- Commitments set out in documents such as the Victorian Government Aboriginal Affairs Framework, Victorian Aboriginal Economic Strategy and the Community Engagement and Partnerships Framework for Victoria's CMAs; and
- The intentions and agreements set out in the CMAs' Regional Catchment Strategies and in other specific plans and strategies, including Traditional Owner Country Plans and Joint Management plans.



Photo: Shell midden.

## 5. INDIGENOUS LAND AND WATER MANAGEMENT IN THE MALLEE

### 5.1 Overview

The Traditional Owner groups of the region within the parameters of the Mallee CMA consultation and engagement processes include but are not limited to Latji Latji, Wadi Wadi, Wamba Wamba, Tati Tati, Jari Jari, Kureinji, Nyeri Nyeri, Ngintait, Ngarkat and Barengi Gadjin Land Council Aboriginal Corporation - Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Yupagalk, and Wergaia.

At the time of publishing, within the Mallee CMA region there is:

- One registered Native Title claim by the First People of the Millewa-Mallee Aboriginal Corporation;
- An application to become a Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) by the First People of the Millewa-Mallee Aboriginal Corporation;
- An application to become a Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) by the Wadi Wadi Wemba Wamba Barapa Barapa First Nations Aboriginal Corporation, and
- One RAP, which is the Barengi Gadjin Land Council Aboriginal Corporation.

The First People of the Millewa-Mallee Aboriginal Corporation is also pursuing settlement under Victoria's *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010*.

The Mallee CMA recognises the primacy of Traditional Owners' obligations, rights and responsibilities to use and care for their traditional lands and waters.

The Mallee CMA acknowledges there may be other claims and applications in process and will seek to update this document as required in order to acknowledge the procedural rights of those involved.

There are also many Indigenous people living in the Mallee whose traditional land may be outside this region and people whose family is known to have lived in an area for generations, but who are not part of Traditional Owner groups.

The Mallee CMA thanks the many Traditional Owners, Aboriginal communities and organisations it has worked with over many years to implement a range of plans, projects and programs to improve and protect our natural resources.

The Mallee CMA values these partnerships and seeks to continue to work collaboratively into the future.

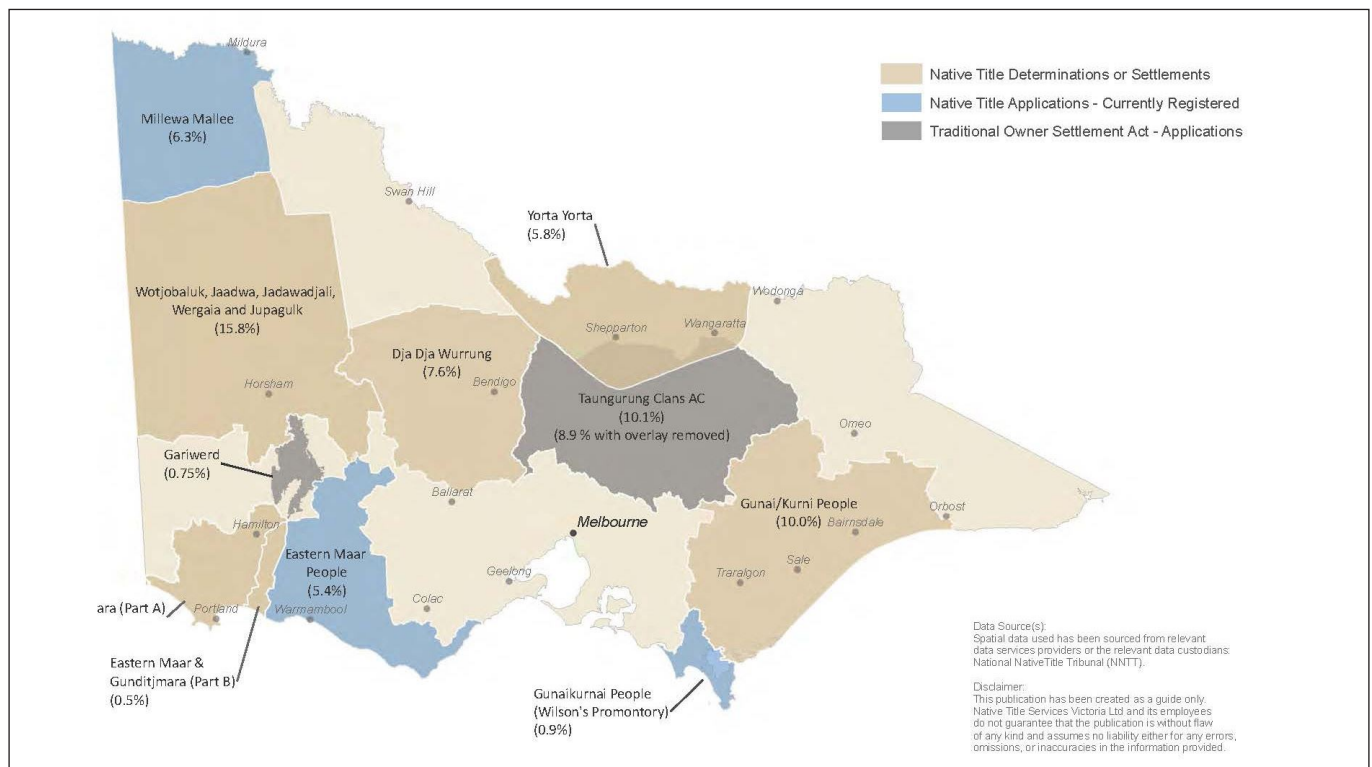


Figure 2: Map of native title determinations, settlements and proposed settlement boundaries in Victoria as at 30 June 2016.

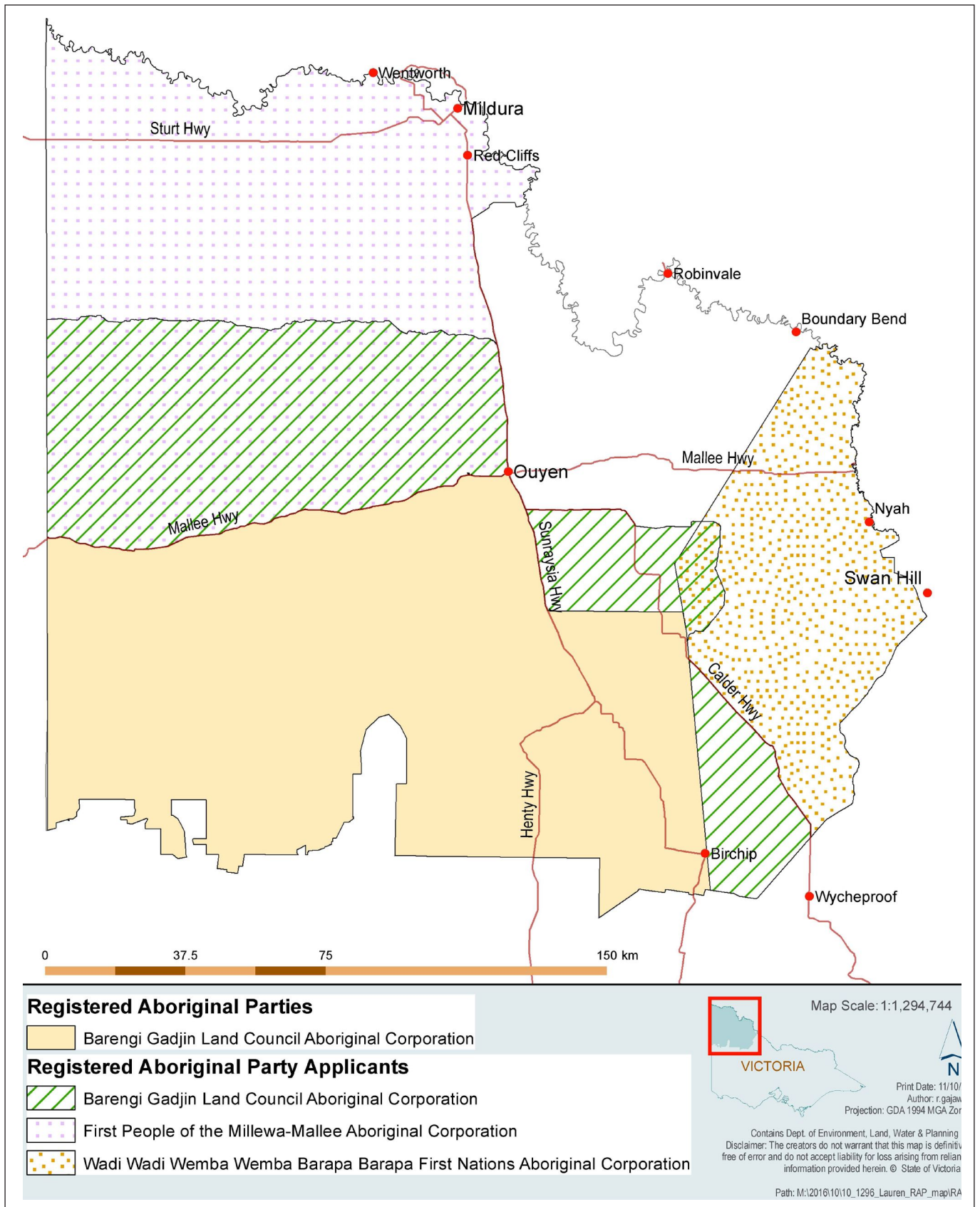


Figure 3: Map of Registered Aboriginal Parties and Registered Party Applicants as at 10 October 2016.

## 5.2 Indigenous Involvement in NRM

There is strong and committed involvement by Indigenous people in NRM in the Mallee; as evidenced by the numerous projects, programs and plans Traditional Owners, Aboriginal communities and organisations have had input into over many years.

Examples of current participation by Indigenous people in NRM in the Mallee include:

- Indigenous Facilitators, NRM Project Officers and trainees employed by Mallee CMA;
- Cultural heritage monitoring undertaken for Mallee CMA projects;
- Site inspections and associated reviews of Cultural Heritage Management Plans (CHMPs);
- Participation in the Mallee CMA's Aboriginal Reference Group;
- Involvement in the Robinvale Indigenous Landcare Group;
- Involvement in planning and delivery of on-ground projects at the local level (e.g. Traditional Owners, Aboriginal communities and organisations have involvement in cultural heritage assessments and cultural heritage site works for rehabilitation, protection and enhancement);
- Input into Mallee CMA planning processes including development of regional policies and strategies such as the Regional Catchment Strategy;
- Mallee CMA community engagement; and
- Development of field guides to increase cultural understanding and to help with the protection of sites of cultural significance.

### ***The Mallee Aboriginal Reference Group***

The Mallee CMA has a fundamental responsibility to ensure the community has opportunities to provide input into priority setting and funding allocations for natural resource management in the region. This is achieved in a variety of ways, including through community advisory groups such as the Aboriginal Reference Group (ARG).

The ARG has been part of the Mallee CMA's governance structure since 2012/13. The role of the ARG is to foster two way communication between the Mallee CMA and Aboriginal stakeholders within the Mallee CMA region, maintaining and building links with the broader Aboriginal community to ensure NRM outcomes are delivered in a way that both benefits the environment and respects Aboriginal culture.

Members of the ARG do not represent the views of Traditional Owners, Aboriginal communities or organisations.

## 6. ASPIRATIONS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

The Mallee Regional Catchment Strategy 2013-19 (RCS) provides a long-term (50 year) statement of our communities' aspirations for the region. The Mallee NRM Indigenous Participation Plan builds on this to set out objectives and actions to help increase Indigenous participation in natural resource management. These objectives and actions have been developed through consultation with Traditional Owners, Aboriginal communities and organisations across the Mallee.



**Table 1: IPP Aspirations, Objectives and Actions**

	<b>NRM Aspirations</b>	<b>Key Objectives</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Responsible Partners</b>	<b>Time Frames</b>
1	Traditional Owner groups recognised as speaking for their Country is the primary aspiration for Indigenous engagement.	Increased involvement of Traditional Owner groups in project planning and decision making with the aim of developing ownership of NRM projects on their Country.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CMA to develop an overarching Indigenous policy in regard to recognition of Traditional Owners with commitment from the CMA Board for its implementation.</li> <li>• Groups to inform CMA of relevant representative/s who speak on behalf of their organisation/group.</li> <li>• CMA to involve Traditional Owner representatives identified for specific areas using reference to legal rights of Traditional Owners under the <i>Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010</i>.</li> </ul>	All CMA & Board Indigenous Facilitators	On-going
2	Cultural competency reflected in NRM engagement, communication and project implementation.	Build cultural competence of Mallee CMA staff at a whole-of-organisation level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Induction and training for Board members, staff and contractors in ways that help build cultural competency.</li> <li>• Indigenous participation in cultural awareness training.</li> <li>• Senior CMA staff to be more involved in Indigenous forums and discussions with Indigenous communities.</li> </ul>	All CMA & Board Indigenous Facilitators ARG	Dec 2016
3	Increased Indigenous involvement and participation at all stages of NRM delivery.	Integrate opportunities for Indigenous engagement from commencement of projects to ensure participation during the different stages of project delivery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement a process where Mallee CMA Indigenous Facilitators are involved in the planning stage of projects and regional planning processes, to ensure appropriate Traditional Owners and Indigenous community are engaged and involved in projects, across all areas of CMA business.</li> </ul>	Indigenous Facilitators Senior management Project Officers	On-going
4	Clear lines of communication between Indigenous organisations and the Mallee CMA.	Establish clear contact points to facilitate Indigenous engagement with groups/organisations. Ensure Indigenous groups are better informed about upcoming projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure contact details of relevant contact person for each organisation are readily accessible to CMA staff and updated readily on the CMA's contact management system.</li> <li>• Develop an Indigenous communication strategy to keep groups informed of future projects for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilise local Aboriginal corporations (e.g. MDAS) as a vehicle for contacting Elders and Community by sending out notices about meetings or projects, either via CEO or in organisational newsletters.</li> <li>• Ensure ARG members have access to updated information.</li> <li>• Quarterly walkabout newsletters to be developed</li> <li>• Website to be updated regularly.</li> <li>• Advertise meetings in local media.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	ARG Indigenous Facilitators	Dec 2016

	NRM Aspirations	Key Objectives	Actions	Responsible Partners	Time Frames
5	Leadership and governance roles for Indigenous people with more Indigenous representation on NRM Boards and Committees.	Leadership and governance roles for Indigenous people with more Indigenous representation on NRM Boards and Committees. Increase opportunities for Indigenous people to apply for positions on Mallee CMA Board, NRM Advisory Committees and other community-based Boards. Achieve greater involvement by increasing the number of Indigenous representatives on the Mallee CMA Land and Water Advisory Committee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote opportunities to Indigenous communities during the recruitment processes for Board appointments.</li> <li>Build capacity for Indigenous people by training through the ARG and by encouraging enrolment in leadership programs.</li> <li>CMA to encourage Indigenous people to apply for positions on Advisory Committees.</li> <li>CMA to support governance workshops specific to expectations for holders of positions on CMA committees.</li> <li>Access Training opportunities to increase knowledge and skills in NRM and Government processes.</li> </ul>	Indigenous Facilitators	On-going
6	Recognition and acknowledgement of the value of Indigenous participation in NRM.	Ensure that all Indigenous participation and involvement is recognised and acknowledged as an integral part of relationship building.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorporate a feedback loop in consultative processes to acknowledge what knowledge / information is imparted by Indigenous people and how the CMA is using that information.</li> <li>CMA staff need to ensure early in project development involvement of the Indigenous Facilitators to ensure relevant Traditional Owner groups are contacted and given the opportunity for input and participation.</li> </ul>	Indigenous Facilitators Senior management Project Officers All CMA & Board	On-going
7	Greater respect and recognition for Indigenous people as partners in NRM.	Develop partnership arrangements with Traditional Owners and Indigenous organisations as a means of recognising the value of their contribution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formalise arrangements through land management agreements or other agreements.</li> <li>Increase opportunities to work together to develop a team-work approach, learning from each other, respecting each other through meaningful participation and engagement.</li> </ul>	Indigenous Facilitators Senior management Project Officers All CMA & Board	On-going
8	Recognition of existing protocols/ agreements in all engagement processes.	Ensure Mallee CMA follows protocols for engagement under Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUAs) or Recognised Aboriginal Parties (RAPs). Ensure Mallee CMA partners follow the process and protocols outlined in the Mallee IPP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update and review existing protocols to ensure the free, prior and informed consent of Traditional Owners and Indigenous community.</li> <li>Promote these protocols to CMA staff and include an annual review.</li> <li>Ensure contracts with partners include requirements to follow protocols.</li> <li>Undertake education and communication with partners including recommending staff induction in cultural protocols.</li> <li>Continue to update, review and implement the cultural heritage compliance policy and procedures.</li> <li>Develop and implement a cultural heritage induction for all contractors to ensure protection of cultural values in all projects.</li> <li>Continue to review and monitor that protocols are being followed using the compliance checklist in Cultural Heritage Management Plans for large CMA projects. For smaller projects/ground disturbance projects, ensure that they comply by checking with Mallee CMA's Indigenous NRM Project Officer regarding compliance.</li> </ul>	Indigenous Facilitators Senior management Project Officers All CMA & Board	On-going



	NRM Aspirations	Key Objectives	Actions	Responsible Partners	Time Frames
9	Capacity building for Traditional Owner groups	Support the need for resourcing Traditional Owner groups to build capacity and encourage self-determination.	<p>Examples of resourcing and capacity building:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support Elders to participate in the delivery of training.</li> <li>• Support Indigenous people to participate in meetings.</li> <li>• Support ongoing training to build capacity, especially for young Indigenous people.</li> <li>• Support training for Indigenous people to create employment opportunities, for example in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural Heritage, plant id, mapping, water quality monitoring.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Continue to support traineeships. Seek funding to facilitate community activities, e.g. basket weaving and other traditional crafts.</li> <li>• Create connections and build shared knowledge through collaborative projects.</li> <li>• Create and build opportunities for partnerships through new funding arrangements. Involve kids from schools in various projects including educational programs about cultural heritage sites, e.g. show kids cultural sites along the river.</li> <li>• Support work procurement opportunities.</li> </ul>	<p>Indigenous Facilitators Senior management Project Officers All CMA &amp; Board</p>	On-going
10	Recognition and acknowledgement of connection to Country	CMA to solidify its commitment to Acknowledgement of Country through implementation of agreed engagement protocols.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an Acknowledgement of Country policy</li> <li>• Develop a Reconciliation Action Plan for the Mallee CMA</li> <li>• Develop co-operative agreements with Registered Aboriginal Parties.</li> </ul>	All CMA & Board	Dec 2016
11	More Indigenous people working on Country	CMA supporting initiatives that contribute to health and well-being and closing the gap of disadvantage. Increased Indigenous employment in Mallee CMA to facilitate community engagement and provide opportunities for jobs in land and water management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to build capacity for Indigenous employment within the Mallee CMA.</li> <li>• Maintain Indigenous NRM Facilitator role.</li> <li>• Continue to provide a diverse range of opportunities for Indigenous staff to work across all aspects of Natural Resource Management areas.</li> <li>• Developing opportunities for indigenous participation in sustainable diversion limit projects.</li> <li>• Encourage inter-agency collaborative projects involving indigenous community and staff.</li> <li>• Involvement in on-ground projects such as fencing burial sites, re-burial of some burial sites, regenerating vegetation, etc.</li> <li>• Support community in accessing cultural water.</li> <li>• Encourage and support capacity building projects for Indigenous community.</li> <li>• Seek funds to resource more community projects.</li> </ul>	All CMA & Board	On-going
12	Effective ARG	Ensure ARG is well supported and acknowledged for its role in building relationships and fostering two-way communications between the Mallee CMA and Indigenous stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide adequate resources for ARG e.g. maintain sitting fees and travel.</li> <li>• Ensure biannual reviews are undertaken.</li> <li>• Provide input into RCS &amp; regional investment program.</li> <li>• Ensure TOR is consistent with other community advisory groups.</li> <li>• Build ARG's profile in the community - through newsletters and website.</li> </ul>	Mallee CMA	On-going



## 7. CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

### 7.1 Consultation process

Consultation for development of the Mallee CMA IPP involved identifying relevant representatives from Traditional Owner groups and Aboriginal communities across the Mallee CMA region, contacting them by telephone or email, then arranging and attending small group meetings.

At the time of development, there was one Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) in the Mallee CMA region, Barengi Gadjin Aboriginal Land Council (BGLC). Therefore consultation was arranged to seek their input to the IPP by attending BGLC Board meetings.

Discussions that directly informed the development of the Mallee IPP were also held with the First People of the Millewa-Mallee Aboriginal Corporation, which was a RAP applicant and registered Native Title claimant at the time of writing (September 2016). The First People were also pursuing settlement with the Victorian Government under the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act* at this time. The First People were instrumental in ensuring appropriate recognition of Traditional Owners, Aboriginal communities and organisations in this plan.

Consultation was also undertaken with the representatives of the Wadi Wadi Wemba Wamba Barapa Barapa First Nations Aboriginal Corporation, which was a RAP applicant at the time of the IPP's development.

The Mallee CMA thanks everyone who contributed to the development of the IPP and apologies for omissions from any groups where representatives could not be contacted or were unable to attend scheduled meetings.



Photo: Scarred tree near Lake Wallawalla.



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## 8. IMPLEMENTATION

### 8.1 Implementing the Plan

In implementing the Mallee IPP, the Mallee CMA will seek to work with all Traditional Owners, Aboriginal communities and organisations with an interest in the region, as relevant.

In doing so, the Mallee CMA will utilise the Aboriginal Participation Guideline developed specifically for Victorian Catchment Management Authorities. The Guideline provides key principles and actions for

CMA's which are reflected in the Mallee IPP and will assist Mallee CMA staff to effectively implement the Mallee IPP and achieve its objectives.

#### Key principles

The following key principles are identified in the Guideline as being the foundations for working with Traditional Owners, Aboriginal communities and organisation in caring for our natural resources.



Figure 3: Key principles of the Aboriginal Participation Guideline for Victorian Catchment Management Authorities.

	Objectives (as per Section 6.1)	Success Factor/Mallee CMA Outcome
1	Increased involvement of Traditional Owner groups in project planning and decision making with the aim of developing ownership of NRM projects on their Country.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overarching Indigenous policy developed in regard to recognition of Traditional Owners.</li> <li>• Commitment from CMA Board for its implementation.</li> <li>• Relevant representative/s identified by each group and updated as needed.</li> <li>• Positive feedback from Traditional Owners regarding involvement with Mallee CMA.</li> </ul>
2	Build cultural competence of Mallee CMA staff at a whole-of-organisation level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural awareness training held for CMA Board, staff and contractors involving Traditional Owner reps and ARG.</li> <li>• Frequency of senior CMA staff involvement in Indigenous forums and community discussions.</li> </ul>
3	Integrate opportunities for Indigenous engagement from commencement of projects, at the thinking stage, so that Indigenous staff and people are first not last in project planning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involving Indigenous Facilitators in planning stage of projects across all areas of CMA business.</li> </ul>
4	Establish clear contact points to facilitate Indigenous engagement with groups/organisations. Ensure Indigenous groups are better informed about upcoming projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated contact management system.</li> <li>• Indigenous communication strategy developed as per IPP actions.</li> </ul>
5	Increase in Indigenous participation and involvement in Mallee CMA governance, decision making, as well as program planning and project delivery. Increase opportunities for Indigenous people to apply for positions on Mallee CMA Board, NRM Advisory Committees and other community-based Boards. Achieve greater involvement by increasing the number of Indigenous representatives on the Mallee CMA Aboriginal Land and Water Advisory Committee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunities for Board appointments.</li> <li>• Capacity building training through ARG.</li> <li>• Encouragement for enrolment in leadership programs.</li> <li>• Governance workshops provided by CMA in expectations for holders of committee positions.</li> <li>• Increased knowledge and skills in NRM and Government processes.</li> </ul>
6	Ensure that all Indigenous participation and involvement is recognised and acknowledged as an integral part of relationship building.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback loop is incorporated in consultation to acknowledge what has been imparted by Indigenous people and how CMA is using that information.</li> <li>• Indigenous Facilitator reports indicate adequate opportunity for Traditional Owner involvement.</li> </ul>
7	Develop partnership arrangements with Traditional Owners and Indigenous organisations as a means of recognising the value of their contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreements documented.</li> <li>• Team-work approach has been achieved through meaningful participation and engagement.</li> </ul>
8	Ensure Mallee CMA follows protocols for engagement under Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUAs) or Recognised Aboriginal Parties (RAPs). Ensure Mallee CMA partners follow the process and protocols outlined in the Mallee IPP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protocols updated and promoted to CMA staff.</li> <li>• Protocols reviewed annually.</li> <li>• Contracts with partners include requirements to follow protocols.</li> <li>• Staff induction in cultural protocols and cultural heritage for partners and contractors is evidenced.</li> <li>• Monitoring and review processes indicate compliance with protocols.</li> </ul>
9	Support the need for resourcing Traditional Owner groups to build capacity and encourage self-determination.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elders participating in the delivery of training.</li> <li>• Connections have been created through shared knowledge and collaborative projects.</li> <li>• Work procurement opportunities.</li> </ul>
10	CMA to solidify its commitment to Acknowledgement of Country through implementation of agreed engagement protocols.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledgement of Country policy developed by CMA.</li> <li>• Co-operative agreement with RAPs developed.</li> </ul>
11	CMA supporting initiatives that contribute to health and well-being and closing the gap of disadvantage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educational, cultural and social programs supported which focus on bridging the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous cultures.</li> </ul>
12	Ensure ARG is well supported and acknowledged for its role in building relationships and fostering two-way communications between the Mallee CMA and Indigenous stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ARG adequately resourced and supported as indicated in annual review.</li> <li>• ARG input in RCS and regional investment program is evidenced.</li> <li>• TOR revised to be consistent with other community advisory groups.</li> <li>• ARG profile incorporated into CMA communication strategy.</li> </ul>

## 8.2 Review and Evaluation

The Mallee CMA will develop monitoring, evaluation, reporting and improvement (MERI) processes specific to the Mallee IPP, based on the guidance outlined in the Aboriginal Participation Guideline for Victorian Catchment Management Authorities and its Implementation Plan, Pathways to Participation. The Guideline emphasises the importance of the MERI process being participatory in collaboration with Traditional Owners and Indigenous communities. Through this process, the Mallee CMA will develop practical ways to assess its performance against agreed outcomes.

The measures of success outlined above provide specific outcome-based measures against each objective in the IPP. These objectives and measures will form part of the MERI process to ensure continuous improvement and agreed outcomes based on progress.

In addition, the Mallee CMA will also utilise the participation checklist included in the Guideline Implementation Plan which has been developed to ensure a level of consistency across CMAs. This IPP has drawn on the checklist in developing the measures in the above table, incorporating the key outcomes where they align with objectives developed through Mallee specific consultation.



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