



CORANGAMITE WATERWAY STRATEGY 2014 - 2022

PUBLIC CONSULTATION SUMMARY REPORT





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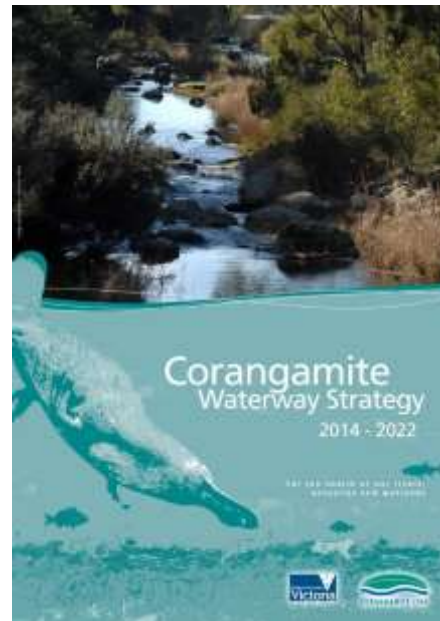
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This report summarises the one month public consultation period for the development of the Corangamite Waterway Strategy 2014 – 2022.

It covers the activities that occurred, key feedback that was received and the key changes that were made for the final CWS.

The final strategy is available online at the Corangamite CMA website:
www.ccma.vic.gov.au



BACKGROUND

The Corangamite Waterway Strategy provides an evidence based framework and regional works program for the CMA to implement, in partnership with community groups, landholders, other agencies and industry, to maintain or improve the condition of priority rivers, estuaries and wetlands so they can continue to support environmental, social, cultural and economic values.

The regional planning and priority setting processes used in the development of the CWS were outlined through the 2013 Victorian Waterway Management Strategy and detailed guidelines were developed and provided by the Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI) in consultation with a state-wide CMA working group of the Victorian Waterway Managers Forum.

Pre-draft consultation

The draft CWS was developed by the Corangamite CMA via a project team and Project Review Group which consisted of key senior staff and four members of the Corangamite CMA Board. Comprehensive engagement and consultation occurred during the development of the draft CWS. In addition to the project review group, subject experts, lead and key partner agencies, Landcare Coordinators, Aboriginal organisations and the community were involved in various aspects of its development.

A highlight of the pre-draft consultation was 10 community sessions that were run with assistance from Landcare Networks, which over 200 people attended. The sessions were run to identify waterways of local importance, to cross check data used in the development of the strategy and feature community values in the strategy.

Additionally, a workshop (convened jointly by Fisheries Victoria and the Corangamite CMA) was held in December 2013 with key recreational fishing representatives to identify key fisheries management priorities for the region. Corangamite CMA staff also met with a number of lead and partner agencies (including Parks Victoria, DEPI, local governments, Greening Australia and water corporations), to discuss joint management activities and other areas of interest in the strategy.

Public consultation

The draft CWS was released on Friday 18 July 2014 and was available for a period of 1 month for community and stakeholder feedback, closing on Monday 18 August 2014.

There were three options to provide feedback: via formal written responses (email or mail), an online survey or by attending a listening post.

Five listening posts were run to offer an opportunity for people to discuss details of the draft CWS with key Corangamite CMA staff:



1. Colac, 29 July – Corangamite Catchment Management Authority offices
2. Geelong, 1 August – Geelong West Town Hall
3. Camperdown, 5 August – Killara Centre
4. Buninyong, 6 August – Buninyong Town Hall
5. Apollo Bay, 7 August – Apollo Bay Bowls Club.

Marketing and communications

Marketing and communications to notify people of the availability of the draft and how to participate was via print media and through email distribution networks, including Landcare, Waterwatch and EstuaryWatch.

Advertisements were also placed in seven regional newspapers at the beginning of the public consultation period. These included the Warrnambool Standard, Colac Herald, Geelong Advertiser, Ballarat Courier, Camperdown Chronicle, Cobden Times and Torquay Times. The advertising and media release resulted in articles in the Warrnambool Standard (x1), Geelong Advertiser (x1), Geelong Independent (x1), Colac Herald (x1) and the Camperdown Chronicle (x2), one radio interview and two radio advertisements on commercial radio for south west Victoria (3YB/3CS). Twitter and Facebook were also used to support communication activities.

A summary of marketing and communications activities for the waterway strategy is provided in Table 1. This gives an indication of the number of individuals reached through these efforts. Duplication of individuals for the totals has been removed where possible (e.g. the Geelong Advertiser is circulated to 38,747; this number has been counted only once even though there were two articles in this paper). Totals do not account for instances of individuals receiving CWS information from multiple sources (e.g. being on more than one email distribution list, receiving from both Facebook and twitter).

Table 1: Summary of marketing and communications activities

Activity	No. of activities/events	No. potential individuals reached
Media (newspaper ads and articles)	12	105,762
Media (radio ads/interviews)	3	unknown
Twitter (CCMA tweets and retweets)	16	3,925
Facebook posts	12	224
Emails via distribution lists (e.g. CWS, Landcare, Waterwatch & EstuaryWatch)	12	700
Mail out of letters notifying of CWS public consultation	1	66



FEEDBACK SUMMARY

Participation

Over the one month public consultation period a large number of people showed interest in the draft CWS, a summary of the level of interest and participants is provided in Table 2. There were over 400 views of the waterway strategy home page on the Corangamite CMA website, a 372% increase from the previous month. A majority of these visitors (71%) went on to visit the page where the draft CWS could be downloaded and 14% (117 views) visited the page where the Landscape Zone summaries could be downloaded.

There were 45 attendees across the five listening posts, with Geelong and Camperdown hosting the most attendees at 15 and 18 respectively.

There were five phone enquiries and 29 printed copies of the draft CWS requested, with an additional 50 copies handed out at the listening posts.

Table 2 – Summary of interest and participation in CWS public consultation period

Type	No. of participants/level of interest
Website views – waterway strategy home page	429
Website views – page to download the draft CWS	405
Phone enquiries	5
Printed copies requested/provided	79*
Attendees at Listening posts (x5)	45
Formal responses received (survey, written submissions)	55

*includes 50 copies handed out at listening posts

Feedback received

Fifty-five responses were received on the draft CWS, this included 30 online surveys and 25 written responses submitted by post or email. These were received from the general public, interested community groups, local governments, water corporations, the state government (DEPI, Parks Victoria) and the Australian Government (Department of the Environment).

Overall the feedback on the draft CWS was largely positive and supportive of the intent and activities. Areas that were well supported included:

- *Format:* logical layout; easy to read and easy to download in small and identified parts, people liked the Landscape zone summaries as a way of quickly finding out information relating to their local area.
- *Approach:* the integrated catchment approach is a clear strength of the CWS; agreement with the asset based approach and guiding principles.



- *Community and partnerships*: strong support for the emphasis on collaboration and partnerships and that the importance of community and community involvement is well recognised.
- *Work program*: support for activities aimed at improving waterway condition and agreement with the identified values, threats and proposed works program.

Online survey

The online survey asked respondents to answer a number of questions that focused on particular aspects of the CWS itself. This was intended to gauge how well particular sections of the document achieved their purpose. A summary of responses to these questions is displayed in Appendix A. Where comments were provided they have been included in the comments register and considered as part of the comment review (see next section below). Overall, feedback was largely positive, with the majority of responses in the 'very' to 'mostly' categories for all questions, indicating respondents were satisfied the CWS had achieved its intent for those particular aspects/sections. The majority of feedback was received from residents of the City of Greater Geelong and Corangamite Shire areas (~80%). This reflected the comments provided by respondents which were largely on the Bellarine, Gellibrand and Lismore Landscape Zones.

Listening Posts

Five listening posts were held around the region with 45 attendees in total. Listening posts held in Geelong and Camperdown had the most attendees with 15 and 18 respectively. Interestingly the attendance numbers were in line with the locations of people who provided feedback through the online survey (i.e., majority being from Geelong and Corangamite Shire regions). It can be assumed from this that many people who attended the listening posts also provided written feedback via the online survey.

Major themes of comment from the listening posts include the following:

- largely positive, well written, enabling for community
- locally important waterways not prioritised
- potential to include other waterways in future strategies
- improving information on the importance of game hunting
- actions perceived as limiting or restricting community access and/or use (e.g. fencing actions; this issue was addressed at the listening posts)
- consider including all special water supply reaches
- improved database for non-priority and / or non-assessed (ISC/IWC) waterways

Written submissions

Comment and feedback received via written submission fell generally into the following categories:

- largely supportive; clear format; identifies areas of accountability; proposes a number of logical future actions
- Welcomed the emphasis on community participation through partnerships and integrated catchment management approach



- support for continued fencing, revegetation and pest control (in particular fox control) through landholder agreements
- potential to include other waterways in future strategies (and some local waterways suggested)
- lack of feasibility for achieving environmental outcomes from predator (fox) control
- lack of weed control along priority waterways (esp woody weeds; data will be refined)
- enhancing discussion around better stormwater management and potential retention and recycling, as well as the pressures on effective stormwater management due to development/urban growth.
- balancing urban water use and justifying all threats for future environmental water investigations
- improving data on values and threats to refine priority setting (e.g. Yarra pygmy perch in reaches of Thompson Creek)
- concern with the ‘asset-based approach’ (two comments)

KEY CHANGES MADE

All feedback received through listening posts, online survey and written submission was collated and decisions were made on how to address the main themes using the CWS project review group. Changes included refinements and edits that offered improvements to the CWS rather than any large scale change.

The key themes and the resulting changes to the CWS are detailed in Table 3. In addition to the information presented in Table 3, there were a large range of other minor edits made throughout the CWS to improve accuracy and readability, remove repetition, and adjust grammar inconsistencies.

Table 3 – Key areas of feedback and resulting changes to the CWS

Feedback theme	Change
Structure changes	
Structure change (presentation only)	<p>The detailed regional work program (Appendix A in the Draft CWS) is now a section of the main document. The CWS now consists of three Parts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part A: context and strategy development • Part B: priorities, work summary and delivery • Part C: detailed regional work program.
Refine priority setting/review data	
Changes to priorities (Suggestions that particular waterways should be priority and in some cases data provided).	<p>In all instances this data and information was reviewed. This resulted in the following changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New priorities (data updates meant these met a regional goal and risk assessments were completed): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Three reaches met the native fish goal: 35-



Feedback theme	Change
	<p>37,38,39 (Thompson, Duneed, Merrijig, Creeks).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lake Tooliorook met the social goal. • Adjusted priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Princetown wetlands (adjusted waterway name and boundary). ○ Lake Murtnaghurt (adjusted boundary to include channel as part of Ramsar status; work program activities apply to the whole site). <p>For any other waterways suggested, the data was checked and these could not be elevated to priority based on the fact they still did not meet a regional goal (and therefore could not continue through the prioritisation process). An example is Lake Modewarre, which is extremely important locally, but did not meet a regional goal. The Corangamite CMA has a local catchment planning process that aims to identify these types of local priorities.</p>
Data for the control of woody weeds such as gorse and blackberry needs to be improved.	Database updated with new data on high threat weeds from DEPI Biosecurity (gorse, blackberry and serrated tussock) and other community feedback. Risk assessments were re-run (where necessary) and work program activities updated.
General data or information provided on threats	These comments did not affect the data in the database or activities required but did provide more detail on the threats. In this case updates were made to the threat descriptions in Part C (regional work program) and/or in Chapter 5 (e.g. feral pigs in Stony Rises).
<i>New/altered content</i>	
Western District Lakes Ramsar Site management plan	In order to meet the Australian Government criteria for Ramsar site planning further detail has been included on this site. Changes were focused on consistency between the CWS and the sites Ecological Character Description (ECD) and included defining Ramsar terminology and using this within the CWS (e.g. defining Limits of Acceptable Change and including these in Part C with CWS targets); describing all threats that are listed in the ECD, including a table to highlight interested parties and roles, bringing in more detail on the monitoring and evaluation approach/requirements.
Stormwater management and impacts from development/urban growth (many comments relating to the following local	A new section has been added to Chapter 3, 3.4.6 to discuss the impacts from new developments/growth areas on waterways and the overall approach to



Feedback theme	Change
government areas: City of Greater Geelong, areas of Golden Plains, Surf Coast and Ballarat).	stormwater management. Activity has been added to relevant waterways that are adjacent to current developments.
<p>Predator control (fox control). Fox control is listed in a large proportion of the works programs for specific waterway reaches. The scope of these projects range from 5 to 1000 Ha's. Committing to large numbers of small fox control programs is an aspirational target and unlikely to achieve the aims identified for the reasons outlined below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of recent studies have shown that even very well coordinated baiting programs involving many landholders may not achieve substantial and wide-spread population reductions • The scale of fox control programs proposed through the CWS are not sufficient to achieve long term reductions in fox numbers or substantial benefits to native fauna. 	<p>This research and advice was taken into account and the approach to fox control has been altered. Fox control actions have remained in the work program to identify there is a need to reduce this threat. These actions have been adjusted so that they are carried out only where they can be a part of a large scale coordinated effort. As it is not feasible to estimate quantities and costs for this type of program these have been removed. Technical feasibility within the risk assessments has been adjusted to 'low' and waterway rankings have been adjusted as a result. A short discussion has been included on predator control feasibilities and knowledge gaps in Chapter 3.</p>
Include information on the importance of game hunting and provide positive comment on the partnership with Field and Game.	A new section has been included in Chapter 3 to recognise the importance of game hunting in the region and provide the intended management approach. Updates have been made to the Landscape Zone summaries to recognise this value (where needed).
Minor edits and points of clarification¹	
Waterways referred to in the 'other waterways' sections should be displayed on the maps, including where special water supply reaches are not already included.	Maps within Landscape Zone summaries have been updated to include these waterways.
The estuary entrance management section omits discussion on the possible adverse effects on ecology of the estuary from artificially openings.	Discussion in estuary management section in Ch3 on the possible effects of artificially opening the estuary mouth, while considering all aspects of entrance management are discussed appropriately.
The draft strategy should recognise the opportunity for making controlled release of recycled water into waterways for environmental benefit.	Text added to the Environmental Water section discussing licenced discharge into waterways as a potential source of water and environmental beneficial use, eg., Batesford, Yarrowee.

¹ This list is not exhaustive. It includes examples of minor changes and points of clarification resulting from feedback, however there was also many other changes of a similar nature that resulted from community feedback.



Feedback theme	Change
Borefields appear to be attributed as a key influence on the existing acid sulfate soils issue on Boundary Creek and Anglesea (ASS are listed as the only threat that the action will address). A range of other significant influences on ASS need to be mentioned in the strategy.	Activity has been broadened to include investigation into all possible impacts on ASS for both of these sites.
Environmental water section needs to recognise other impacts on flow such as agriculture and farm dams (as well as water harvesting for urban and town water supplies).	Text included in Environmental Water section to clarify the types of impacts on flow (i.e. addition of stock agricultural and domestic uses).
Environmental water investigation activities need a supporting rationale.	Wording on activity has been updated to clarify that these actions are about investigating the issues where there is a flow threat identified through AVIRA, and determining whether a supporting rationale exists.
The position on water quality incidents (blue-green algae) is unclear.	A management approach has been added to water quality section in Chapter 3.
<p>Many other individual text edits and improvements were provided. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updating names of active Landcare Groups • Updating community values where additional information is provided • Updating lead agencies and partners in work program 	The approach used was to make as many of these refinements as possible. All inaccuracies were addressed and other comments were addressed where they fitted within the scope and guiding principles of the CWS.

In addition to these comments and recommended changes, there was some feedback that did not result in changes to the CWS. There were four main reasons for this:

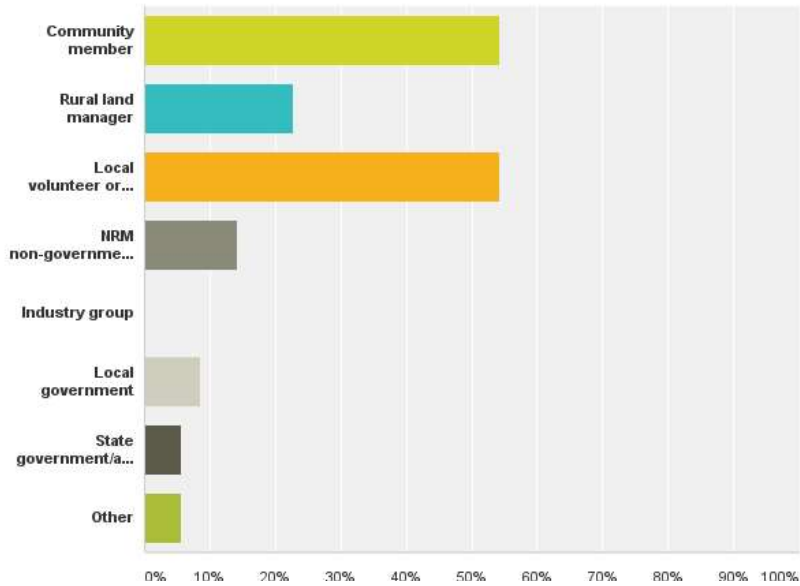
- The item was already covered in another section of the CWS.
- The comment was outside the scope in which the CWS can operate (e.g. including surveys of species that are not threatened, having the CMA review roles of other agencies).
- Item was outside the requirements and principles in which the CWS needs to operate (e.g suggestions of changing the priority setting/asset based approach).
- Insufficient information was provided and the submitter could not be contacted (i.e. reference to a specific reach or wetland was required).



APPENDIX A - Online survey results

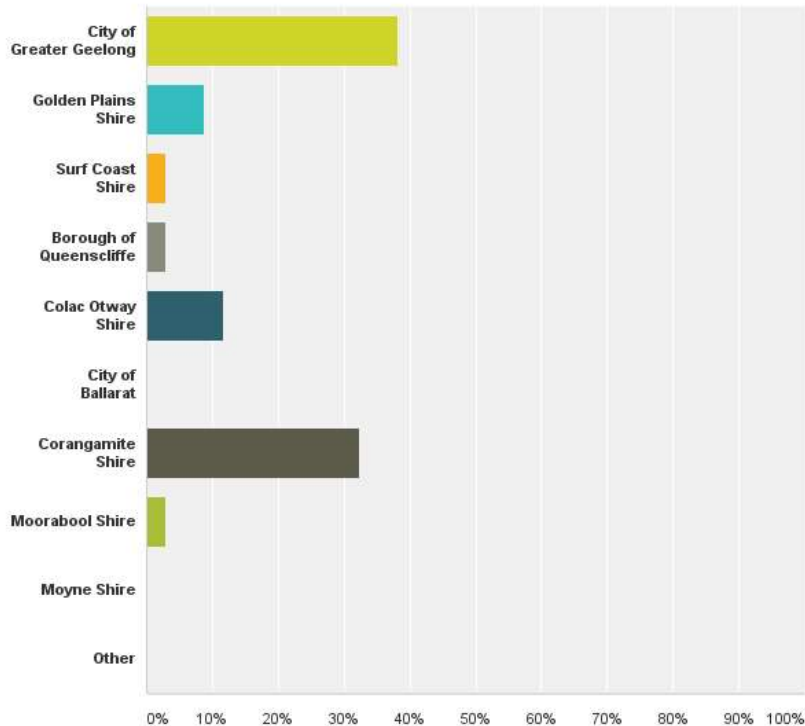
**Q1 What sector of the community do you represent when you consider the CWS?
(select all that apply)**

Answered: 35 Skipped: 0



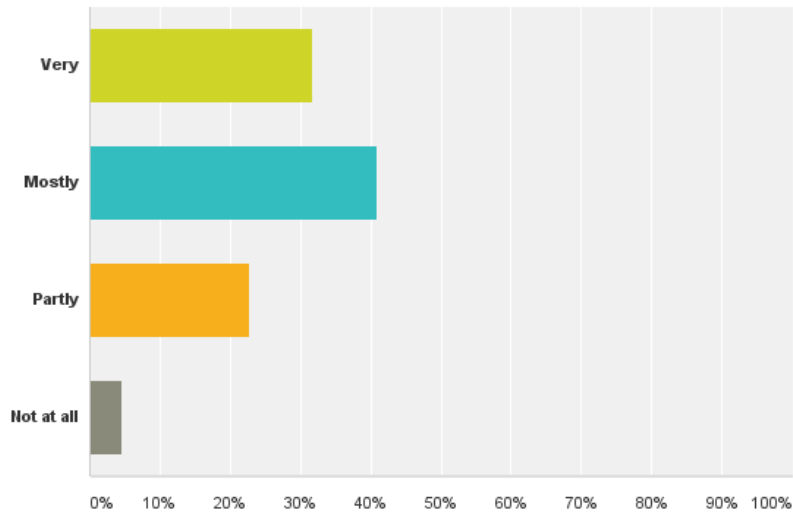
Q2 Which local government area do you reside in?

Answered: 34 Skipped: 1



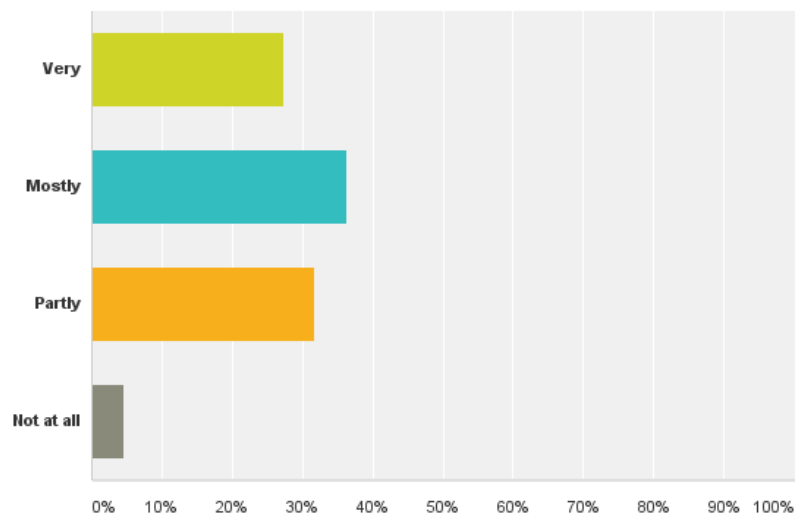
Q4 The background and development process for Corangamite Waterway Strategy, including priority setting, are detailed in Chapters 4 and 5. Did these sections clearly outline the development process?

Answered: 22 Skipped: 13



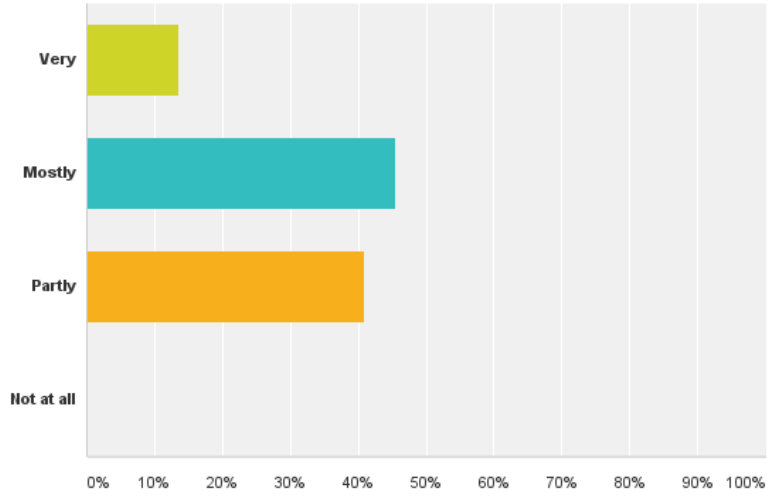
Q5 The strategy outlines 8 goals guided by the Corangamite Regional Catchment Strategy for improving waterway condition. Do you consider these goals reflect the priorities for improving waterway condition in the region?

Answered: 22 Skipped: 13



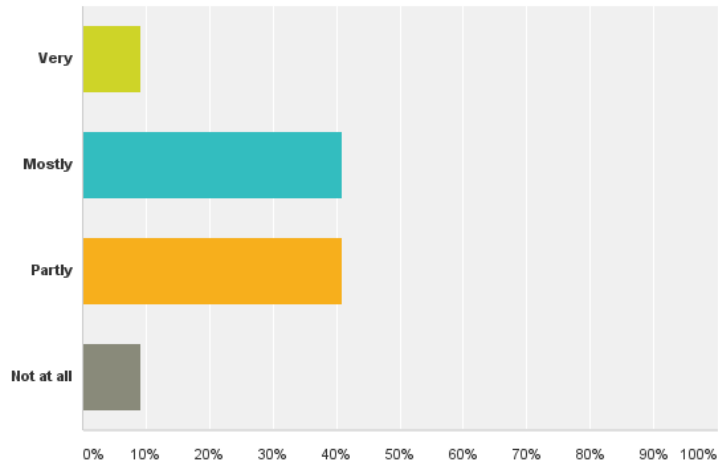
Q6 Management actions for addressing priority waterways in the strategy are detailed in Chapter six. Do you consider these actions will improve waterway condition in the region?

Answered: 22 Skipped: 13



Q7 Community values on local waterways are detailed in each of the 15 Landscape sections in Chapter six of the strategy. Did these sections provide an adequate representation of the community's values on local waterways, and the support available for undertaking local action?

Answered: 22 Skipped: 13



Q9 Overall, does the Corangamite Waterway Strategy 2014-2022 provide a good basis for improving the health of the region's waterways?

Answered: 19 Skipped: 16

