

VICTORIAN COASTAL WETLAND RESTORATION PROGRAM

Victoria's new Climate Change Act 2017 and the proposed Marine and Coastal Bill 2017 offer significant opportunities to develop systems to improve the management and protection of Victoria's coastal and marine areas, of which coastal wetlands represent a critical but degraded asset.

We acknowledge and respect Victorian Traditional Owners as the original custodians of Victoria's land and waters, their unique ability to care for Country and deep spiritual connection to it. We honour Elders past and present whose knowledge and wisdom has ensured the continuation of culture and traditional practices.

THE VICTORIAN COASTAL WETLAND RESTORATION PROGRAM WILL:

PROGRAM 1.

WETLAND RESTORATION STRATEGY

Develop and test a wetland restoration and conservation strategy that will provide critical information on coastal wetland restoration. Specifically, we will develop a Restoration Action Plan based off of detailed field investigations and hydrodynamic models to inform site constraints and opportunities, as well as potential ecological linkages for present day and future scenarios. The site-specific strategy itself will be designed to be upscaled and replicated across other sites in Victoria and across Australia more broadly.



PROGRAM 2.

ON-GROUND WORKS

Undertake on-ground restoration within 3 regions along Victoria's coast (Pt. Lillias, Bass River & Gippsland Lakes), to repair ~100 hectares of threatened saltmarsh and wetland habitat, and thereby helping to provide essential habitat for the Orange-Bellied Parrot - one of the Australia's most endangered animals - as well as other ecologically-significant birds (27 bird species), plants (The Rare Bitter-bush, Tiny Arrowgrass, Devious Sea-wrack and Sea Water-mat), and frogs (Green and Golden Bell Frog and Growling Grass Frog).



PROGRAM 3.

PROTECTING ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE

Perform remedial work with Traditional Owners at 16 coastal sites within Port Phillip Bay - the largest cluster of Aboriginal cultural heritage sites in Port Phillip Bay (as identified by PPACH report). This will address a number of threats to these sites, that will also benefit biodiversity in the Port Phillip Bay (Western Shoreline) & Bellarine Peninsula RAMSAR site.



This program will enable Victorians the opportunity to strategically invest in the health of our coast with respect to biodiversity enhancement, cultural heritage/services, coastal and shoreline protection, marine life and fish habitat, and carbon sequestration – all of which are critical to our health, prosperity, and very existence. Furthermore, the preservation of wetlands provides us with the opportunity to test research solutions for helping mitigate climate change and improve natural capital whilst simultaneously contributing to economic growth, capacity building alongside traditional owners and land managers, and community wellbeing in Victoria.



FUNDING FOR THIS PROGRAM:



This project has been funded by the Victorian Government's Biodiversity Response Planning program and is helping to ensure that Victoria's natural environment is healthy, valued and actively cared for.



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PROJECT PARTNERS

This work is lead by **Deakin University's Blue Carbon Lab** involving the following project partners:

