

# Coastcare Victoria Strategy

2021-2026





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## Acknowledgment of Aboriginal Victorians

Coastcare Victoria proudly acknowledges Victoria's Aboriginal communities and their rich culture and pays respects to their Elders past and present.

We acknowledge Aboriginal people as Australia's first peoples, and as the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land and sea on which we work and live.

We recognise the strength of Aboriginal people despite the negative inter-generational impacts of past practices and policies, some of which continue to be experienced today.

We support the need for reconciliation and genuine partnerships to address the negative impacts of the past.

We recognise and value the ongoing contribution of Aboriginal people and communities to Victorian life, and how this enriches us all. We recognise that Aboriginal cultures and communities are diverse, and the value we gain in celebrating these cultures and communities. We acknowledge that the land and sea is of spiritual, cultural and economic importance to Aboriginal people.

We recognise the intrinsic connection of Traditional Owners to Sea Country and acknowledge their role in the management of Victoria's marine and coastal environment.

We embrace the spirit of reconciliation, working towards the equality of outcomes and ensuring an equal voice. We have distinct legislative obligations to Traditional Owner groups that are paramount in our responsibilities in managing Victoria's resources.

## Use of terms

Throughout this document, Aboriginal is used to refer to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

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## Ministerial foreword



Victoria is privileged to be home to some of the country's most spectacular coastlines. Our marine and coastal areas are loved by many for their environmental and recreational values and play a significant role in tourism and industry.

Thousands of Victorian volunteers make significant contributions to protect and improve the health and values of the marine and coastal environment. As a state, we are fortunate to have many volunteers, organisations and networks dedicated to looking after Victoria's coast for the benefit of local communities and visitors who are drawn to these areas.

This Strategy's vision is for "thriving community groups and networks providing stewardship for a healthy, valued marine and coastal environment." Its three pillars of Marine and Coastal Stewardship, Thriving Community Groups and Networks, and Victorians Valuing the Coast outline how the Coastcare Victoria program and community can work together to achieve this vision for the benefit of all Victorians.

The Victorian Government is committed to supporting community efforts to protect and improve the health and values of the marine and coastal environment. The Coastcare Victoria Strategy 2021 – 2026 has strong ties to the Victorians Volunteering for Nature Environmental Volunteering Plan, and other community focused initiatives like Absolutely everyone – state disability plan 2017-2020.

Collaboration between the various sectors and tiers of state and local government, agencies, non-government organisations and community groups is necessary to support the delivery of on-ground action, education and awareness.

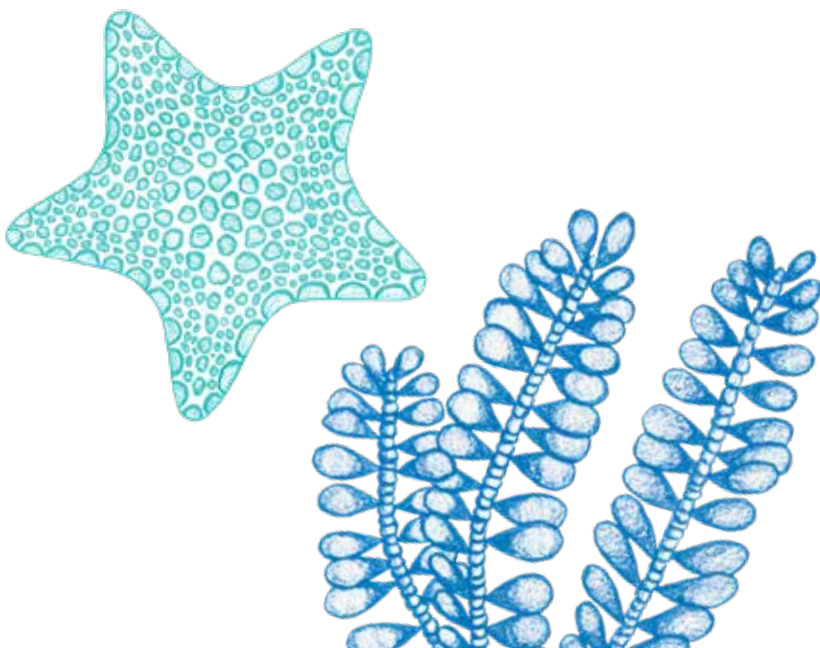
This collaborative approach plays a significant role in helping communities take ownership of local issues, allowing relationships between government and the community to be strengthened. The Coastcare Victoria Strategy 2021–2026 paves the way for a bright and strong future for community stewardship along the Victorian coast.

On behalf of the Victorian Government, I thank the Coastcare Victoria community for your dedication and valued contributions to protect and enhance Victoria's marine and coastal environment.

A blue ink handwritten signature, appearing to read 'Lily D'Ambrosio', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**The Hon. Lily D'Ambrosio MP**

**Minister for Energy,  
Environment and Climate Change**



# Introduction

Coastcare Victoria is a community-based program which supports stewardship of Victoria's marine and coastal environment. Coastcare Victoria is run by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP).

The Coastcare Victoria Strategy 2021-2026 (the Strategy) sets out the focus and strategic direction for Coastcare Victoria over the next five years. It guides the investment of resources for the delivery of the Coastcare Victoria program and focuses on three 'Strategic Pillars':

- Marine and Coastal Stewardship
- Thriving Community Groups and Networks and
- Victorians Valuing the Coast.

This Strategy replaces the Coastcare Victoria Strategy 2011-2015.

## Development of this Strategy

The Coastcare Victoria Strategy 2021-2026 has been developed through a participatory-engagement process involving a wide range of stakeholders to ensure that it reflects their needs and priorities. A series of facilitated workshops were conducted between April and May 2019 to engage key community groups, agencies and individuals from across Victoria. The draft Strategy was open for public comment from November 2019 to January 2020.

This extensive community engagement helped to define Coastcare Victoria's core principles (page 8) and three Strategic Pillars for the next five years (pages 12-13) by exploring and understanding how Coastcare Victoria can best add value for the organisations, networks, groups, communities and individuals living, working and interacting with Victoria's coastline.

Coastcare Victoria extends its gratitude to all individuals, groups, networks and organisations who contributed ideas, local knowledge, enthusiasm and passion to the creation of this Strategy.

The Victorian Government is committed to implementing this Strategy to ensure that communities are equipped to meet the challenge of caring for Victoria's marine and coastal environment.



### Some of the key messages heard from stakeholders during the Strategy engagement included:

- Networking and connections between groups and organisations with similar challenges and opportunities is important. Coastcare Victoria is well placed to facilitate this.
- A digital portal to help volunteers to connect, share and learn would be valuable.
- The help Coastcare Victoria provides to facilitate relationships and collaboration with land managers, government and other organisations is valuable to community.
- Volunteer recruitment, succession planning, youth engagement and the changing nature of volunteerism is an ongoing challenge which marine and coastal volunteers and organisations are ready to tackle.
- Coastcare Victoria stakeholders are passionate about the importance of engaging and educating communities and young people in marine and coastal matters.
- Coastcare Victoria stakeholders want the Coastcare Victoria program to recognise, celebrate and share their stories and successes and promote Coastcare Victoria and messages to a wider audience.
- Diversity of people, ideas, skills and knowledge leads to success.
- Groups want simplified administrative requirements with available support.
- Marine and coastal volunteers and organisations value grants and training – these multiply the value of in-kind resources communities provide.

### What's new in the 2021-2026 Strategy?

This Strategy seeks to:

- address new challenges and opportunities that have emerged since the 2011-2015 Strategy such as accelerating climate change, the impacts of population growth on the coast and changes to the nature of volunteerism
- include the marine environment in line with the *Marine and Coastal Act 2018*
- support pathways for community contribution to the implementation of the *Marine and Coastal Act 2018*
- provide a stronger alignment with state environmental and social policies (refer to Appendix)
- integrate both the environmental and social objectives that underpin the success of Coastcare Victoria
- increase the value of Coastcare Victoria to coastal networks, groups, not-for-profit organisations and local communities
- aspire to partner with Traditional Owners to participate in and deliver Coastcare Victoria activities
- increase support to networks, groups and not-for-profit organisations to increase participation, engagement and action on local needs and broader, systemic issues impacting the marine and coastal environment
- develop a strong framework for how the program will be monitored, evaluated, reported on and improved.

# Victoria's marine and coastal environment

Victoria's marine and coastal environment is a special and unique place that provides natural values and social, cultural and economic benefits to communities.

Some 96 per cent of the 2,512 kilometres of Victoria's coastline and all its marine areas is Crown land and waters. Crown land and waters are managed for the benefit of the Victorian community, ensuring that Victorians can enjoy access to and benefits of the marine and coastal environment.

Victoria's coastline and associated land and waters are part of the Country of Traditional Owners in Victoria.

The coastline can have native title rights and interests under the Commonwealth *Native Title Act 1993* or Traditional Owner rights and interests under the Victorian *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010*. The entire coastline is subject to the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* protects all Aboriginal cultural heritage and provides Registered Aboriginal Parties with a range of responsibilities that include the evaluation of cultural heritage management plans and decisions about cultural heritage permit applications.

There are a number of Traditional Owner groups across Victoria's coastline, including those with formally recognised rights over coastal land and waters under these different regimes. Some of Victoria's coastline is jointly managed by Traditional Owners and government agencies.

There are six internationally recognised Ramsar wetlands, 13 Marine National Parks and 11 Marine Sanctuaries along Victoria's coastline.

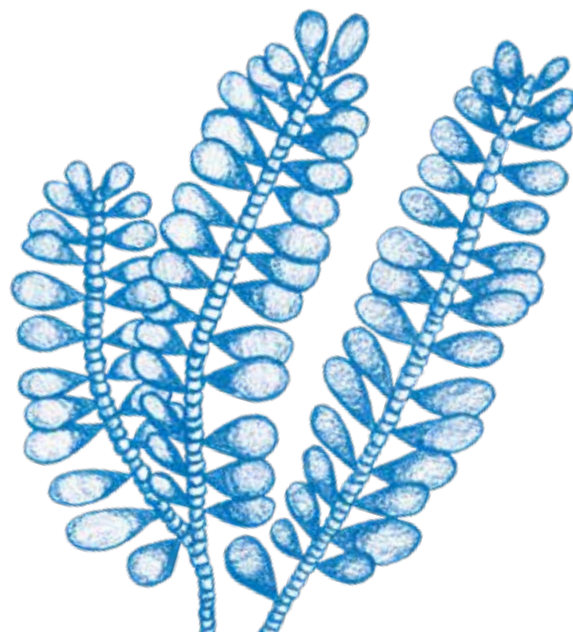
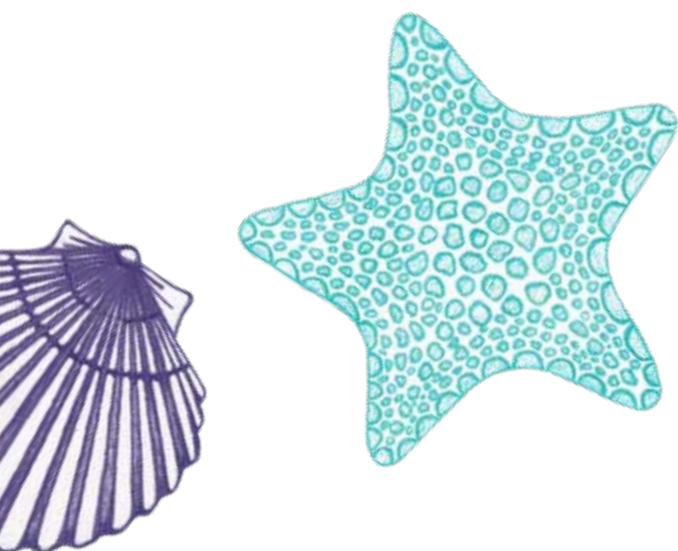
Victoria's marine and coastal environment is made up of biodiverse and dynamic ecosystems which are home to a unique mix of more than 12,000 plant and animal species, many not found elsewhere in the world. The marine environment incorporates ecosystems including sandy seafloors, reefs, sponge gardens, kelp forests and seagrass. Coastal land includes important ecosystems such as wetlands, heaths, coastal forest and woodlands, temperate rainforest and dune complexes. These ecosystems have intrinsic value including the diversity of their genetic information, and the components that make up their structure and function (for example native flora and fauna).

The marine and coastal environment also contributes to the health, wellbeing and prosperity of Victorian communities – see Figure 1.

Victoria's natural environment is under increasing pressure. The Victoria in Future 2019 report shows that Victoria's population will reach 11.2 million by 2056,<sup>1</sup> with considerable growth expected in local government areas adjacent to the Victorian coast. This population increase will see greater demands on marine and coastal resources for recreational and other uses.

Climate change is also projected to increase the risks to Victoria's marine and coastal environment through drivers such as sea-level and temperature rise, ocean acidification, change in wave direction and increases in swell energy and storm tide events. These drivers affect coastal erosion, sediment supply and inundation and are expected to vary geographically across Victoria's coastal zone. They can also affect biodiversity through species squeeze and extinctions.

Stewardship and protection of Victoria's marine and coastal environment is vital, and the critical contribution of communities cannot be overstated.



1. (2019) Victoria in Future 2019; Population Projections 2016 to 2056. Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning; State Government of Victoria.



Figure 1. Summary of values associated with Victoria's marine and coastal environment



# About Coastcare Victoria

## Mission

Coastcare Victoria's mission is to "support communities to care for marine and coastal environments".

Coastcare Victoria's work supports the Victorian Government's Marine and Coastal Policy vision for "a healthy, dynamic, and biodiverse marine and coastal environment that is valued in its own right, and that benefits the Victorian community, now and in the future".

## Coastcare Victoria's core principles

The following are the core principles by which Coastcare Victoria will work to deliver the Strategy. The principles will inform Coastcare Victoria's approach and guide decision making.

### **Coastcare Victoria is community-based**

Victoria's communities are passionate about engaging with the state's unique natural assets. Victorians have a strong ethos for volunteering and a willingness to work in partnership with each other and with government. Coastcare Victoria respects the autonomy and independence of marine and coastal volunteers, organisations, networks and groups. Coastcare Victoria's achievements are the achievements of the community and will be recognised as such.

### **Coastcare Victoria partners with Traditional Owners and the wider Aboriginal community**

Coastcare Victoria works on Country and acknowledges the long-standing relationships that Traditional Owners have with the coast and the wealth of knowledge they hold. In doing so, Coastcare Victoria commits to enabling the process of self-determination and working to identify new opportunities for partnerships which align with Traditional Owner aspirations for Sea Country. Self-determination is all about choice. Traditional Owners have the right to make choices that best reflect them on

their journey to self-determination and self-governance – and that right must be respected.

Coastcare Victoria will work to identify and remove barriers that keep Traditional Owners in Victoria from exercising their right to self-determination. Aboriginal people know what is best for themselves, their families and communities. The program will work to strengthen partnerships with Traditional Owners, department and agency staff and other relevant bodies to develop opportunities to work collaboratively.

### **Coastcare Victoria is science-based, innovative, and driven by knowledge and learning**

Coastcare Victoria seeks to facilitate partnerships between community groups, organisations with scientific agencies, academia and science-to-action programs to identify and share citizen science opportunities.

### **Coastcare Victoria is diverse and inclusive**

Coastcare Victoria recognises that the marine and coastal environment is to be enjoyed by all Victorians, now and in the future. If all Victorians are to truly treasure their unique marine and coastal assets, all Victorians must have access and opportunities to engage. Coastcare Victoria commits to social and cultural inclusion and diversity and providing engagement and volunteering opportunities to all Victorians, regardless of their backgrounds and abilities.

### **Coastcare Victoria is collaborative, integrative and convening**

Coastcare Victoria provides a connective framework, supporting the coastal stewardship community to share ideas, knowledge and stories, and build innovative and effective partnerships. This helps build the capacity needed to mobilise and respond to emerging issues and improve community resilience in the face of change. Coastcare Victoria provides a convening space for action and supports groups to extend this convening role into their communities. Coastcare Victoria commits to sharing, partnerships and working together.



## Why is Coastcare Victoria important?

Victoria has a proud history and culture of volunteering, with communities supporting the management of coastal reserves in Victoria for over 100 years. From the restoration of coastal ecosystems to the protection of threatened species, communities have long been implementing practical responses to the issues that concern them.

The Victorian Government launched the Coast Action program in 1994 and in the same year the first Coast Action group was founded at Jan Juc. In doing so, Victoria became the first state in Australia to formally support its coastal volunteers, recognising that many Victorians were already actively involved in protecting the coast's natural assets.

Now known as Coastcare Victoria, the name has become well known nationally. When the Coastcare Strategy 2011-2015 was launched, there were approximately 150 community-based organisations involved in coastal conservation and protection in Victoria. Today, the Coastcare Victoria database shows that this number is approximately 250.

The annual economic contribution of Victoria's 1.5 million volunteers across all sectors (including environmental) is projected to reach \$42 billion by 2021.<sup>2</sup> The annual economic contribution by coastal volunteers is in the tens of millions of dollars – in 2010, it was assessed to be \$15 million.<sup>3</sup>

Coastcare Victoria supports Coast Action and Coastcare groups, Friends groups, volunteer committees of management, not-for-profit organisations, citizen science efforts and special interest groups (such as threatened species groups and beach clean-up groups).

The important work of community organisations and Coastcare Victoria volunteers contributes to healthy, dynamic and biodiverse marine and coastal environments which are valued, utilised and relied upon by Victorians.

Coastcare Victoria volunteers are often motivated to contribute by a special connection to their local environment, seascape or community, and by a commitment to shared responsibility to maintain an inspiring and liveable environment for future generations.

Additionally, volunteers value the social connections and opportunities to be in nature that volunteering provides. It has been shown volunteers enjoy better physical and mental health than those who don't volunteer.<sup>4</sup> Volunteers also report enjoying the increased environmental awareness and knowledge gained through their participation in Coastcare Victoria activities.

New challenges have emerged since Coastcare Victoria's inception, with the marine and coastal environment facing an increase in pressures from population growth and urbanisation, recreational use, invasive species and climate change.

Additionally, the nature and extent of the volunteering sector is changing as Victorians become increasingly time-poor and the environmental volunteering sector ages. Many Victorians are looking for event-based volunteering opportunities which allow them to make short-term commitments. Accordingly, groups must plan strategically to attract a diverse range of volunteers and embrace new volunteering formats.

Coastcare Victoria has grown and matured since its early days. Today's Coastcare Victoria volunteers are involved in diverse activities and technologies and are playing a major role in engaging and educating the public about marine and coastal issues. Coastcare Victoria is working to sustain and expand coastal groups and networks and enable diversification to attract a new cohort of volunteers.



2. (2017) Volunteers in Victoria; Trends, challenges and opportunities. Ministerial Council for Volunteers: State Government of Victoria.

3. (2011) Coastcare Victoria Strategy 2011-2015. Department of Sustainability and Environment: State Government of Victoria.

4. Casiday, R., Kinsman, E., Fisher, C., & Bambra, C. (2008). Volunteering and Health: What Impact Does It Really Have? Volunteering England.

## Who is involved?

Coastcare Victoria is driven by a community of passionate volunteers, groups and networks with a wealth of expertise, knowledge and experience in protecting and enhancing marine and coastal environments. They are the powerhouse of Coastcare Victoria.

They are diverse and varied in their age, abilities, ethnicities, backgrounds, skills and knowledge. Some people work in the sector or volunteer regularly while others make one-off or occasional contributions. Every person who advocates for or acts on behalf of Victoria's marine and coastal environment plays a valuable role.

Volunteers are also supported by networks of not-for-profit organisations, marine and land managers, local governments, universities and others. Many other organisations interact with Coastcare Victoria in varying capacities to provide stewardship for marine and coastal environments including Traditional Owners.



*Birdlife volunteers with Bellarine Bayside and Coastcare Victoria staff*



*Citizen science training*

## What does Coastcare Victoria do?

Coastcare Victoria volunteer groups use their local knowledge of Victoria's marine and coastal ecology to prioritise, plan and deliver projects and works.

They care for marine and coastal environments locally and more broadly through a huge variety of activities. These include on-ground works such as weeding and revegetation, citizen science activities such as dune monitoring, education activities to raise awareness of coastal values and issues, and engagement activities to involve the broader community.

The DELWP Coastcare Victoria team supports these activities through a range of initiatives including providing grants, training and forums, assistance with administration and project requirements like occupational health and safety and facilitating connections and partnerships amongst coastal networks.

The team also works with the community and organisations in the marine and coastal management sector to deliver the annual Summer by the Sea program and support various events throughout the year.

## Where does Coastcare Victoria work?

Coastcare Victoria activities occur across the Victorian coastline including beaches, estuaries, coastal lakes, foreshores and near-shore marine environments. They work on Crown land managed by DELWP, committees of management, Parks Victoria, local government and local port and water authorities.

## How does Coastcare Victoria operate?

The DELWP Coastcare Victoria team operates as a statewide program with a coordinator and a network of regional Coastcare Victoria facilitators. The team works together to deliver a cohesive program through local actions (see Program delivery section).

## How does Coastcare Victoria engage with and enable Traditional Owners to realise rights, aspirations and knowledge

Coastcare Victoria is committed to engaging with Victoria's Traditional Owners and enabling them in realising their rights, aspirations and knowledge, through the following actions:

- Enabling and encouraging Traditional Owners to apply for grants, including but not limited to the Coastcare Community Grants.
- Building the capacity of individuals through Volunteer Capacity Building in subjects such as grant writing, first aid and strategic planning.
- Empowering Traditional Owners to share their culture, knowledge and wisdom through the Summer by the Sea program, through Welcomes to Country and through running activities.
- Leading by example and encouraging volunteers to engage with Traditional Owners in their everyday work by ensuring Traditional Owners are consulted early in the grant writing and project planning process.
- Encouraging volunteer groups to partner with Traditional Owner natural resource management crews to conduct on ground works.
- Building volunteer knowledge and capacity through training sessions on cultural heritage.

## CASE STUDY - Winter by the Sea

Using volunteer feedback, the Coastcare Victoria team identified a need to build volunteer knowledge on protecting Aboriginal Cultural Heritage when working on the coast.

Participants of Winter by the Sea's Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management workshop were privileged to hear a Welcome to Country from both Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation and Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation, both Traditional Owner representatives of the land on which the workshop was hosted. Stories of working on Country and of the importance of recognising and respecting cultural heritage were shared by both corporations with the workshop participants.

Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation's Senior Archaeologist and Heritage Advisor gave practical examples of what to look for when working on Country to help identify artefacts and more importantly, what to do if volunteers find something of significance while working on Country.

DELWP staff including the Statewide Heritage Management Coordinator, Aboriginal Landcare Facilitator and the Manager Aboriginal Partnership and Engagement Support presented on some of the practical and legal aspects of working on Country and with Traditional Owners. Practical on ground sessions will be conducted with regional Traditional Owner groups to learn about working on their local Country into the future.

### Visit the Coastcare Victoria website:

[marineandcoasts.vic.gov.au/coastcare](https://marineandcoasts.vic.gov.au/coastcare) for Coastcare Victoria program and grants information, an interactive map of environmental volunteering groups in Victoria, useful links for volunteers, volunteering opportunities and more.

Follow us on social media:

 **CoastcareVictoria**

 **@Coastcare\_Vic**

 **coastcare\_victoria**





## Coastcare Victoria Strategy 2021- 2026 vision

Coastcare Victoria's vision for this Strategy is for "thriving community groups and networks providing stewardship for a healthy, valued marine and coastal environment"



## Strategic Pillars 2021-2026

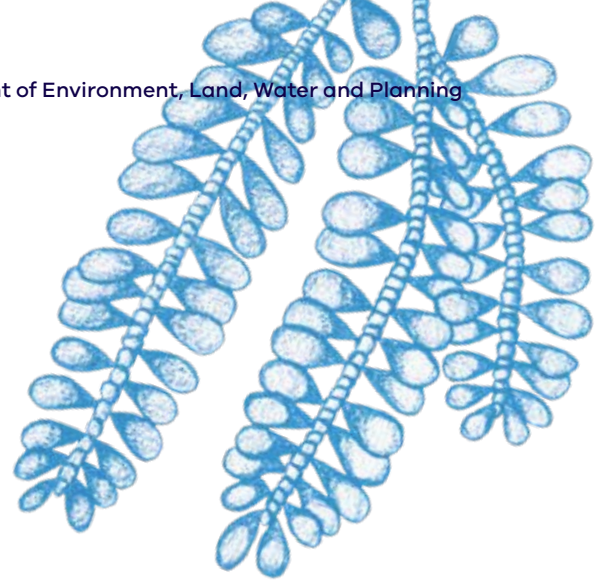


### 1. Marine and Coastal Stewardship

This is the core on-ground component of Coastcare Victoria, where projects unfold. Community organisations and Coastcare Victoria volunteers deliver protection and rehabilitation of marine and coastal environments and make contributions to science and research. In this area, the Coastcare Victoria program will focus on providing grant funding in alignment with key state priorities, connect communities with citizen science opportunities and seek opportunities to enable Traditional Owner self-determination. The program will seek to align community efforts with state and regional policies and priorities and conduct monitoring, evaluation and reporting to demonstrate the value and contribution of the Coastcare Victoria program.

**See page 14 for 5-year goals and actions relating to Marine and Coastal Stewardship.**





## 2. Thriving Community Groups and Networks

The Coastcare Victoria program's primary role is to assist and support communities with the work they do. The program will respond to the changing nature of volunteerism to support groups now and in the future through a team of Coastcare Victoria facilitators. The program will provide capacity building opportunities, spaces to convene, and support to strategically plan, expand and diversify volunteer bases. The program will work to simplify and streamline administration requirements, support volunteers to work safely and ensure the work of Coastcare Victoria volunteers is celebrated and their effort recognised. The program will enable a broad Traditional Owner self-determination approach through respecting Traditional Owner voices and knowledge, through planning, management and decision making.

**See page 15 for 5-year goals and actions relating to Thriving Community Groups and Networks.**

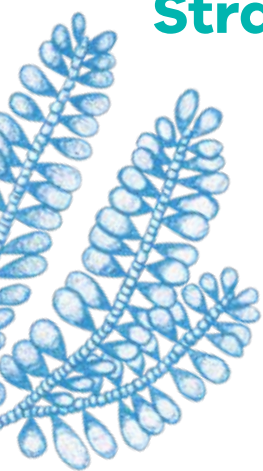


## 3. Victorians Valuing the Coast

With specialised local knowledge, experience and enthusiasm, the Coastcare Victoria community is perfectly placed to engage, educate and involve the broader community in the marine and coastal environment. Coastcare Victoria will continue to include and inspire people from all walks of life to value and care for the coast through community grants projects, the Summer by the Sea program and other initiatives. The program will continue to acknowledge and respect Traditional Owners' longstanding and deep knowledge, and connection to Country.

**See page 16 for 5-year goals and actions relating to Victorians Valuing the Coast.**

# Strategic Plan 2021-2026



## Strategic Pillar 1 - Marine and Coastal Stewardship

### 5-year goals

### Priorities for action

**1.1 Clearly demonstrate how Coastcare Victoria contributes to key state government marine, coastal and social priorities and broad, systemic issues such as climate change mitigation and adaptation, and marine debris and plastic pollution.**

Tailor Coastcare Victoria community grants program to clearly align with and contribute to statewide marine, coastal and catchment priorities.

Encourage the use of DELWP data capture and decision-making tools for environmental protection and improvement works, including in grants acquittals.

Capture data about how community activities contribute to statewide marine, coastal and catchment priorities and broad, systemic issues such as climate change mitigation and adaptation, marine debris and plastic pollution.

Use data from biodiversity decision making tools (for example, NatureKit and CoastKit) to determine how Coastcare Victoria contributes to priority actions.

Facilitate collaboration between Coastcare Victoria volunteer groups, the community and marine and coastal managers.

Enable collaborative management of Country with Traditional Owners.

**1.2 Coastcare Victoria contributes positively to reconciliation and celebration of Aboriginal culture in marine and coastal areas.**

Enable Traditional Owners to realise their goals and aspirations towards self-determination.

Ensure community groups are advised on cultural heritage management requirements with the support and leadership of Traditional Owners.

**1.3 Clearly demonstrate how Coastcare Victoria contributes to marine and coastal citizen science.**

Capture data about how Coastcare Victoria is involved in citizen science activities.

Explore how Coastcare Victoria can better support and contribute to citizen science initiatives.

Promote citizen science opportunities for example the Victorian Coastal Monitoring Program, LitterWatch Victoria, Great Victorian Fish Count, Sea Search (aligns with Seagrass Watch), Seal the Loop, Tangaroa Blue, RedMap, EstuaryWatch and Reef Life Survey.

Develop and communicate key messages about citizen science.

Promote and encourage the use of the latest scientific knowledge and tools.

Link with DELWP Marine Biodiversity Policy and Programs regarding relevant projects DELWP's Marine Knowledge Framework.

## Strategic Pillar 2 - Thriving Community Groups and Networks

5-year goals	Priorities for action
<b>2.1 Enable a strong Coastcare Victoria facilitator network which is well-connected locally and at a state level and shares information, advice and opportunities with community groups and networks.</b>	<p>Include a range of information from state to local level in regular network updates, including information relevant to the focus areas of this Strategy.</p> <p>Focus on connecting Coastcare Victoria volunteer groups with land managers and other groups with similar challenges and opportunities and attend community-led meetings and activities to gather and share information.</p>
<b>2.2 Commit to leadership role as a convenor for community networking.</b>	<p>Develop a plan for each coastal region to convene marine and coastal volunteers and groups through regular formal and informal forums and events at local levels.</p> <p>Develop a digital portal for marine and coastal volunteers and organisations.</p> <p>Undertake a mapping exercise to categorise Coastcare Victoria's relationship with marine and coastal volunteer groups.</p>
<b>2.3 Identify all volunteer groups for which Coastcare Victoria is Responsible Officer and ensure those groups are compliant with OHS requirements.</b>	<p>Ensure all groups for which Coastcare Victoria is the Responsible Officer are informed, educated and compliant with occupational health and safety (OHS) requirements.</p> <p>Liaise with the DELWP Environmental Volunteering team to enable consistent OHS support for volunteer between agencies.</p> <p>Simplify and clarify volunteer OHS and insurance requirements and processes.</p>
<b>2.4 Ensure capacity building programs continue to identify and meet volunteer requirements.</b>	<p>Identify volunteer training and capacity needs.</p> <p>Initiate partnerships with other relevant agencies to maximise efficiency and effectiveness of the capacity building program.</p> <p>Implement capacity building actions outlined in the DELWP Environmental Volunteering Plan ('Sustain' focus area).</p>
<b>2.5 Encourage and support volunteer groups to diversify their membership base, plan for the future and be responsive to change.</b>	<p>Explore strategies for engaging youth in Coastcare Victoria volunteering opportunities.</p> <p>Support volunteer groups to succession plan and incorporate strategies for recruitment and retention.</p> <p>Explore strategies for engaging multicultural communities in Coastcare Victoria.</p> <p>Promote resources and training which enable volunteer groups to be more diverse and inclusive.</p> <p>Explore ways to "reimagine volunteering" to make it more accessible and available for different groups, for example event-based volunteering.</p>
<b>2.6 Encourage and enable relationships between Traditional Owners and Coastcare Victoria stakeholders.</b>	<p>Enable and strengthen relationships with Traditional Owners.</p> <p>Strengthen relationships with Aboriginal staff and programs in DELWP and other relevant authorities.</p> <p>Partner with Traditional Owners to integrate Country knowledge and practices into the Coastcare Victoria program.</p>
<b>2.7 Formalise Coastcare Victoria's recognition program.</b>	<p>Support recognition and reward programs that align with the Strategic Pillars of the Coastcare Victoria Strategy.</p> <p>Promote, celebrate and share stories of success through the statewide network and formal communications channels.</p> <p>Continue to deliver a bi-annual volunteer forum.</p>



## Strategic Pillar 3 - Victorians Valuing the Coast

### 5-year goals

### Priorities for action

#### 3.1 Coastcare Victoria uses education and engagement to contribute to positive behaviour change among coastal users.

Continue to develop and deliver an annual Summer by the Sea (SBTS) program.

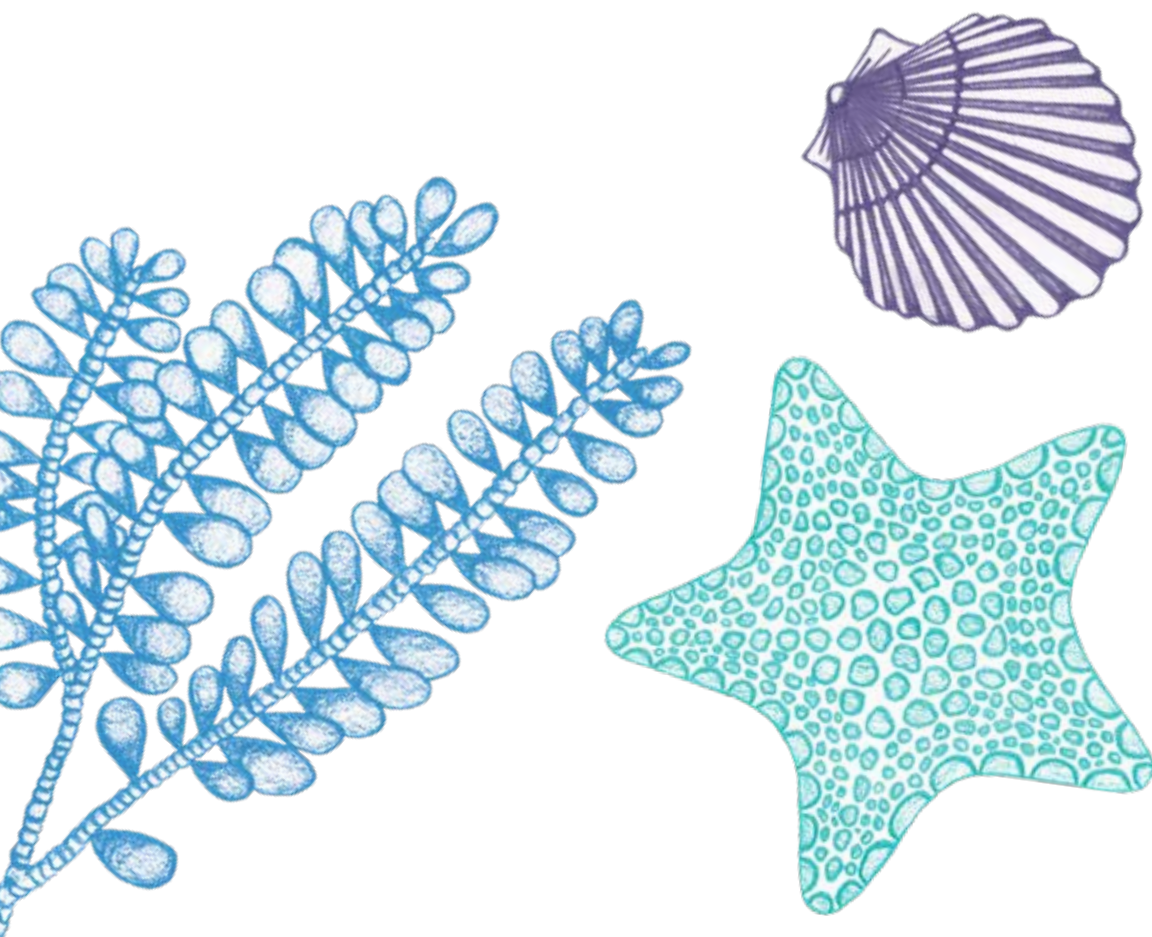
Conduct periodic reviews and evaluations to assess achievement of long-term goals relating to positive behaviour change and volunteering recruitment.

Ensure SBTS continuously improves its accessibility and inclusion for people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities, different socio-economic backgrounds and people with disabilities. For example, actively engage relevant groups and organisations to support their involvement and partner with them to develop activities.

Develop a Coastcare Victoria schools "kit" as a resource to engage young people in caring for marine and coastal environments.

#### 3.2 Enable Traditional Owner self-determination and acknowledge land and sea interconnection.

Enable Traditional Owners to determine and realise their ambitions through actions such as restoring marine and coastal cultural knowledge and practices.





# Program delivery

## People and roles

The people involved in Coastcare Victoria are many and varied, each with a role to play in bringing this Strategy to life. Key roles will include:

### Coastcare Victoria (DELWP)

The Coastcare Victoria program is delivered by a team of Coastcare Victoria facilitators positioned in DELWP's three coastal regions: Port Phillip (including Western Port), Barwon South West and Gippsland.

The Coastcare Victoria Coordinator is positioned in DELWP's Statewide Coastal Programs team and is responsible for overseeing the delivery of the Coastcare Victoria program. The Coastcare Victoria program is governed by the DELWP Coastal Programs Project Control Board.

Each facilitator is responsible for supporting and working with community groups, organisations and coastal management partners to achieve regional outcomes that contribute to the program's overall goals.

Roles include:

- support marine and coastal volunteers and community organisations by:
  - assisting with administration and project requirements
  - providing networking opportunities including a bi-annual forum
  - facilitating relationships and information exchange between Coastcare Victoria stakeholders
  - provision of resources including grants, information and training
  - supporting reward and recognition programs
  - encouraging and supporting volunteer groups to diversify, plan and adapt to changes in volunteering, science and research, practices and physical environments
- work to build stronger relationships with Traditional Owners and to enable self-determination regarding Sea Country
- encourage all Victorians to value the marine and coastal environment through programs such as Summer by the Sea
- program governance, planning, coordination and administration
- program monitoring, evaluation, reporting and improvement
- links and strategic alignment to other strategies, programs, agencies and areas of government.

### Volunteers

Includes Coastcare Victoria and Coast Action volunteer groups, 'Friends of' groups, volunteer committees of management and other marine and coastal volunteers.

Roles include:

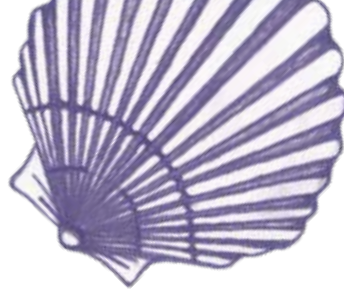
- undertake on-ground works to protect the environment and enhance coastal amenity
- deliver education and community awareness information and programs
- undertake citizen science activities
- liaise with relevant management agencies to ensure alignment with management plans and works approval
- collaborate with other volunteers and community organisations locally and statewide
- advocate for positive environmental change
- produce local media to generate wider community engagement, awareness and appreciation.

### Community organisations

Includes not-for-profit organisations, catchment and community conservation networks and category 1 committees of management.

Roles include:

- build important cross-sector relationships with potential collaborators
- support volunteers with essential resources, knowledge and expertise, funding, skills and attracting additional support
- plan and coordinate volunteer and community activities
- work closely with government to understand local coastal management issues
- lead or support citizen science opportunities
- lead or support advocacy efforts
- lead or support community projects.



### Traditional Owners

Roles include:

- advise on how their rights and interests in Country are to be incorporated in implementing the Strategy
- partner with the Coastcare Victoria program.
- evaluate Cultural Heritage Management Plans
- assess Cultural Heritage Permit applications
- make decisions about Cultural Heritage Agreements
- provide advice on applications for Interim or Ongoing Protection Declarations
- enter into Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Land Management Agreements with public land managers
- nominate Aboriginal intangible heritage to the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register and managing intangible heritage agreements.

### Government agencies and programs

Includes DELWP (as program owner), Parks Victoria, catchment management authorities (CMAs), local government, Landcare Victoria

Roles include:

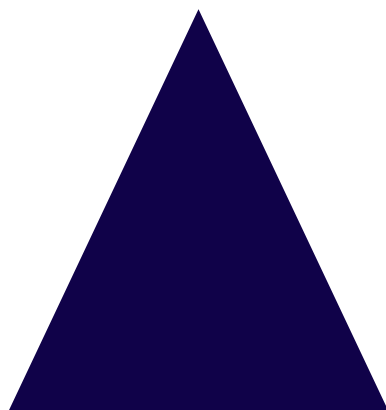
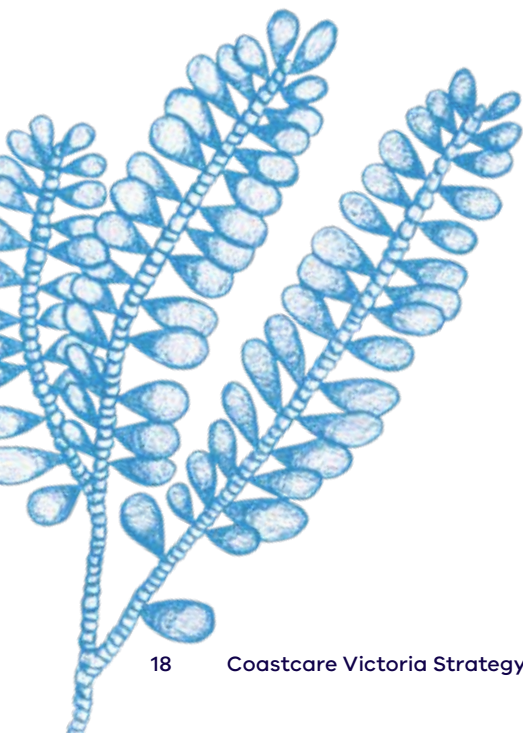
- provide financial resources and grants
- provide practical resources including information, digital tools, training and in-kind support
- support monitoring, evaluation and reporting
- provide strategic alignment with local and state priorities
- ensure alignment with environmental policy and legislation
- partnering with Coastcare Victoria for example Parks Victoria partnership on the Summer by the Sea program.

### Education and research organisations

Includes schools, universities and research bodies.

Roles include:

- form partnerships with community
- provide in-kind support
- education and engagement opportunities.





# How community and Coastcare Victoria work together

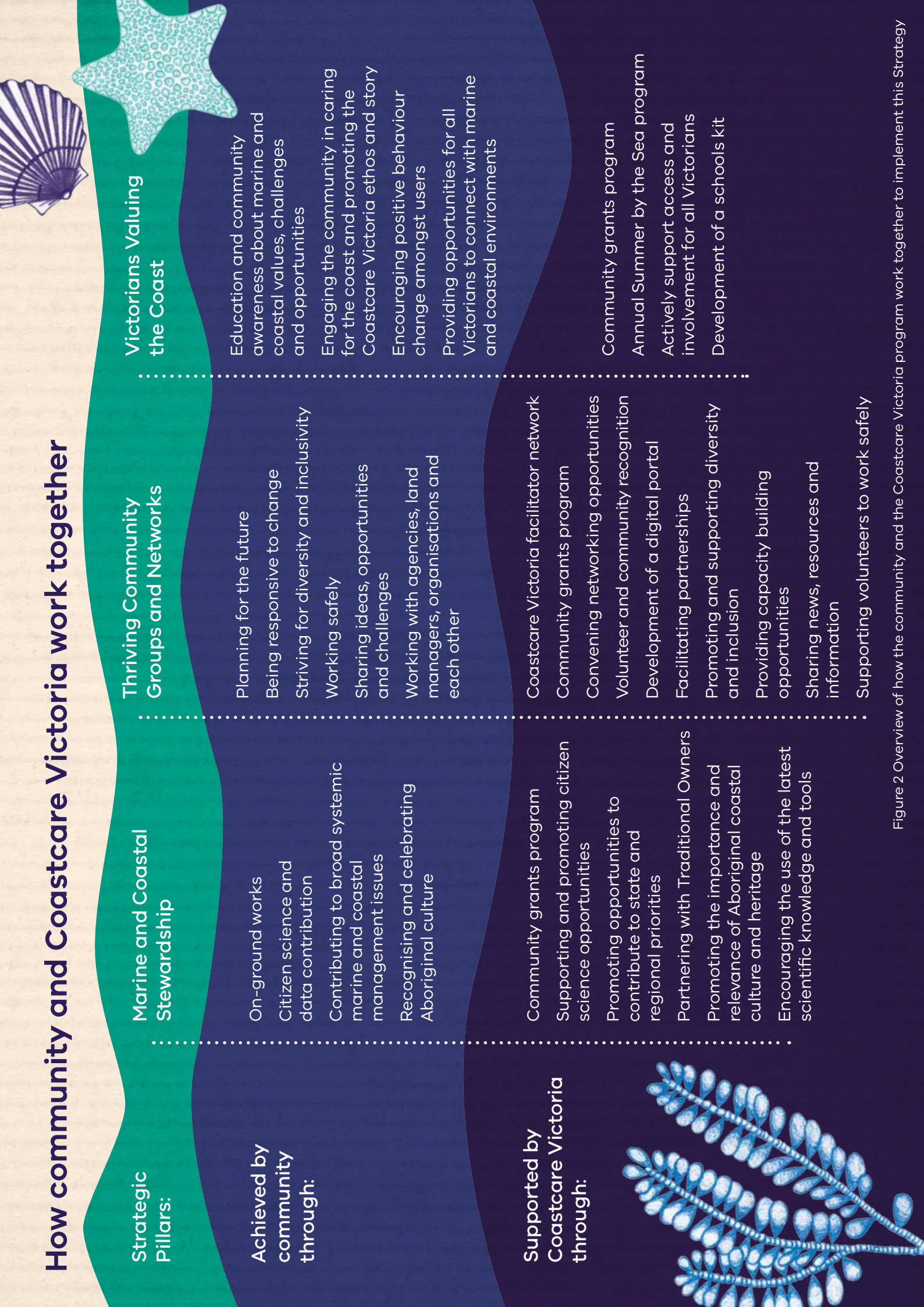
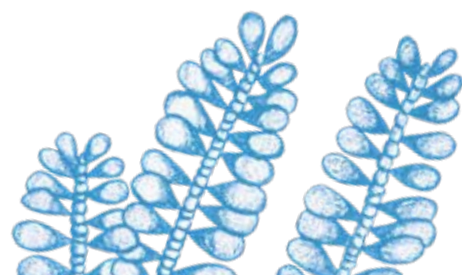


Figure 2 Overview of how the community and the Coastcare Victoria program work together to implement this Strategy

# Enabling Strategy delivery

Coastcare Victoria has set the following goals and actions to enable the delivery of this Strategy and to monitor, evaluate, report on and continuously improve the program.

5-year goals	Priorities for action
<b>4.1 Coastcare Victoria's brand and purpose is clear and well understood by stakeholders.</b>	<p>Develop a communications and engagement plan to tell the Coastcare Victoria story, promote Coastcare Victoria and engage a wider audience.</p> <p>Share stories of success with a wide audience via regular social media posts and other media publications.</p>
<b>4.2 Effectively Monitor, Evaluate, Report and Improve (MERI) the Coastcare Victoria program.</b>	<p>Utilise Coastcare Victoria's new Key Evaluation Questions (KEQs) and MERI framework to evaluate program impact and achievement of program objectives.</p> <p>Deliver a regular report based on the outputs of the program's KEQs to articulate and promote the benefits of the program.</p> <p>Report outcomes against key policy alignment to managers of relevant policies/plans for inclusion in their data sets.</p> <p>Develop and implement a regular actions list for improvement based on KEQ outcomes.</p>
<b>4.3 Improved program governance.</b>	<p>Maintain a central record of groups and networks that Coastcare Victoria supports.</p> <p>Develop an operational plan to implement the priority goals and actions of this Strategy and inform coordinator and facilitator workplans.</p> <p>Provide staff capacity building around emergent issues and priorities.</p> <p>Ensure the DELWP Coastal Programs Project Control Board has oversight of the program.</p>
<b>4.4 Ensure Coastcare Victoria activities are informed by Traditional Owner Country Plans.</b>	<p>Each facilitator to become familiar with Country Plans and priorities in their area and consider Coastcare Victoria activities in this context.</p>
<b>4.5 Ensure Coastcare Victoria works strategically with relevant agencies, programs and staff.</b>	<p>Contribute to DELWP Environmental Volunteering Action Group for gains in consistency, efficiency and effectiveness with other similar programs.</p> <p>Work with DELWP regional teams to leverage off each other's work to better support volunteers and committees of management.</p> <p>Identify and capitalise on opportunities for collaboration, information sharing and efficiencies with relevant agencies, community organisations and programs (such as Traditional Owner Corporations, Landcare, local government and catchment management authorities).</p>





# Appendix

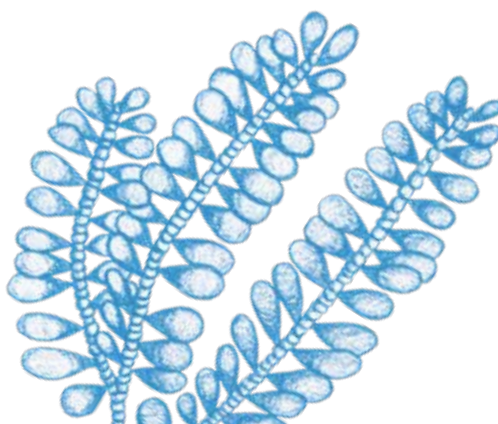
## Alignment with marine and coastal policies and plans

The Coastcare Victoria 2021-2026 Strategy's goals and actions have been developed to align with and support implementation of Aboriginal Plans and Victorian Government strategies, policies and plans listed below.

Coastcare Victoria Strategic Pillars/Areas 2021-2026	Marine and Coastal Stewardship			Thriving Community Groups and Networks							Victorians Valuing the Coast		Enabling Strategy Delivery				
	1.1	1.2	1.3	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.6	2.7	3.1	3.2	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.5
Absolutely everyone—state disability plan 2017-2020																	
Pillar 1: Inclusive communities								✓			✓						
Pupangarli Marnmarnepu 'Owning Our Future' Aboriginal Self-Determination Reform Strategy 2020-2025*																	
Domain 2.1: People		✓							✓			✓					✓
Domain 2.3: Country		✓				✓											✓
One-DELWP Strategic Framework 2019-2023																	
Reduce the harmful effects of pollution and waste on human health and the environment	✓																
Secure a net improvement in the outlook for species	✓																
Increase the sustainable management of public land	✓																
Increase public value benefits from government land	✓																
Increase participation of Traditional Owners in land management decision making and practices		✓															
Increase Victorians valuing nature											✓						
Increase participation in environmental events >35,000											✓						

\* Pupangarli Marnmarnepu is DELWP's roadmap on building a better future with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Victorians, through systemic and structural change that fully supports Aboriginal decision-making, evaluation and talent building to inform its policy and processes.

Coastcare Victoria Strategic Pillars/Areas 2021-2026	Marine and Coastal Stewardship			Thriving Community Groups and Networks							Victorians Valuing the Coast		Enabling Strategy Delivery				
	1.1	1.2	1.3	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.6	2.7	3.1	3.2	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.5
<b>5-year goals</b>																	
<b>Port Phillip Bay Environmental Management Plan 2017–2027</b>																	
Goal: Stewardship of the Bay is fostered across community, industry and government	✓	✓	✓				✓				✓						
Goal: Water quality is improved to ensure environmental health and community enjoyment of the Bay	✓		✓														
Goal: The Bay's habitat and marine life are thriving	✓		✓														
<b>Protecting Victoria's Environment–Biodiversity 2037</b>																	
Goal: Victoria's natural environment is healthy	✓																
Goal: Victorians value nature	✓										✓						
<b>Victorian Marine and Coastal Policy 2020</b>																	
Ecosystems and habitats	✓																
Natural features and landscapes	✓																
Heritage and cultural values	✓																
Managing coastal hazard risk	✓																
Stewardship and collaborative management	✓		✓	✓													



Coastcare Victoria Strategic Pillars/Areas 2021-2026	Marine and Coastal Stewardship			Thriving Community Groups and Networks							Victorians Valuing the Coast		Enabling Strategy Delivery				
	1.1	1.2	1.3	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.6	2.7	3.1	3.2	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.5
Victorians Volunteering for Nature—Environmental Volunteering Plan 2018																	
Key focus area: Sustain				✓	✓	✓	✓						✓				
Key focus area: Expand				✓				✓									
Key focus area: Value	✓		✓							✓			✓				
Key focus area: Understand	✓		✓											✓			
Victoria's Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2017-2020																	
Principle: Community engagement	✓										✓						
Priority action: Help the community to understand and manage the risks and impacts of climate change (part 4)	✓										✓						
Adapting on our coasts (Action 5.3.2)	✓																





### **Our commitment to inclusion and diversity**

Coastcare Victoria supports liveable, inclusive and sustainable communities. Coastcare Victoria wishes to create a culture diverse in ability, gender, sexuality, age, socio-economic status, ethnicities and religious beliefs. Coastcare Victoria believes everyone has the right to feel safe, welcome and have their life experience valued. Fostering diversity and inclusion helps people to learn from each other and develop new ways to work effectively.

At Coastcare Victoria:

- We are connected to liveable, inclusive and sustainable communities
- We are diverse
- We are inclusive and flexible
- We are safe and respectful

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Hornet Press 2/73 Rushdale St, Knoxfield VIC 3180

ISBN 978-1-76105-035-0 (Print)

ISBN 978-1-76105-036-7 (pdf/online/MS word)

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