Habitat

Performance monitoring summary for the Healthy Waterways Strategy 2018

Overview

Habitat related regional and subcatchment performance objectives (RPOs and SCPOs) are about managing habitat, other than vegetation (refer Vegetation Fact Sheet), from a physical perspective (i.e. physical form and instream connectivity) and managing for the particular habitat requirements of specific species that were not captured adequately in other SCPOs. For example Melbourne Water's Sites of Biodiversity Significance program manages areas of Melbourne Water owned land to protect plant and animal species of listed significance.

For rivers this group includes all the SCPOs relating to instream connectivity (i.e. fish passage) and physical habitat (largely around erosion control). In addition, SCPOs were developed for frog species of significance as these habitats were considered quite distinct from the general riparian vegetation improvement performance objectives. Translocation of Yarra Pygmy Perch was included as an action due to the very isolated range of this threatened species. The other quite unique SCPO in this group relating to rivers and wetlands is about re-engaging the floodplain along a particular reach of the Yarra River to achieve multiple benefits. Other specific SCPOs for wetlands are around managing threats to physical habitat such as soil disturbance and stock access. It is recognised in the Strategy that SCPOs for rivers will largely benefit estuaries and as such specific targets in the estuaries were not developed apart from improving the longitudinal connectivity and tidal exchange of specific estuarine reaches.

Typical actions for managing river and wetland habitat include fencing, revegetation, weed and pest animal control, and works to stabilise erosion. Other specific actions are also considered such as physical habitat creation/restoration, addressing the need to supply water to sustain habitat ponds and to engage floodplains, removal of barriers and construction of fish passage structures, and where required, the physical translocation of animals. The mix of performance objectives under the Habitat group align with the intent of the performance objectives in the Vegetation and Pest group. Additionally, targets for re-engaging floodplains and wetlands will increase connectivity for wetland fish species.

Performance indicators and data are outlined below:

PO theme	Performance indicators	Data required to track progress	Timing	Who is involved in reporting
Improve / increase connectivity for fish passage	# fish barriers removed in priority reaches	Fishway database	Annual from 2018	Melbourne Water
Mitigate threats to physical form	Physical form program developed	Progress report	Annual from 2018	Melbourne Water

PO theme	Performance indicators	Data required to track progress	Timing	Who is involved in reporting
protect specific values and habitat	Ha habitat created Implementation of Melbourne Water's Sites of Biodiversity program	Ha vegetation, km fencing, ha weed control, ha pest animal control, sites included in sites of biodiversity significance program	Annual from 2018	Melbourne Water
Re-engage floodplains	Ha habitat created	Ha vegetation, km fencing, ha weed control, ha pest animal control	Annual from 2018	Melbourne Water
Translocate species	Investigation completed	Progress report	Annual from 2018	Melbourne Water

Summary of the number of Performance Objectives within each theme:

Performance Objective theme	Regional	Rivers	Wetlands	Estuaries
Improve / increase connectivity for fish passage		12		2
Mitigate threats to physical form		30	9	1
protect specific values and habitat	1	5	7	
Re-engage floodplains		1	4	16
Translocate species		2		

About this document

Delivering the Performance Objectives
Melbourne Water and partners will approach implementation of the many different Performance Objectives within this group according to each organisations obligations and delivery mechanisms and their associated capacity and capability to plan and deliver the required activities/works.