



Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Plan

**Goulburn Broken Catchment
Management Authority
December 2003**



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Foreword

The Goulburn Broken Catchment community has made dramatic advances in managing native vegetation over the past decade. Biodiversity is now an integral part of all natural resource management programs and we are protecting remnants and revegetating at unprecedented levels. The recently released draft *Biodiversity Integration Strategy for the Goulburn Broken Catchment* outlines how all aspects of biodiversity are, and will continue to be, incorporated into land and water management programs in the catchment.

This *Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Plan* (GBNVP) formalises these advances by collating issues in two separate volumes. Volume 1 establishes the broad strategic direction for vegetation management while *Volume 2* details how native vegetation retention controls are implemented in the Catchment. Full detail on the component parts of the GBNVP can be found on Page 4 (context page).

The GBNVP is the result of many years work and an extensive process of community (including agency) participation and consultation. *Volume 1 - Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Management Strategy* was finalised in 2000. *Volume 2 - Native Vegetation Retention Controls: Regional Guidelines for the Goulburn Broken Catchment* was finalised in December 2003, in line with the recently produced Statewide guidelines.

Many people have been involved in developing the GBNVP and are acknowledged within the relevant sections. In particular I would like to thank Kate Bell, Paul Ryan and Rod McLennan for developing and finalising components of the GBNVP in consultation with the community. I would also like to thank Dianne McPherson for her leadership and dedication as the Chair of the Biodiversity Committee that produced these documents.

The next formal opportunity for the catchment community to contribute to the strategic direction for vegetation management will be in mid-1995 when *Volume 1 - Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Management Strategy* will be reviewed.



Stephen Mills
Chair, Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority

Acknowledgements

Acknowledgements for developing each of the component parts of the Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Plan are listed in the relevant sections.

Context

The final Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Plan consists of three main parts:

1. Addendum - Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Plan

The Addendum to the Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Plan (GBNVP) explains the status of the GBNVP as at December 2003. It lists the major achievements since implementation began in 1999, provides updated targets from the review of the Goulburn Broken Regional Catchment Strategy and includes updated Appendices from Volume 1.

2. Volume 1 – Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Management Strategy (GBNVMS)

- GBNVMS Catchment Response: builds on the Draft GBNVMS by describing the outcomes of a broad community consultation process following the release of the Draft and by highlighting progress since the consultation process in July 1999.
- Draft GBNVMS: provides the broad strategic direction for vegetation management in the Catchment. This document was produced by the Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Plan Steering Committee.

Together these two documents form Volume 1 of the Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Plan.

3. Volume 2 – Native Vegetation Retention Controls: Regional Guidelines for the Goulburn Broken Catchment

This document provides a consistent regional interpretation of the Native Vegetation Retention Controls (1989) in line with Victoria's Native Vegetation Management – A Framework for Action (2002). These Guidelines were updated in 2003 in line with recent Victorian Government guidelines.

Acronyms

ANZECC	Australian and New Zealand Environment Conservation Council
BAP	Biodiversity Action Planning
CaLP	Catchment and Land Protection Act (1994)
CAMS	Catchment Activity Management System
CMA	Catchment Management Authority
DPI	Department of Primary Industries
DSE	Department of Sustainability and Environment
EVC	Ecological Vegetation Class
GBCMA	Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority
GBNVMS	Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Management Strategy
GBNVP	Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Plan
MSS	Municipal Strategic Statement
NAP	National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality
NHT	Natural Heritage Trust
NRE	Department of Natural Resources and Environment (prior to DPI & DSE)
NVO	Native Vegetation Officer
NVR	Native Vegetation Retention Controls (1989)
RCS	Regional Catchment Strategy
RFA	Regional Forest Agreement
SPPF	State Planning Policy Framework
VPP	Victorian Planning Provisions

Contents

Addendum - Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Plan 7

1. Background.....	8
2. Achievements in Vegetation Management.....	8
2.1 Action Area 1: Processes for better decisions – participation and partnerships	9
2.2 Action Area 2: Tools for better decisions – targeting investment	9
2.3 Action Area 3: Ongoing improvement	10
3. Updated Information	10
3.1 Updated targets for vegetation management	10
3.2 Other updated information.....	11
Appendix 1. Bioregions of the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority, updated August 2002.	12
Appendix 2. Bioregional Conservation Status of EVCs, updated May 2003	13
Appendix 3. Ecological Vegetation Classes – Areas and Targets, updated 2003	14
Appendix 4. Assessment of the Bioregional Conservation Status of EVCs.....	17
References	19

Volume 1 – Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Management Strategy Catchment Response 21

1. Finalisation Process	26
2. Scope of Strategy.....	27
3. Major Issues Raised in Submission	28
4. Future Directions.....	32
Appendix 1.	34
Appendix 2.	35
Appendix 3.	36
Appendix 4.	37
Appendix 5.	39

Draft Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Management Strategy .. 41

1. Introduction.....	52
2. About the catchment.....	55
3. Our responsibilities: policies and legislation.....	64
4. Our approach through prior experience	67
5. What are our goals?	68
6. How do we link science with policy implementation?.....	71
7. Action Area 1: Processes for better decisions – participation and partnerships	75
8. Action Area 2: Tools for better decisions – targeting investment.....	81
9. Action Area 3: Ongoing improvement.....	86
10. Timelines and responsibilities	88
Appendix 1.	98
Appendix 2.	99
Appendix 3.	103
Appendix 4.	104
Appendix 5.	106
Glossary	109

Volume 2 - Native Vegetation Retention Controls – Regional Guidelines for the Goulburn Broken Catchment..... 113

1. Introduction.....	118
2. Decision Making Process	119
3. Assessment Process.....	120
Appendix 1.	123
Appendix 2.	124
Appendix 3.	126
Appendix 4.	127
Appendix 5.	130
Appendix 6.	131
Appendix 7.	133
Appendix 8.	141
Appendix 9.	143
Appendix 10.	144
Appendix 11.	146
Appendix 12.	147
Glossary	148



Addendum

Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Plan

1. Background

The *Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Plan* (GBNVP) translates the policies of *Victoria's Native Vegetation Management – A Framework for Action, 2002* (Victoria's Framework) to the specific circumstances of the Catchment.

Victoria's Framework:

- lists the State policy context;
- describes the principles of Net Gain;
- describes the evaluation of native vegetation quality using the habitat hectare methodology;
- lists the hierarchy of protecting and enhancing significant values; and
- seeks to avoid the need to remove native vegetation, minimise any necessary losses of native vegetation and provide off-set measures for any losses so that the outcome is a net gain.

The GBNVP is a community driven, living, adaptive plan that has evolved over several years, building on past experiences.

The Goulburn Broken Catchment community started developing a Native Vegetation Plan in 1996. The process since then has been as follows:

August 1997

The Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Plan Steering Committee was established by the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority to develop a Native Vegetation Plan as a pilot for Victoria.

May 1999

The Committee decided there was a need to first agree on the strategic direction for vegetation management in the Catchment. As a result the *Draft Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Management Strategy* was produced.

August 2000

Following extensive consultation a *Catchment Response* was added to the draft Strategy and together they formed the final *Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Management Strategy* (GBNVMS). These two documents now form *Volume 1* of the GBNVP.

August 2000

In response to community demand, the *Draft Regional Guidelines for Native Vegetation Retention Controls* were produced and these formed *Volume 2* of the GBNVP.

August 2000

At the same time, the State Government released *Victoria's Draft Native Vegetation Management Framework* for public consultation.

August 2002

Victoria's Native Vegetation Management – A Framework for Action was finalised by the State Government.

January 2003

The *Regional Native Vegetation Plan Finalisation Guidelines* were released by the State Government.

June 2003

Following a period of consultation, this *Addendum* and the final *Volume 2 – Native Vegetation Retention Controls – Regional Guidelines for the Goulburn Broken Catchment* were produced to ensure that the GBNVP reflects the State guidelines.

December 2003

The final GBNVP was endorsed by the GBCMA Board.

During the development of the GBNVP, each component document has been circulated to stakeholders for consultation and feedback. The consultation process is outlined in the relevant component section.

Implementation of *Volume 1 – Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Management Strategy* is well underway and much has been achieved since 1999. Some of the major achievements are highlighted in section 2. *Volume 1* is due for a five-year review in mid-2005. This will provide an opportunity to revisit the strategic direction for vegetation management and bring the component parts of the GBNVP together into a more concise format.

2. Achievements in Vegetation Management

Since the release of the *Draft Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Management Strategy* in May 1999 there have been many achievements in native vegetation management in the Catchment. Public concern for native vegetation and biodiversity issues has reached unprecedented levels and native vegetation management is now well integrated into land and water management programs in the Catchment.

Some of the major achievements are listed below categorised into the three action areas outlined in *Volume 1 – Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Management Strategy*.

2.1 Action Area 1: Processes for better decisions – participation and partnerships

Increased focus on biodiversity assets

- The concept of ‘asset’ has broadened from just economic assets. Biodiversity assets now have at least equal weighting in decision-making for natural resource management programs.
- The Native Vegetation Plan Steering Committee broadened its scope to focus on all biodiversity assets and evolved into the Goulburn Broken Biodiversity Committee in December 1999.
- A *Draft Goulburn Broken Biodiversity Integration Strategy* was produced in 2003. This Strategy outlines how all aspects of biodiversity are, and will continue to be, incorporated into other natural resource management programs.
- Biodiversity Risk Mitigation Protocols have been developed to ensure that any existing and new projects within the Catchment identify and consider the risks to biodiversity assets and where possible enhance biodiversity outcomes.
- Priorities to protect and enhance biodiversity assets are now factored into funding allocations for riverine health, water quality and salinity programs.
- The Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Management Strategy has provided information for municipal planning schemes.

Improved communication

- The *Revegetation Guide for the Goulburn Broken Catchment* was produced in 2001. This useful resource, contains best practice information on many aspects of revegetation and is now widely used across the catchment for vegetation management activities.
- A draft communication strategy has been developed for the biodiversity program of the GBCMA. In addition new information on vegetation management is being updated on the GBCMA website.
- Biodiversity staff have active involvement on many cross-agency committees and a Biodiversity Integration Group (BIG) has been established to ensure ongoing communication and a forum for decision-making.

Greater community involvement

- Landcare groups in the Catchment have played a key role in native vegetation management with many groups undertaking remnant protection and revegetation works each year. The Superb Parrot Foraging Habitat Project won the 1999 Banksia Award for community groups for their environmental contributions.

- Local Area Plans produced in the Shepparton Irrigation Region now contain detailed sections on priorities for native vegetation management.

Broad adoption by partner agencies

- Goulburn-Murray Water produced a Biodiversity Strategy in 2002 detailing the directions and actions for management of biodiversity on their land.
- Goulburn Valley Water is taking a keen interest in vegetation management on their land and it is now an integral part of their business operations.
- Five of the eight municipalities in the Catchment have produced Roadside Management Plans.
- The GBCMA partnered Vicroads and the Department of Natural Resources and Environment during 1999-2000 in preparing Victoria’s first approach to applying the principle of ‘net gain’ to projects involving the removal of native vegetation.
- The City of Greater Shepparton and Shire of Campaspe have developed their own revegetation schemes.
- Parks Victoria now reports annually on their vegetation management activities through the GBCMA.
- The Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) and Department of Primary Industries (DPI) work closely with the GBCMA and integrate native vegetation priorities into their programs.

Improving capacity

- Strong partnerships with DPI and DSE continue. A Nature Conservation Coordinator position was developed to promote integration of biodiversity issues in the dryland program. The Environmental Management Program in the Shepparton Irrigation Region promotes and encourages vegetation management activities within the other programs of the Shepparton Irrigation Region Catchment Strategy.
- A Native Vegetation Officer has been appointed within the Department of Primary Industries for the Catchment to facilitate the rollout of Victoria’s Native Vegetation Management – A Framework for Action.

2.2 Action Area 2: Tools for better decisions – targeting investment

Developing and integrating new information

- Community groups are guided to invest in priority areas for nature conservation indicated in the Catchment scale map (see Volume 1 GBVMS Catchment Response - Appendix 2).

Biodiversity Action Planning

- Biodiversity Action Planning (BAP) is being undertaken in the Catchment to identify and prioritise biodiversity assets at bioregional and local landscape scales. This identifies all known biodiversity assets and translates the Catchment priorities identified in the GBNVP to a local scale.
- BAP Strategic Overviews have been prepared for the Victorian Riverina, Murray Fans, Northern Inland Slopes, Goldfields and Central Victorian Uplands bioregions. The documents provide an overview to the principles of BAP and general detail on biodiversity assets at a bioregional scale.
- BAP Landscape Plans have been developed for all 21 zones in the Catchment. These plans provide detailed information on priority assets by land tenure for each zone.
- A BAP trial has been undertaken in the Longwood zone which has resulted in the development of priority mapping and the engagement of many stakeholders (including local landholders, Parks Victoria, DPI, DSE and the GBCMA) in planning conservation works.
- Priority BAP mapping is continuing across the whole dryland part of the Catchment.

Ensuring future indigenous seed supplies

- In 2001, the Goulburn Broken Indigenous Seedbank was opened at the Dookie Campus of the University of Melbourne. The Seedbank is a joint project between Kraft Foods, GBCMA, the University of Melbourne, Greening Australia and DSE/DPI. The seedbank ensures the ongoing collection and supply of locally indigenous seed for revegetation activities across the Catchment.

Greater efficiency and effectiveness from grants

- In 2000, the GBCMA adopted an Environmental Management Grants Framework as the basis for cost-sharing for revegetation and vegetation protection across all plans and programs. This innovative incentive process allows a higher level of payment to be given to works in priority areas that provide the greatest benefits to biodiversity as well as salinity and water quality.

Increased investment

- Investment in Bushcare funding has improved each year with a total of \$5,367,850 of Bushcare funding invested in the Goulburn Broken Catchment since 1998/1999 for vegetation management projects.

Greater understanding of investment needs

- Several different investigations in the Catchment including the Ecosystem Services Project and the Landscape Change Project are providing us with trial information aimed at ensuring appropriate cost-sharing arrangements for vegetation management in the Catchment.

2.3 Action Area 3:

Ongoing improvement

Greater accountability

- All vegetation grants processed in the Catchment are now being recorded on the Statewide Catchment Activity Management System (CAMS) in a consistent format. Considerable effort has also been spent on entering previous vegetation projects in the Catchment onto the CAMS. This is allowing us to report on all actions and outputs for NAP/NHT reporting and for reporting against our strategies.

Improved monitoring and reporting

- We are continually working on methodology to monitor vegetation health and management in the Catchment. Vegetation quality information is being collected for grants as they are processed and this feeds into ongoing monitoring.
- A biodiversity monitoring framework is being developed for the Catchment. This framework will help us to monitor progress against targets for a range of biodiversity assets.

3. Updated Information

3.1 Updated targets for vegetation management

The Biodiversity Mission Statement developed by the Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Plan Steering Committee in 1999 serves as an aspirational target (as defined in the National Framework¹) which provides the context for managing biodiversity, including native vegetation:

'The community will work in partnership with Federal and State Governments and other agencies to protect and enhance ecological processes and genetic diversity to secure the future of native species of plants, animals and other organisms in the Catchment.'

The goals listed in Volume 1 – Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Management Strategy have been modified slightly to conform to the National Framework. 'Goals' are now referred to as 'Resource Condition Targets'. Management action targets have also been included to meet the requirements of this framework and these are presented in Table 1.

The modified native vegetation and threatened species resource condition and management action (works) targets presented in Table 1 provide further focus and a reference point for native vegetation management.

Table 1. Updated Biodiversity Targets for the Goulburn Broken Catchment

	Resource Condition Target*	Management Action (Works) Target
1.	Maintain extent of all native vegetation types at 1999 levels in keeping with the goal of 'net gain' listed in Victoria's Biodiversity Strategy 1997.	By 2007 maintain all of the 715,000 ha of 1999 native vegetation and 8,000 (162,000 by 2030) of 'new' (see third target) native vegetation.
2.	Improve the quality of 90% of existing (2003) native vegetation by 10% by 2030.	By 2007 protect 6,000 ha (118,00 ha by 2030) of remnant vegetation on private land.
3.	Increase the cover of all endangered and applicable vulnerable EVCs to at least 15% of their pre- European vegetation cover by 2030.	By 2007 plant, direct seed or naturally regenerate 8,000 ha (162,000 ha by 2030) of native vegetation.
4.	Increase 2002 conservation status of 80% threatened flora and 60% threatened fauna by 2030.	Implement relevant Action Statements and Recovery Plans.

* These Resource Condition Targets update the Goals listed in Volume 1 GBNVMS Catchment Response in line with the National Framework for Natural Resource Management (NRM) Standards and Targets (October 2002).

3.2 Other updated information

Since Volume 1 – Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Management Strategy was finalised in 2000, a new bioregion that falls within the Goulburn Broken Catchment has been described. This is the Murray Fans bioregion. An updated bioregion map has been included in this Addendum (Appendix 1) which replaces Map 2 in Volume 1 Draft GBNVMS.

As a result of the description of a new bioregion the area and conservation status of EVCs as described by bioregion for the Goulburn Broken Catchment has also been updated. Appendices 2, 3 and 4 of this Addendum provide the updated information and replace Appendices 3, 4 and 5 of Volume 1 GBNVMS Catchment Response.

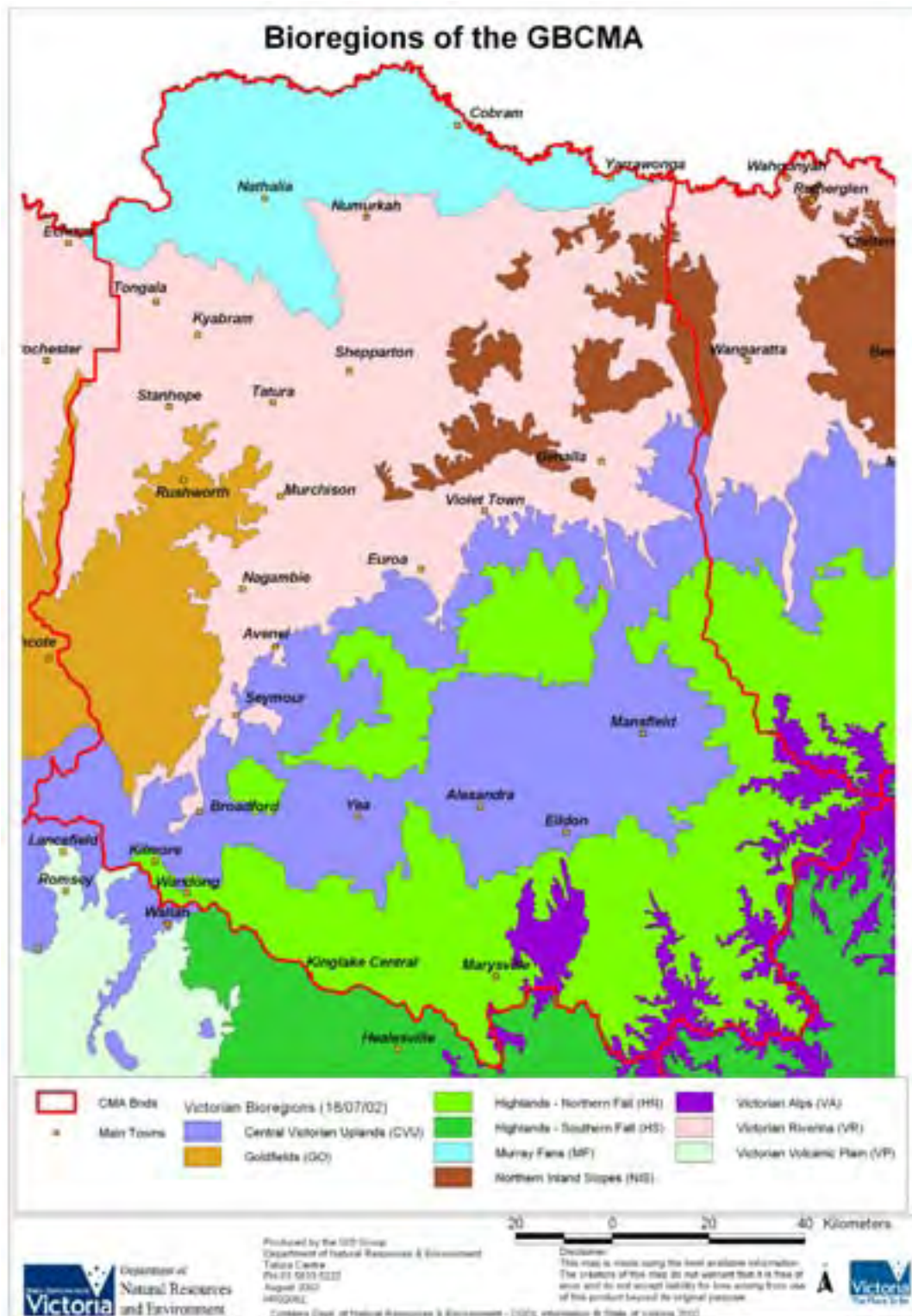
¹ National Framework for Natural Resource Management (NRM) Standards and Targets (October 2002).

² Resource condition targets in the Draft Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Management Strategy 1999 were modified slightly in the Catchment Response 2000. These modified targets captured feedback received as part of the consultation process, emerging data on Ecological Vegetation Classes and the government's modified policy of 'net gain' (which replaced 'no net loss'). The second target was modified slightly in the Draft Goulburn Broken Regional Catchment Strategy 2003 to reflect the emergence of a methodology to measure quality of native vegetation. The fourth target was also made more specific. (The fourth target also contains a threatened fauna target.)

³ High level management action targets have been determined from resource condition targets. The uptake of action is expected to accelerate over time, reflecting evolving community attitudes and new mechanisms that encourage increasing investment.

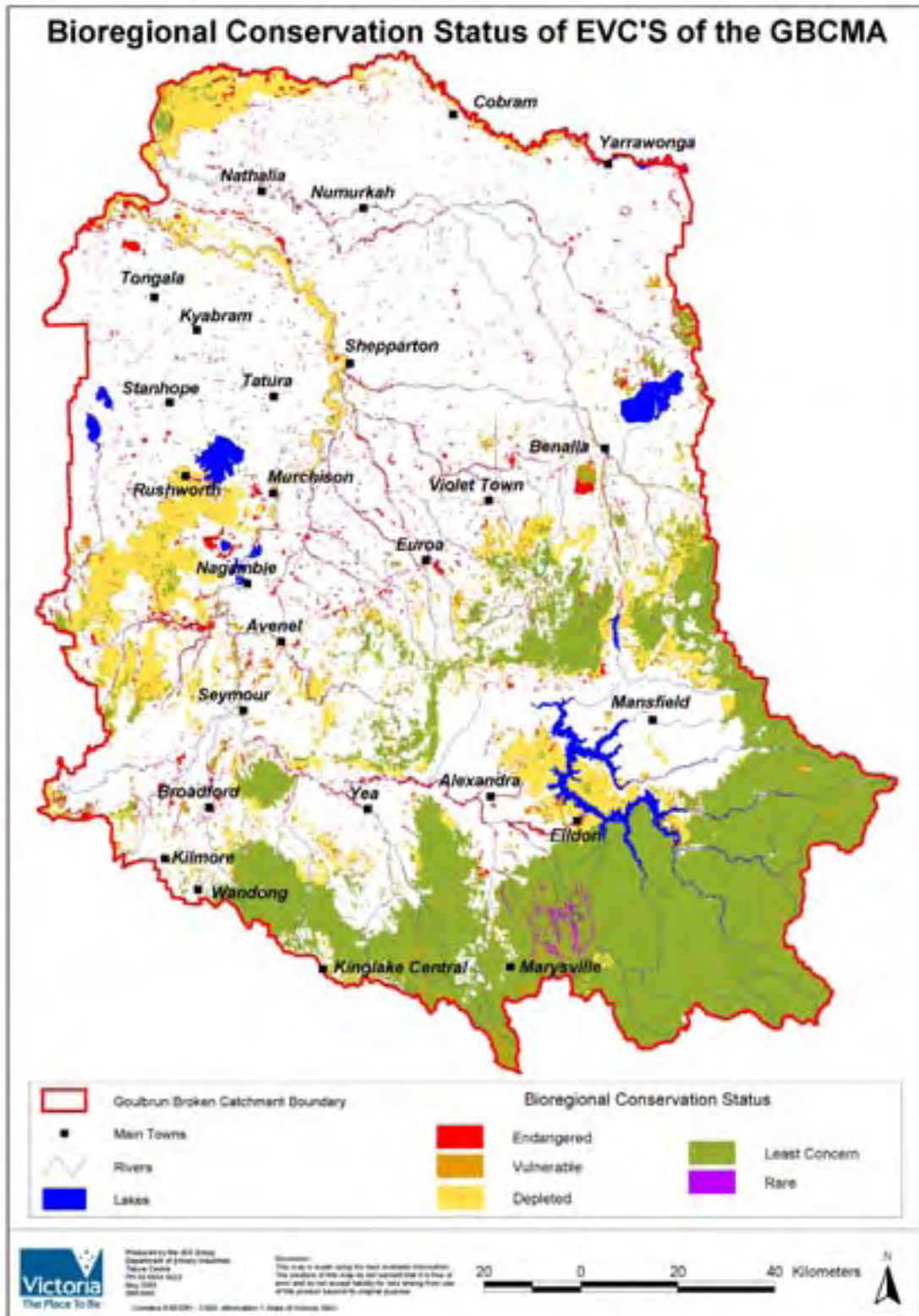
Appendix 1 Bioregions of the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority, updated August 2002

Note: This map updates Map 2 in Volume 1 Draft GBNVMS.



Appendix 2 Bioregional Conservation Status of EVCs, updated May 2003

Note: This map updates Appendix 3 in Volume 1 GBNVMS Catchment Response.



Appendix 3 Ecological Vegetation Classes – Areas and Targets, updated 2003

Note: These tables update Appendix 4 in Volume 1 GBNVMS Catchment Response.

Table 2. EVC Coverage Pre-European Settlement and 1993

	Ecological Vegetation Classes, complexes and mosaics.		Pre-European [^]	Vegetation Cover (1993)					
				Total Area	Total Extant Area	Private (Freehold) Land		Conservation Reserves (includes Forests SPZ)	Other Public Land (includes unknown)
Bioregion	No.	Con-servation Status	Ha	Ha	%*	Ha	% of 1993 Cover that is Freehold	Ha	Ha
Murray Fans	22	Endangered	187,992	5313	3%	2403	45%	540	2369
	2	Vulnerable	6559	456	7%	56	12%	329	71
	2	Depleted	67,829	39,144	58%	2509	6%	6360	30,275
	1	Least Concern	2295	2039	89%	0	0%	1333	706
TOTAL			264,676	46,951	18%	4968	11%	8562	33,421
Victorian Riverina	3	Presumed Extinct	1482	0		0		0	1
	42	Endangered	719,812	11,723	2%	7725	66%	1780	2219
	9	Vulnerable	19,937	3269	16%	2271	69%	253	745
	2	Depleted	8272	5719	69%	1534	27%	605	3581
	1	Least Concern	212	22	10%	5	23%	15	2
TOTAL			749,714	20,733	2.8%	11,535	56%	2653	6548
Northern Inland Slopes	2	Presumed Extinct	821	0	-	0	-	0	0
	19	Endangered	57,803	1342	2%	901	67%	303	138
	2	Vulnerable	24,799	2272	9%	1248	55%	291	734
	3	Depleted	625	418	67%	88	21%	329	0
	3	Least Concern	8680	5951	69%	1992	33%	3364	595
TOTAL			92,727	9983	11%	4228	42%	4288	1467
Goldfields	24	Endangered	48,220	3158	7%	1078	34%	41	2039
	8	Vulnerable	11,637	1640	14%	913	56%	18	709
	5	Depleted	101,068	55,450	55%	8242	15%	1815	45,393
	1	Least Concern	9288	5227	56%	1067	20%	1150	3010
TOTAL			170,213	65,474	38%	11,299	17%	3024	51,151

	Ecological Vegetation Classes, complexes and mosaics.		Pre-European [^]	Vegetation Cover (1993)					
				Total Area	Total Extant Area		Private (Freehold) Land		Conservation Reserves (includes Forests SPZ)
Bioregion	No.	Con-servation Status	Ha	Ha	%*	Ha	% of 1993 Cover that is Freehold	Ha	Ha
Central Victorian Uplands	24	Endangered	185,973	6765	4%	4522	67%	1280	963
	13	Vulnerable	162,232	11,355	7%	9493	84%	1209	653
	5	Depleted	153,747	63,489	41%	33,181	52%	18,674	11,634
	1	Rare	103	27	26%	27	100%	0	0
	5	Least Concern	20,883	10,063	48%	4262	42%	2767	3034
TOTAL			522,937	91,968	18%	51,485	56%	23,930	16,283
Highlands - Northern Fall	6	Endangered	4231	675	16%	624	92%	15	36
	7	Vulnerable	10,580	4549	43%	854	19%	2757	937
	3	Depleted	5744	2785	48%	1274	46%	715	796
	2	Rare	581	444	76%	48	11%	391	5
	17	Least Concern	493,938	381,002	77%	44,935	12%	117,686	218,381
TOTAL			515,075	76%	47,734	12%	121,564	220,157	
Highlands - Southern Fall	1	Vulnerable	6	6	100%	0	0%	6	0
	9	Least Concern	966	900	93%	16	2%	257	627
TOTAL			972	906	93%	16	2%	263	627
Victorian Alps	2	Vulnerable	1092	1035	95%	0	0	762	273
	2	Rare	2565	2565	100%	0	0	1276	1289
	15	Least Concern	86,727	86,419	100%	16	0	30,069	56,318
TOTAL			90,384	90,019	100%	16	0%	32,106	57,880
TOTAL for GB Catchment			2,406,699	30%		18%	202,003	387,929	

* percentage of original Ecological Vegetation Class remaining. NRE's 1993 Tree 100 layer used to calculate areas remaining against the bioregional boundaries updated in 2002.

Minor discrepancies occur due to different scales of data captured (1:250,00 and 1:100,000).

[^] Terminology used in this Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Management Strategy is pre-European rather than pre-1750 to simplify communication. (Pre-1750 is terminology used on NRE Corporate Database from which EVC information is extracted.)

Information derived from NRE's Corporate database.

Note – some subtotals may differ when added in this table due to the rounding effect of raw data.

Table 3. Coverage and Targets for ‘Endangered’ and appropriate ‘Vulnerable’ Ecological Vegetation Classes#

	Ecological Vegetation Classes		Pre-European [^]	Vegetation Cover 1993				Target for Increasing to 15% of Original		
			Total Area	Total Area				Other Land	15% of Total Area	Increase required
Bioregion	No.	Conservation Status	Ha	Ha	%*	Freehold Ha	% of 1993 Cover that is Freehold	Ha	Ha	Ha
Murray Fans	16	Endangered	117,087	3306	28%	2101	64%	1205	17,563	14,257
	1	Vulnerable	6098	62	1%	56	90%	6	915	853
Victorian Riverina	37	Endangered	714,867	10,510	1.5%	7202	69%	3309	107,230	96,720
	7	Vulnerable	7919	937	12%	520	55%	417	1188	250
Northern Inland Slopes	14	Endangered	56,827	966	2%	791	82%	176	8524	7558
	2	Vulnerable	24,799	2272	9%	1248	55%	1025	3720	1448
Goldfields	14	Endangered	42,838	1579	4%	888	56%	691	6426	4847
	4	Vulnerable	4303	319	7%	131	41%	187	646	326
Central Victorian Uplands	22	Endangered	185,485	6588	4%	4494	68%	2094	27,823	21,235
	11	Vulnerable	153,809	9118	6%	8253	91%	866	23,071	13,953
Highlands - Northern Fall	4	Endangered	804	27	3%	26	96%	1	121	94
	2	Vulnerable	3842	354	9%	282	80%	72	576	223
Total			1,318,678	36,038	3%	25,992	72%	10,049	197,803	161,764

#Relevant to Goal 3 of Strategy. All Endangered EVCs have below 10% existing cover within the bioregion, and some Vulnerable EVCs have below 15% - only those Endangered and Vulnerable EVCs covering less than 15% in the Goulburn Broken catchment are included in the target.

Note – some subtotals may differ when added in this table due to the rounding effect of raw data.

Appendix 4 Assessment of the Bioregional Conservation Status of EVCs

Note: This information is adapted from Victoria’s Native Vegetation Management – a Framework for Action and updates Appendix 5 in Volume 1 GBNVMS Catchment Response.

Assessment of the conservation status of vegetation types is traditionally based on the broad concepts of inherent rarity, degree of threat (including consideration of historic and on-going impacts) and importance for supporting other significant features (for example, as a drought refuge for native fauna). These concepts have been expressed as more specific criteria in a number of processes at State and National levels. The Regional Forest Agreement (RFA) process undertaken in partnership by Commonwealth and State agencies used National Forest Reserve Criteria which included a number of biodiversity criteria for establishing a Comprehensive Adequate and Representative reserve system (outlined in JANIS 1997). Many of these criteria have been used as the basis for assessing conservation status of vegetation types in the Net Gain approach. However, there are inherent differences between the processes - RFAs focus primarily on establishing a reserve system for forests in largely natural landscapes across public land, while Native Vegetation Plans focus primarily on prioritising protection of all types of remnant vegetation in rural landscapes across private land. These differences necessitate a refinement of the criteria. The key refinements are as follows:

- Depletion and rarity of occurrence assessments are made within a Victorian bioregional framework which is more informative than the RFA study area framework;
- Combinations of depletion-degradation-rarity which give equivalent conservation status to depletion-only thresholds are more explicitly defined;
- A “depleted” category is added to allow identification of vegetation types which may become threatened if broad-scale depletion or degradation activities are not managed appropriately.

The criteria are detailed in Table 4 below and have been used to assign a conservation status for each combination of EVC and bioregion. The status of each combination may be amended with time as more complete or better scale mapping of vegetation type and condition becomes available. Where an EVC is only a minor occurrence in a bioregion it is assigned the conservation status from an appropriate neighbouring bioregion, unless the occurrence is considered to represent a threatened floristic community.

Complexes / mosaics are assigned the conservation status of the most threatened component EVC. Similarly, where threatened EVCs / floristic communities are known to exist but mapping is not available at this level of discrimination, decision-making processes based on more generalised datasets (for example, Broad Vegetation Types at 1:250 000) should be driven by the conservation status of the most threatened component likely to be present in a mapped polygon.

Explanation of Terms used in Table 4:

Subject to a threatening process	includes currently acting threats that will lead to degradation (moderate or severe) OR risk of significant rapid change (e.g. rising groundwater; change of land use).
majority	greater than 50% of area.
minority	greater than 10% and up to 50% of area.
severely degraded	floristic and/or structural diversity is greatly reduced (and/or subject to a threatening process which will lead to an equivalent reduction) and unlikely to recover naturally in medium to long-term.
moderately degraded	floristic and/or structural diversity is significantly reduced (and/or subject to a threatening process which will lead to an equivalent reduction) but may recover naturally with removal of threatening processes.
little to no degradation	floristic and/or structural diversity is largely intact.

range

area of smallest concave polygon which includes all occurrences.

Table 4. Bioregional Conservation Status of Ecological Vegetation Classes (EVCs)

Status		Criteria
Presumed Extinct	X	Probably no longer present in the bioregion (the accuracy of this presumption is limited by the use of remotely-sensed 1:100 000 scale woody vegetation cover mapping to determine depletion - grassland, open woodland and wetland types are particularly affected)
Endangered	E1	Contracted to less than 10% of former range; or Less than 10% pre-European extent remains;
	E2	Combination of depletion, degradation, current threats and rarity is comparable overall to E1: 10 to 30% pre-European extent remains and severely degraded over a majority of this area; or naturally restricted EVC reduced to 30% or less of former range and moderately degraded over a majority of this area; or rare EVC cleared and/or moderately degraded over a majority of former area.
Vulnerable	V1	10 to 30% pre-European extent remains;
	V2	Combination of depletion, degradation, current threats and rarity is comparable overall to V1: greater than 30% and up to 50% pre-European extent remains and moderately degraded over a majority of this area; or greater than 50% pre-European extent remains and severely degraded over a majority of this area; or naturally restricted EVC where greater than 30% pre-European extent remains and moderately degraded over a majority of this area; or rare EVC cleared and/or moderately degraded over a minority of former area.
Depleted	D1	Greater than 30% and up to 50% pre-European extent remains;
	D2	Combination of depletion, degradation and current threats is comparable overall to D1 and: greater than 50% pre-European extent remains and moderately degraded over a majority of this area;
Rare	R	Rare EVC (as defined by geographic occurrence) but neither depleted, degraded nor currently threatened to an extent that would qualify as Endangered, Vulnerable or Depleted
Least Concern	LC	Greater than 50% pre-European extent remains and subject to little to no degradation over a majority of this area

References

These references are for those listed in the Addendum to the Goulburn Broken Native Vegetation Plan. Volume 1 and Volume 2 of the GBNVP contain their own reference lists.

1. Department of Environment and Heritage (2002). *National Framework for Natural Resource Management (NRM) Standards and Targets*. Commonwealth of Australia.
2. Department of Natural Resources and Environment (2002). *Victoria's Native Vegetation Management – A Framework for Action*. The State of Victoria.
3. Department of Natural Resources and Environment (2001). *Revegetation Guide for the Goulburn Broken Catchment*. The State of Victoria.
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6. Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority (2002). *Draft Biodiversity Integration Strategy for the Goulburn Broken Catchment*. GBCMA, Shepparton.
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