

MERI Plan

A plan for monitoring, evaluating, reporting and improving the Healthy Waterways Strategy (HWS)

October 2019 Sharyn RossRakesh

Outline & acknowledgements

- Context (strategy development)
- MERI plan
- Key points

Helen
Watts



Michelle
Dickson



Amanda
Wealands



Context

Co-designing the Healthy Waterways Strategy

Context – HWS development

COLLABORATIVE DESIGN OF THE HEALTHY WATERWAYS STRATEGY | SEPT 2016
-JUL 2018

2600+ COMMENTS FORMALLY CONTRIBUTED

50 formal submissions

COLLABORATION

437 WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS



250+ ORGANISATIONS

23 WORKSHOPS

4 LABS

9 COMMUNITY LISTENING POP-UPS

9 SITE TOURS

INTERNAL MELBOURNE WATER DISCUSSIONS

11 PROJECT LEADERSHIP TEAM MEETINGS

- VOLUNTEER WORKING GROUPS
- DISCUSSIONS WITH TRADITIONAL OWNER GROUPS
- CONVERSATIONS WITH FRIENDS OF AND LANDCARE GROUPS
- SCIENCE DELIBERATIONS WITH MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY
- COUNCIL MEETINGS AND AGENCY DISCUSSIONS

YOURSAY
ENGAGEMENT WEBSITE

40,326

PAGE VIEWS

60 PAGES OF SCIENCE DATA PUBLISHED

1898 REPORT DOWNLOADS

INTERACTIVE DROP-PIN MAPS



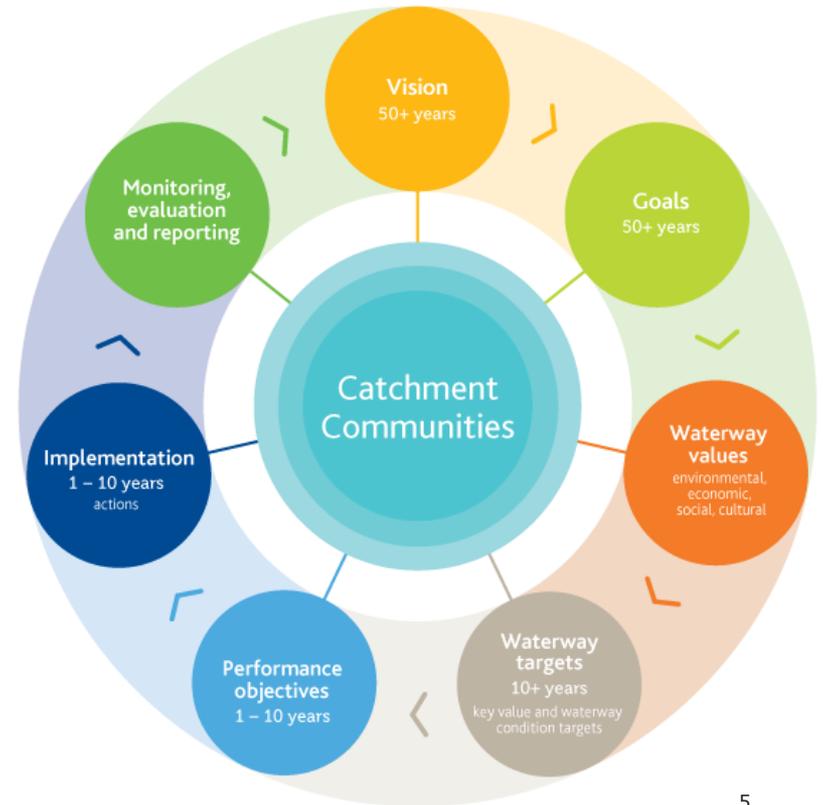
WURUNDJERI LAND COUNCIL SECONDMENT

Advocacy support via Environmental Justice Australia



Context HWS development

"Merri Creek Management Committee (MCMC) is strongly supportive of the objectives of the Healthy Waterways Strategy and is very interested in participating in the delivery of the Strategy."



Increase **access** along waterways by 34 km.

Environmental water reserve is increased by 7 GL/year by 2028

Progressively implement **stormwater harvesting**. Around 16.9 GL/year of stormwater harvested and 3.0 GL/year infiltrated.

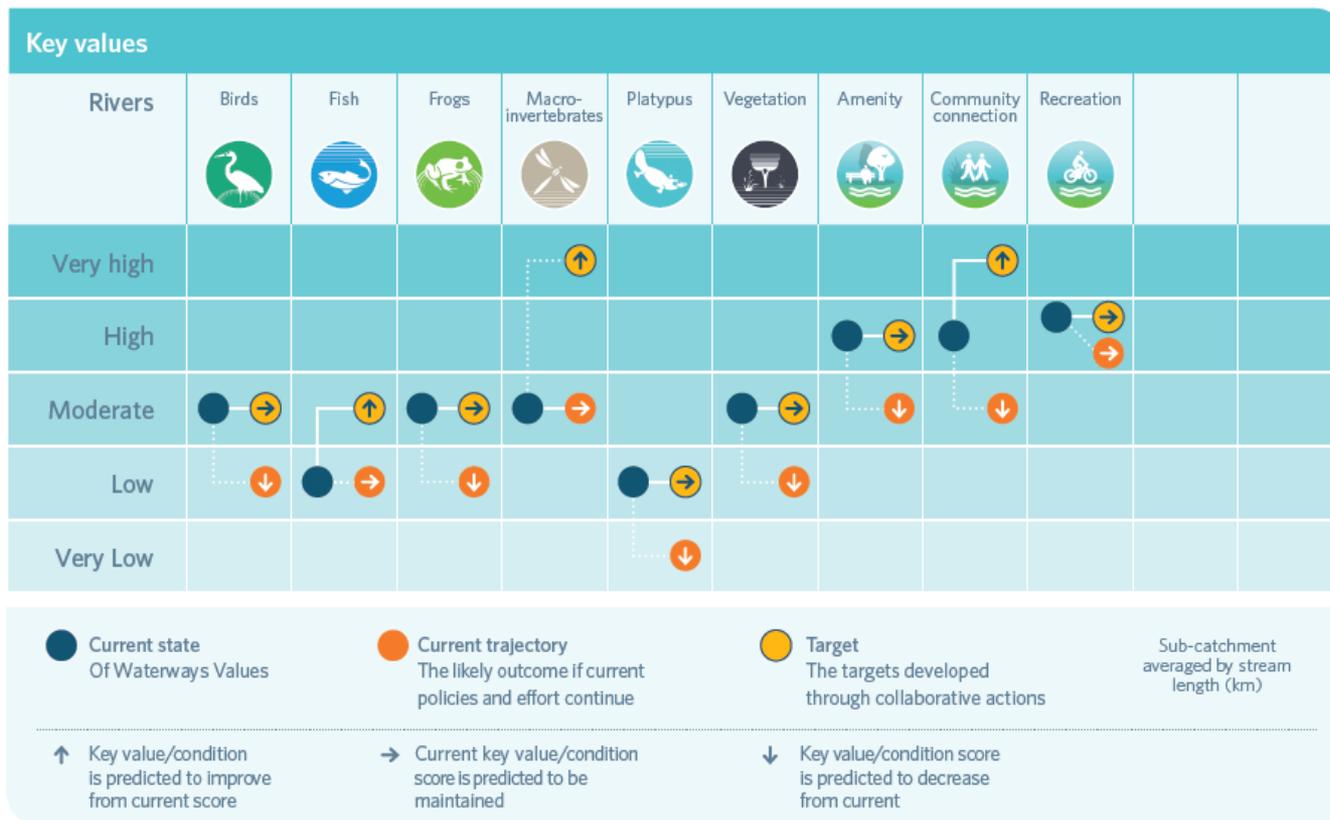
Establish 435 km and maintain 648 km of continuous **vegetated buffers** along at least 80% of priority reaches.

Wetlands: Eg Implement key actions in the Ramsar Site Management Plan

Estuaries: Eg Enhance estuarine vegetation



Example of long term key value targets



MERI

Developing a MERI plan for the HWS

Where does the MERI plan fit?

Healthy Waterways Strategy

Region-wide Strategy

5 x
Co-Designed Catchment Programs



MERI

Resource Doc



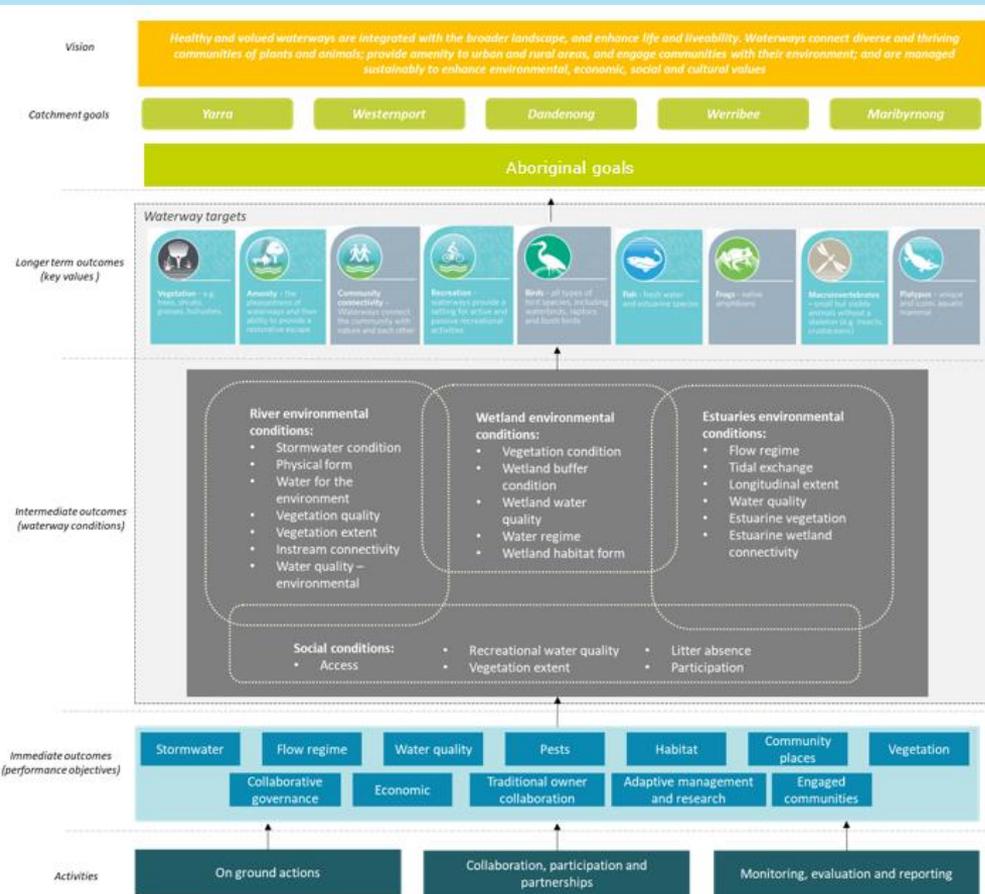
Key values (environmental and social)
Environmental conditions
Performance Objectives



“Monitoring, evaluation and reporting provides a mechanism to check and adjust implementation, performance objectives and targets to respond to changing conditions, successes or failures, and evolving challenges during the life of the Strategy.”



Program Logic



assumptions



externalities

Key Evaluation Questions

Evaluation question

When it is asked

KEQ No. 1 - To what extent have the performance objectives of the Strategy been achieved?

- Annual
- Event-based (as needed)

KEQ No. 2 - To what extent has progress been made towards the longer term environmental condition targets for rivers, wetlands and estuaries?

- Mid-term (2022)
- End of Strategy (2026)

KEQ No. 3 – What is the state of waterway values?

- Mid-term (2022)
- End of Strategy (2026)

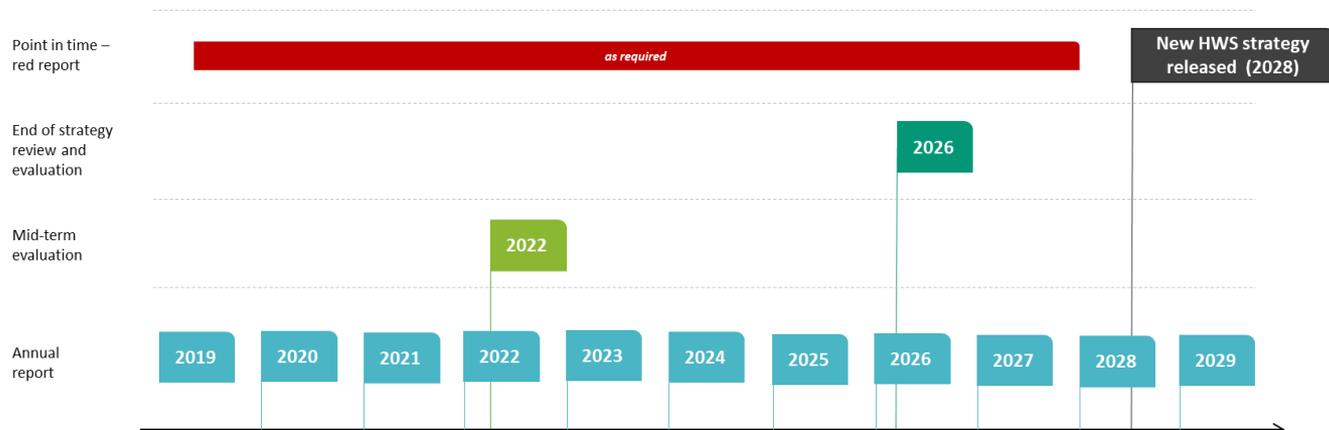
KEQ No. 4 -To what extent have the delivery methods of the Strategy been cost effective and efficient?

- Mid-term (2022)
- End of Strategy (2026)

KEQ No. 5 – To what extent have legacy items been identified and managed for?

- End of Strategy (2026)

Pathways for learning and improving



Pathways

- annual reporting
- mid-term evaluation
- end of strategy evaluation
- 'Red Report'

- Tracking implementation short term indicators
- Research and intervention monitoring
- Surveillance monitoring

- Business processes
- Catchment Forums
- Regional Leadership Group

KEQ No. 1 - To what extent have the performance objectives of the Strategy been achieved?

Sub-question 1a. What progress has been made towards achieving the regional and sub-catchment performance objectives?

Sub-question 1b. Have the fundamental changes required to implement the strategy in full been made? If not, why not?

Sub-question 1c. To what extent has the HWS influenced emergency and critical events (if, and as they occur) and to what extent have critical events impacted on the achievement of the Strategy? How effective was the response to the event in minimizing impact?

Sub-question 1d. To what extent has the delivery of the Strategy been safe?

Output indicators – eg area of vegetation established, volume stormwater harvested

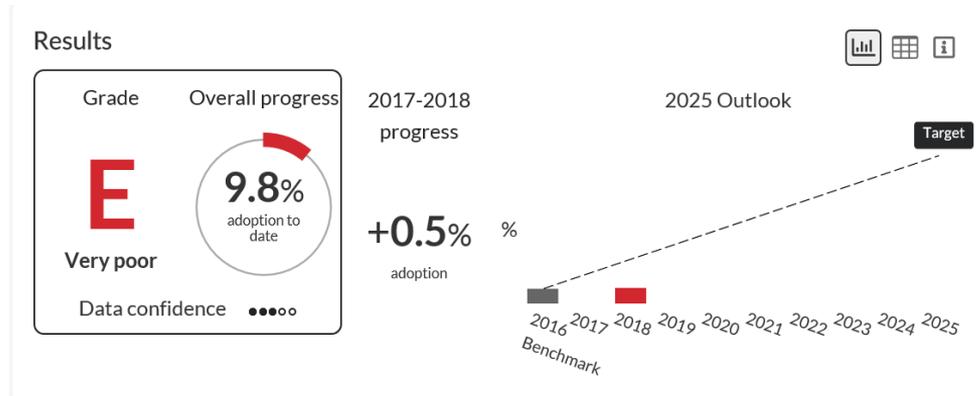
Investigations

Review

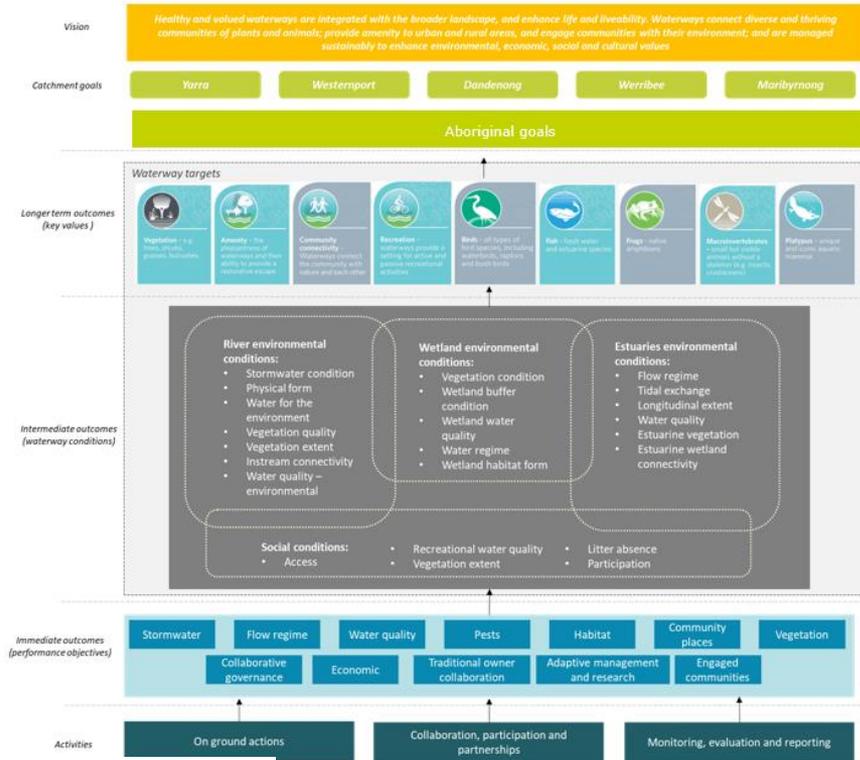
Expert review

Case study/outcome narratives

Summit workshops



KEQ No. 2 - To what extent has progress been made towards the longer term environmental condition targets for rivers, wetlands and estuaries?



- Detailed monitoring plans
- Mix of field based & remote sensing
- Specific indicators for rivers, wetlands and estuaries
- Changes may take many years ie beyond life of strategy
- Citizen science data

KEQ No. 3 – What is the state of waterway values?

Sub question 3a. To what extent are key values on the predicted trajectory?

Sub-question 3b. Have macroinvertebrates exceeded acceptable risk thresholds?

Sub question 3c. How have the ecosystems services and benefits as defined through the System of Environmental Economic Accounting changed as a result of investment in waterways

- Report annual status
- Bugs as leading indicator
- Deep dive at mid term & end

safety

- Detailed monitoring plans
- Mix of traditional and eDNA
- Specific indicators for rivers, wetlands and estuaries
- Changes may many years ie beyond life of strategy
- Citizen science data

KEQ No. 4 -To what extent have the delivery methods of the Strategy been cost effective and efficient?

Sub-question 4a. How, and in what ways, has collaboration enabled effective and efficient delivery of the Strategy?

Sub-question 4b. How has monitoring and research contributed to effective and efficient delivery of the Strategy?

Sub-question 4c. To what extent has data been used to inform and validate models, assumptions and to inform adaptive management?

Sub-question 4d. How appropriate were our interventions in achieving the intended outcomes and aligning with needs of beneficiaries?

Sub-question 4e. How has Traditional Owner and Aboriginal Victorian knowledge informed, and been advanced through Strategy implementation?

Reviews

Reflective interviews

Comparative methods

Expert review

Social surveys

KEQ No. 5 – To what extent have legacy items been identified and managed for?

Sub-question 5a. Which programs should continue or be modified and are resources being planned for?

Sub-question 5b. What are the long term arrangements for managing and resourcing maintenance of outcomes?

Review

Summit workshop

Getting at the heart of evaluation

Evaluation

Step 1 – Define scope of evaluation for each performance objective

Step 2 – Agree relevant performance criteria and credible evidence



Step 3 – gather mix of credible evidence

Evaluate outcome

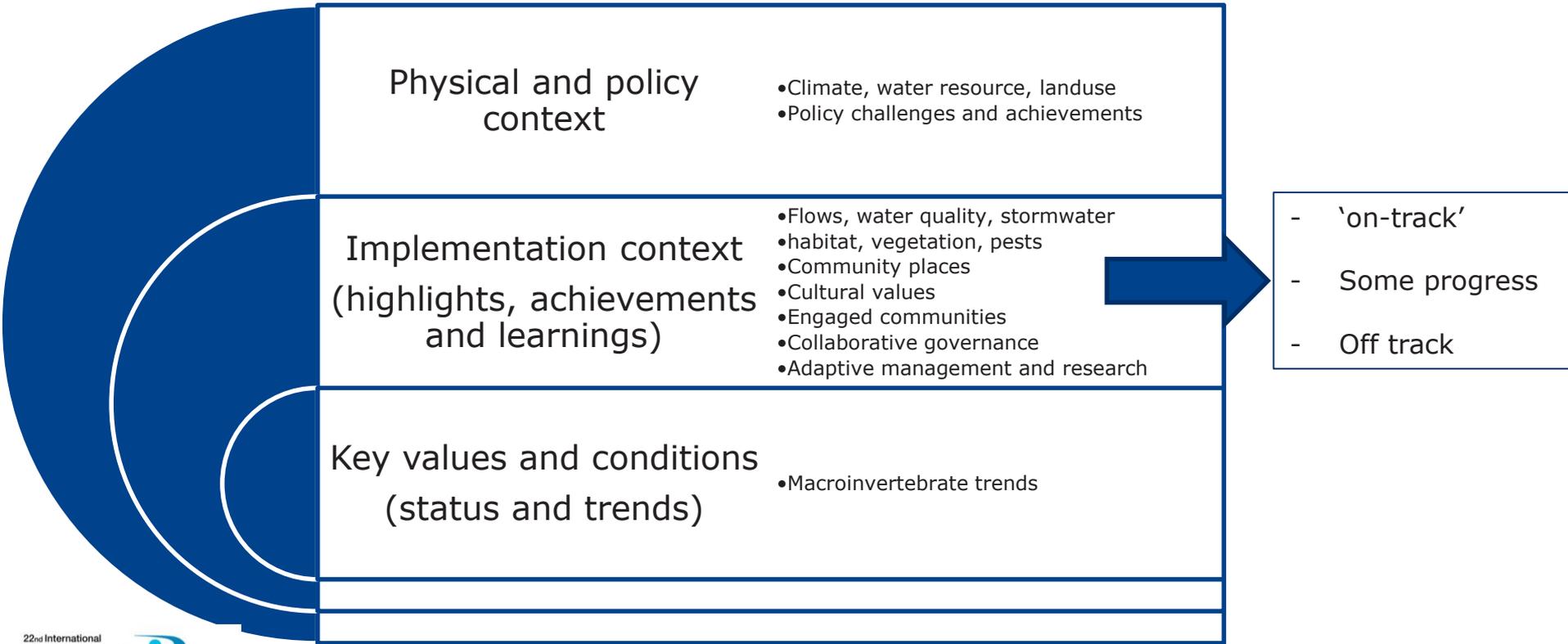
Step 4 – Synthesize and make sense of evidence to make judgements



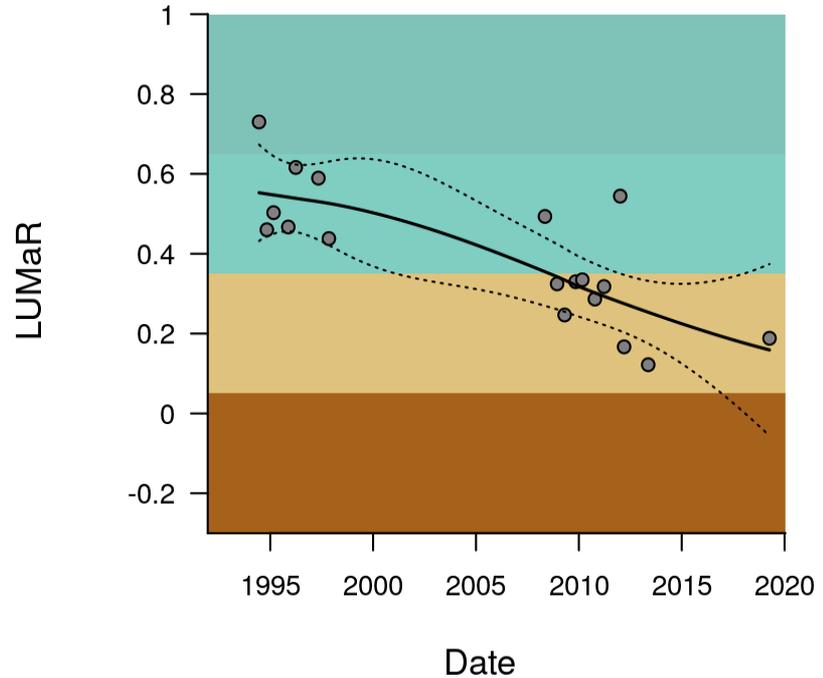
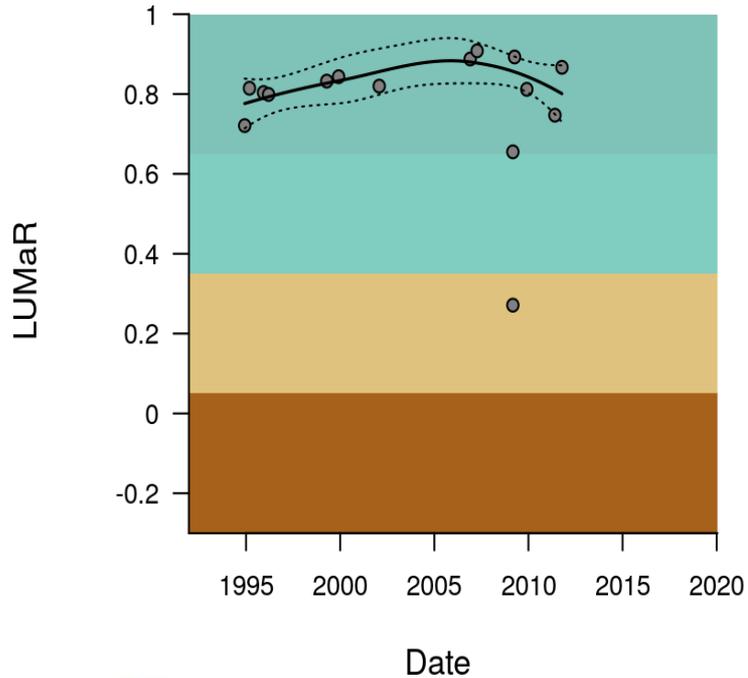
Step 5 – report use, social results to appropriate audience

Step 6 – record decision and update process, program, system, plan or strategy

First annual report



Eg of condition and value monitoring - Macroinvertebrates



Implementing the MERI Plan

The MERI plan will be implemented in three stages:

1. **Foundation** years 1-2 (2019/20-2020/21)
2. **Implementation** years 3-5 (2021/22-2023/24)
3. **Refine and adjust** years 5-10 (2023/24 – 2024/28)

THE WRAP

Take home messages

Summary – key points

- Commitment, governance, budget key ingredients to successful MERI
- Start with 'evaluation' and think short and long term 20+
- Phasing implementation – build on over time (but make a start)

Thank you

ADDITIONAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

HWS Science panel
Melbourne Water MERI working group
Regional Leadership Group
MERI lab participants
Biodiversity & Waterways Team

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