



Bass Coast Landcare Network Strategic Plan 2018 - 2025

Our Strategies

Strong communities engaged and connected through Landcare

Grow and protect a connected biodiverse landscape

Lead an innovative sustainable agricultural community

Capitalise on Carbon

Ensure best practice governance and safe, skilful operations

Deliver leading edge experiences, education and training

Background

The Bass Coast Landcare Network (BCLN) was formed in 2003 as an affiliation of ten Landcare Groups to enhance investment opportunities from government and corporate programs. Sixty percent of the 1,400 rural properties in the Network area are involved in, and are supported by, the BCLN.

The Bass Coast Landcare Network falls in two Catchment Management Areas, West Gippsland and Port Phillip and Western Port. The top of the catchment is characterised by steep hills with slopes from 20 to 40 degrees whilst the lower catchment area is flat and prone to flooding and salinity. Within the catchment there are a number of small rural settlements surrounded by agricultural enterprises, such as dairying, beef cattle, sheep and vegetables, which support the majority of the population. Tourism, small rural allotments and extractive industries are other typical land uses within the catchment.

The Network has the twin focus of changing the understanding and the practices of landholders. In recent years the Network has conducted education and training programs for landholders highlighting the issues of land management, best practice farming techniques and whole farm planning. In addition, the Network has been successful in gaining funds to support landholders and urban groups complete works to improve their land. This includes re-vegetation, seed collection, salinity control, sustainability, greenhouse reduction, wetland restoration, coastal rehabilitation, weed control and improving water quality.

Core Purpose - Educate – Grow – Feed

Our vision is to be a community engaged in supporting a productive, biodiverse landscape incorporating sustainable agricultural practices and innovative environmental enterprises.

We collaborate with our groups, the community and partners to provide on ground services in the delivery of innovative land and environmental management practices in support of healthy and resilient communities and ecosystems for generations to come.

Our Values

Excellence: To strive for high standards in everything we do to create the best outcomes for the community and future generations.

Respect: To maintain a respectful and professional attitude to embrace individuality and different viewpoints

Teamwork: To create a healthy, cohesive and supportive work environment to ensure collaboration and cooperation are cornerstones of our organisation.

Optimism/resilience: to continually adapt and evolve to change while remaining optimistic and confident

Integrity: To take pride in working professionally and honestly to achieve outcomes that reflect our values and enhance our reputation as a trust worthy organisation.

*As an organisation we value and support **biodiversity and the natural environment.***

Our Products and Services

Bass Coast Landcare Network specialises in:

1. Conservation Planning and Land Management Action Planning

GIS Mapping

Bushland Management and Revegetation Plans

Land management Plans

Soil health planning

Environmental Offsets

Flora and Fauna Surveys

Ecological Monitoring Programs

Partnership brokering

2. Native Nurseries and Seedbanks

Native Plant Supply

Native Seedbank Management

Native Seed Supply

3. On-ground Environmental Works

Revegetation (direct seeding and tube stock planting)

Weed and Feral Animal Control

Fencing for Riparian, revegetation and Bushland Areas

Landscape scale restoration

4. Training and Education Programs

Accredited and Non-accredited Conservation and Land Management Courses

Accredited traineeships Conservation and Land Management

Environmental Education

Publications and On-line Tools.

Community Engagement

Volunteer Community Events

Environmental Volunteer Programs.

Strategies 2018- 2025

To achieve our core purpose, six key strategies and their objectives have been identified. These strategies and objectives will guide the selection and focus of the activities undertaken by the Network. How the activities are to be managed will be outlined in an annual Operational Plan, compiled and reviewed in November each year for the coming year.

1. Strong communities engaged and connected through Landcare

- 1.1 Increase volunteer activity by 50% by 2025
- 1.2 Increase new memberships within Landcare groups by 20%
- 1.3 Engage 50 new landholders (average 5 per member group) in Landcare activities per year
- 1.4 Increase level of lobbying on Landcare issues by Landcare groups by 100%
- 1.5 Double funding from corporate sources by 2020
- 1.6 Raise awareness of BCLN within the philanthropic sector
- 1.7 Explore other commercial opportunities that align with principles of the network.
- 1.8 Develop an MOU with the Bunurong Land Council

2. Grow and protect a connected biodiverse landscape

- 2.1 Increase indigenous vegetation cover by 1.5 % per annum
- 2.2 Protect and enhance 40 ha of remnant vegetation per annum
- 2.3 Hold a minimum of 15 community planting days per annum
- 2.4 Increase works crew revenue by 25% by 2025
- 2.5 Facilitate 6 more traineeships by 2025
- 2.6 Establish 50 new Biolinks Projects by 2025
- 2.7 Increase woody weed eradication funding by 30% by 2025
- 2.8 Trial 3 new technologies in revegetation by 2025

3. Lead an innovative sustainable agricultural community

- 3.1 50% of the agricultural community have implemented productive changed practice to become resilient to climate change
- 3.2 25% of agricultural properties have developed carbon-neutral action plans and implemented changed practice to become carbon neutral
- 3.3 75% of the agriculture community have developed approved farm biosecurity plans and have implemented changed practice
- 3.4 BCLN will have established a peer to peer mentoring program for 5 key sectors;
 - Organic/regenerative horticulture
 - Master Tree Grower/Multi Story farming.
 - Grazing (beef and sheep)
 - Zero Emissions agriculture
 - Mixed Farming
- 3.5 25% of the agricultural community will have developed drought proofing water plans and have become water stewards

4. Capitalise on Carbon

- 4.1 Expand BCLN vehicle offset program to include flights, by 100% by 2025
- 4.2 Become a carbon neutral organisation by 2022
- 4.3 Train 2 staff members in carbon accounting by 2020
- 4.4 Develop an on-farm carbon sequestration and carbon reduction program by 2020
- 4.5 Develop a carbon consultancy prospectus by 2020
- 4.6 Develop carbon offsets programs by 2020

5. Best Practice Governance and Safe, Skilful Operations

- 5.1 Maintain a quality board and management team which provide effective, accountable and strategic leadership and sound succession planning
- 5.2 Implement Professional development for staff to the minimum of 5% of salary
- 5.3 Maintain effective, nationally compatible systems across all key areas of operation.
- 5.4 Zero Harm, live a culture of safety
- 5.5 Develop plan for Network to become progressively less reliant on public funds in support of operational overheads and support self-sufficiency by 2025
- 5.6 Maintain strong cash reserves (>\$500K), high levels of secured work and an ongoing annual surplus (>5%).
- 5.7 Maintain high quality assets, infrastructure and equipment in priority locations.

6. Deliver leading edge experiences, education and training

- 6.1 Develop and market two new profitable environmental experiential activities per year
- 6.2 Increase by 10%, the number of students reached each year by the Environmental Detectives Program
- 6.3 Develop new environmental detective's activities per annum
- 6.4 Develop an integrated and accredited Landcare Training program for landholders by 2025
- 6.5 Establish a partnership with an Adult, Community and Further Education (ACFE) accredited centre to deliver accredited Landcare training
- 6.6 Increase landholder/farmer engagement in education by 50% by 2025
- 6.7 Engage 15% more volunteers in training – both as trainer and trainee
- 6.8 Establish 3 Educational Hubs in Gippsland by 2025

Measures of Success

A process of evaluation and reporting is to be implemented for all projects and programs to ascertain their success or otherwise in achieving the stated objectives.

Environmental impact/health categories

	unit of measurement	KPIs	Target detail	Annual Target
Global Warming (Climate Change)	CO2 (eq)	Total (CO2eq sequestration)	Tonne CO2eq sequestered	
Habitat Creation	Ha	Ha of land revegetated	Area planted	90
	No	no of plants in ground	no of plants planted	180,000
Habitat Alteration (Biodiversity)	Ha	Area of priority weeds controlled	Ha	500
	Km	Roadside weed control	Linear km	
Habitat Protection	Ha	Habitat protection (Ha)	Ha of remnant vegetation protected	50
Electricity	Usage		Kwh/year	2500
	Credit		Kwh/year	2500
Revegetation of riparian areas	km of water way protected	km of waterway revegetation	km of riparian revegetation	4km
River water quality	N,P,SS,pH,EC	Index of Stream condition	% annual decrease	5% decrease in baseline
River health	River ecological health	Presence of macroinvertebrates	No Species present	20
Bird life	Species present	Native bird counts	No Species present in sites	25
Marsupials	Species present	No of indigenous species present	Species identified through Camera trap /group areas	10
Soil health	Ha	Area of soil health improvement	Area under soil/nutrient management plans	1200

	unit of measurement	KPIs	Target detail	Annual Target
	Ha	Area of soil health improvement	No management plans/ annually	20
	No	Soil courses	No Landowners undertaking soil health	20

Social accountability

Category	unit of measurement	Relative measure	Annual Targets
Community engagement	no of community activities	activities/members	70
	no of attendees at all activities		1000
	no of complaints	complaints/ members	5
	no of communication initiatives	Enews, annual report, website, social media	20
Schools engagements	no of Schools activities		70
	no of Schools engaged	Schools engaged/year	30
	No students involved		1400
Landcare group membership	no of members		800
	no of active members	active/total members	345
Business engagement	No of business contacts	Business engaged and quotes developed	20
	No of business contracts	contracts/contacts	10
Staff and contractors	no of people		13
	injuries	injuries/employee-year	0
	sick days	sick days/ employee-year	2
	complaints	complaints/ employee-year	0
	satisfaction (surveyed)	level of satisfaction / employee-year	

Financial

Category	unit of measurement	Relative measure	Annual Targets
Income	\$ / year	income \$/Effective Fulltime Staff	1,450,000
Government grants	\$ / year	Project income	600,000
Business contracts	\$ / year	income \$ (works crew, consulting)	230,000
Partnerships	\$ / year	Project partnerships	630,000
Philanthropic donations	\$ / year	Project income	20,000
Group incomes	\$ / year	income \$/member (for each group)	30,000
Assets (value)	\$ / year		90,000
Administration	\$ / year	overhead \$/income	33,000

Programs and Projects

BCLN programs and projects reflect the vision, strategies and objectives as outlined in this document.

Programs remain reasonably constant to provide some consistency for our community. Projects are developed opportunistically in response to need and funding availability and sit within the Strategic areas of the Network. Future programs and projects will be chosen, shaped and guided by this strategic document. In this way gaps in provision and relevance of activities will be determined.

Current programs have been mapped against the strategies and are presented in the table below. An annual list of projects is developed by staff with the Landcare Groups and Network. The list is compiled through the development of the Operational Plan and is attached to that document.

Strategies

1. Strong community engagement
2. Grow and protect a connected biodiverse landscape
3. Lead an innovative sustainable agricultural community
4. Capitalise on Carbon
5. Best practice governance and skilful safe operations
6. Deliver relevant education, experiences and training

Programs	Strategies					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Demonstrating Sustainable Agriculture	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑
Training in Environmental Best Management Practice	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	
Environmental Detectives primary to tertiary	☑	☑	☑		☑	
Bass Coast Biolinks	☑	☑	☑		☑	☑
Invasive Plants and Animals Know No Boundaries – Integrated Pest Plant and Animal Control	☑	☑	☑		☑	☑
Improving soil health	☑	☑	☑	☑		☑
Partnerships in Action – Engaging and delivering partnerships in the corporate and agency sector	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑
Practical Sustainability in the peri-urban environment – Landcare for urban residents	☑	☑	☑		☑	☑
Ecosystem Services Delivery – Valuing biodiversity and providing vegetation offsets	☑	☑	☑		☑	☑
Putting Carbon Targets into Action	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑
Governance and training	☑			☑		

Appendix 1 SWOT analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>Introducing landholders to new sustainable concepts and ideas.</p> <p>Engaging farmers in new practices.</p> <p>Providing high quality education and training programs</p> <p>Diversification of funding sources</p> <p>Valuing diversity of ideas while maintaining respect for individuals.</p> <p>Lobbying and obtaining funding.</p> <p>Completing projects while maintaining the passion.</p> <p>Staff expertise and their ability to learn.</p> <p>Evaluating and monitoring programs</p> <p>Staff professionalism</p>	<p>Not having security for our programs.</p> <p>Communicating the complexity and depth of who we are and what we do.</p> <p>Employment security – Staff retention and succession planning.</p> <p>Realistic and logical project implementation – strategic planning tools.</p> <p>Promotion of our programs and engaging volunteers.</p> <p>Sustainable Agriculture is not recognised enough as a Landcare Activity</p> <p>Lack of support from the corporate sector</p> <p>Landcare image</p>
Opportunities	Threats
<p>Foster sustainable behaviour in the community through our projects and programs.</p> <p>Indigenous engagement in programs.</p> <p>Commercialise our successes.</p> <p>Market BCLN activities to the community. Targeting non-members and non-active members.</p> <p>Expand our training program.</p> <p>Improve partnerships with Industry and corporates</p> <p>Develop a weeds education program.</p> <p>Participating in carbon market.</p> <p>Provide environmental services to landholders and other organisations.</p> <p>Ongoing board development and succession.</p>	<p>Loss of grass roots involvement and people drifting away.</p> <p>Biosecurity</p> <p>Staff safety and well being</p> <p>Changing Climate</p> <p>Governance – financial, HR, organisational; making sure the organisation is solvent and safe.</p> <p>Cost of operation</p> <p>Population demographic change and urban encroachment</p> <p>Changing environmental conditions: Our understanding, community perceptions and capability of reacting to these changes.</p> <p>Holding onto our core purpose while adding new business opportunities.</p> <p>Unpredictable government and other financial support</p>