

Ref: CO553/K.26.1

13 October 2009

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Dear \_\_\_\_\_,



**Priorities for Regional Collaboration on Victoria's Western Coast: Coastal Planning and Natural Resource Management – Final Report**

I am delighted to provide you with the Final Report for the *Priorities for Regional Collaboration on Victoria's Western Coast: Coastal Planning and Natural Resource Management* (Coastal Priorities) Project.

The project evolved considerably from its genesis in early 2007 and drew on the skills and expertise of a broad range of regional stakeholders. The project was designed to pilot a dedicated process to work towards improved collaboration, investment and alignment between organisations with common interests and complimentary responsibilities for delivering integrated coastal zone management (ICZM) through coastal planning and natural resource management activities. The need for such a process was reinforced through the participation and input of decision makers, chief executives, senior officers, professional staff and technical experts.

The priority-setting process identified five overarching themes for collaboration across the region:

- Identifying and assessing coastal natural assets
- Positioning the region to respond to climate change
- Addressing the pressures of population growth and development
- Clarifying organisational roles and facilitating collaborative arrangements
- Improving the awareness and engagement of communities and stakeholders

From these themes, a series of potential initiatives were identified for each theme and a suite of higher order Priority Projects for collaborative action recommended. These are outlined in the attached Executive Summary and are shown on the following page for your information.

The evolution of the project is described in the attached Executive Summary and Final Report. The component documents that drove the project, including the literature review and priority-setting methodology, are currently being adapted for electronic publication and will be available on the Board's website in the coming weeks.

The Board would like to thank the organisations and individuals who participated in the project through the various workshops. A full list of participants is provided in Appendix I of the Final Report.

The project would not have been possible without the financial support of many regional organisations. Contributions exceeded expectations by almost 10% to provide a total project budget of \$122,500 from the Board's initial cash investment of \$15,000. Our thanks go to the following organisations for their contributions: Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority, Corangamite CMA, Department of Planning and Community Development, Parks Victoria, Environment Protection Authority, Warrnambool City Council, Glenelg Shire Council, Moyne Shire Council, Surf Coast Shire Council and Wannon Regional Water Authority.

The regional operating environment has changed considerably since the commencement of the project, particularly through the release of a revised Victorian Coastal Strategy 2008 and the establishment of the Regional Strategic Planning Initiative. We have been encouraged by the level of interest, investment, and participation from partners and are now investigating the feasibility of a second annual cycle to ensure any future priority-setting complements existing processes. We expect to seek the involvement of key regional stakeholders to progress this over October-November 2009. The Board will consider a second annual cycle at its December meeting, after which I expect to be in contact again.

Thank you again for your interest in improving collaboration in the region and your participation in the project. If you have any queries, please contact me directly on 5226 4008 or call Linda Kelly, Project Manager, on 5226 4733.

Yours sincerely



Steve Blackley  
**Executive Officer**

**Attached**

Coastal Priorities Executive Summary  
Coastal Priorities Final Report

The **Priority Projects** for collaborative action include:

***A consistent Asset and Threat Framework*** (including monitoring of asset condition)

***A collaborative research program*** for

- assets, threats and systems
- climate change impacts
- demographic changes and development pressures

***A regional approach*** to

- climate change response, including the potential for a Coastal Action Plan
- coastal planning, including engagement with the Regional Strategic Planning initiative and TBL assessment of development opportunities
- education and capacity building

***Refining the Coastal Priorities process***