

ACT and Region Catchment Management
Coordination Group **Annual Report**

2017–18



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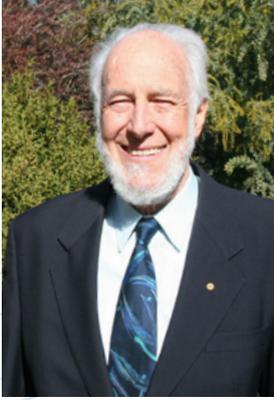
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Chair's Foreword

This year has seen three major areas of progress for the Coordination Group, that of developing and agreeing a framework for the cooperative funding of programs, interjurisdictional cooperation and the strengthening of ongoing activities in the area of water management.

The strategic plan of the Coordination Group contains several areas requiring in-kind and budgeted financial support. These include funding for community support through the Upper Murrumbidgee Catchment Network (formerly acting as the Upper Murrumbidgee Catchment Coordinating Committee), support for the catchment groups in the region and a program of ongoing community and project support through the agreed investment framework. This framework comprises a shared funding model in which mutual costs are apportioned to support community understanding of catchment health, the work of peak stakeholder groups, volunteers and land owners and managers. Specific project costs in this funding model will be negotiated between the collaborating parties and outside agencies as appropriate. For 2018–19 the community sector support has initially been met from the Environment Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate budget.

Discussions have been held on inter-jurisdictional planning issues including land development, waste management and the replacement of the old Queanbeyan sewage treatment plant. These are further considered in this report in the sections on Actions 10 and 11.

In the area of water management, collaboration between the NSW South East and Tablelands Regional Plan and the ACT water policy, development of NSW and ACT Water Resource Plans, the impacts of climate change, and community understanding of catchment health have progressed.

Initial planning for a sub-regional water strategy has commenced, with the aim of preparing a plan for drinking water supply for the region. As the population growth increases in the areas bordering the ACT the requirement for larger volumes of quality drinking water by communities currently relying on rain or bore water, or the Yass River, becomes more apparent. Higher housing densities also mitigate against the use of septic tank sewage treatment, with potential to contaminate groundwater.

The impacts of climate change on flood frequency and intensity, drought planning and bushfire emergency planning have been considered and ACT and NSW plans developed. The Coordination Group have also considered post-emergency impact mitigation planning.

Water quality in the catchment has been reported by Waterwatch, a community group activity assessing water quality from the headwaters of the Murrumbidgee down to Burrinjuck dam. The best quality was in the creeks of the National parks and grazing areas, and the most deteriorated in the urban areas of Canberra. This is to be expected as domestic run-off and site runoff from development carry loads of turbidity and nutrients into the urban creeks.

Community awareness of catchment and lake health is a focus for the Coordination Group, as the recreational value of our rivers and lakes is dependent on overall waterway health. Lake closures through the presence of potentially toxic blue-green algae have impacted on the community this year, with the public being intermittently prevented from using the lakes for recreation and aquatic sporting events cancelled.

The H2OK program has alerted the community of the need to only have rainwater going down the stormwater drains. The construction of stormwater retention ponds, wetlands and rain gardens in the ongoing Healthy Waterways project will improve urban water quality. Workshops for builders and developers have been held, in response to observations of below best-practice work being conducted during land development in the ACT.

We have now established a basic framework for funding and operation of the Coordination Group, and look forward to increasing the interaction of the ACT Directorates, the National Capital Authority Icon Water and NSW local and regional government to achieve ongoing regional cooperation and mutually beneficial development.

Emeritus Professor Ian Falconer
Independent Chair
ACT and Region Catchment Management
Coordination Group



1. Background

This report outlines the activities of the ACT and Region Catchment Management Coordination Group (the Coordination Group) from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 and fulfils the Coordination Group's obligations as per the Water Resources (Catchment Management Coordination Group) Amendment Bill 2015 Part 2 S. 67D:

67D Annual report by coordination group

1. For each financial year, the coordination group must prepare a report about the group's activities during the financial year, including any advice given, or recommendations made, to the Minister.
2. The group must give the report to the Minister within 3 months after the end of the financial year.
3. The Minister must, within 21 days after receiving the report, table the following in the Legislative Assembly:
 - a. the report;
 - b. a statement by the Minister responding to any advice given or recommendations made to the Minister in the group's annual report.
4. However, if there are no sitting days during the 21-day period—
 - a. the Minister must give the report and the statement, and a copy of each for each member of the Legislative Assembly, to the Speaker; and
 - b. the report and the statement are taken for all purposes to have been tabled in the Legislative Assembly on the day the Minister gives it to the Speaker (the **report day**); and
 - c. the Speaker must arrange for a copy of the report and a copy of the statement to be given to each member of the Legislative Assembly on the report day; and
 - d. despite paragraph (b), the Speaker must present the report and the statement to the Legislative Assembly on the next sitting day

The establishment of an inter-jurisdictional coordination body to strengthen governance and catchment management in the ACT and surrounding regions was approved by the ACT Government in October 2014. The Coordination Group was established on an interim basis on 25 February 2015. The ACT Legislative Assembly passed the [Water Resources \(Catchment Management\) Amendment Act 2015](#), which amended the [Water Resources Act 2007](#) and established the Coordination Group as a statutory body, on 4 August 2015.

This amendment allowed for the appointment of an independent chair and a community representative, with Emeritus Professor Ian Falconer AO and Dr Fiona Dyer appointed to the respective positions in October 2015 (Notification NI2015-581).

The Coordination Group is specified in the work plan for the ACT and NSW Memorandum of Understanding for Regional Collaboration (December 2016) (the MoU). Consistent with the intent of the MoU, the considerations of the Coordination Group and the contribution of staff and financial resources are negotiated on a project-by-project basis. The format of this annual report sets out the range of activities undertaken by the Coordination Group, focussing on key priorities, achievements over the period and planned future activities.

The Catchment Management and Water Policy Branch of the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD) provides secretariat support to the Coordination Group.



1.1 Functions

The Coordination Group is committed to improving governance of catchment management within the region. It works for the long-term benefit of the ACT and region catchments and the people who reside therein. It aims to:

- » be a responsive, dynamic and representative body which aims to work in a fair, open and collaborative manner
 - » take a holistic approach to understanding and managing the catchment
 - » promote a whole-of-catchment and governmental approach to improving the catchment's health in the long term, using best available science and community engagement to support its work.
- The Coordination Group was established to:
- » advise the ACT Minister for the Environment and Climate Change on water catchment management in the ACT and Region catchment
 - » improve coordination, cooperation and direction of effort in catchment management across the ACT and region
 - » facilitate collaborative problem solving for inter-jurisdiction and interagency issues
 - » provide advice on opportunities to align national, regional and territory investment in the context of integrated catchment management
 - » oversee the development of an integrated catchment management strategy with agreed principles and actions
 - » provide advice on proposed developments in terms of their likely impacts and strategies and actions to mitigate any risk to catchment health
 - » undertake other matters as determined by the Minister.



1.2 Membership

ACT and Region Catchment Management
Coordination Group Chair
Emeritus Professor Ian Falconer

The role of the Chair is to independently facilitate a collaborative process between jurisdictions to ensure the best outcomes are achieved. Emeritus Professor Falconer has extensive experience in water and catchment-based research and consulting. Prior to coming to the ACT he was Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) at the University of Adelaide and advised overseas universities in Malaysia and Thailand over 25 years on their development of environmental and pre-medical sciences. This, alongside his experience in staff training and academic administration, has been invaluable in guiding the Coordination Group in developing and executing a regional catchment management strategy.

Community Representative
Dr Fiona Dyer, Community Representative, Upper
Murrumbidgee Catchment Network

The Upper Murrumbidgee Catchment Network (UMCN) is a community-based organisation made up of agencies and groups that are responsible for natural resource management in the upper Murrumbidgee catchment. The network operates as a regional cross-border network to enhance communication between agencies and groups in NSW and the ACT and represents the interests of and provides a link to the broader community within the region. Dr Dyer is the immediate past Chair of the network.



Environment, Planning and Sustainable
Development Directorate
Director-General, Mr Ben Ponton

EPSDD has several roles in managing water in the ACT, including responsibility for high-level strategic water policy development and participating in the national water reform agenda and competition issues relating to water access, pricing and trading. In addition, the directorate regulates the Territory's water resources and monitors and reports on water quality. The directorate also has a role in the demand management of water resources and in developing strategies to address catchment management issues in the ACT and wider region.

Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic
Development Directorate
Head of Service, Ms Kathy Leigh

Ms Leigh supports the Chief Minister at intergovernmental forums, notably the Council of Australian Governments. The directorate manages and coordinates the ACT's relationships with other jurisdictions, most significantly with the Commonwealth, NSW, Australia's other capital cities and NSW councils surrounding the ACT.

ACT Emergency Services Agency
Commissioner, Mr Dominic Lane

The ACT Emergency Services Agency (ESA) comprises the ACT Ambulance Service, ACT Fire and Rescue, the ACT Rural Fire Service, the ACT State Emergency Service and the ESA Support Services. ESA will play a key role in helping the Coordination Group coordinate risk analysis, and in planning for and managing emergency situations such as storms, floods and bushfires.

Transport Canberra and City Services Directorate
Director-General Ms Emma Thomas

The Transport Canberra and City Services (TCCS) Directorate is responsible for managing Canberra's urban lakes and ponds, including managing stormwater control. TCCS is also responsible for providing services to manage the Territory's waste and other infrastructure.

ACT Health Directorate
Director-General, Ms Nicole Feely, is represented
by the Chief Health Officer, Dr Paul Kelly

In respect to environmental health, the Health Directorate protects and promotes the good health of the ACT community through the fostering of safe and healthy environments. It provides information, policy development, monitoring and enforcement in relation to public health activities including the Guidelines for Recreational Water Quality. The directorate provides a framework for the management of recreational water sites within the ACT, addressing risks from blue-green algae as well as microbial pathogens.

National Capital Authority
Chief Executive, Ms Sally Barnes

The National Capital Authority (NCA) manages some of Canberra's nationally and culturally significant landscapes and attractions including the nationally iconic Lake Burley Griffin and surrounding lands. NCA is keen to see national land and water bodies used and enjoyed by visitors and Canberra residents for a range of recreational uses; however, it aims to ensure an appropriate balance between public access to National Land with the protection of national assets.

South East Local Land Services General Manager, Mr Anthony Marshall

South East Local Land Services (South East LLS) brings agricultural production advice, biosecurity, natural resource management and emergency management into a single organisation. Its services add value to local industries, enhances natural resources, protects industries from pests and disease, and helps communities respond to emergencies like flood, fire and drought. South East LLS will ensure the natural assets, local industries, landholders and communities of the surrounding tablelands region are represented on the Coordination Group.

Icon Water

Managing Director, Mr John Knox Icon Water owns and operates the ACT's network of dams for drinking water, water treatment plants, sewage treatment plants, reservoirs, water and sewage pumping stations, mains and other associated infrastructure. It provides water and sewerage services to the ACT and bulk water to Queanbeyan. Icon Water's interests in healthy catchments include the security, quality and sustainability of water resources for a range of uses, and minimising the impact of its network on the region's waterways.

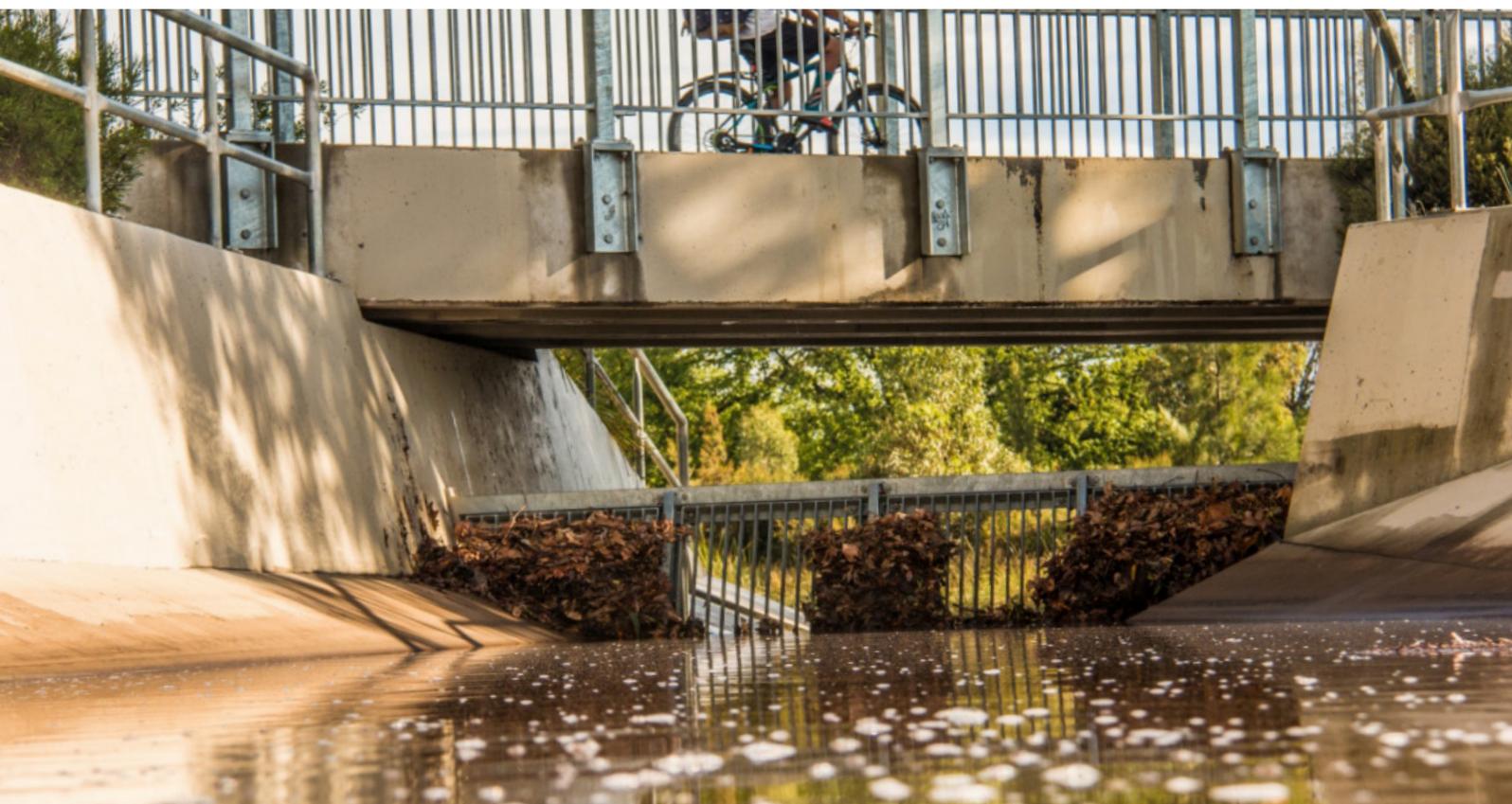
Queanbeyan—Palerang Regional Council, General-Manager Mr Peter Tegar

Yass Valley Council,
Director of Planning Mr Chris Berry

Snowy Monaro Regional Council, Director of Environmental Services Mr Peter Smith

The local government areas of Queanbeyan—Palerang Regional Council, Snowy Monaro Regional Council and Yass Valley Council make a significant contribution to the management and protection of the region's natural resources.

Local governments undertake a wide range of activities related to catchment management, including the development and implementation of land use planning, managing public land and regulating private activities. They play a key role in translating the policies of the Australian and state governments into local and on-ground projects. As such, their input to strategic planning, economic development and stormwater management is vital to providing the best outcomes for an inter-jurisdictional catchment.





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Giving Shape to Ideas

2. Highlights

The Coordination Group continues to set a strong example for multi-jurisdictional collaboration in regional catchment management. In 2017–18 it made further progress against actions in the ACT and Region Catchment Strategy (the Catchment Strategy). A brief synopsis of these is provided below, together with other key activities undertaken.

2.1 Progress on priority actions from the Catchment Action Implementation Plan (2016–21)

The Catchment Strategy identifies 19 actions to promote a healthy catchment region and bring governments, community and industry together to produce a healthy, productive, resilient and liveable catchment region.

The Catchment Strategy's key themes

Governance, policy and planning—a framework for coordination of policy, planning, investment and knowledge processes that provide a foundation for our work.

Communities—acknowledging the outstanding contribution that catchment groups and volunteer programs play in protecting our natural resources, motivating people to connect to their catchment and increasing their capacity to adapt to change.

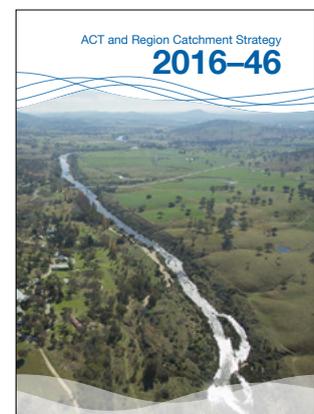
Regional development—recognising that the catchment is a growth area and strategies are needed to support the prosperity of the region with sound catchment management planning principles and technical expertise to support sustainable growth.

Water, land and biodiversity—support the biophysical processes that maintain the resilience and health of natural resources that are essential for thriving communities and ecosystems.

The Catchment Strategy is supported by the ACT and Region Catchment Action Implementation Plan (2016–21) (the Implementation Plan), which sets out the 19 actions under their respective themes and provides additional detail in terms of what each action will achieve, key stakeholders, who should be involved, resourcing status and likely timeframes.

The Implementation Plan includes criteria for determining the project timeframes and an outline of the principles for applying adaptive management based on issues such as ease of implementation, budget availability, existing data, technology and appropriate policy settings.

A copy of the Catchment Strategy can be found at: www.environment.act.gov.au/water



The Coordination Group identified seven priority actions from the Implementation Plan as a focus for its work in 2017–18. Progress against these seven actions is provided below.

[Action 1: Build an inter-jurisdictional decision making framework related to catchment policy and planning](#)

This action was completed in 2017–18. A framework for inter-jurisdictional decision making was adopted by the Coordination Group in November 2017.

[Action 2: Establish an inter-jurisdictional investment and resourcing framework](#)

This action was completed in 2017–18. The Coordination Group agreed in principle to a three-tiered cost sharing approach in 2016. This was progressed over 2017–18 and a co-investment framework was adopted in principle in March 2018. Commencement of projects is planned for 2019–20 to enable member organisations sufficient time consider associated costs in their forward budgets.

Additionally, the ACT Government is undertaking a feasibility study for water trading. Water trading could offer a future funding stream for catchment management activities in the ACT.

[Action 7: Strategically support the role and work undertaken by peak stakeholder groups, volunteers, and land owners and managers.](#)

The Coordination Group supported an ACT budget bid submitted by Southern ACT Catchment Group and Ginninderra Catchment Group. This bid resulted in all three ACT region catchment groups (including Molonglo Catchment Group) sharing a budget allocation of \$352,000 for one year. During 2018–19 the catchment groups will work with ACT Government to develop a more sustainable funding model for the future; there is likely to be a role for the Coordination Group to play in exploring opportunities in this area.

The Coordination Group agreed in-principle, through its new funding framework, that members would contribute to funding for UMCN from 2019–20, and to fund new approaches to develop community leaders in catchment management. It also (through ACT Government) provided \$15,000 in funding for UMCN for FY 2017–18 to enable the group to maintain some administrative capacity.



Action 9: Build community understanding about catchment health to promote behaviour change through a broad range of communication and education strategies

The H2OK Keeping our Waterways Healthy stormwater education and behaviour change program continued to be rolled out. The program operates across the upper Murrumbidgee region and targets actions by urban and rural residents as well as the building and construction industry that have a negative impact on our waterways. The program combines awareness, education and incentive elements such as:

- » Seasonal social media campaigns (winter—litter; spring—fertilisers; summer—soil and erosion; autumn—leaves).
- » A catchment road show (Multicultural Festival; Canberra Show; Jerrabomberra Wetlands Open Day; Murrumbateman Field Day; Clean Up Australia Day).
- » DrainART (a School drain art competition and decals; commissioned art works and decals).
- » Stencilling stormwater sump covers (over 600 stencils across Canberra and the region).
- » Demonstration sites at 15 urban and rural residential properties to illustrate best practice stormwater management; eight of the properties were open to the public over two weekends in June. More than 200 people visited the sites with two fully booked bus tours. Feedback was that the events were well received.
- » Collaboration with the building and development industry to improve training on stormwater management and improve installation and maintenance of erosion and sediment control measures.
- » Ambassadors to get the key messages across that 'Only Rain Goes Down the Stormwater Drain'.

Two videos were produced: one is an informative video about using leaves as a resource; the other shows how the building and construction industry is playing its part in helping to reduce loss of soil off their sites. A training video for the Master Builders Association for construction workers on sediment and erosion control was in development. In addition, demonstration sites in Denman Prospect and Googong Township have been identified to showcase best practice erosion and sediment control methods.

The Coordination Group gave in-principle support to considering financial support for the H2OK Keeping our Waterways Healthy program in their forward budgets.

Action 10: Provide an integrated catchment management planning approach for growth and settlement patterns in the ACT and Region.

A project is underway to compare ACT and NSW Council environmental management policies and identify areas for improved alignment. A report is expected to be available in coming months. Early indications are that there is little evidence of substantial lack of alignment between ACT and NSW policies, although the project has identified several potential areas for improved collaboration.

A component of Action 10 in the Catchment Strategy is “supporting continued cross jurisdictional approach to management of waste and recycling”. Transport Canberra and City Services is seeking and reviewing proposals to provide new waste infrastructure for the ACT and region. As part of this process, EPSDD, the ACT Waste Feasibility Study and Icon Water staff are discussing the best ways to manage biosolids. The South East Resource Recovery Group of the Canberra Region Joint Organisation is being consulted on how their requirements can be addressed through this process.

Action 11: Develop regional capacity to implement and manage sustainable water infrastructure

A 'Best for Region' sewage management project was thoroughly investigated by Icon Water and Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council. Following their analysis, this project was not progressed for financial and technical reasons. Icon Water and Yass Valley Council are continuing investigations into options for improved water security in the Yass region.

Action 13: Improve water quality, protect and restore aquatic ecosystem health and reduce nutrient, sediment and pathogen loads at key sites across the catchment

Expert panels have been convened by ACT Government to examine phosphorus and nitrogen loads in ACT receiving waters and discharges into other water bodies such as Lake Burley Griffin and the NSW Murrumbidgee River. Work is ongoing to balance the various ecological, amenity, financial and regulatory factors that must be considered in this complex area.



2.2 Progress on other actions

Although not identified as key priorities, substantial progress was made against other actions.

Action 3 Promote evidence-based decision making for improved healthy catchments

An extensive review of water monitoring activities in the ACT and surrounding regions (Integrated Water Monitoring Plan 2018) was completed in 2018. Key recommendations focussed on updating monitoring activities in the Territory; improved data management and sharing and building modelling capabilities to support catchment management and policy development.

Implementation of these capabilities is being undertaken, through a new monitoring program in the ACT; development of a Data Management System and development of catchment modelling capabilities.

Action 4: Continue to inform a catchment-wide assessment of vulnerability to climate change

Canberra Urban and Regional Futures was appointed to undertake this task. A stakeholder engagement workshop was held in November 2017 and the project is ongoing.

Action 12: Secure long-term water supplies for the ACT and Region

Water trading is included in the 2017 work plan for the MoU for Regional Collaboration. At a recent Murray–Darling Basin Authority Ministerial Council Meeting, NSW and the ACT attained in-principle support to establish water trading between the two jurisdictions.

An allocation was made in the 2018–19 ACT Budget for a feasibility study to establish water trading in the southern connected basins of the Murray–Darling Basin. The ACT Government expects this water trading will assist with providing a sustainable funding source for regional catchment management into the future.

Action 14: Ensure Indigenous and other values are recognised

Early consideration of some project components commenced, including trialling cultural burning. The potential for Aboriginal water reserve is to be identified within the ACT Water Resource Plan, due for accreditation in 2019.

Action 16: Implement an approach to biosecurity planning and risk management

NSW is currently reviewing policies and regulations regarding biosecurity. The ACT released a Biosecurity Strategy in 2016 and has just completed public consultation on a discussion paper to inform new biosecurity legislation.

The Coordination Group received briefings on the progress of the National Carp Taskforce, and is seen as a forum to support coordination of the release of the carp herpes virus in the region. Funding for a Carp Control Coordinator was allocated in the 2018–19 ACT Budget.

Action 19: Consider regional approaches to dealing with contaminated land and illegal dumping of contaminated waste

The NSW Department of Planning and Environment amended the exempt provision related to earthworks under the State Environment Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008 to address this issue.

2.3 Stakeholder engagement

To continue to strengthen the coordination between the Group and community in the ACT and NSW, the Chair and officers have met with the following stakeholder groups and executives of the key bodies to discuss furthering the priority actions and issues of wide concern to catchment management. Some of this engagement is provided below.

[ACT and region catchment groups](#)

The Chair corresponded with the Ginninderra, Molonglo and Southern catchment groups with regard to the cessation of funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Program which had previously sustained these groups, and potential mechanisms for support of the catchment groups through the Coordination Group.

[National Parks Association \(ACT\) Bushfire Management Conference](#)

Participation in a wide-ranging two day discussion of bushfire management and control, including a field trip to observe regrowth of vegetation in dry sclerophyll forest after controlled burning.

[Professor Kate Auty, ACT Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment](#)

Discussion of problems arising from land offsets for conservation arising from developers clearing areas of natural conservation value, including Stage 3 of the Molonglo development.

[H2OK Stormwater program](#)

Participation in the installation of stormwater drain decals focussing on the campaign's key message: 'Only rain down the stormwater drain'.

[Ms Emma Thomas, Director-General Transport Canberra and City Services Directorate](#)

Discussion on the Coordination Group's Strategic Plan and the five-year Implementation Plan in relation to integration between Transport Canberra and City Services and regional development in nearby NSW.

[Ms Sally Barnes, CEO National Capital Authority](#)

The NCA is investigating environmental matters, particularly relating to Lake Burley Griffin. Lake water quality is of vital importance to the lake, in terms of both aesthetics and recreational values. Lake Burley Griffin is a receiving environment for urban run-off and upstream nutrient loads; further work is required to minimise these inputs.

[Ms Rowena Abbey, Chair of the Canberra Region Joint Organisation](#)

Discussions on regional waste management issues and the role of the Joint Organisation in resolving ongoing inter-jurisdictional negotiations.

[Landcare ACT](#)

The chair attended a presentation by Professor Bill Gammage and Mr Bruce Pascoe on Aboriginal land management, cultivation and burning practices.

2.4 Advice to the ACT Minister for the Environment and Heritage

The Chair met with Minister Gentleman to present the Coordination Group's progress in implementing the Strategic Plan and participation in coordinating group members' relevant activities. Issues discussed included:

- » the region's vulnerability to climate change
- » development of an integrated catchment and emergency response plan
- » community understanding of catchment and waterway health
- » regional approaches to dealing with contaminated land and illegal dumping of contaminated waste
- » establishment of an inter-jurisdictional investment and resourcing framework
- » the role and work of the peak stakeholder groups, volunteers and land owners.



3. 2018–19 Priorities

The key focus for the Coordination Group in 2018–19 will be to further the actions within the Implementation Plan, with a particular emphasis on the following priorities:

Action 3: Promote evidence-based decision making for improved healthy catchments.

Continue work to implement key recommendations from the Integrated Water Monitoring Plan 2018. Explore opportunities for wider uptake and use of citizen science data from programs such as Waterwatch and Frogwatch.

Action 7: Strategically support the role and work undertaken by peak stakeholder groups, volunteers, and land owners and managers.

The Coordination Group has given in-principle commitment to support for UMCN and other projects that will support peak stakeholder groups over a four-year period. Work with these groups, including outreach through them to land owners and managers, will be ongoing. There may also be synergies with Action 9 below.

Action 9: Build community understanding about catchment health to promote behaviour change through a broad range of communication and education strategies.

The Coordination Group has given in-principle commitment to support for the continuation of the H2OK program, which is its final year as the program was originally funded. Consideration needs to be given to management of the legacy for this program. There may also be synergies with Action 7 above; for example, the Waterwatch program will include a formal education component in 2018–19 for the first time in several years.

Action 12: Secure long-term water supplies for the ACT and region.

A regional water strategy is currently being developed in collaboration between the ACT Government and NSW Department of Planning with reference to the South East and Tablelands Regional Plan.

Action 13: Improve water quality, protect and restore aquatic ecosystem health and reduce nutrient, sediment and pathogen loads at key sites across the catchment.

There are opportunities to improve collaboration and information sharing on riparian ecosystem health projects in the ACT region, both within and across government, and with the wider catchment management community. This would give a more coherent narrative about the wide range of work being done in this area and help target future works and key sites. The diversity of work in this area includes the Upper Murrumbidgee Demonstration Reach, 20 Million Trees, and ACT Parks and Conservation Service Management Plans

Expert panels looking at specific nutrient loads in water in the region will continue to meet.

Action 14: Ensure Indigenous and other values are recognised.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' role in water management is being increasingly recognised in formal water management plans across Australia, including the Murray–Darling Basin Plan. The Coordination Group will explore ways to better ensure the perspective of regional Aboriginal communities is better integrated into its information-gathering and decision-making.

