

Marine and Coastal Act Consultation Paper

Submission prepared by the Victorian Coastal
Council

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1.0 Introduction

Victoria's unique and diverse coast is one of the community's most cherished and visited natural asset with four out of five Victorians visiting the coast every year. The Victorian Coastal Council (VCC) sees the development of a Marine and Coastal Act as a once in a generation opportunity to provide for the future protection of marine and coastal assets. Valuing Victoria's coast and marine ecosystems and understanding the social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits they deliver is central to effective decision making.

The sustainable management of marine and coastal assets is facing a number of significant challenges including:

- Delivering an agreed strategic vision across government portfolios including environment, planning, regional development, ports, tourism, fisheries and infrastructure and clarifying and aligning federal, state and local government responsibilities
- Accommodating population growth with pressures for both permanent settlements and 'lifestyle' properties
- Responding to climate change and early impacts on coastal communities. Sea level rise, increases in severity and frequency of storms, rising temperature and increased ocean acidity all present a significant risk to the natural, social and economic values of marine and coastal environments
- Balancing and protecting significant natural and social values (97% of the coast is crown land) against the \$18.3 billion of economic value provided to Victorians through the use and enjoyment of the coast.

Over 20 years the *Coastal Management Act 1995* (the Act) has provided a sound framework for the protection and management of Victoria's coastal land. The inclusion of marine environments into this framework is essential for the successful implementation of Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM). The development of a new Marine and Coastal Act provides the opportunity to build on the success of the current Act and strengthen links in the state's legislative framework.

Many of the proposals in the MACA consultation paper have merit and will deliver important improvements to the marine and coastal system. The Council's submission provides feedback on the proposals in the paper and presents recommendations to strengthen proposals where the Council believes this is needed.

The Council, however, also believes that there are three key issues that warrant further exploration:

- The current leadership and management arrangements are failing to deliver true integrated coastal zone management
- There is an urgent need to harness existing resources effectively and take a coordinated approach to coastal management and protection
- There is a critical underlying gap in baseline knowledge which is impacting on the quality of decision making, as well as a gap in the skills and expertise of marine and coastal managers.

The Council has explored three additional reforms to address these issues and believes the government should consider these strategic propositions now and over the next five years:

- A Coast and Marine Commissioner
- An integrated investment framework
- A science and knowledge capability hub.

2.0 The role of the Victorian Coastal Council

The VCC is established under the *Coastal Management Act 1995*. The Council's primary purpose is to advise the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change about the protection and management of the Victorian coast. A key responsibility of the Council is to develop a draft Victorian Coastal Strategy (VCS). The VCS applies to Victorian coastal waters and land, both public and private. The VCS (2014) contains a hierarchy of principles, the first being 'value and protect'. The VCS is integrated into the Victorian planning system through the State Planning Policy Framework (SPPF).

The VCS (2014) highlights five key issues that require an integrated policy response:

- Managing population growth
- Adapting to a changing climate
- Managing coastal land and infrastructure
- Valuing the natural environment, and
- Integrating marine planning.

3.0 Strengths of the existing system

The *Coastal Management Act 1995* established a strong coordinated strategic framework for coastal planning and management of the whole of the Victorian coast. The Victorian Coastal Strategy sets a long term vision for the coast and informs coastal decision making. Embedding the strategy in the land use planning system has helped to support planning decisions. The Council has led the development of the strategy and Council members, as subject matter experts, have been available to provide strategic advice to government. The impact of sea level rise on coastal landscapes and settlements has also been highlighted and considered in planning legislation. Perhaps the most significant strength is that the community continue to enjoy the coast and the majority believe it is being well managed.

4.0 Principles to guide reform

As input to the new MACA, the Council explored a range of options to improve coastal governance arrangements. The Council has developed five principles to underpin a new approach to marine and coastal management in Victoria. They include:

1. Integrated planning and management in the marine environment
2. Management boundaries are defined by coastal features and community needs
3. Management arrangements align accountability, authority and resourcing
4. Strategic oversight and sustainable resourcing
5. Access to technical expertise and addressing knowledge gaps.

Table One: VCC principles for a new model of marine and coastal management

Principle	Problem	Desired Outcome
1. Integrated planning and management in the marine environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The management of terrestrial and marine environments is undertaken separately • The management of conflicting uses in the marine environment is becoming increasingly disparate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An integrated marine planning framework is provided incorporating coastal waters, estuaries and intertidal areas • Decision makers have consistent approach to dealing with conflicting uses
2. Management boundaries are defined by coastal features and community needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current boundaries are arbitrary • Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) is impeded by the disconnect between these boundaries and coastal cells or catchments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victoria’s coastline is divided into logical coastal cells or catchments
3. Management arrangements align accountability, authority and resourcing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large number of managers • Ad hoc decision making • Lack of integrated planning • Limited collaboration • Communities unclear about roles and responsibilities of marine and coastal managers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managers have clear roles • Decision makers are accountable and have a focus on ICZM • Actions are prioritised and well aligned
4. Strategic oversight and sustainable resourcing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coastal managers are not resourced to fulfil their legislated roles • Inequity in the ability of coastal managers to generate revenue • Council has no role in monitoring alignment of resources to deliver the VCS • Insufficient funding allocated to infrastructure or climate change mitigation/adaptation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sufficient resources are available • Revenue generation and expenditure aligns with the directions in the VCS • All Victorian’s contribute to the cost of coastal management • Infrastructure funding is identified for climate change adaptation priorities and ongoing maintenance
5. Access to technical expertise and addressing knowledge gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical capacity of marine and coastal managers has been reduced over time • Absence of state-wide coastal risk assessment and mitigation/adaptation planning • Lack of baseline data on the condition of marine and coastal environments • Data gaps preventing informed decision making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy developers and decision makers have ready access to marine and coastal technical expertise • Baseline data on which to measure improvement or decline

5.0 Response to MACA consultation paper

The Council supports many of the proposals in the MACA consultation paper and believes they will deliver important improvements to the marine and coastal system. This section contains the Council's feedback on key proposals in the MACA consultation paper and presents recommendations to strengthen these proposals where the Council believes this is needed. Appendix One presents a table that summarises the Council's overall response to all the proposals in the MACA consultation paper.

5.1 Boosting community involvement

The Council takes up its role based upon a deep commitment to community participation as an essential foundation to sound decision-making and management of the marine and coastal environment. The Council agrees with the statement in the MACA consultation paper that opportunities to engage the community have not been maximised. The Council supports the proposal that a new Marine and Coastal Council (MACC) is established and that it provides a conduit between government and community. The new MACC would, therefore, have an important oversight role in ensuring that community engagement across the system is meaningful and contributes to transparent, sound decision making. The Council recommends that the role of a new MACC include:

- Promoting public understanding through education and encouraging Victorians to participate in coastal and marine management
- Engaging with the Victorian community on key coastal and marine issues (including matters of interest to Government and the Minister)
- Advocating for leading practice community engagement and public transparency in coastal and marine management
- Establishing a Community Reference Group and a Traditional Owner Joint Management group as sub-committees
- Advancing the role and recognition of volunteers delivering programs such as citizen science and monitoring, Coastcare, marine education and other community programs.

The proposed changes to Committees of Management and Regional Coastal Boards may generate concern that local and regional community engagement in coastal management will be reduced. To address these concerns, the Council recommends that the new MACC develops:

- A 'coastal community charter' to guide community engagement activities of marine and coastal managers
- Traditional Owner engagement principles that support joint coastal and marine management with Traditional Owners.

5.2 Clarifying functions of a marine and coastal system

The Council believes it is critical that the hierarchy of functions from policy through to on-ground delivery are clearly defined and well integrated. The Council does not support the recommendation to not include regional level planning as a mandatory requirement in the MACA. Regional coastal plans provide a critical link between state-wide strategy and local coastal management plans. Where they have failed to be effective is in the supporting arrangements for their funding and clear accountabilities for delivery. The Council does not believe that the Regional Catchment Strategies provide a real alternative to Coastal Action Plans (including Regional Coastal Plans). Regional Catchment Strategies focus on natural resource

management and address issues such as land degradation. The Coastal Action Plans in the current Act provide directions and objectives for the use and development of the coast at a regional scale. They also inform planning and controls about access, use and development at a local scale. As population growth, climate change and sustaining economic growth continue to place pressure on marine and coastal ecosystems, regional planning will have a critical role in identifying solutions and balancing impacts that are difficult to resolve at a local or state-wide level. They are also closely aligned to the Regional Growth Plans and the consent process required under the Planning and Environment Act 1987. The Council believes that the requirement for regional marine and coastal plans should be retained in the MACA and the Secretary of Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) should be accountable for their delivery. DELWP should also ensure that delivery of the regional plans is funded, operational policies are developed and local Coastal Management Plans are aligned. The Council does not believe this function can be successfully delivered by RASPs. Like the Regional Coastal Boards, RASPs could effectively bring together partners and consult with the community, however they would not have authority or accountability to ensure the outcomes of the plan are funded or delivered.

5.3 MACA Objectives

The new MACA presents an important opportunity to set clear objectives for the marine and coastal system. The Council supports formally recognising climate change in the objectives of MACA. The Council also supports the scope and intent of the eight objectives. However the Council is concerned that the language used contains technical terminology that the community and users of the legislation may have difficulty understanding. The Council recommends that the objectives are written in simple language that can be clearly understood by the community, stakeholders and user groups. In line with its reform principle of addressing knowledge gaps, the Council believes an additional objective should be included:

- Enhance science-based evidence, knowledge and understanding of issues relating to ecologically sustainable development and the marine and coastal environment.

5.4 A Marine and Coastal Council

The current VCC has a range of important functions including state-wide strategic planning, preparing the Victorian Coastal Strategy, advising the Minister, facilitating the operation of Regional Coastal Boards, encouraging cooperation, supporting community involvement and reflecting the needs of Traditional Owners. In line with the Council's reform principle of improving management arrangements, the Council supports the proposal that a new Marine and Coastal Council (MACC) is established and would:

- Maintain a focus on marine and coastal strategy and policy
- Provide a conduit between government and community
- Facilitate scientific research and best practice marine and coastal management
- Advise the Minister
- Have an oversight role in monitoring the implementation of strategy and policy.

The Council also believes that there is another critical role for the new MACC as a conduit between government, community and industry. Many of the opportunities and challenges facing the marine and coastal environment are linked to unlocking economic potential without compromising natural, social and cultural values. If the Council is to fulfil its role in advising on policy and strategy, it needs to maintain an active dialogue with the industries that depend on the marine and coastal environment.

In relation to the specific activities of the proposed MACC, the Council has investigated the roles of a range of advisory councils including Victorian Environmental Assessment Council (VEAC), Victorian Catchment Management Council (VCMC), Alpine Resorts Coordinating Council (ARCC) and the Heritage Council.

The Council recommends that the new MACC undertakes the following roles:

- Provide advice to the Minister on state-wide issues impacting sustainable management of marine and coastal environments and coastal communities
- Provide advice to the Minister on all developments or change in use that present a potential 'significant impact' on the marine and coastal environment
- Provide advice on marine and coastal policy development and implementation
- Establish guidelines for the preparation of the Victorian Marine and Coastal Strategy
- Monitor and advise on the development, funding and implementation of the Victorian Marine and Coastal Strategy
- Promote public understanding and encourage Victorians to participate in coastal and marine management
- Advocate for best practice community engagement and public transparency in coastal and marine management
- Advancing the role and recognition of volunteers involved in programs such as citizen science and monitoring, Coastcare, marine education and other community programs
- Establish as subcommittees such as a Community Reference group, Traditional Owner Joint Management group and Science and Knowledge expert panel
- Facilitate scientific research and access to technical expertise.

The Council supports the recommendation in the MACA consultation paper that the new MACC has members with relevant experience and knowledge and includes broad representation from the community including rural and regional communities, Traditional Owners, user groups and industry. To increase public transparency and community confidence in the performance of the new MACC, the Council recommends that the formal advice provided by the MACC is documented in its annual report which is then tabled in Parliament.

The Council believes the accountability to audit major decisions taken under other Acts to ensure decision makers have specifically taken into account the MACA should sit with the Secretary of DELWP. As a strategic advisory council the new MACC would have limited capability or authority to undertake this audit role successfully. However, the Secretary could refer matters identified through an audit process to the new MACC for advice.

The MACA consultation paper explored the option of a Marine and Coastal Authority with responsibilities from policy setting through to service delivery. The Council agrees that such an organisation would likely be less responsive and agile in responding to emerging issues.

5.5 Separation of policy and strategy

The Council strongly supports the clear separation of policy and strategy proposed in the MACA paper. The new Marine and Coastal policy should consolidate the various policy statements and the hierarchy of principles in outlined in the VCS (2014). The Council also supports that policy development is a key accountability of the Secretary of DELWP and that the new MACC has a critical role in advising on policy development and implementation.

5.6 Catchment Management Authorities

The Council supports increasing the effectiveness of Catchment Management Authorities (CMAs) in the delivery of their current responsibilities along the coast, in estuaries and in the marine environment out to three nautical miles. The Council believes better integration of natural resource management across

catchment, coasts and marine environments could be achieved by enhancing the skills and expertise of CMAs and ensuring coastal CMA boards have appropriate marine and coastal expertise.

5.7 Regional and Strategic Partnerships (RASPs)

Many regional issues are already being addressed through existing regional forums and partnerships such as G21, the Association of Bayside Municipalities and the Great South Coasts group. The Council supports the value of such partnerships in fostering cooperation between organisations and communities. The Council also supports the formation of RASPs to deliver issue based planning where communities and marine and coastal managers identify that this is the most efficient and effective delivery model. The Council does not, however, believe that RASPs are the best vehicle to deliver legislated regional coastal planning. The Council also does not see a need for the RASPs to be a legislated mechanism administered on behalf of the Minister.

5.8 Phasing out Regional Coastal Boards

The Council supports the phasing out of the Regional Coastal Boards and that the functions of the Boards should be transferred to the Secretary of DELWP. A critical function that has been successfully delivered by the Boards has been facilitating community awareness and engagement in regional coastal planning. The Council believes it is critical that:

- there is regional representation on the new MACC; and
- establishment of a community reference group be a mandatory requirement for DELWP in preparing regional marine and coastal plans.

5.9 Committees of Management

Coastal processes are not bounded by land tenure, land management, jurisdictional or policy boundaries. Integrated coastal zone management requires arrangements that enable management responses that operate across a geographic area (land to sea), across different land tenures (public and private) and foster collaboration at a national, state, regional and local level. There is no cohesive logic to which areas various Committees manage, when Parks Victoria becomes involved or how the area from three nautical miles out to the high tide mark is effectively managed. This is further complicated by the number of coastal managers. There are 63 different coastal managers in Victoria and over 40 just in the Port Phillip and Westernport Bay area.

Whilst the MACA consultation paper proposes a rationalisation of some smaller Committees of Management, the Council remains concerned that even following the implementation of these changes that unclear management arrangements will remain, as well as poor alignment of boundaries. The Council supports creation of new Committees of Management where it can be demonstrated that they:

- have boundaries that reflect natural features and community needs
- reduce the number & complexity of land managers in a geographic location
- have accountability and authority linked to a defined revenue source
- have technical expertise and capacity to deliver key functions.

These new management arrangements should also align with the recommendations of the recent VEAC assessment of public land use categories. The Council also recommends that as part of strengthening the role of Parks Victoria that some Committee of Management areas be rationalised and incorporated into areas managed by Parks Victoria.

5.10 Coastal Management Plans

As there are likely to remain a large number of marine and coastal managers, the Council recommends that Coastal Management Plans (CMPs) be prepared on the basis of marine and coastal planning areas that reflect natural features and community needs. These planning areas may cover multiple marine and coastal managers and would require a lead coastal manager to be selected based on their skills and their capacity to deliver the plan by working with and engaging the community and other coastal managers. This delivery mechanism echoes the model presented in the MACA consultation paper for RASPs. The Council has undertaken some preliminary analysis of Victoria's marine and coastal features and identified six primary regional coastal areas and then a number of secondary smaller coastal cells. The Council believes these secondary coastal cells would form a good basis for developing the planning areas for CMPs. The Council believes that preparation of CMPs needs to be a mandatory requirement within the MACA. The plans need to be delivered within realistic timeframes and with an identified funding source. By reducing the number of plans, ensuring the plans are refreshed every five years, incorporating changes in use and development proposals for Ministerial approval and building a requirement for community engagement, the Council believes the value of the coastal management plans will be strengthened. The Council also recommends that the plans include the marine environment and planning areas extend to three nautical miles offshore.

5.11 Sustainable Resourcing

The Council believes that sustainable resourcing is critical to ensuring coastal and marine assets are protected. In line with the Council's reform principle of strategic oversight and sustainable resourcing, the Council supports the proposal that new MACC would have a role in:

- Investigating measures that would provide greater transparency on the costs and revenue generated and spent in coastal and marine areas;
- Identifying where beneficiary pays principle could be better applied.

The Council also recommends that the new MACC has an ongoing role in monitoring funding and alignment of priorities with the Victorian Marine and Coastal Strategy.

Programs such as commissioning of new research, coastal protection works and major infrastructure all rely on funding and prioritisation at state-wide and regional level. The Council therefore believes that DELWP has a critical role in ensuring that the directions of state-wide strategy and regional plans are clearly aligned into program priorities and funding sources.

The Council also supports establishing appropriate cost-sharing arrangements for coastal infrastructure. A significant future coastal infrastructure liability exists due to the combined impact of deferred asset maintenance and climate change. Marine and coastal managers are currently not required to manage annual or medium-term program funding in a manner that accumulates funds to address these future infrastructure needs. The Council wishes to promote responsible funding and financing of coastal infrastructure. The Council supports the recommendations in the recently released draft Victorian 30 year Infrastructure Strategy to:

- improve coastal protection infrastructure
- implement a pricing, funding and expenditure regime for protected areas, which ensures that funding and revenue reflect the ecosystem services provided
- establish governance arrangements that enable coastal managers to act as an asset manager, forward planning for maintenance and renewal to address existing or emerging challenges.

The Council sees a major opportunity for the VCC, and a new MACC, to work with Department of Environment Land Water and Planning (DELWP) and Infrastructure Victoria to ensure immediate and short

term state-wide marine and coastal infrastructure priorities are appropriately provided for and there is commitment to a sustainable funding model for the pipeline of future works.

Whilst the Council acknowledges that there is inequity in the ability of coastal managers to generate revenue, the Council is unsure that introducing a new levy on certain coastal Crown Land managers is the best solution. While the idea of an environmental dividend generated from the coast is appealing, the Council is not convinced that there is enough income being generated to enable a levy without significant disruption to day to day operation or capital improvement budgets.

Further investigation is needed of existing levies and whether their scope or geographic coverage could be expanded to help fund marine and coastal programs and better reflect the beneficiaries pays principle. There may also be an opportunity to ensure income generating assets are included within new larger Committee of Management boundaries to enable income to be reinvested across a broader geographic area.

5.12 Improving knowledge, building capacity and knowledge transfer

The Council's reform principle of accessing technical expertise and addressing knowledge gaps reflects the value the Council places on evidence-based decision making. The Council is currently supported by an expert scientific panel comprising over 40 senior scientists representing a broad range of disciplines to provide a 'whole of coast' perspective. This panel has made a vital contribution to the work of the Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability in preparing the 'State of the Bays' report. The Council supports the proposal in the MACA consultation paper that the new MACC has a core function to improve knowledge transfer for decision makers, identify gaps in knowledge and monitoring, commission research and foster technical expertise and capacity.

The Council has explored whether a science panel, as a sub-committee of the new MACC, would be an appropriate way to deliver this function. The Council believes a science panel could deliver the function of building capacity and knowledge transfer at a strategic level. However, a science panel model may have limited ability to support the delivery of science and technical expertise to assist decision-making and management at a regional and local level.

The Council also supports the proposal in the MACA consultation paper to develop a State of the Marine and Coasts Report. The Council recommends that future reports also align with the 2018 Framework for the State of the Environment report which incorporates both state and benefits. The Council believes there is an important opportunity to build upon initial assessments of the benefits of ecosystem services provided by marine and coastal communities.

The Council believes that there has been a reduction in technical skills and capability amongst marine and coastal managers over time. Whilst some local governments and large Committees of Management may have appropriate expertise, overall there is a gap particularly in area of coastal processes and engineering. This expertise has shifted into large engineering based consulting firms and often smaller local councils or Committees of Management do not have the skills or experience to effectively procure and manage these consulting services. The Council therefore strongly supports the proposal to build capacity and technical expertise among marine and coastal managers and ensure this expertise is shared across the network. The MACA consultation paper, however, is not sufficiently clear about how this might be achieved.

6.0 Strategic propositions: strengthening the system into the future

The development of the MACA is a once in a generation opportunity to respond to the future challenges facing the marine and coastal environment. The Council has taken this submission as an opportunity to present some 'blue sky' reform propositions for the consideration of government. These strategic propositions aim to further strengthen the marine and coastal system and deliver true integrated coastal zone management.

The Council recognises that such propositions would require further investigation and asks that the door for these additional reforms be kept open to allow this exploration.



6.1 Strategic Leadership, Trusted Advice: A Coast and Marine Commissioner

The Council believes that even with the intended MACA proposals there will remain significant challenges in fully integrating management of the marine environment. It is a concern to many stakeholders that whilst the marine environment is used by a wide range of user groups such as fisheries, ports, renewable energy, recreational boating and fishing there is no integrated, strategic oversight across the various Acts and government portfolios that can help to monitor the impacts of activities and facilitate and guide a more integrated approach. Delivering an agreed strategic vision across government portfolios including environment, planning, regional development, ports, tourism, fisheries and infrastructure is also a significant challenge.

The Council has explored other models to further strengthen an 'arm's length' government entity without moving to a stand-alone Authority. The Council believes a significant reform opportunity exists in establishing a Coast and Marine Commissioner as a mechanism to address these concerns.

There are a number of government Commissioners operating in land management including the Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability and the Emergency Management Commissioner. The Council envisages the role of a new Coast and Marine Commissioner would be to:

- Maximise the ability of the marine and coastal sector to work together and achieve joined up outcomes that are community focused
- Lead and facilitate key initiatives focused on system-wide reform with integrated policy, strategy, planning, streamlined consents, investment and improved service delivery
- Integrate social and environmental considerations into economic development in the marine and coastal environment
- Coordinate investment planning
- Ensure all planning processes achieve greater efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of marine and coastal management services
- Provide governance oversight for improving marine and coastal science, knowledge and technical expertise
- Promote openness, transparency and accountability in decision-making.

The Council has considered whether these outcomes could be achieved through amendments to the role of the Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability. A key difference is that the proposed Marine and Coast Commissioner would have a specific focus on delivering reform of the marine and coastal sector, in the same manner the Emergency Management Commissioner is focused on reform of the emergency management sector. The Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability has a broad role across the entire Victorian public sector and works and consults with all sectors of the Victorian community. However, like the Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability, this new Commission could be established through a low overhead model and utilise existing resources that support the current advisory arrangements.

6.1.1 A Case Study: The California Coast Commission

The mission of the California Coast Commission is 'protecting and enhancing California's coast'. The Commission is committed to protecting and enhancing California's coast and ocean for present and future generations. It does so through careful planning and regulation of environmentally sustainable development, rigorous use of science, strong public participation, education and effective intergovernmental coordination. In partnership with coastal cities and counties, the Coastal Commission plans and regulates the use of land and water in the coastal zone. The Commission's decisions are bound by the policies of the Coastal Act. These policies constitute the statutory standards for issues including access and recreation, habitat protection, development design, commercial fisheries, industrial uses, offshore oil and gas development, water quality, ports and public works. The coastal zone governed by the Commission includes an inland coastal zone and an offshore zone including a three-mile-wide band of ocean.

6.2 Responsible Investment, Sustainable Financing: An integrated investment framework

The Council is supportive of the initial steps outlined in the consultation paper to better understand the current financial commitment to the marine and coastal environment as well as maximise opportunities to enhance revenue. The Council believes that a more holistic and comprehensive approach needs to be taken to address future challenges. An integrated investment framework that supports the implementation of policy and the Victorian Marine and Coastal Strategy is recommended by the Council. The framework would be based on the following key principles:

- Target resources to where they are needed most
- Maximise revenue generation, without compromising public good obligations
- Explore expansion of existing levies such as the Parks Charge and Environmental Contribution Levy
- Provide for reinvestment in coastal and marine protection, infrastructure, services, research and capability building
- Ensure consistent application of 'beneficiary pays' principle
- Provide for responsible risk based funding and financing of coastal infrastructure
- Include recurrent maintenance costs
- Address the maintenance renewal gap
- Identify appropriate cost-sharing arrangements between federal, state and local government.

6.2.1 Case Studies: Victorian Salinity Investment Framework and Great Barrier Reef Investment Framework

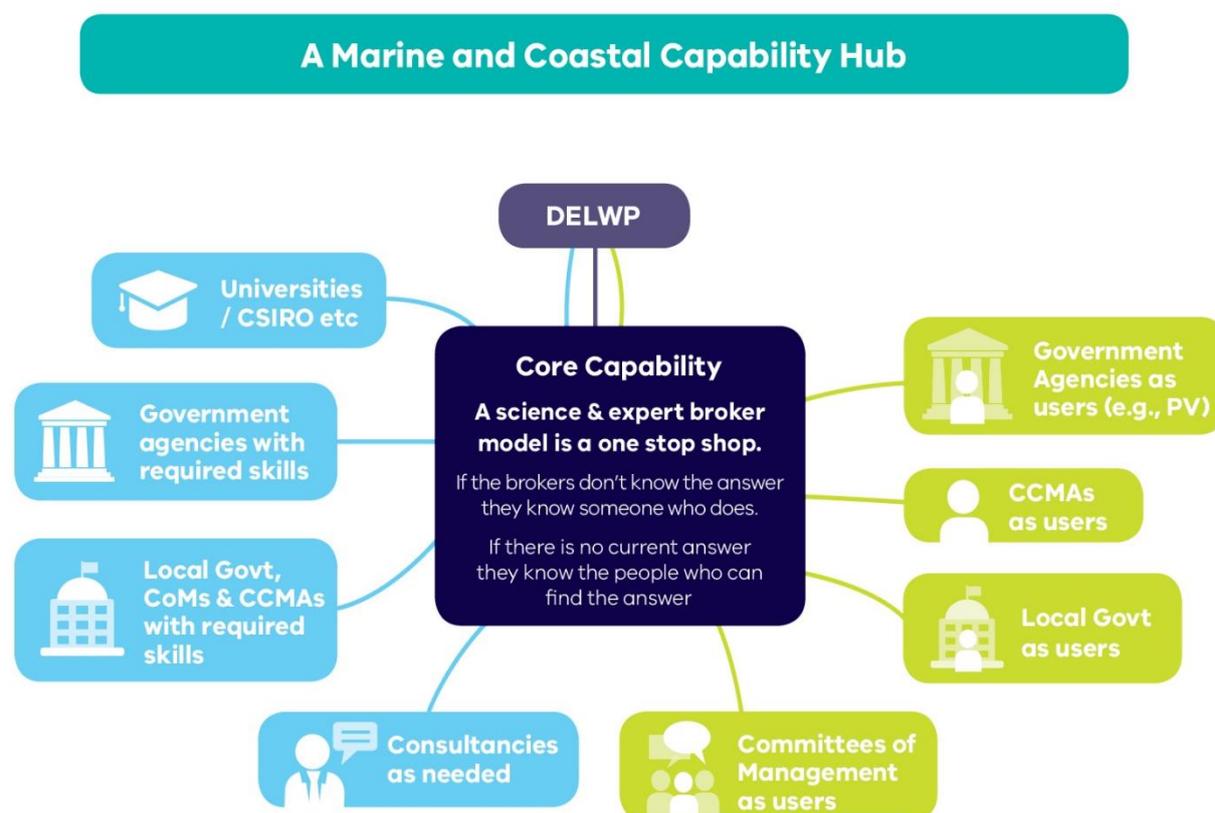
Investment frameworks that may act as models include the Salinity Investment Framework and the Reef Investment Framework. The Salinity Investment Framework (SIF) was commissioned by the Victorian State Salinity Council to guide public investment in salinity management initiatives at state, regional and catchment levels. The aim of the SIF was to ensure that public investment was directed to programs with the best potential to protect assets of high public value at threat from salinity.

The Reef Investment Framework is a robust framework aimed at harnessing and coordinating public and private investment to maximise outcomes for the Reef. It is guided by the following principles:

- additionality and complementarity: investments will build on and align with existing efforts
- clear outcomes: investments are focused on delivering results to achieve Plan outcomes
- cost-effectiveness: investments will be well-planned and cost-effective
- collaboration and partnerships: investments will consider opportunities for co-investment, strategic collaboration and partnership
- evidence-based scientifically robust: investments will be informed by the best available scientific and expert knowledge

6.3 A new Marine and Coastal “Science and Knowledge” Hub

The Council and expert science panel have been exploring options to address the underlying gaps in knowledge which are currently impacting on the quality of decision making as well as the skills and expertise of marine and coastal managers. The Council believes a new ‘science and knowledge’ capability hub should be established to provide a central point of coordination and connectivity for marine and coastal science, engineering and technical expertise, as well as social science and cultural knowledge. The marine and coastal ‘science and knowledge’ hub would be low overhead and agile, with a clear focus on delivering public value and supporting marine and coastal decision makers. DELWP would have an important role in providing governance, as well as being a partner and user. The Council believes a marine and coastal capability hub is consistent with the reforms being considered by DELWP and the Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability.



Decision makers need to be able to ask the right questions, procure appropriate science and knowledge and then effectively use it in decision-making. To boost the capability of marine and coastal managers, the hub would provide guidance and standards for procuring knowledge particularly in the fields of coastal processes and engineering.

Options to develop such a capability hub include:

- A central hub with networked capability and governance linked to DELWP Chief Scientist;
- Partnering with the University of Melbourne proposal to establish a National Coasts and Climate Centre at Point Nepean;
- Building upon the Victorian Marine Science Consortium approach;
- A not-for-profit organisation similar to the Sydney Institute of Marine Science

6.3.1 Case Studies: The Gold Coast to the European Union

There are many successful models for creating networked science and knowledge capability. At a basic level, the Gold Coast Coastal Knowledge Hub creates an opportunity for coastal managers to meet annually and 'ensure that the hard learnt lessons from the past are available to guide and inform the next generation of coastal managers'. It achieves this aim by summarising literature, providing access to data on coastal processes, provides a record of the effectiveness of past actions and identifies knowledge limitations for future decision-making.

The Victorian Marine Science Consortium is a consortium of tertiary institutions, CSIRO, EPA and Fisheries Victoria's fisheries management and science team. It highlights the benefits of having experts co-located and teams of marine managers having ready access to research and data.

The Industry Capability Network is an example of an industry-based network that brokers connections between Australian and New Zealand businesses and technical capacity. It exists to stimulate economic activity and connect industry with current and emerging opportunities. It delivers this service through a team of technical consultants offering tailored procurement services.

The European Union Knowledge and Competence Centres are at the forefront of processing science-based evidence to inform policy makers and provision of tools to support decision-making. The knowledge centres are virtual and designed to be a 'one-stop-shop' in their area of expertise and include communities of practice. The competence centres focused on providing analytical tools to address specific policy problems.

All of these models rely on a central coordinating hub brokering connections between decision makers and a network of scientific and technical experts.

Appendix One. VCC Response to all proposals in the MACA Consultation Paper

Proposed reform in MACA paper	VCC Principles	Expert panel recommendations	VCC response
<p>Improving governance and institutional arrangements</p>	<p>3. Management arrangements align accountability, authority and resourcing</p> <p>2. Management boundaries are defined by coastal features and community needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Replacing VCC with a Marine and Coastal Council ✓ Separating policy and strategy ✗ Removing regional coastal planning from the MACA ✗ Regional Catchment Strategies are an alternative to Coastal Action Plans ? Land managers prepare individual CMPs ✓ Strengthen CMAs to fulfil their obligations ✓ Phasing out Regional Coastal Boards ✗ Legislated RASPs deliver regional planning ✓ RASPs deliver issue based planning ✓ Transitioning from smaller Committees of Management ✓ Boosting community stewardship ✓ Greater use of shared services ✓ Strengthen role for Parks Victoria ✓ A greater role for Traditional Owners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New MACC role - see section 5.4 • Regional marine and coastal planning should be retained in the MACA • Secretary of DELWP should be accountable for delivery and implementation of regional plans • Coastal Management Plans should be prepared based on planning areas that reflect natural features and community needs • The VCC is concerned that the proposed changes will still result in unclear management arrangements and poor alignment of boundaries. The VCC would support new CoM's where they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ have boundaries that reflect natural features and community needs; ○ reduce the number & complexity of land managers in a geographic location; ○ have accountability and authority linked to a defined revenue source; ○ have technical expertise and capacity to deliver key functions • Creation of new CoM's reflect changes to public land use categories recommended by VEAC • Strengthen CMAs to fulfil their existing obligations in marine and coastal natural resource management • RASP's deal with issue based cross-jurisdictional planning

Strengthening Marine Management	1. Integrated planning and management in the marine environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Marine and Coastal Policy articulates how we manage marine environments ✗ MACC may have role in audit and compliance to promote decisions that consistent with Act ✗ Marine spatial planning as part of policy ✓ Port Phillip Bay EMP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Secretary of DELWP has an audit role for major decisions taken under other Acts to ensure decision makers have specifically taken into account the proposed MACA • Marine spatial planning framework embedded in proposed MACA rather than policy • EMPs are rolled out to other marine and coastal management cells
Integrating Planning Systems		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Coastal Management Plans retained and strengthened ✓ Clearly articulating when a consent is required ✓ Strengthen enforcement of unauthorised use and development ✗ MACC may be requested to advise on consents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MACC provides advice to the Minister on developments and changes in land use that present a potential “significant impact” on marine and coastal environment • Coastal Management Plans should be prepared based on planning areas that reflect natural features and community needs • Funding provided to undertake CMPs and with a five year review
Adapting to Climate Change		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Recognise climate change in objectives of MACA ✓ Align marine and coastal policy and strategy with revised Climate Change Act 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future opportunity to harmonise revised Climate Change Act and MACA, not just align policy and strategy • Strategic, regional and local leadership on climate change mitigation and adaptation is critical to the protection of marine and coastal ecosystems and the benefits they generate

Resourcing the proposed system	4. Strategic oversight and sustainable resourcing of infrastructure and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ MACC investigate measures to increase transparency ✓ MACC identify where “beneficiary pays” principle can be better applied ✓ Appropriate cost-sharing arrangements ✓ Build and support volunteer programs ✗ Establish a levy and use funds for grants or loans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new MACC has a role in monitoring the funding of the Victorian Marine and Coastal Strategy • DELWP ensures delivery of regional plans has clearly identified funding • VCC/MACC and DELWP work with Infrastructure Victoria on coastal infrastructure planning and investment priorities
Improve knowledge transfer	5. Access to technical expertise & Address knowledge gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Science and knowledge transfer a core function of MACC ✓ State of the Marine and Coasts report sets the baseline condition and monitors change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced capability needed in terms of research and technical expertise from policy through to day to day operations.