

Our purpose

The Association of Bayside Municipalities (ABM) represents the councils of Port Phillip Bay. Our shared purpose is the protection and management of the natural, cultural, social and economic values of Port Phillip Bay.

Founded in 1974, we are the voice of local government for the Bay. Through our advocacy and action we aim to respect the Traditional Owner aspirations for the land and sea Country, and uphold the community's vision and values for the Bay's marine and coastal environment.

The ABM acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters of Port Phillip Bay – the Wadawurrung and Bunurong Boon Wurrung peoples of the Kulin Nation. We pay respect to their Elders past, present and emerging. We value their deep knowledge of the Bay, its waters, tides, coast, plants and animals, developed over many generations.

OUR APPROACH



DESIRED OUTCOMES

The voice of local government for Port Phillip Bay, protecting the values of the marine and coastal environment.



Capability, resources and networks that support Member Councils in coastal planning and management.



Leadership in the protection and sustainable management of Port Phillip Bay through visible and effective planning, investment and action.

6 Strategic Priorities

Context for Strategic Priorities

ECOSYSTEM PROTECTION ecology and vegetation	TRADITIONAL OWNER ENGAGEMENT cultural heritage protection	COASTAL CLIMATE ADAPTATION	COASTAL ASSETS maintenance and management	ACCESS AND USE SAFETY AND AMENITY foreshore and marine	INVESTMENT AND FUNDING
The health and use of the Bay to live, work and play relies on a functioning marine and coastal ecosystem that is valued, protected and enhanced. Ecosystem protection requires rightsholders, stakeholders and communities to work collaboratively together to achieve optimal outcomes.	The land and sea of Port Phillip Bay is of spiritual, cultural and economic importance to Aboriginal people. We recognise the intrinsic connection of Traditional Owners to Country and commit to genuine working partnerships, respect and understanding.	The effects of climate change amplify the challenges of protecting and managing the marine and coastal environment, impacting ecosystem health, access and use. Adapting to climate change on the coast requires knowledge sharing, partnerships and co-investment to drive action.	Buildings and structures in the marine and coastal environment support access and use. Management and maintenance of these assets integrates cultural heritage, environment protection and natural coastal processes, climate adaptation, shared use and safety.	The Bay is renowned and valued for its beaches and diversity uses. Managing multiple, often competing uses, requires strong working partnerships that balance ecosystem protection with safe access and use and amenity of the waterways, foreshore and Bay.	Sustainable management of the Bay requires strategic funding and resources. Coastal councils require adequate, equitable funding and support to deliver on its marine and coastal responsibilities and the expectations of community.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access knowledge and resources to improve understanding of bay ecology, protection, restoration and rehabilitation techniques for Member Councils. • Coordinate advocacy, information sharing and resources to support action on foreshore vegetation / tree loss, illegal removal, monitoring and enforcement. • Advocate for improved ecological health and protection of the Bay. • Advocate for continued ecological modelling and monitoring of the Bay, and coordinate access to latest information for Member Councils. • Access support for councils on managing seaweed accumulations and seagrass meadows. • Build capacity to implement nature-based solutions, including partnership projects to support a suite of case studies in the bay. • Provide clarity for Member Councils on the role of local government in the marine environment. • Coordinate partnerships to trial opportunities for blue carbon projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the aspirations and expectations of Traditional Owner Groups in terms of ongoing engagement and partnership with ABM. • Open invitation for Traditional Owner groups to attend ABM events. • Coordinate two-way capacity building to support relationship building between Traditional Owner Groups and Council. • Establish partnership projects to support improved cultural heritage assessment, protection and management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for and coordinate partnerships in adaptation planning and public consultation (federal-state-local). • Build knowledge and capacity in adaptation strategies, sharing tools and approaches. • Drive improved funding support and co-investment for adaptation planning. • Work in partnership with agencies and organisations to align activities and investment. • Support completion and effective dissemination of a Coastal Hazard Assessment for Port Phillip Bay, including communication and community engagement. • Advocate for risk assessment and hazard response planning to support the Coastal Hazard Assessment. • Facilitate Ministerial led planning scheme amendments / overlays where applicable. • Coordinate access to information and resources to support responses to coastal hazards such as flooding and erosion, groundwater intrusion. • Build knowledge and capacity in coastal climate adaptation for Councillors and Officers aligned to the Marine and Coastal Policy adaption actions including nature based responses, links to modelling and research, and proven case studies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for urgent action to address current high risk coastal asset issues associated with degraded, unsafe aging infrastructure, including removal of red tape to effectively respond after extreme events. • Advocate for development of a long-term strategic co-investment plan for removal, relocation, renewal or maintenance of coastal assets. • Collaborate with government agencies to improve support for councils managing key assets eg. heritage assets, boating/fishing facilities, jetties and piers, etc. • Build knowledge and capacity in coastal asset management approaches such as nature-based defence, eco-engineering, etc. • Clarify coastal land and asset management and investment responsibilities – for councils. • Partner with Melbourne Water to establish coastal erosion advice function. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate and support action that improves safe access and shared use of foreshore and marine environments eg. water, beach and foreshore safety. • Coordinate resources and knowledge to support councils to manage pressure and risks on coastal areas at peak times. • Partner with Maritime Safety Vic and Parks Victoria to improve shared use zoning and safety issues due to competing use. • Continue advocacy to improve personal watercraft (eg. jetski) licensing, education, monitoring and enforcement during summer peak. • Work with EPA Vic and Melbourne Water to improve water quality in the Bay, including monitoring and reporting of bay health. • Partner to support integrated water management and water sensitive urban design in coastal areas and contributing waterways to the Bay (including litter reduction and stormwater management). • Expand knowledge and management approaches to algal blooms and seaweed accumulation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for funding to support local government coastal climate adaptation planning and implementation. • Advocate across new and existing funding streams to improve balance (equity) of funding distributed around the Bay. • Coordinate funding bids and investment opportunities with new and existing partnerships eg. Coastcare, Port Phillip Bay Fund, Victoria's Resilient Coast. • Explore new co-investment or collective bargaining opportunities. • Advocate for urgent funds/ grants to deal with immediate priority issues that are not addressed by existing funding programs. • Provide advocacy support for local Member Council project proposals aligned to ABM strategic priorities. • Partner with DELWP to determine beach renourishment priorities including opportunities for natural approaches to renourishment. • Advocate for improved funding support for beach cleaning services. • Advocate for Coastguard funding to reduce financial load on Member Councils.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional Owner Groups • Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning • Parks Victoria • Melbourne Water • Industry and research expertise • Coastal community organisations • Victorian Fisheries Authority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional Owner Groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional Owner Groups • Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning • Parks Victoria • Melbourne Water • South East Councils Climate Change Alliance • Research institutions • Interstate and international organisations • Coastal community organisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional Owner Groups • Maritime Safety Victoria • Parks Victoria • Life Saving Victoria • EPA Victoria • Melbourne Water • Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning • Industry and research expertise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional Owner Groups • Maritime Safety Victoria • Parks Victoria • Life Saving Victoria • EPA Victoria • Melbourne Water • Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning • Industry and research expertise • Better Boating Victoria • Victorian Fisheries Authority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning: Coastcare, Port Phillip Bay Fund, Victoria's Resilient Coast Program • Parks Victoria • Melbourne Water • Life Saving Victoria • Coastguard