

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

2015–16





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Chair's Foreword





The formation of the ACT and Region Catchment Management Coordination Group has provided an opportunity for the improvement of regional catchment management at a time of change and challenge. Climate change, an increasing population and the challenges of multi-jurisdictional governance are key issues shaping the catchment in which we live. Coordination of land, water and natural resource management at an inter-jurisdictional level will enable better outcomes for the region and assist in building resilience to the affects of climate change and pressures of population growth while maintaining a healthy, liveable catchment.

The Coordination Group consists of key government agencies across the ACT, the adjacent NSW government areas, the National Capital Authority and Icon Water. Organisations are represented at the most senior level. The catchment communities are represented by the Chair of the Upper Murrumbidgee Catchment Coordinating Committee.

Since its establishment under the amendment to the *ACT Water Resources Act 2007* in August 2015, the Coordination Group has met quarterly and made significant progress in tackling some of the priority issues that challenge the region. The development of the draft ACT and Region Catchment Strategy and the accompanying implementation plan has been a notable achievement, and will guide the work of the Coordination Group in the future.

Projects already well underway include:

- The Stormwater Education Program, which targets urban and rural dwellers across the region to ultimately change behaviours that negatively affect water quality in our lakes and waterways and
- The Best for Region Sewage Strategy Project, which has resulted in significant cooperation across the jurisdictional boundaries in working towards an integrated approach to manage pressures on wastewater treatment facilities in the ACT and Queanbeyan area into the future.

The interaction between NSW and the ACT is a major component of our coordination across the catchment. Inter-jurisdictional planning mechanisms will need exploration, and compatibility of regulations examined, so that similar standards for development apply across the boundaries. To facilitate our interaction with NSW, I have undertaken a series of recent meetings with NSW Ministers, local Members of Parliament and senior officials, raising awareness of the Coordination Group and its endeavours, and particularly the draft Catchment Strategy, for which I received strong overall support. I will continue to focus on cross-border relationships as a priority in the coming months.

I look forward to the challenges of implementing integrated natural resource management across the catchment to maintain a liveable region for our community. It is with pleasure that I present this first report.

**Emeritus Professor Ian R. Falconer AO, DSc
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 2015 to 30 June 2016 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.

In October 2014, the ACT Government approved the establishment of an inter-jurisdictional coordination body to strengthen governance and catchment management in the ACT and surrounding regions. The Coordination Group was established on an interim basis on 25 February 2015. On 4 August 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.

This amendment allowed for the appointment of the Independent Chair and Community Representative which were finalised by the Chief Minister under the *Water Resources Act 2007*. The three year appointments of an Independent Chair and a Community Representative to the Coordination Group were notified in the legislation register, (NI2015-581) effective 2 October 2015.

The Coordination Group is foreshadowed in the ACT and NSW Memorandum of Understanding for Regional Collaboration (December 2014) (the MoU). The Strategy is consistent with the objectives 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 the future activities.

The Catchment Management and Water Policy Branch of the Environment and Planning Directorate provides secretariat support to the Coordination Group, which is funded by the ACT Basin Priority Project until 2019.

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 catchment 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
- » other matters as determined by the Minister.

1.2 Membership

The Coordination Group comprises an Independent Chair and Community Representative, which are remunerated positions, senior representatives from the Australian, ACT and NSW governments and Queanbeyan–Palerang, Snowy Monaro and Yass Valley regional councils, and Icon Water.

The Chair and Community Representative are appointed on a part-time basis and hold office for a period not exceeding three years, although they are eligible for re-appointment for a further three-year term. All other members are automatically appointed to represent their organisation at Director General level or equivalent. Current members:

- » Independent Chair
- » Community Representative
- » Director-General, Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate
- » Director-General, Environment and Planning Directorate
- » Director-General, Transport Canberra and City Services Directorate
- » Chief Health Officer, Health Directorate
- » Commissioner, ACT Emergency Services Agency
- » Managing Director, Icon Water
- » Chief Executive, National Capital Authority
- » General Manager, South East Local Land Services
- » General Manager, Queanbeyan–Palerang Council
- » Director of Environmental Services, Snowy Monaro Regional Council
- » Director of Planning, Yass Valley Council

The Chair reports to the ACT Minister for the Environment and Climate Change and members report to their respective organisations.

The Coordination Group has a wide range of representation from those who contribute to and benefit from the catchment.



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

Professor Falconer was appointed on 1 October 2015. The role of the chair is to facilitate a collaborative process between jurisdictions and agencies to ensure the best outcomes are achieved. Professor Falconer has extensive experience in water research, especially in water quality. He has advisory experience to the former Murray-Darling Basing Ministerial Council, the Murray Darling Basin Authority and to the water industry. He was a Professor in the Rural Science Faculty of the University of New England, Armidale and was a joint owner operator of a Poll Dorset sheep stud. He has extensive overseas consulting experience and retired as Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) of the University of Adelaide. This range of experience has been invaluable in guiding the Coordination Group in developing and commencing execution of a regional catchment management strategy..

Community Representative Dr Fiona Dyer, Community Representative, Chair of the Upper Murrumbidgee Catchment Coordinating Committee (UMCCC)

The Upper Murrumbidgee Catchment Coordinating Committee is a community-based organisation made up of agencies and groups that are responsible for natural resource management in the upper Murrumbidgee catchment. The UMCCC operates as a regional cross-border network to enhance communication between agencies and groups in NSW and the Australian Capital Territory and represents the interests of and providing a link to the broader community within the region.

Environment and Planning Directorate Director-General, Ms Dorte Ekelund

The Environment and Planning Directorate has several roles in managing water in the ACT. This includes responsibility for high-level strategic water policy development. The ACT is wholly situated within the Murrumbidgee River Catchment, which feeds into Murray-Darling Basin – Australia’s largest river system and also one of the world’s driest. As the largest population centre in the Basin, the ACT will continue to be an active and responsible participant in managing the precious and finite water resources of the Murray-Darling Basin. The management and protection of the Australian Capital Territory’s water resources is a key priority of the ACT Government. The Environment and Planning Directorate has several roles in managing water in the ACT. This includes responsibility for high-level strategic water policy development, with the national water reform agenda and national competition issues relating to water access, pricing and trading. In addition, the Directorate regulates the Territory’s water resources, monitors and reports on water quality in the ACT. The Directorate also has a role in the demand management of water resources to ensure water is available and water is used wisely.

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 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 (TCCSD) is responsible for managing Canberra's urban lakes and ponds, including managing stormwater control and 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 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.

South East Local Land Services General Manager, Mr Derek Larsen

South East Local Land Services (South East LLS) brings together agricultural production advice, biosecurity, natural resource management and emergency management into a single organisation. Its services add value to local industries, enhance natural resources, protect industries from pests and disease, and help 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.

National Capital Authority

Chief Executive, Mr Malcolm Snow

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.

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 our network on the region's waterways.



**Queanbeyan—Palerang Regional Council,
General-Manager Mr Peter Tegart
Yass Valley Council, Director of Planning
Mr Chris Berry
Snowy Monaro Regional Council, Director
of Environmental Services
Mr Peter Smith**

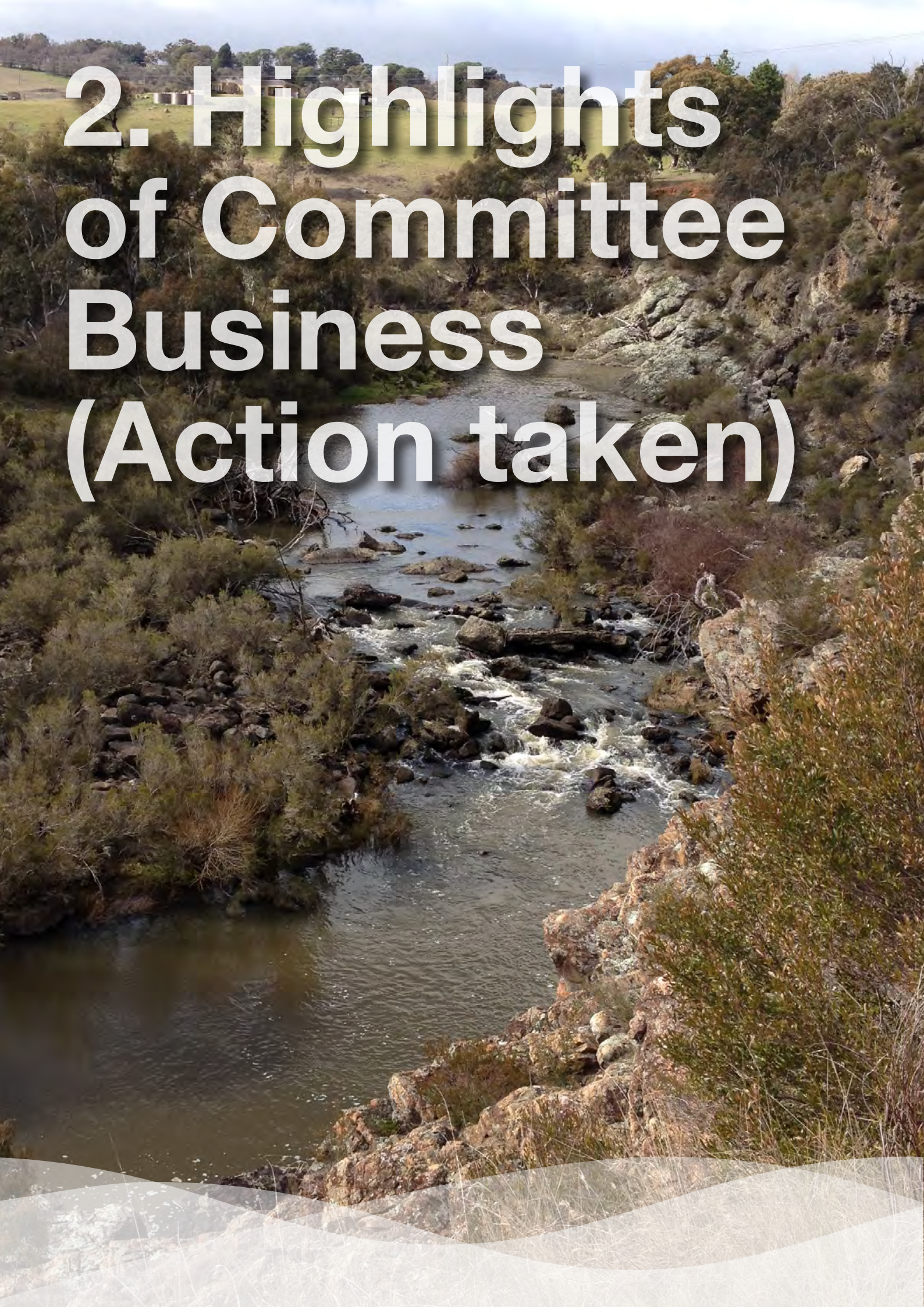
The local government areas of Queanbeyan—Palerang Regional Council, Snowy Monaro Regional Council and Yass Valley Council all make a significant contribution to the management and protection of the region's natural resources.

Local government undertakes a wide range of activities related to catchment management. This includes the development and implementation of land use planning, managing public land and regulating private activities. Local government plays a key role in translating the policies of Commonwealth 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.

The councils included in the draft ACT and Region Catchment Strategy were formed on 12 May 2016 to reflect the NSW Government's 'Fit for the Future' changes, where Palerang Council was amalgamated with Queanbeyan City Council, becoming Queanbeyan—Palerang Regional Council, and Cooma—Monaro Shire Council was amalgamated with Snowy River Shire Council and Bombala Shire Council, becoming Snowy Monaro Regional Council.

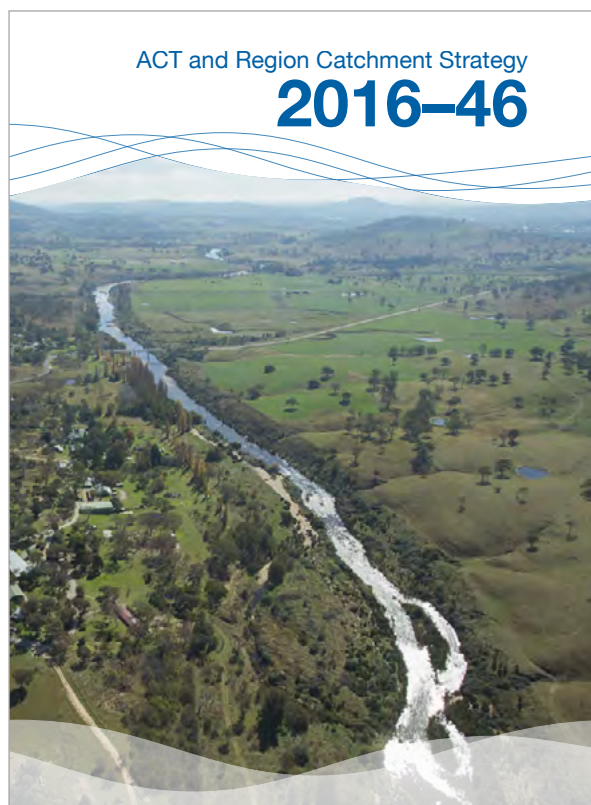
2. Highlights of Committee Business (Action taken)



2.1 Draft ACT and Region Catchment Management Strategy

Background

After the establishment of the Coordination Group, the primary focus was to develop a strategy for the Catchment as a framework to guide and deliver priority actions for the benefit of the region as a whole. The draft ACT and Region Catchment Strategy: 2016-46 (the draft Catchment Strategy) will establish a 30-year vision, recognising that the region is the economic hub and current and future growth centre for south-east NSW. The draft Catchment Strategy details the key factors that are predicted to affect the catchment and includes 19 actions to promote a healthy catchment region. Key issues include climate change, an increasing population, and the challenges of multi-jurisdictional governance. The draft Catchment Strategy aims to bring governments, community and industry together to produce a healthy, productive, resilient and liveable catchment region.



Themes

The draft 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 and land and biodiversity –**
support the biophysical processes that maintain the resilience and health of natural resources that are essential for thriving communities and ecosystems.

Public consultation period

The draft Catchment Strategy was developed in the spirit of collaboration and included a thorough consultation approach to encourage early and ongoing contribution from stakeholders.

The draft Catchment Strategy was released for public consultation from 11 April to 18 May 2016. Community representatives and industry professionals of the ACT and Region and NSW Government representatives were also directly consulted given the high level strategic nature of the draft Catchment Strategy.



The purpose of stakeholder engagement was to:

- » strengthen partnerships between directorates, local councils and stakeholders from the ACT and Region in the context of catchment management
- » raise awareness of the proposed strategy and the Coordination Group, and gain support and confidence in the engagement process
- » increase opportunities for a targeted but diverse range of input and feedback from stakeholders
- » provide stakeholders with opportunities to identify their expectations, priorities and concerns when considering a cross border catchment management approach
- » acknowledge the valuable input from stakeholders in both developing and implementing a catchment management strategy.

Methods of consultation included those listed below.

Stakeholder workshops

The Coordination Group Secretariat circulated an invitation to a stakeholder database of approximately 140 representatives from the Australian Government, ACT and NSW governments, catchment community groups, and industry, agricultural and indigenous representatives. A community-focused workshop was co-hosted by Upper Murrumbidgee Catchment Coordinating Committee (UMCCC) and an industry-focused workshop was co-hosted by the Australian Water Association (AWA). Over 50 people attended the workshops collectively to provide feedback on the draft Catchment Strategy. EPD also conducted an internal ACT Government workshop.

Targeted meetings with Senior NSW stakeholders

Meetings were held between the Chair, assisted by the secretariat, and:

- » NSW Minister for Primary Industries NSW Minister for Transport and Infrastructure and Minister for Land and Water, the Hon Niall Blair MLC
- » Minister for Transport and Infrastructure, the Hon Andrew Constance MP.
- » Parliamentary Secretary for SE NSW, the Hon Katrina Hodgkinson MP
- » Member for Goulburn, Hon Pru Goward MP
- » Member of Monaro and Minister for Regional Development, Hon John Barilaro MP
- » NSW Cross Border Commissioner, Mr James McTavish

Meeting outcomes were very positive and supportive of the draft strategy and its vision.

Written submissions

Stakeholders and the general public were invited to provide submissions. Nine written submissions were received during the consultation period.

Online engagement platform

www.haveyoursayplanning.act.gov.au provided an easily accessible online platform for community engagement. All campaign content was linked to the website to encourage people to participate in the consultative process. Website statistics indicate that 878 people visited the website during the consultation period. Of these:

- » 309 people were 'informed', meaning they visited multiple pages on the site
- » 570 people were 'aware', meaning they visited at least one page on the website
- » 496 visitors downloaded one or more of the documents from the online library

The level of participation on the website met expectations, given the targeted nature of stakeholder consultation.

Publicity

To reach a diverse audience, several communication methods were used:

- » A media release was issued by the ACT Minister for the Environment and Climate Change, inviting the public to comment on the draft ACT and Region Catchment Strategy.
- » Editorials were developed for the Canberra Times (14 May 2016) and other regional outlets.
- » Coordination Group members were requested to place subsequent notices inviting the public to comment on the draft Catchment Strategy on their respective websites.
- » Professor Ian Falconer, Chair of the Coordination Group participated in interviews where he invited members to comment on the draft Catchment Strategy including:
 - 2XXfm Radio Landcare interview
 - Published interview with Australian Water Association (AWA)

A presentation on the draft ACT and Region Catchment Strategy was made to the UMCCC forum on 18–19 March 2016 and UMCCC executive meeting on 11 May 2016.

Comments and feedback were positive and valuable. They will be incorporated into the final Catchment Strategy. Key changes to the draft included minor refinements, mostly in wording, of certain actions and additional clarity of some proposed activities. Further clarification was provided for some governance matters, such as the role and process for community input in decision making. Greater emphasis was placed on the importance of information sharing, monitoring and evaluation, and community/stakeholder involvement in implementation and further transparency in monitoring, evaluation and review of the draft Catchment Strategy.

Multi-jurisdictional endorsement

Members of the Coordination Group, South East Local Land Services, Yass Valley Council, Queanbeyan–Palerang Regional Council and Snowy Monaro Regional Council provided formal endorsement of the draft Catchment Strategy.

During community engagement, Professor Ian Falconer (Chair) and the Coordination Group Secretariat attended targeted meetings with the NSW Minister for Primary Industries, the Parliamentary Secretary for SE NSW, the NSW Minister for Transport and Infrastructure local NSW Members of Parliament and senior NSW officers. The Hon Minister Niall Blair MLC provided a letter of support for the draft Catchment Strategy and cross-border collaboration. Meetings with the NSW Cross Border Commissioner and senior NSW officers indicated strong support for the draft. The NSW Government has indicated interest in nominating further representatives to the Coordination Group.

The endorsement process successfully rallied inter-jurisdictional support for the strategy and mitigated the risk of the strategy being seen as a Canberra ‘owned’ initiative.

2.2 Liaison with external committees or groups

The Coordination Group agreed to form working groups, as required, to assist in the implementation of identified projects.

ACT and Region Catchment Management Strategy Working Group

The ACT and Region Catchment Management Strategy Working Group was formed to provide strategic advice to the Coordination Group, develop a project execution plan for preparation of the draft Catchment Strategy, oversee the development of the strategy and identify immediate priority projects for the Coordination Group. Members of the Coordination Group nominated officer level representatives from their organisation.

During the reporting period, the working group met seven times and was invited to attend all stakeholder consultation workshops during the community engagement period.

The group was dissembled after community engagement on the strategy finished and final changes had been made to the draft ACT and Region Catchment Strategy, as per the Terms of Reference for the working group.

Project specific groups will be established in the future as the Coordination Group moves into the implementation phase.

Communications Working Group

At the meeting in May 2016 the Coordination Group agreed to establish a Communications Working Group to:

- » coordinate water-related communication activities in the ACT and region between Coordination Group members
- » align all water and catchment management messaging in a concise, coordinated manner to a community that values and enjoys clean, healthy catchments
- » advise the Coordination Group on communications and media opportunities that advance the objectives of the Coordination Group.

Membership comprises officers from organisations of the Coordination Group with a high level of communication and media relations skills. The group reports directly to the Coordination Group at quarterly meetings, or out of session as required. During the reporting period in June 2016, the group met once and attended a workshop to prepare a draft Communications Strategy to guide their work for the foreseeable future.

Stormwater Education Program Working Group

At its August 2015 meeting, the Coordination Group agreed that the Environment and Planning Directorate would develop a regional catchment education program as a priority project. At its February 2016 meeting, the Coordination Group agreed to form a Stormwater Education Program Working Group.

The working group consists of representatives from the members of the Coordination Group with relevant expertise and experience in stormwater management and catchment education. The education program will run initially for three years, have a regional scope, target rural-residential and urban areas and focus on behaviour change to improve catchment management.

During the reporting period, the working group outlined the scope of the project, including:

- » clarifying the key behaviours to focus on in terms of protecting lake and stream water quality, acknowledging that organics from leaves and grass clippings are a key contributor to declining water quality
- » identifying the key messages or incentives that can be used to influence behaviours
- » agreeing on the target people and organisations: urban dwellers; rural residential dwellers; building and construction industry members and garden maintenance and cleaning businesses
- » agreeing on the project steps, key deliverables and timeframes: pilots, pilot evaluations, reviewed project design and full roll-out
- » agreeing on monitoring, evaluation and reporting arrangements for the project.

A Catchment Education Officer has been engaged to support the delivery of the program.

Directors-General Water Group and Senior Executive Water Group (ACT Government)

The Secretariat, on behalf of the Coordination Group, frequently provides progress updates to the Directors-General Water Group (DGWG) and Senior Executive Water Group (SEWG). This provides an opportunity for further discussion on projects that have arisen in the broader Coordination Group context.

Best for Region Sewage Strategy Leadership Group

The Best for Region Sewage Strategy Leadership Group was formed early 2015. The inaugural meeting in February 2015 identified the need to upgrade the Queanbeyan Sewage Treatment Plant and the opportunity to do this in conjunction with the ACT's waste management planning. This matter affects both the ACT and the Region; a collaborative approach will assist in meeting a number of shared objectives.

The project is driven by regional and local factors arising from eastern regional areas draining into ACT catchments with two sewage treatment plants (STP) located in close proximity adjacent to the Molongolo River: Queanbeyan's STP, which is nearing or already at full capacity and will require significant upgrade; and Icon Water's Fyshwick STP, which is also in need of substantial capital investment and upgrade.

Governance arrangements for the best for region project have been established under the auspices of the ACT and Region Catchment Coordination Group, involving Queanbeyan—Palerang Regional Council, Icon Water and EPD with a leadership group and an operational group. During this reporting period the leadership group met frequently and reported quarterly to the Coordination Group.

The leadership group has been considering options that will ensure the STP will meet the highest possible environmental standards and provide a sewerage treatment service to ACT and Queanbeyan customers with sufficient economies of scale to implement higher environmental standards and realise cost efficiencies and hence represent a lower cost option to the alternative standalone options.

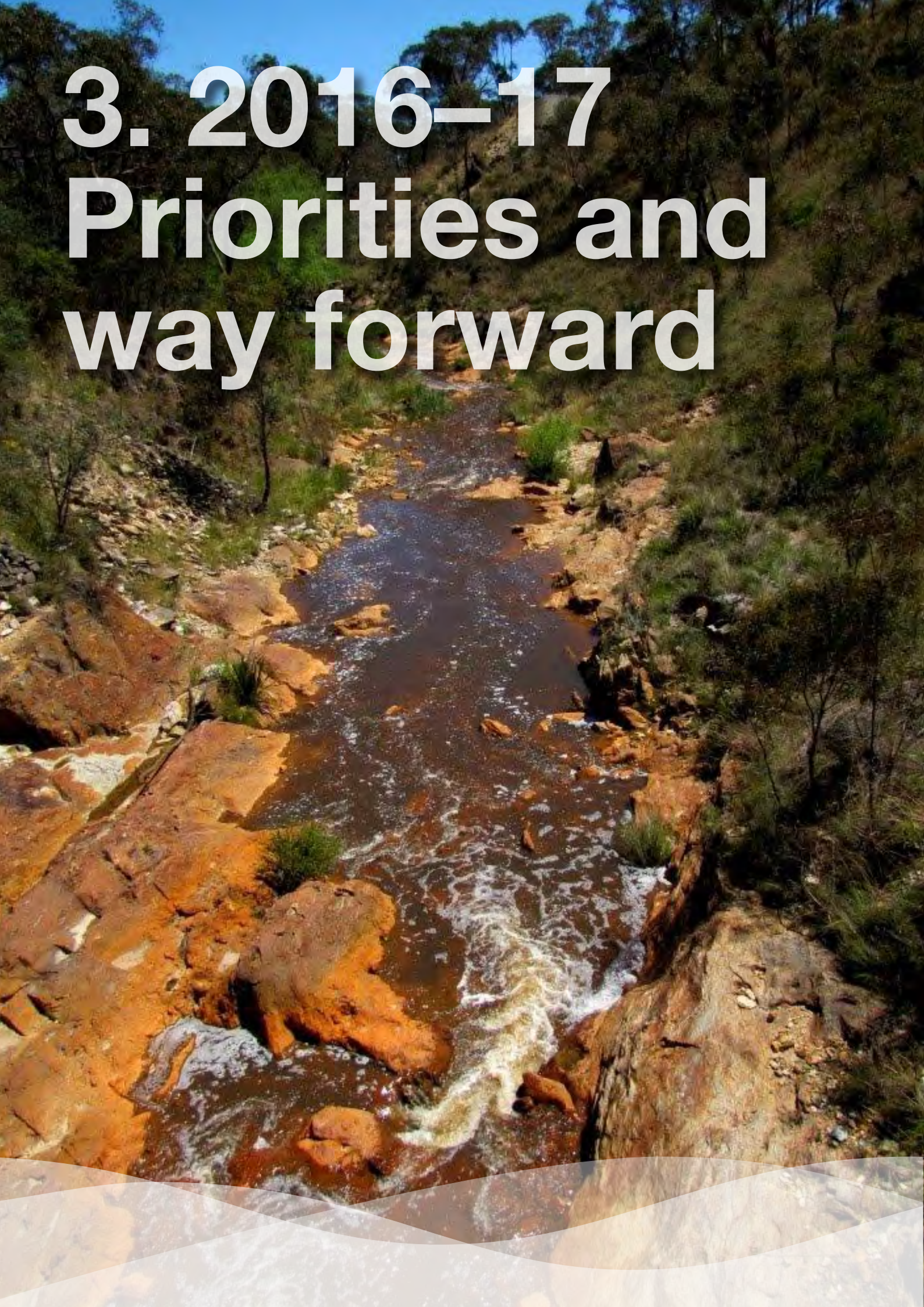
2.3 Correspondence to ACT Minister for the Environment and Climate Change, Minister Corbell MLA

During the reporting period, the following correspondence was provided to Minister Corbell. Correspondence was drafted by the Coordination Group's secretariat after consultation with the Coordination Group at meetings.

- » Ministerial Briefing – Interim Catchment Governance Briefing
- » Ministerial Briefing – ACT and Region Catchment Management Coordination Group – A proposed way forward
- » Ministerial Briefing – Approval for Promotional Flyer and Survey Questions for the Social Expectations of Waterways Study
- » Ministerial Briefing – Appointment of Chairperson and Community Representative for the ACT and Region Catchment Management Coordination Group
- » Ministerial Briefing – Letters to members of appointment to ACT and Region Catchment Management Coordination Group

Additionally, following his appointment as Chair of the Coordination Group, Professor Falconer met with Minister Corbell twice to discuss the progress of the Coordination Group and plans for the future.

3. 2016–17 Priorities and way forward



The focus of the Coordination Group for the upcoming 12 months will be to progress the short term priority actions outlined in the draft Catchment Action Implementation Plan 2016–21 (the draft implementation plan) (<http://www.environment.act.gov.au/water/water-strategies-and-plans/draft-act-and-region-catchment-strategy>).

The implementation plan was developed as a separate document to the draft Catchment Strategy and released concurrently with the strategy for public comment. The implementation plan outlines the 19 actions under their respective themes and provides additional detail in the way of activities, in terms of the outcome each action will achieve, key stakeholders that should be involved, resourcing status¹ and likely timeframes.²

The implementation plan also includes criteria for determining the 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.

The Coordination Group recommended at its meeting on 2 August 2016 that seven of the 19 actions contained within the Implementation Plan can be commenced in the 2016-17 financial year. This is based on an assessment of the above mentioned criteria contained in the Implementation Plan's Table 1, 'Criteria for determining timelines and priorities for implementation'.

The implementation actions for 2016–17:

Theme: Governance, Policy and Planning

- Action 1: Build an inter-jurisdictional decision making framework related to catchment policy and planning
- Action 2: Establish an inter-jurisdictional investment and resourcing framework
- Action 4: Continue to inform a catchment wide assessment of vulnerability to climate change

Theme: Communities

- Action 8: Develop an integrated catchment emergency response plan
- Action 9: Build community understanding about catchment health to promote behavior change through a broad range of communication and education strategies

Theme: Regional Development

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

Theme: Land and Biodiversity

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

Effective catchment management cannot and should not be constrained by jurisdictional boundaries. The Coordination Group is a strong example of multiple jurisdictions undertaking a collaborative approach to regional catchment management. In 2015–16 it facilitated the development of the draft Catchment Strategy, a pragmatic and achievable set of policy initiatives outlining a strategy for the catchment to face the challenges of the next 30 years.

Furthermore, the Coordination Group has started implementing several priority projects across the ACT and Region. The Coordination Group has demonstrated its commitment to achieving coordinated governance across multiple jurisdictions and is undoubtedly an effective tool for facilitating a collaborative approach to integrated catchment management.

¹ The resourcing status of each action has been categorised as:
Resourced: current resources are available but may need to be re-aligned.
Partly resourced: relevant programs and actions and activities are already funded by a number of organisations however, a more coordinated regional approach provides opportunity for achieving better outcomes. Additional resources may be required for full implementation of some actions and activities at a regional level.
Un-resourced: new resources are required and are subject to funding bids.

² Short term to commence by 2016–17; medium term to commence by 2018 to 2021; longer term to commence post 2021.

