



MANAGEMENT & IMPLEMENTATION PLAN UPDATE

February 2011

Providing direction and priority for GRCCC programs.

M&I Plan Aims

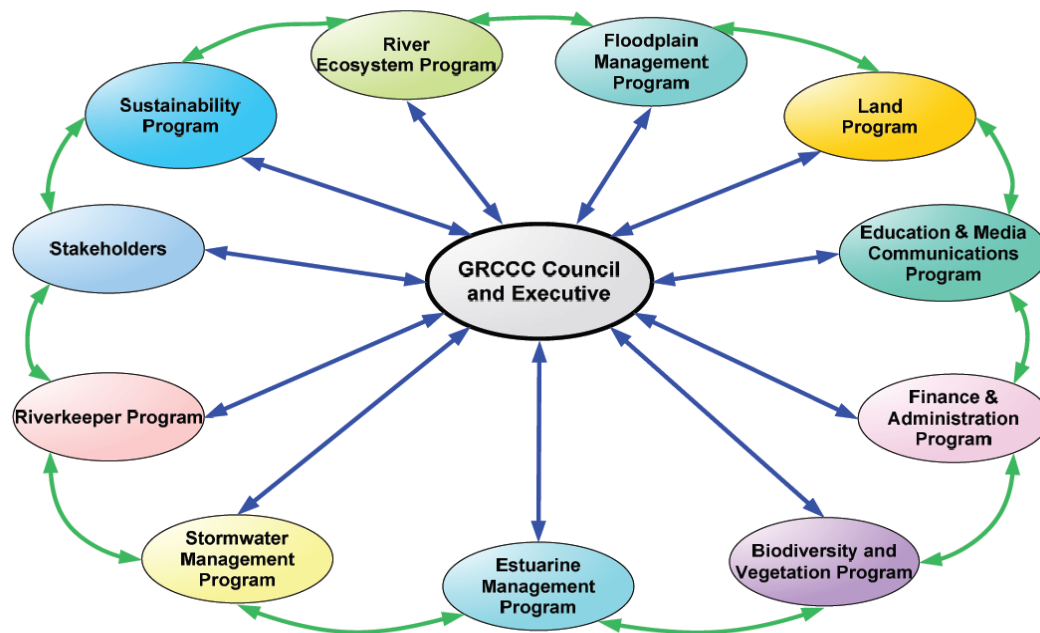
- Allows the GRCCC Council to address priority natural resources management (NRM) targets.
- Guides the activities of the GRCCC while forming the basis for partnerships with the community, business, industry and governments.
- Ensure that NRM projects are undertaken in priority areas within the Georges River Catchment, and that these projects lead to the best outcomes for the environment and the community.

M&I Plan Framework

- Our programs have been developed to be consistent with the Natural Resource Commission's Standard for Quality NRM and the 13 NSW State-wide targets thereby ensuring that we will continue to successfully attract government investment.

GRCCC's 11 Programs

The basis of the M&I Plan are the GRCCC's 11 Programs identified in the Strategic Future study which help group the projects and 74 actions into 11 specialised Cluster programs. Cluster groups form the partnerships across the catchment that are fundamental to the success of the programs.



Riverkeeper Program



Statewide target: By 2015 there is an improvement in the condition of riverine ecosystems.

Issue: Poor Water quality; litter and dumping of rubbish, degraded foreshores.

Responsible organisations: Riverkeeper Cluster Group Members / Councils

Aims

1. Rehabilitation of degraded areas.
2. GRCCC develops and implements the annual Riverkeeper Work Program in partnership with local Councils, Department of Corrective Services and other community and agency stakeholders.

Riverkeeper Program



Actions:

- Develop Annual Riverkeeper Work Plan
- Collect statistical data on works on River
- Co-ordinate on-ground Riverkeeper works & events.
- Monthly / annual reports for councils on program outputs.
- Assist councils to monitor foreshore from water as required.

Outputs and Outcomes

- Improved health of GR foreshore & waterways
- Increase in council on ground projects.
- Improved reporting on program results.
- Engaged community.

Monitoring / Progress Indicator

- Efficient / equitable project planning & scheduling.
- Accurate and timely monthly reporting to councils.
- Improved accuracy of Riverkeeper database.
- Community and corporate engagement activities included in work plan.
- Increase in number of councils actively using program.

Progress Achieved

- 2009/2010 RK work plan developed with councils.
- Councils & Corrective Services (CS) have developed a new strategic and formalised approach to on ground work which adds value to councils and aid reporting for both organisations.
- Significant increase in CS teams / buses .Currently 8 per week - 12 per week by June 2011.
- Councils have several months notice of LGA visits.
- Significant increase in number of catchment work sites & councils actively using the program.
- Full time Riverkeeper with professional bush regeneration qualifications employed to lead and instruct teams in bush regen projects for councils in addition to rubbish clean ups.
- Database audited, revised and updated.

Communications Program



Statewide target: Natural resource decisions contribute to improving or maintaining economic sustainability and social well being.

Issue:

Population with low local NRM knowledge; increasing need for capacity building; local councils have less ability to fund programs.

Responsible organisations:

All Councils / Communications Cluster / Community Members / SMCMA.

Aims:

1. GRCCC to support SMCMA's Community Engagement/ Capacity Program;
2. Raise awareness of NRM issues and management
3. Co-ordinate NRM engagement for GRCCC programs / member councils;
4. Raise profile of GRCCC & increase participation in GRCCC programs.

Communications Program

Actions:

- Develop GR website
- Partner councils / SMCMA in community engagement activities.
- Develop Communications & Partnerships Strategy
- Include education and training needs in all GRCCC projects.

Outputs and Outcomes

- Informed Councils, Community & Stakeholders.
- By 2016, awareness-raising programs have been developed for the GR catchment.
- Communications, & Partnerships Strategy
- Community groups with capacity to engage in NRM on-ground and mgt processes

Monitoring / Progress Indicator

- Website launched and used.
- Training held for community and councils which builds capacity in NRM.
- Increase in community engagement & awareness.
- Communications Strategy developed and implemented.
- Indigenous community engaged and awareness of aboriginal culture and traditional ecological methods increased.

Progress Achieved

- Website built and launched. 2 training sessions held for Council staff to use website CMS.
- Community Engagement Officer Employed
- RiverHealth Monitoring Project engaged over 300 community members .
- Community & council staff trained in scientific methods of assessing ecosystem health.
- Riverhealth Report Cards released.
- Riverkeeper Program raises awareness of environmental issues to over 1000 detainees per year.
- Training in bush regen techniques given to teams.
- Communications Cluster group (media and coms officers) formed in 2010.
- Draft Media Policy Developed.
- Cultural Heritage study prepared for Estuary Management Plan.

Estuary Management Program



Issue:

Lack of co-ordination from NRM managers to reduce serious impact of urbanisation on estuarine health. Examples of threats include water pollution, destruction of seagrass and other vegetation communities; reduction in mangrove communities and sediment contamination.

Responsible organisations:

SSC, BCC, RCC, KCC, HCC, LCC, DECCW, NPWS, SMCMA and other agency stakeholders and community.

Aims

GRCCC leads the development and implementation of an Estuary Management Plan for the Georges River.

Actions:

- Form EMC.
- Develop Consultancy briefs.
- Engage Consultants, develop studies.
- Obtain DECCW funding for subsequent planning stages.
- Lead councils to implement EMPs and seek DECCW funding to subsidize actions in EMP.

Outputs and Outcomes

- Improved health of Georges River estuary, including water quality, riparian vegetation, threatened species, aquatic habitat & pests.
- Grant Application for each stage of planning process successful.
- Consultants engaged, studies completed.
- EMP

Monitoring / Progress Indicator

- EMC established.
- DECCW Grant funding & matching council funding secured .
- Consultants brief written and reviewed by EMC.
- Consultants engaged and each planning stage completed.
- Councils secure funding from DECCW for up to 50% of actions in EMP.

Progress Achieved

- EMC established.
- Grant funding and council funds secured
- Briefs developed with EMC and issued to consultants.
- SMEC (Aust) Pty Ltd engaged and comprehensive GR Data and Estuary Processes study produced .
- DECCW / Council and LGRSI funding secured for final 2 stages of EMP process, the Estuary Management Study and Plan.
- Consultants brief developed and issued to consultants for quotation 4 Feb 2011.

Issue:

Community confusion about NRM roles of government agencies, local Councils; absence of most long term NRM Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (MER) in catchment. Need to improve monitoring and reporting and administration systems.

Responsible organisations: All Councils / SMCMA / NRM Agencies.

Aims

1. GRCCC leads the development and implementation of an M&I Plan.
2. Partner with SMCMA to develop NRM MER framework for Georges River
3. Partner with SMCMA to develop catchment wide data framework for NRM activities.
4. Improve administrative function and management of GRCCC.

Finance and Admin Program



Actions:

- Develop an action plan for the GR catchment.
- Secure 4 year council hosting for GRCCC.
- Review GRCCC fee structure to better reflect expanded services following strategic review and ensure equity in fees across the catchment.
- Partner with SMCMA to develop a detailed catchment-wide MER framework plan.
- Partner with SMCMA to develop a GR catchment data / reporting system for NRM activities

Outputs and Outcomes

- GR M&I Plan
- 4 year hosting to minimise disruption.
- New fee structure and improved financial reporting.
- Staffing structure, and finances of GRCCC support delivery of program outcomes.

Monitoring / Progress Indicator

- GR M& I Plan
- 4 year hosting period and greater administrative stability of GRCCC.
- Financial resources adequately support programming.
- Adequate staff to deliver program outcomes.
- GRCCC financial resources are used efficiently and responsibly.

Progress Achieved

- Plan endorsed by GRCCC 1 May 08
- 4 Year hosting adopted by GRCCC.
- Finance / Admin Cluster formed and fees review conducted . To ensure equitable contribution of councils and delivery of M&I Plan. Fee review recommendations endorsed by GRCCC in June 2009.
- Improved financial reporting in 2009/2010 annual report. GRCCC accounts independently audited on annual basis.
- Review of GRCCC operational budget following fee review. Review of resource requirements for Riverkeeper Program. Employed fulltime GRCCC Riverkeeper & part time Admin officer within same budget.

River Ecosystems Program



Statewide target: By 2015 there is an improvement in the condition of riverine ecosystems.

Issues:

Poor water quality due to unsustainable methods of urban water management.
Degraded riparian vegetation, corridors and habitat.
Unsustainable practices of local Councils, small businesses and community.

Responsible Organisations: All GRCCC Councils / SMCMA . Program based on the objectives of the Mid & Upper, Lower & Improving Prospect Creek Urban Sustainability Initiatives and the BBWQIP.

Aims:

1. Develop a consistent and co-ordinated approach to Stormwater Management.
2. Increase community pride, awareness, consultation and engagement in the Georges River.
3. Improve the health and ecological function of riparian areas, wetlands & aquatic ecosystems.
4. Increased level of communication, co-ordination and consistency in planning between councils & NRM agencies.

River Ecosystems / River Health Program

Actions:

- Establish Cluster Group
- Lead local councils to improve urban water management .
- Lead local councils to Improve and protect urban bush land and creeks .
- Increase community engagement in NRM.
- Support council and community sustainability initiatives.

Outputs and Outcomes

- Improved health of GR waterways.
- Increase in community awareness, involvement and capacity .
- Increased council bushland restoration works
- Increased awareness of urban stormwater issues and WSUD.
- Improved sustainability practice of councils.

Monitoring / Progress Indicator

- Increase in species richness.
- Improved Monitoring Results.
- Increased community participation in GRCCC programs.
- Interpretive material on website relating to River Health and sustainability.
- Training conducted on ecosystem monitoring methods.
- Restoration works identified using Riverhealth results.
- WSUD workshops

Progress

- Cluster group established.
- Riverhealth Monitoring Program formed. Sampling at 42 sites twice a year, 300 community volunteers, issued 3 Riverhealth Report cards. Interim regional WQ guidelines developed.
- Urban Water Mgt workshops conducted by GRCCC to identify WQ targets and LEP / DCP clauses.
- GRCCC promotes WSUD workshops in association with LGRSI / MGRSI.
- GRCCC/LGRSI/MGRSI/UGRSI arrange Georges River Cruise to raise Clr & exec mgt awareness of urban water issues / WSUD

Benefits of Program / cluster participation



- Sharing expertise between member councils facilitates a regional level exchange of information
- Pooling of resources to reduce duplication.
- Joint projects are more economical and efficient as similar issues are faced in other LGA's.
- Impacts stem beyond the local government boundary and can't be dealt with effectively without a regional approach e.g. water quality.
- A collaborative approach helps avoid ad hoc decision-making that does not fix problems operating at larger spatial scales e.g. development controls for controlling sedimentation
- High profile programs across the whole catchment such as the Upper, Middle and Lower Georges River Sustainability Programs and EMP are more likely to attract Fed / State grants to help implement them.
- The GRCCC's contacts and networks with councils and agencies can assist councils with other issues.

Strategy Update:



- Original M&I Plan developed to align with Local Council 3-5 year management plans, annual business plans, environmental management plans, water management plans, stormwater management plans, floodplain management plans, plans of management for the Riverine corridor, and estuary management plans.
- The M&I Plan was adopted by the GRCCC in 2008. The plan contains lots of duplication, is relatively cumbersome and requires updating.
- Half day facilitated strategic planning session with councils and other stakeholders to re-assess program priorities and refresh focus to reflect current council and agency planning.
 - e.g. – Review GRCCC’s current resources, direction and commitment from councils on program input, consider activating new programs such as Floodplain Management Program and consolidating or rationalising other programs ie Stakeholder Program becomes part of communications program?