

Mallee Indigenous Participation Plan



2020 - 2023



National
Landcare
Program



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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, present and emerging, and recognise the primacy of Traditional Owner obligations, rights, and responsibilities to use and care for their Traditional lands and waters.

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Mallee CMA is proud to play a leading role in the facilitation and implementation of Traditional Owner engagement in land and water management and planning in the region.

It is important to recognise there is always the opportunity to improve engagement activities and processes. Mallee CMA continues to focus on supporting Traditional Owners, Aboriginal communities and organisations to participate in a meaningful way to deliver positive outcomes in land and water management projects.

The renewal of the 2020-23 Mallee Indigenous Participation Plan (IPP), a central part of our Cultural Competency Framework and Regional Catchment Strategy, shows our commitment and support for culturally appropriate, recognised and effective engagement with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities and organisations in decision making, planning and delivery of land and water management.

The Mallee IPP focuses on three key pillars: self-determination; relationships; and capacity building. The plan strengthens the cultural competency of the Mallee CMA through respectful and mutually beneficial engagements and relationships with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal stakeholders.

The Mallee CMA Aboriginal Reference Group's (ARG) role will be strengthened through the implementation of the IPP. Key objectives and outcomes (monitored and reviewed in collaboration with Mallee CMA) ensure continued improvement in our processes, project planning and delivery of land and water management, employment and education opportunities, and overall engagement strategies.

We acknowledge and appreciate the contribution of Traditional Owners, Aboriginal communities, and Aboriginal organisations in the development and renewal of the Mallee IPP. The feedback received has influenced and shaped the development of Mallee IPP objectives and actions for land and water management.

The Mallee CMA Board and staff look forward to continuing to build relationships with Traditional Owners, Aboriginal communities and Aboriginal organisations in the delivery of the 2020-23 Mallee IPP and land and water management projects.



Sharyon Peart
Mallee CMA Board Chair
2021

Mallee Indigenous Participation Plan

PURPOSE

The Mallee Indigenous Participation Plan (IPP) was first developed in 2016 and was the first of its kind in the Mallee region. It provides an opportunity for Traditional Owners and the wider Aboriginal community to inform and be involved in the delivery of land and water management projects, strategies, and activities. Through the development of objectives, outcomes, and actions the IPP provides a measurable and practical guide for Mallee Catchment Management Authority (CMA) to develop a framework for staff and management to deliver the plan.

The framework within the 2020-23 Mallee IPP provides realistic and achievable actions and activities to ensure strengthened and collaborative engagement between Traditional Owners and Mallee CMA. The framework also forms an important part of Mallee CMA's cultural competency and skill development for staff to further enhance relationships and make better informed decisions about land and water management within the Mallee region.

Traditional Owner aspirations for land and water management provides for an inclusive and transparent environment offering the ability to connect with Country, while guiding CMA projects, strategies, and activities with culturally appropriate approaches.

Mallee CMA's primary responsibility is to ensure natural resources in the region are managed in an integrated and ecologically sustainable way. Mallee CMA is the peak body for the delivery of natural resource programs in the Mallee region. Our work is based on science and delivered through meaningful partnerships with government agencies, local organisations such as Landcare, Traditional Owners and community groups in the Victorian Mallee.

OUR STARTING POINT

Consultation and engagement undertaken to inform the 2020-23 Mallee IPP involved discussions with Traditional Owners, Aboriginal organisations and the wider Aboriginal Community. This level of consultation and engagement helps ensure the Mallee IPP reflects the needs and aspirations of the Aboriginal community regarding land and water management. The renewal process also provided opportunities to identify lessons learnt and to continually improve the Mallee IPP to enhance the Aboriginal community's involvement in the region's land and water management.

Lessons learnt

As part of the review process, key learnings were identified and incorporated in the Mallee IPP 2020-2023:

- Consultation must occur at project conception to ensure Traditional Owners are appropriately engaged from the beginning, and to avoid a tokenistic approach
- Travel time and distance must be considered when including Traditional Owners in On-Country visits and projects
- Limited understanding of water policy and governance requirements by Traditional Owners may restrict input on key projects; additional education would benefit both Traditional Owners and Mallee CMA
- A consistent engagement and implementation approach helps build trust and long-term relationships with Traditional Owners
- Establishing a feedback loop to show how Traditional Owner input has influenced land and water management planning and projects is vital for building and maintaining relationships.

CONSULTATION PROCESS:

The review of the existing Mallee IPP outcomes and expectations for the future are incorporated into the 2020-23 Mallee IPP. Consultation included face-to-face engagement, On-Country visits, small group meetings including with the Aboriginal Reference Group (ARG) and information sessions with Traditional Owners. The consultation enabled priorities to be identified and captured in an environment where participants felt comfortable to share experiences and knowledge.

On-Country visits included discussions about potential environmental watering sites, how Traditional Owners can share knowledge with CMA staff and the Aboriginal community, and the role Traditional Owners play in caring for country.

Key discussion topics included: How Mallee CMA could support Traditional Owners to be more involved in the delivery of land and water management projects; and, Challenges faced by Traditional Owners in participating in watering events, project planning and delivery of appropriate, respectful and recognised communication.



Neds Corner: On-Country 'Talking Water' visit



Duckfoot lagoon: Watering site

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

Our Region
 The Mallee CMA region covers 3.9 million hectares – about one fifth of Victoria. It is the largest catchment area in the state and runs along the Murray River from Nyah to the South Australian border, and south to the vast dryland cereal and wheat crops of the Wimmera.

Wimmera Mallee Pipeline
 Located approximately 250kms South of the Mildura around the Birchip area is a series of small wetlands supported by the Wimmera Mallee Pipeline, which is part of the Mallee CMA service region.

Mallee Catchment Management Authority - Catchment Area

VISION

Alignment with Mallee CMA's vision through connected and diverse communities creating trusted partnerships to support healthy landscapes; opportunities to generate lasting relationships; and recognition of the importance of genuine engagement with the Aboriginal community in land and water management.

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

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Defining Community Engagement

We define 'communities' as including individuals, Traditional Owners, Aboriginal community and organisations, public and private landholders, community groups and business owners. We define 'community engagement' as the activities which see us interact with members of our communities to inform, consult, involve, collaborate, or empower others (IAP2).

Defining Partnerships

We define 'partners' as those community groups, organisations, local, state and federal governments, or individuals with whom we seek specific and mutually beneficial outcomes. As partners, we share both the problem and the solution. Arrangements may be formal or informal.

Creating a welcoming environment

All Board members, managers and staff have an important role in creating safe and welcoming environments by ensuring:

- Acknowledgement of Country signage on doorways
- Acknowledgement of Country at Mallee CMA meetings.

Engaging with Aboriginal communities

It is essential to ensure a respectful and inclusive engagement process for establishing and maintaining relationships by:

- Engaging early in project planning
- More effective and meaningful consultations
- More precise identification of needs
- Greater collaboration on solutions.

Communications and relationships

Communication skills remain central to creating a trusting and open environment through:

- Using positive communications skills and attitudes
- Seeking feedback in ways which consider varying literacy levels and communication methods
- Ensuring staff are familiar with local Aboriginal workers in the Natural Resource Management field.

Developing Cultural Competence

A person who is culturally competent can communicate sensitively and effectively with people from a range of cultures, religions, ethnicities, ages, abilities, and sexualities by:

- Ensuring steps are taken to avoid imposing personal values and attitudes that may conflict with cultural norms for the individual, family, or community members
- Encouraging Board members, managers, and staff to participate in important Aboriginal events
- Ensuring Mallee CMA acknowledges and pays respect to the Traditional Owners of the land, and Indigenous Elders, both past and present
- Inviting Indigenous Elders to give a Welcome to Country at the commencement of any major event.

Training

All Board members, managers and staff have an important role in creating safe and welcoming environments through:

- Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Training within induction programs for new staff
- Promotion of Board member, management and staff participation in cultural events and cultural awareness training as a recognised form of professional development
- Improved Board member, management and staff member understanding of relevant legislation, policies and guidelines related to discrimination and working with Aboriginal communities.

LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

Mallee CMA continues to fulfil its roles and responsibilities in enabling effective Aboriginal community participation in land and water management within the Mallee region, including:

- Responsibilities outlined 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 and the Catchment and Land Protection Act.
- Commonwealth Government Indigenous Procurement Policy (2019).
- Current and future Traditional Owner settlements.
- Closing the Gap in Indigenous disadvantage.
- The commitments within the Victorian Governments Aboriginal Affairs Framework, Victorian Aboriginal Economic Strategy and the Community Engagement and Partnerships Framework for Victoria's CMA's.
- Supporting the Australian Government's commitment to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- The intentions and agreements set out in the CMA's Regional Catchment Strategies and other specific plans including Traditional Owner Country Plans and Joint Management Plans.

REGIONAL CONTEXT

The Mallee CMA region covers a large area of the catchment and incorporates 14 Traditional Owner groups spanning over 400 kilometres. Consultation and engagement with local Traditional Owners groups offers both opportunities and challenges in terms of distance and travel. Feedback obtained through the 2020-23 Mallee IPP consultation process identified long distance travel for On-Country project works as a key challenge for Traditional Owners.

Mallee CMA has adopted practices to assist Traditional Owners with facilitating On-Country visits, project related programs such as e-watering events, Cultural Heritage Management Plans (CHMPs) and Aboriginal Water Assessments (AWA's). This has enabled Mallee CMA to further strengthen the relationships with Traditional Owners and the wider Aboriginal community.

ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN LAND AND WATER MANAGEMENT

Traditional Owner groups within the Mallee CMA service region included as part of the consultation and engagement in the development of the 2020-23 Mallee IPP review include (but are not limited to): Latji Latji Peoples; Wadi Wadi Peoples; Wemba Wamba Peoples; Tati Tati Peoples; Jari Jari Peoples; Kureinji Peoples; Nyeri Nyeri Peoples; Ngnintait Peoples; Ngarkat and Barengi Gadjin Land Council Aboriginal Corporation – Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Yupagalk and Wergaia.

The Mallee CMA service region has two Recognised Aboriginal Parties (RAPs):

- Barengi Gadjin Land Council Aboriginal Corporation; and
- First People of Millewa Mallee Aboriginal Corporation.

Mallee CMA Aboriginal Reference Group (ARG)

Mallee CMA is committed to ensuring the Aboriginal community has a voice within the planning framework for land and water management and other business operations. The development of the Mallee CMA ARG in 2012-13 has formed a key component of community connection, relationship building and knowledge sharing. The ARG continues to form a vital part of the engagement process and has delivered benefits for the environment, Aboriginal culture and in the delivery of Mallee IPP commitments.

The ARG does not represent the views of Traditional Owners, Aboriginal communities or Aboriginal organisations. It offers insight and feedback from a community perspective on land and water management and programs and monitors outcomes and actions through the 2020-23 Mallee IPP.

KEY OBJECTIVES, OUTCOMES AND ACTIVITIES

The 2020-23 Mallee IPP has been updated in cooperation with Traditional Owner groups of the region, Mallee CMA ARG, and members of the Aboriginal community. Mallee CMA has tested the ongoing suitability of existing objectives, outcomes, and activities, and developed new objectives, outcomes, and activities through this engagement process.

Consideration of Regional Land Partnerships (RLP) five-year outcomes is now incorporated in the 2020-23 Mallee IPP, and forms an important framework for the engagement and partnerships with Traditional Owners.

Mallee CMA continues to work with the Aboriginal community to further enhance and develop a strong understanding of Aboriginal community and Aboriginal organisational aspirations in land and water management for the Mallee region through:

- Targeted engagement practices on projects, generation of investment opportunities and collaborative forums
- Development of the Mallee Reconciliation Action Plan (2017)
- Establishment of the RAP Working Group
- Annual reporting against RAP actions
- Development of the Mallee Natural Resource Management Plan for Climate Change (2016)
- Mid-term review of the 2013-19 Mallee RCS (2017)
- Implementation of the Mallee Waterway Strategy (2014-22) and mid-term review (2018).
- Development of the Victorian Mallee Irrigation Region Land and Water Management Plan (2020)
- Development of the Victorian Murray Floodplain Restoration Project Traditional Owner Engagement Strategy (2021-24).

Principles and objectives established within the Cultural Competency Framework, updated IPP and Mallee Reconciliation Action Plan will continue to be integrated within Mallee CMA to support meaningful, culturally appropriate, and effective stakeholder engagement.

ASPIRATIONS FOR LAND AND WATER MANAGEMENT

Through the engagement carried out as part of the review of the Regional Catchment Strategy, Aboriginal community and Aboriginal organisations provided input into all components of the strategy.

The following core aspirations were identified as being central to the feedback provided:

- The protection and management of Aboriginal Culture and heritage is considered as an integral component of all land, water, and biodiversity management processes.
- Further opportunity is provided for Aboriginal community and organisations to promote and apply Traditional ecological knowledge.

Pillars of our IPP

1. SELF DETERMINATION

Mallee CMA supports: the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to determine their own political status; and to pursue their own economic, social, and cultural interests. Self-determination encompasses both.

Self-determination is an 'ongoing process of choice' to ensure Aboriginal communities are able to meet their social, cultural and economic needs.

2. RELATIONSHIPS

Encourage and foster meaningful, long term relationships with the Aboriginal community. Long term relationships lie at the heart of who we are as an organisation and as a community. Mallee CMA works closely with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to build and maintain meaningful, on-going, long-term relationships.

3. CAPACITY BUILDING

Grow sustainable employment and participation opportunities for local Aboriginal people. Mallee CMA recognises the important role employment and training plays in boosting self-esteem, economic security and overall health and wellbeing for Aboriginal people, their families, and wider communities.

Status metrics:

-  On-track
-  Requires additional attention
-  Requires immediate attention

AIM:

INCREASE APPRECIATION AND UNDERSTANDING OF ABORIGINAL CULTURE AND ISSUES WITHIN OUR ORGANISATION WHILE EMPOWERING TRADITIONAL OWNERS TO MAKE DECISIONS AND SHAPE OUTCOMES IN LAND AND WATER MANAGEMENT AND CULTURAL HERITAGE.

SELF-DETERMINATION / RECOGNITION / RESPECT						
	Aspirations	Key Objectives	Actions/Measures	Responsible	Timeframe	Status
1.	The Traditional Owners can self-determine how, when, and why land and water management projects occur.	The Traditional Owners have a voice in designing, delivering, and reporting on land and water management projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traditional Owners are given the opportunity to capture and share cultural values and knowledge with the Aboriginal Community. MCMA supports relevant information sharing via platforms to disseminate information to Traditional Owners, encourage discussions and questions relating to land and water management. 	ARG MCMA Board MCMA Staff	Ongoing	 
2.	The Traditional Owners can pursue their own economic, social, and cultural interests in relation to land and water management.	Support Traditional Owners in building capacity, encouraging self-determination and knowledge sharing whilst creating economic opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of consultation and on-Country visits, guided tours and walks by Elders included to pass on important cultural knowledge and understanding. Ensure updated Victorian government Traditional Owner procurement policies and guidelines are incorporated into all relevant land and water management projects. Support the Aboriginal community to access cultural water through education, forums, workshops, and governance practices. 	MCMA Board MCMA Staff Traditional Owners	Ongoing	
3.	Traditional Owner groups recognised as speaking for Country and respectful protocols followed.	Traditional Owner groups strong involvement in decision making for land and water management programs and projects on their Country.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MCMA to develop and implement framework and policy for recognition of Traditional Owners. Traditional Owners and MCMA develop relevant register for representatives who speak on behalf of their group/organisation. MCMA to follow Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010 in reference to legal rights in specific areas. 	ARG MCMA Senior Management Project Officers All CMA & Board	Ongoing June 2022	
4.	Recognition and acknowledgement of cultural values and participation in land and water management projects.	Integration of protocols, cultural values and traditional owners in land and water management project development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MCMA to ensure diversity of staff relating to both men's and women's business on-Country can be shared appropriately. 	ARG MCMA Senior Management Project Officers	Ongoing	
5.	Respect and recognition for Aboriginal people as partners in land and water management.	Build on partnerships with Traditional Owners and related organisations to ensure input is recognised and contributions valued.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pull up banners, newsletters, website branding and collateral recognises MCMA is a culturally respectful organisation. ARG Committee members identified and promoted as committee members in MCMA through, website etc. ARG Logo to appear within MCMA publications, foyer signage and website where appropriate. Create opportunities to work together through shared learning, meaningful engagement activities and formal assessments (AWA's/CHMPs'). Ensure all staff and contractors follow the compliance checklist in Cultural Heritage Management Plans (CHMPs') and Aboriginal Water Assessments (AWA's) 	ARG MCMA Board and Senior Management Project Officers	Ongoing	

6.	Recognition and acknowledgment of connection to Country.	<p>Relevant Traditional Owner group to perform Welcome to Country where possible.</p> <p>CMA staff and contractors understand and deliver the CMA Acknowledgement of Country appropriately and respectfully.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protocols for Acknowledgement of Country developed for use by staff, contractors, visitors. • Signage appropriately identifies the use of Acknowledgement of Country within the CMA buildings and entrances. • MCMA provides opportunity for Traditional Owners to educate the community through the Acknowledgement of Country. • Protocols and information sessions developed relating to the use of Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country for Aboriginal Community, CMA staff and contractors. • Traditional Owners are able to provide a Welcome / Acknowledgement of Country at CMA events, meetings and gatherings (with appropriate understanding and training if required). • CMA Acknowledgement of Country respectfully and appropriately recognises the traditional lands where the meeting is held and the Elders within the meeting/gathering. • An easily understood map outlining the appropriate use of the Acknowledgement of Country – relating to the relevant townships. 	ARG MCMA Senior Management Project Officers	Ongoing December 2020	
7.	Clearly identify and acknowledge the various Aboriginal tribal and/or language groups, their interests, responsibilities and relationships to land and water;	Clearly identify and acknowledge the various Aboriginal tribal and/or language groups, their interests, responsibilities and relationships to land and water.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update Mallee IPP to reflect Traditional Owner groups of the region, along with status of Native Title and Registered Aboriginal Party claims. Include appropriate maps/spatial representations. • Draw on existing relationships with Traditional Owner groups and recently completed Aboriginal Water Assessments (AWAs) to ensure the Mallee IPP accurately reflects groups' interests, responsibilities and relationships to land and water in the Victorian Mallee. 	MCMA Senior Management Project Officers	Ongoing December 2022	

AIM:

BUILD RESPECTFUL CONNECTIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS WITH ABORIGINAL PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES.

RELATIONSHIPS / COMMUNICATION / ENGAGEMENT						
	Aspirations	Key Objectives	Actions / Measures	Responsible	Timeframe	Status
1.	Traditional Owner groups are acknowledged for their connection to Country and recognise their aspiration to speak for Country.	Traditional Owner involvement in project planning and decision making fostering a strong connection and ownership of land and water management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular meetings (quarterly / annually) with Traditional Owners to offer information and outline proposed projects for the next year and how it aligns with funding opportunities, watering events and proposed submissions. Meetings delivered both On-Country and office based to ensure best outcomes and information flow. 	MCMA Senior Management MCMA Staff	Annually	
2.	Following of all appropriate protocols and agreements in engagement processes.	Close the loop with engagement practices to ensure cultural knowledge is recognised and used appropriately and timely.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A combination of both on-Country and office-based meetings/training, before, during and after projects. Ensure protocols are reviewed and updated annually. Promotion internally to all MCMA staff of protocols through staff correspondence, intranet, newsletters, toolbox meetings, staff meetings. Ensure partner organisation MOU's and contracts include protocols. Review, amend and implement the cultural heritage compliance policy and procedures annually. 	MCMA Senior Management Project Officers	Ongoing	
3.	Clear and consistent communication with Traditional Owner's, Aboriginal Organisations and the Aboriginal community.	Build trust and transparent relationships to ensure strong ongoing communication relating to land and water management projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish consultation feedback loop as part of the consultation processes. MCMA Community Engagement and Partnerships policy/strategy developed. Ensure Engagement Register is kept relevant and updated. Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Community protocols developed Simple, easy to understand overview flyers, presentations available for distribution to the Aboriginal Community by the ARG and other related organisations (upfront and transparent about what is and is not negotiable as part of the project). Development of MCMA Language Guide to ensure all project and related engagement is clear and easily understood and delivered. Information is provided in various formats including written, presentation, social media, website, face-to-face, on-Country etc. 	ARG MCMA Senior Management Project Officers All CMA staff	Ongoing	

4.	Effective and informed Aboriginal Reference Group (ARG).	A supported ARG which fosters strong relationships within the community and provides key connections with the Aboriginal Community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources continue to be provided to support the Aboriginal Reference Group (ARG) with the provision of sitting fees, travel arrangements. Resources and collateral provided to (ARG) to support community engagement and consultation. Continue with biannual reviews of the ARG structure, outcomes, and feedback. Review of Terms of Reference to ensure consistency with Government regulations and other similar community advisory groups. Build a strong profile in the community through foyer signage, website acknowledgement & promotion of the ARG. 	MCMA Senior Management Project Officers	Ongoing	
5.	Strong relationships and partnerships with related agencies.	Consistent and coordinated relationships established with related key agencies to avoid duplications and effective conversations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A central calendar of events, meetings, workshops, projects, and potential opportunities developed and available for relevant Traditional Owners groups to ensure attendance and allocation of appropriate Traditional Owner. 	Related key agencies MCMA Senior Management Project Officers All CMA & Board	Ongoing	

AIM:

INCREASE CURRENT ABORIGINAL EMPLOYMENT LEVEL TO 3% BY JULY 2021, COMPLETE 80% OF TRAINING FOR ABORIGINAL EMPLOYEES AND TRADITIONAL OWNERS INVOLVED IN LAND AND WATER MANAGEMENT PROJECTS.

CAPACITY BUILDING / TRAINING / LEARNING						
	Aspirations	Key Objectives	Actions / Measures	Responsible	Timeframe	Status
1.	Mentoring and training opportunities for Traditional Owners	Relevant and consistent skillset creation for Traditional Owners to assist with future procurement opportunities, governance, and project implementation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training programs for Traditional Owners to better understand government legislations, regulations and protocols relating to project bids, watering programs and project governance. • Mentoring programs developed to ensure Elders knowledge can be passed down to the younger generation. • MCMA supports Elders and Indigenous people to participate in delivery of training, workshops, forums through resources, travel / transport, and related support. • Facilitate and support ongoing training delivered for young Indigenous people to build capacity, support career development and upskill. • MCMA to support the Aboriginal community through traineeships and seek funding annually to deliver traditional community activities and workshops. 	All CMA and Board	Ongoing	
2.	Respectful, appropriate, and considered training for all MCMA staff and contractors.	MCMA staff and contractors have a clear understanding of the Aboriginal communities' expectations and needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff, Board, and contractors complete relevant Cultural Competence Awareness course and refresher (as required). • Ensure partner organisations follow protocols and complete cultural inductions. • Traditional Owner involvement in delivery of cultural awareness training. • Senior MCMA staff and Project Managers to be involved in Traditional Owner forums, discussions, workshops. • Continue to periodically deliver cultural heritage inductions for all contractors working with MCMA. 	Related key agencies MCMA Senior Management Project Officers All CMA & Board	Ongoing	
3.	Leadership and governance roles identified for aboriginal people on Boards and Committees.	Leadership roles for aboriginal people through Board appointments, senior roles, and advocacy committees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognised MCMA positions identified for Aboriginal community. • Promotion and awareness of the ARG and recruitment for future members. • The Aboriginal community is involved in the identified recruitment processes for MCMA. 	MCMA Board and Senior Management ARG Project Officers	Ongoing December 2022	

4.	Building the capacity of Traditional Owner groups.	To build knowledge, expertise and understanding in cultural values for Traditional Owners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-meeting visit or workshop material and flyers provided to Traditional Owners where possible to ensure preparation and understanding of requirements on the day. • Forum and information sessions to occur annually about river operations, outlook, and allocation information (in conjunction with related agencies – MDBA, LMW, EWH etc.) • MCMA to partner with the Aboriginal community to deliver collaborative projects such as community art, basket weaving workshops, traditional food information sessions etc. • MCMA to continue to be involved in on-ground projects with Traditional Owners. 	MCMA Senior Management Project Officers Related key agencies	Ongoing	
5.	Increased numbers of Aboriginal people working, learning, and training on-Country.	Increase the number of aboriginal people employed in land and water management at MCMA, providing positive outcomes for the whole community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MCMA to provide assistance through travel and accommodation when and if appropriate for Traditional Owners to attend relevant training, workshops, and meetings. • Ensure Traditional Owners are involved in the planning and delivery of project planning and consultation. • Enable MCMA Indigenous staff members obtain a diverse range of skills in a wide range of areas within the land and water management field through job-share arrangements, site visits, shadowing senior staff, mentoring and field visits. 	MCMA Senior Management Project Officers MCMA Board	Ongoing	
6.	Increase Traditional Owners participation and understanding of SDL projects.	Creation of opportunities through economic benefits, on-Country learning, and key project outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities for Traditional Owners participation and input into Sustainable Diversion Limit (SDL) projects through forum attendance, site visits, inductions, inspections, AWA's and CHMPs. 	Project Officers Related key agencies	Ongoing December 2022	
7.	Seek funding to further enhance Traditional practices, education programs and employment and training.	Economic opportunities created for Traditional Owners to build capacity, social enterprise, project capacity and employment opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jointly seek funding with Traditional Owner groups and organisations to deliver education programs for youth / students on cultural heritage and values. • Provide opportunities to successfully bid to delivery projects and services for Mallee CMA. 	MCMA Senior Management Project Officers Related key agencies	Annually	
8.	Consider roles, responsibilities, and capacity of the Indigenous community to contribute to regional NRM priorities (e.g. RLP 5-year Outcomes), particularly where they align with Aboriginal people's land and sea management aspirations.	<p>Consideration and alignment with the RLP 5-year Outcomes.</p> <p>Integration within the organisation of the Commonwealth Government Indigenous Procurement Policy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner with ARG to workshop strategies to identify opportunities for Indigenous community to contribute to 5-year outcomes in land and water management, through engagement, project delivery and MERI activities. • Work with Traditional Owners and community partners to update/identify regional natural resource management priorities, particularly where they align with Aboriginal community aspirations and objectives. • Key renewal actions for the Mallee Indigenous Participation Plan. • Work is underway to inform Mallee CMA in partnering with Traditional Owners to undertake AWAs at priority local wetlands. 	ARG MCMA Senior Management Project Officers	Annually - ongoing	

HOW THE IPP WILL BE IMPLEMENTED

Mallee CMA will implement the 2020-23 Mallee IPP through collaborative, inclusive and ongoing consultation with Traditional Owners, Aboriginal communities, and partner organisations with an interest in land and water management.

Aboriginal Participation Guidelines developed specifically for Victorian CMAs and provides key principles and actions for CMA's and align with the IPP objectives and goals.

The 2020-23 Mallee IPP serves as a practical guide for Mallee CMA to partner with and involve Traditional Owners, Aboriginal communities, individuals and organisations in the planning, consultation and implementation of land and water management investment. The IPP has been developed with the clear understanding that Traditional Landowner Groups are the custodians of the land, and their knowledge and expertise is highly valued.

The development and implementation of the Mallee IPP is regarded by Mallee CMA as a practical action that illustrates the organisation'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.

TARGETS AND MEASURES OF SUCCESS

Progress will be reviewed quarterly against specific project timeframes and overall Aboriginal employment, training, and consultation targets.

Success will be measured against the following indicators:

- Number of employees placed permanently within MCMA and partners.
- Number of employees placed into apprenticeships or traineeships.
- Retention rates.
- Increased Indigenous supplier usage and implementation of updated government procurement policy.
- Increased cultural awareness levels amongst staff, contractors, and partners (measured by annual survey).
- Number of Traditional Owners involved in Land and Water management projects (through AWA's/ CHMP's)
- Number of Traditional Owners completing relevant Cultural Heritage training and certification
- Engagement register – interactions with Traditional Owners through consultation, training, workshops, and meetings.

REVIEW PERIOD

Targets and actions will be reviewed annually to ensure the 2020-23 Indigenous Participation Plan continues to delivery on State and Commonwealth priorities.

REVIEW AND EVALUATION – LEARNINGS & SUCCESS

Key evaluation questions	YES / NO	How? Provide evidence
1. Are we increasing awareness and recognition of Aboriginal peoples' interests in our work?		
2. Are we meeting our legal obligations regarding Aboriginal participation?		
3. Are we establishing and following protocols to ensure the free, prior, and informed consent of Traditional Owners and Aboriginal community for projects that affect their rights and interests?		
4. Are we inducting and training Board members, staff and contractors in ways that help build cultural competency?		
5. Are we providing supportive workplace arrangements for staff and contractors as they engage with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities, including appropriate resourcing and time for project and program delivery?		
6. Are we engaging meaningfully and are we building trust and mutual respect with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities?		
7. Are we respecting Aboriginal people's culture, knowledge, and obligations to Country through our work?		
8. Are Aboriginal people more actively represented in our decision-making processes?		
9. Are Aboriginal communities and organisations participating in our projects and programs?		
10. Are we supporting Aboriginal groups in their pursuit of economic opportunities and jobs in land and water management?		
11. Are we supporting initiatives that contribute to health and wellbeing, and closing the gap of disadvantage?		

REFERENCES

Mallee Regional Catchment Strategy (due for review in 2021)

- Mallee CMA Cultural Competency Framework
- Mallee CMA Reconciliation Action Plan (2017-19)
- Aboriginal Participation Guideline for Victorian Catchment Management Authorities (2016)
- Community Engagement and Partnership Framework and Toolkit for Victorian CMAs (2017)
- Mallee CMA Diversity and Inclusion Plan (2017)
- Commonwealth Government Indigenous Procurement Policy (2019)