

# Vegetation

## Performance monitoring summary for the Healthy Waterways Strategy 2018

### Overview

This group of performance objectives focuses on increasing the extent and quality of vegetation along rivers and estuaries and within and around wetlands. The focus is on protecting high quality areas and increasing the extent in priority locations to benefit specific key values. Performance objectives are set regionally, as regional performance objectives (RPOs), and at the sub-catchment level, as sub-catchment performance objectives (SCPOs). Vegetation performance objectives include:

- Ensuring knowledge gaps are filled and appropriate tools are in place to guide best practice vegetation management
- Protecting high quality areas of vegetation
- Increasing vegetation extent in priority river reaches, wetlands and estuaries.
- Maintaining vegetation in priority river reaches, wetlands and estuaries.

Revegetation is to use local ecological vegetation classes (EVCs), unless they are no longer appropriate. For wetlands the SCPOs aim to protect existing macrophyte vegetation within wetlands or increase the area of vegetation around the wetland in order to provide greater protection to wetland habitat. For estuaries it is likely that sea level rise will significantly impact on existing vegetation along estuaries and as such targets are focused on supporting EVCs to migrate further upstream to offset future losses. Vegetation plays a crucial role in enhancing drought refuge habitats by providing shade and other key ecological functions. The RPOs seek to ensure appropriate programs, tools and guidelines are in place to tackle complex problems such as climate change impacts. In addition there is a performance objective specifically relating to increasing knowledge and developing management programs for Seasonal Herbaceous Wetlands which contain very significant and rare vegetation communities.

Typical actions for managing vegetation include revegetation, weed control, fencing, pest animal control and land use change in estuarine reaches to allow for vegetation migration. The mix of performance objectives under the Vegetation group also align with the Habitat theme and Community Places theme grouping of Regional, River Sub-catchment, Wetland and Estuary POs because of their additional benefits including improving vegetation community resilience and reducing impacts of climate change on vegetation survival and condition; and increasing naturalness and amenity, and creating shading for cooler urban environments.

**Performance indicators and data:**

Performance Objective description	Performance indicators	Data required to track progress –	Timing	Who is involved in reporting
Increase Vegetation Extent for priority areas along rivers, estuaries and wetlands	ha vegetation established,	DELWP std outputs (eg ha vegetation established, ha weed control, ha pest animal control)	Annual from 2018	MW
	ha vegetation maintained,	DELWP std outputs (eg ha vegetation established, ha weed control, ha pest animal control)	Annual from 2018	MW
Protect / maintain or improve vegetation quality in key areas.	for rivers the indicator will be kms plus ha vegetation maintained; for wetlands and estuaries the indicator is ha of vegetation maintained or improved Estuaries – monitor change in EVC extents (along estuaries)	DELWP std outputs (eg ha weed control, ha pest animal control, fencing)	Annual from 2019	MW
		EVC mapping	Annual from 2020	MW
Vegetation management for wetlands (RPO 28 and 29)	Program developed to identify and manage seasonal herbaceous wetlands and protect wetland vegetation.	Progress reports Including maps of seasonal herbaceous wetlands	Annual from 2020	MW

Number of Performance Objectives within each theme:

<b>PO theme</b>	<b>Regional</b>	<b>Rivers</b>	<b>Wetlands</b>	<b>Estuaries</b>
Increase Vegetation Extent		68	62	
Protect / maintain or improve vegetation quality		59	8	55
Vegetation management	2			

### **About this document**

#### **Delivering the Performance Objectives**

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