

# GMCA ANNUAL REPORT // 2021 - 2022

GOULBURN  
MURRAY  
°CLIMATE  
ALLIANCE



# About

The Goulburn Murray Climate Alliance is a formal collaboration of 13 local government councils, two Catchment Management Authorities and informal collaboration with DELWP Hume and the Victorian Alpine Resorts. The Alliance has worked together to build capacity to undertake programmes that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and implement regional adaptation projects generally beyond the reach of individual member organisations.

The GMCA's work is complemented by advocacy, capacity building and regional partnerships across the state and beyond.

# Impact

Although calculations are ongoing, the net benefits of the GMCA's work in the region has returned approximately 6 times the amount invested by member organisations in the form of membership fees and project costs.

# Year at a glance

## \$2.7M

Impact from advocacy (to 2046)

## \$1.1M

savings in 21/22 from climate projects

## 23,949

tonnes avoided greenhouse emissions

# Our Members



# Chair Person's Statement

I am proud to present GMCA's annual report in a year of change and challenge. Despite this the Alliance has gone on to lead the way with ambitious projects across urban greening, and land use planning, whilst capitalising on the positive outcomes emerging from 2020-21 projects, the Victorian Energy Collaboration (VECO) and Charging the Regions.

This financial year we said a sad goodbye to former Executive Officer Bronwyn Chapman, who has been with the GMCA since 2017, and presided during the most challenging years of the pandemic. Bronwyn guided us through a number of pivotal projects, including the Victorian Energy Collaboration, a landmark initiative and the largest ever emissions reduction project undertaken in the Australian local government sector.

The Alliance also welcomed new Executive Officer, Carole Hammond in September 2021. Carole took over one of our much anticipated regional projects, Naturally Cooler Towns which was funded by DELWP. NCT reviewed each municipality's gaps and opportunities in adapting its planting and arborist needs to a changing climate.

The detailed report, with adaptive species listings is on the GMCA website. Many councils are currently implementing the NCT recommendations. A new regional arborist network will commence in 2022/23. The shared knowledge and resources that arise from this network is highly anticipated by many staff.

This report also acknowledges the outcomes of our cross-collaborations with the Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance, and the role the Charging the Regions Report has had in bringing electric vehicles to the regions. The excellent research and data in CtR directly informed state and local governments, leading to numerous successful grants to install EV charging stations in 2022.

One new key project will enable our region to adapt to a changing climate, and build capacity across our member organisations. In 2022 the GMCA led an initiative to fund and employ a 12 month shared ESD Planner position that will work across the Sustainable Subdivisions Framework. Eight councils, the GMCA, and the DELWP Planning Hub contributed to funding the role which will commence in August 2022. Seven other Victorian councils have built upon GMCA's success and will also collaboratively advertise a similar shared role.

I am delighted to see that the innovation and collaboration that GMCA is known for will continue into a new Strategic Plan era for the next four years.

**Cr Rohan Webb**  
**Mansfield Shire Council**  
**GMCA Chair**

# Summary of 2021-22 | outcomes against strategic plan

| Strategy Direction | Initiatives   | Outcomes  |
|--------------------|---|---|
| Learning           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Training 'Our Council &amp; Climate Change'</b></li> <li>• <b>Greenhouse Alliances Conference 2022</b></li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Councillors from five councils participated in this high level governance training planned &amp; hosted by DELWP in late 2021.</li> <li>• Councillors, staff and consultants attended the first VGA annual conference in two years since the pandemic lockdowns. The GMCA helped plan, and hosted 2 sessions.</li> </ul>   |
| Communication      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Created Basecamp portal</b></li> <li>• <b>Reconfigured website with member's portal</b></li> <li>• <b>Advocacy: State Gov't Interim Target</b></li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The GMCA created a portal on the VGA Basecamp site for staff to discuss projects, issues and opportunities.</li> <li>• The website was updated, with a new domain and layout. Members were given access to a new intuitive section for their private use.</li> <li>• GMCA led the Victorian Greenhouse Alliances advocacy to the Victorian State Government's request for input regarding the interim emissions target.</li> </ul>   |
| Partnerships       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Naturally Cooler Towns</b></li> <li>• <b>Shared SSF ESD Planning Advisor</b></li> <li>• <b>Electricity Distribution Price Review : VGA's</b></li> <li>• <b>AusNet public lighting MV replacements</b></li> <li>• <b>Planning for a Safe Climate VGA campaign</b></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members took part in this study looking at gaps and opportunities across the region in relation to public and private open space. Recommendations and reports were shared, with a new Regional Arborist's Network set to commence in 2022/23.</li> <li>• In 2022 eight councils and the DELWP Planning Hub co-contributed to employ a shared Sustainable Subdivisions Planner to work across the region.</li> <li>• In 2021 the collaborative efforts of the VGA's saw combined savings realised of \$30.5m statewide, and \$2.6m to GMCA members.</li> <li>• The collaborative efforts of the Alliances in 2021-22 is assisting councils to navigate new mercury vapour lighting replacements, accessing audits, grants and information.</li> <li>• In 2021 the VGA's and CASBE commenced collaborating to advocate to the Victorian Government to ensure climate change is recognised in the planning scheme.</li> </ul> |
| Governance         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Completed the 2022-2026 Strategic Plan, and 2022-23 Business Plan</b></li> <li>• <b>Facilitated Executive Committee &amp; EO 360 Review</b></li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A February workshop and engagement to finalise the new 2022-2026 GMCA Strategic Plan was finalised, with the adjacent 2022-23 Business Plan.</li> <li>• In 2022 the Executive Committee and Executive Officer participated in a facilitated 360 review, identifying gaps, opportunities and achievements. The EC and EO will continue to action the outcomes in 2022-23.</li> </ul>  |

Direct mitigation

Tool Development

Feasibilities/Studies

Advocacy

Victorian Energy Collaboration

Watts Working Better

PLAN:  
Climate Change Adaptation Framework

TOOLS: LG Carbon Accounting Training

TOOL: Carbon Crunching Councils

STUDY: Charging the Regions - EV Networks

ADVOCACY: ESD in the planning system

2009-12

2013

2015

2017

2018

2019

2020

2021

2022

STUDY: EVs in Council Fleets

TOOL: Climate Smart Ag Development

Local Government Energy Saver Project

ADVOCACY: Electricity Distribution Price Review

Electric Vehicle Chargers Northeast

STUDY: Naturally Cooler Towns

## PROJECTS & IMPACT

# Testimonials

As a small, regional shire we get so much value from working together in the Alliance to create shared solutions and outcomes; our capacity is greatly expanded to well beyond what we are capable of on our own.

In “Around the Regions” I’m always amazed at just how much we are doing as individual councils and how useful it is to confer and learn from each other’s successes and failures.

The Naturally Cooler Towns project and Meg Caffin’s consultation and collation to provide individual council responses to tree management in the region will be invaluable to our council and has provided essential data and recommendations for the region.

Another great outcome this year has been working with DELWP to employ an ESD Planning Advisor to assist councils to implement the Sustainable Subdivisions Framework. I know our council will appreciate this assistance and our Alliance will benefit from a shared strategy.

Having the opportunity to think and work strategically and collaborate on projects to create a more sustainable future for our region is very rewarding.

**Cr Diane Sheppard**  
**Indigo Shire Council**

As a founding member of the Alliance, the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority is excited to see the GMCA continue to grow and evolve. The Alliance provides a great opportunity for the GB CMA to collaborate with a range of partners committed to mitigating and tackling the impacts of climate change. Throughout the development of the Goulburn Broken Regional Catchment Strategy ([goulburnbroken.rcs.vic.gov.au](http://goulburnbroken.rcs.vic.gov.au)) the GMCA actively contributed and shaped the strategy which guides actions to improve and protect the Goulburn Broken Catchment’s land, biodiversity, water and community. Climate change presents a great challenge to the health of our Catchment, and partnerships such as the GMCA are critical in driving a response in our region.

**Chris Cummings, CEO**  
**Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority**

Participation in the GMCA provides me with a community of colleagues who are not only working on similar problems but doing so in a very similar context. That’s important because it makes those solutions relatable. You can see how—sometimes with a bit of tweaking—they might be adapted to suit your community’s unique situation.

But what I value most is the opportunity to go beyond what can be achieved by any individual Council—an invitation to think much bigger and set sights on what might be achieved when we all pull together.

**Cr Jack Herry**  
**Rural City of Wangaratta**

# Contact

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