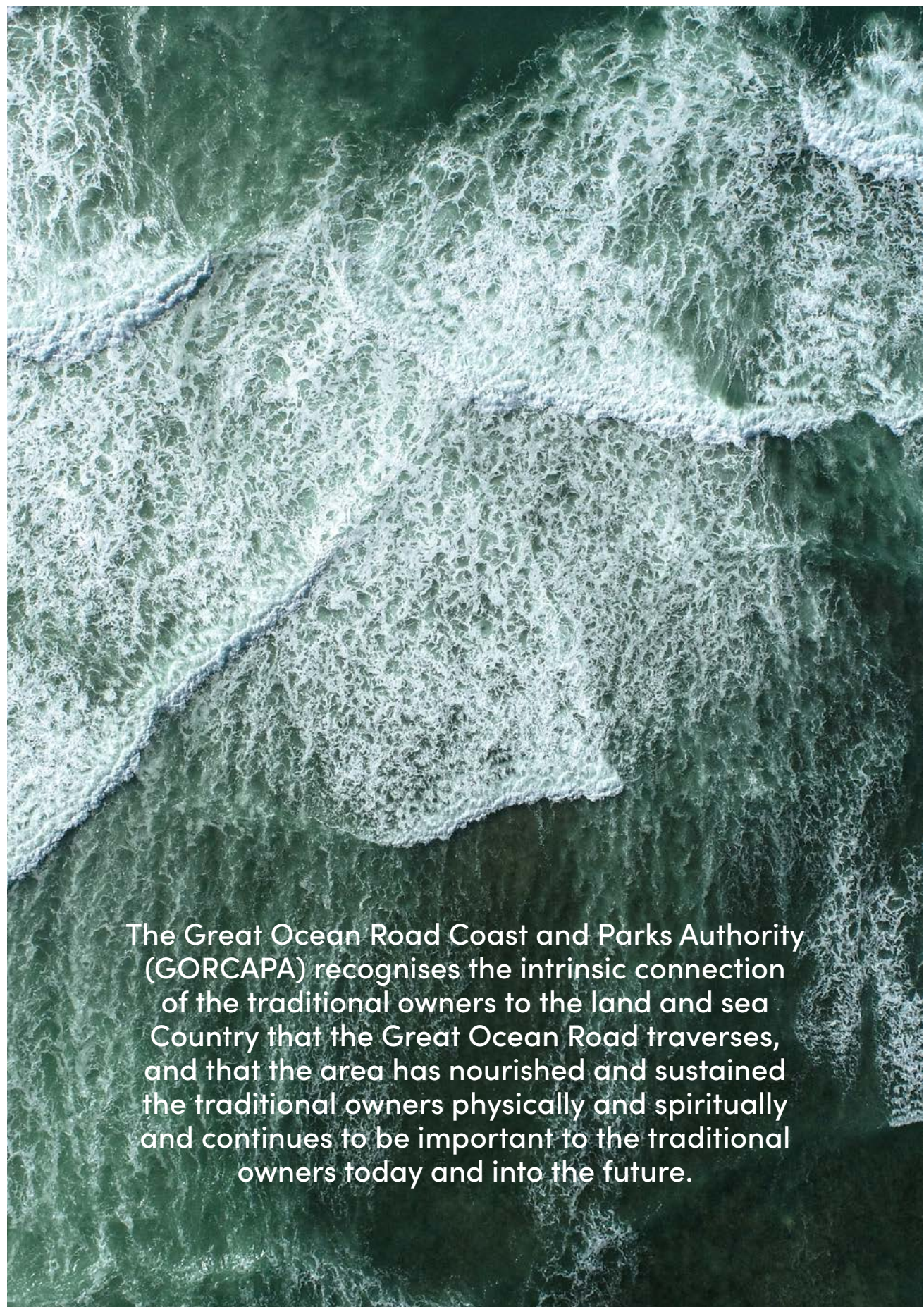


Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Authority

Strategic Plan 2026 - 2031





The Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Authority (GORCAPA) recognises the intrinsic connection of the traditional owners to the land and sea Country that the Great Ocean Road traverses, and that the area has nourished and sustained the traditional owners physically and spiritually and continues to be important to the traditional owners today and into the future.

Message from the Chair & Chief Executive Officer

Over the next five years, GORCAPA will continue to grow as a trusted regional steward — shaping the future of the Great Ocean Road’s coast and parks with care, clarity, and conviction. This Strategic Plan sets out how we will manage this special coastal and marine environment on behalf of all Victorians.

We were created to bring a unified, long-term approach to planning and protection across one of Victoria’s most iconic and sensitive regions. With that mandate comes both opportunity and obligation: to honour the values of the communities who live here, to protect the landscapes that define this place, and to ensure that decisions made today support a thriving region for generations to come.

Our focus is on building an organisation capable of delivering excellence. That means strengthening our foundations — our people, our systems, our culture, and our partnerships. It means embedding evidence-based decision-making, transparent governance, and a deep commitment to collaboration with Traditional Owners, local councils, communities, and industry. And it means designing services and processes that are clear, consistent, and predictable for everyone who interacts with us.

This Strategic Plan outlines the priorities that will guide our work: delivering high-quality planning and regulatory services, protecting and enhancing the region’s environmental and cultural values, supporting sustainable

development, and building organisational capability that grows with the region’s needs. These priorities reflect what we have heard from our partners and communities — that we must be a leader, a collaborator, and a reliable custodian of place.

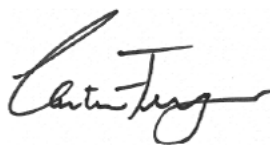
We are committed to continuous improvement. As a new organisation, we have the privilege of building modern systems, contemporary practices, and a culture grounded in integrity, respect, and service. We will measure our progress, learn from our experiences, and adapt as the region evolves.

Our success will be defined not only by what we deliver, but by how we deliver it: with transparency, professionalism, and a genuine commitment to the people and places we serve.

We look forward to working with all our partners as we build a strong, capable, and future-ready GORCAPA — one that protects the region’s unique character while supporting a sustainable and prosperous future.



Libby Mears
Chair



Christine Ferguson
Chief Executive Officer

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ABOUT US

We have a clear and singular role: to manage the Great Ocean Road coast and parks.

The Great Ocean Road coast and parks include a wide range of public land types; therefore, our responsibilities span multiple land management areas, including conservation and field management, port and waterway management, land and marine national parks, regulation and enforcement, delivery of high-quality visitor experiences, and emergency management.

We manage approximately 170,000 hectares of parks and coastal reserves along the Great Ocean Road, including 355 kilometres of coastline from Point Impossible to the Bay of Islands Coastal Park. This includes several National Parks, coastal town foreshores, high-visitation destinations such as the Cape Otway Lightstation Tourism Precinct, the Twelve Apostles Visitor Centre Precinct, and marine land extending to the edge of Victorian waters.

We partner with Traditional Owners, local communities and stakeholders to integrate cultural knowledge, ensure environmental stewardship, support sustainable visitation and build lasting benefits for regional economies and generations to come.

We provide advice to the Minister for Environment, the DEECA Secretary and other responsible entities on matters relevant to the Great Ocean Road coast and parks, supporting informed decision-making and effective land management.

Our responsible Minister is The Hon, Enver Erdogan MLC, Minister for Environment and Minister for Outdoor Recreation.

All revenue raised on the land we manage is reinvested into caring for the Great Ocean Road coast and parks.

OUR BOARD

GORCAPA is a statutory authority governed by a Board of Directors and operates under the *Great Ocean Road and Environs Protection Act 2020*.

A trusted, high-functioning independent board that drives positive change and guides management of the Great Ocean Road coast and parks to deliver long-term environmental, economic and community benefits in a responsible and transparent way.

We have a comprehensive Board Integrity Framework, which consolidates the key standards of conduct and accountabilities applicable to Board members, both individually and collectively.

This framework aligns with the Public Administration Act 2004 (PAA), the Directors' Code of Conduct, and other public sector integrity obligations and good governance practices.

This governance approach ensures the Board operates with transparency, integrity, and in the best interests of the community and the Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Authority.

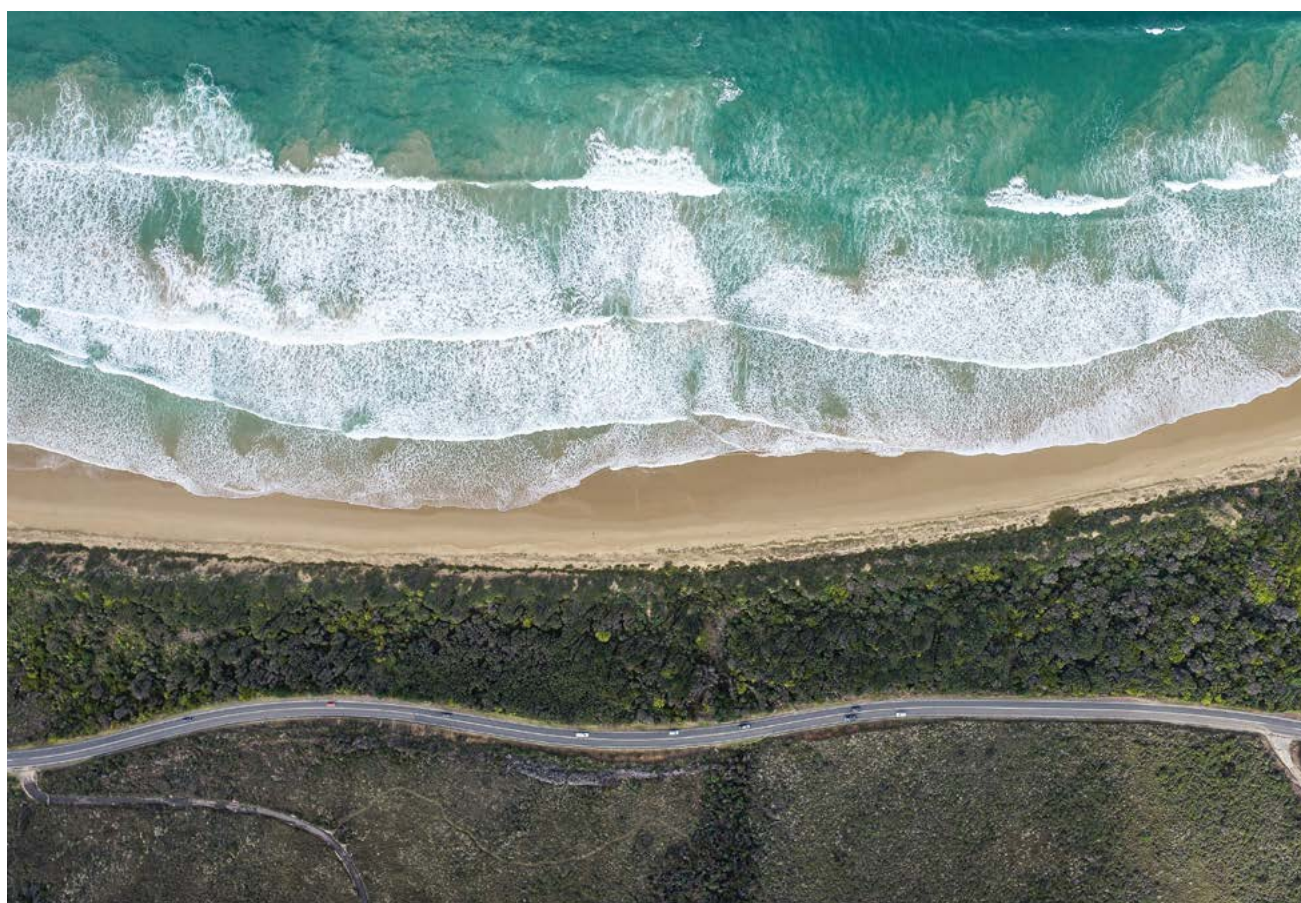




OUR ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

As the dedicated park manager, for the coast and parks of the Great Ocean Road, GORCAPA has a range of land management functions and responsibilities including environmental and visitation management, port and waterway management, co-regulation, and emergency management.

All our functions and responsibilities relate to the delivery of this parks management role as outlined in the *Great Ocean Road and Environs Protection Act 2020* (GOREP Act).



PARK MANAGEMENT

GORCAPA is the dedicated park manager for the Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks:

- To protect, conserve, enhance and manage public land, marine and coastal assets within the Great Ocean Road coast and parks.
- To control and manage land in the Great Ocean Road coast and parks for the benefit of the environment and current and future generations in a manner that protects and enhances the land, including its natural and cultural values; and provides for the land and sea to be appropriately used, enjoyed and appreciated.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Public land and port management includes emergency management responsibilities.

PORT MANAGEMENT

GORCAPA is the appointed local port manager for the local ports of Lorne, Apollo Bay and Port Campbell.

VISITATION MANAGEMENT

GORCAPA is tasked with ensuring the coast and parks of the Great Ocean Road are appropriately used and enjoyed by locals and visitors in ways that support healthy ecosystems and vibrant communities.

CO-REGULATION

GORCAPA partners with other relevant authorities to enforce laws and rules that apply to the land we manage.

PARTNERSHIPS WITH TRADITIONAL OWNERS OF COUNTRY

GORCAPA partners with Traditional Owners to embed self-determination in the management of the Great Ocean Road coast and parks.

OUR OPERATING CONTEXT

**We operate within
a rapidly changing
environment.**

Over the next decade, we will face a range of challenges and opportunities, driven by factors such as climate change, the evolving landscape of Aboriginal self-determination, shifting international and domestic visitor economy trends, workforce availability and capability, digital transformation, population change and information security.

At the same time, ensuring financial sustainability will be crucial as we navigate exposure to dynamic regional, national and global economies.

As our communities adapt to new ways of living, working, and engaging with natural spaces, GORCAPA will need to remain agile and responsive to these changes.

Our approach must protect and preserve the environment with consideration of the important social, cultural and economic values.

Our success will ensure that this precious part of Victoria is able to be enjoyed now, and by future generations.





OUR STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

Over the coming 5 years we aim to achieve the following outcomes:

01

The Great Ocean Road is recognised and enjoyed as a world class regenerative tourism destination.

02

The environmental values and resilience of the Great Ocean Road coasts and parks are effectively managed, protected and enhanced.

03

Self-determination of Eastern Maar and Wadawurrung peoples is advanced.

04

We are a trusted partner and work together to prepare communities for the impacts of climate change on the natural and built environment.

05

Our organisation is trusted, capable and delivers strong and positive outcomes for our region and its people.



Delivering on these outcomes will also ensure that we meet the **Minister for Environment's Statement of Expectations:**



OPERATIONS EXCELLENCE IN PARKS
MANAGEMENT EXPERIENCE



FIRST PEOPLES' SELF DETERMINATION



VISITOR ENJOYMENT AND APPRECIATION



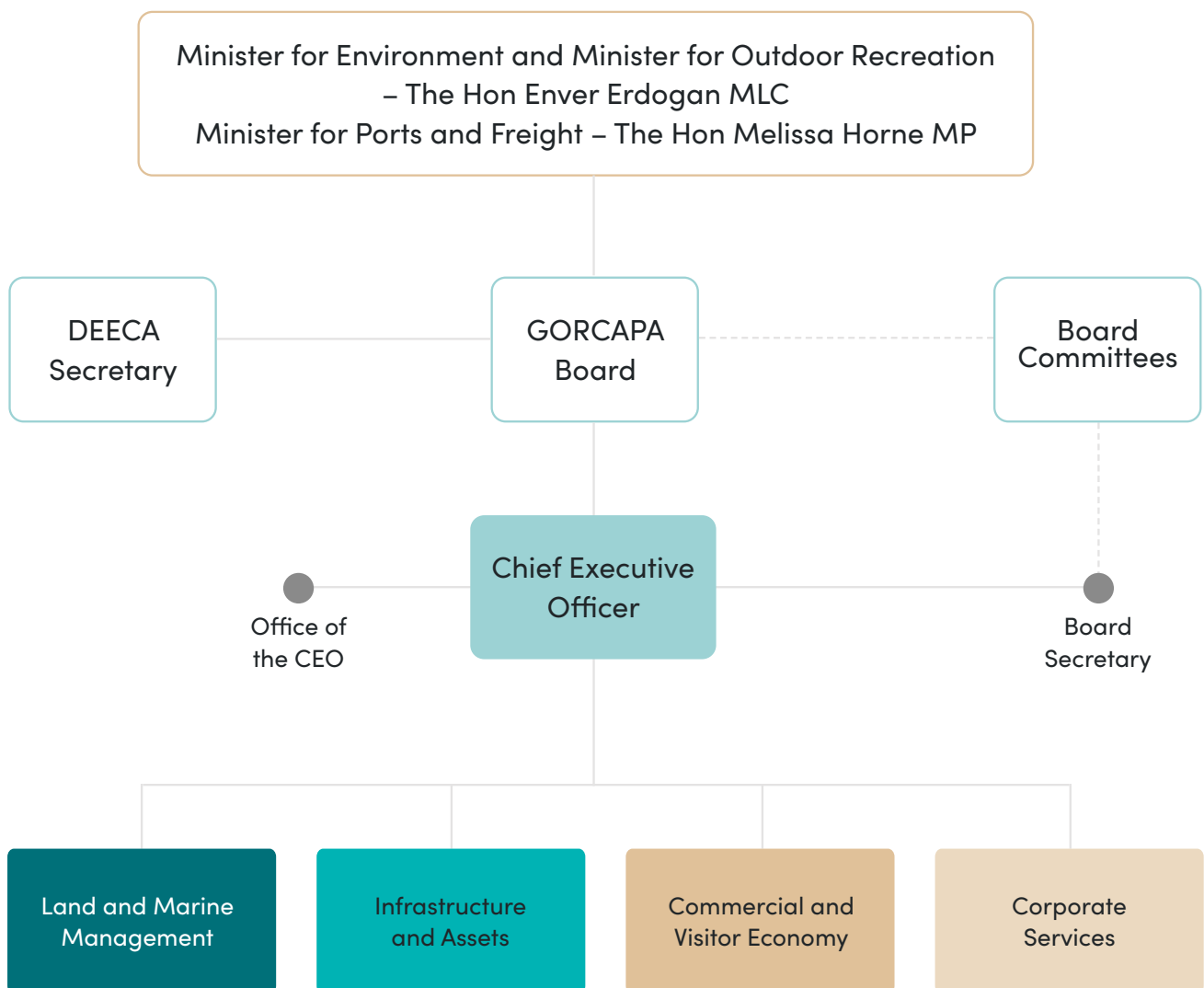
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



LONG-TERM FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

OUR ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

Our governance arrangements provide for clear accountability to the Victorian Government and to the Victorian community.



OUR PEOPLE AND VALUES

We are a committed and capable team working together to care for one of Victoria's most iconic and sensitive landscapes.

Our work is guided by four core values: Trust, Collaboration, Leadership and Evidence.

These are based on the Victorian Public Service Commission Values that guide the conduct, behaviour, and decision-making of public sector employees.

We aim to build a high-performing, values-driven organisation that is culturally safe, collaborative, and accountable.

Our workplace culture goals focus on empowering staff and embedding excellence in governance, capability, and service delivery.

Will will live our values by embedding them into everyday behaviours, policies and culture, and by consistently using them as the lens through which decisions are made and actions are judged.





OUR PRIORITIES

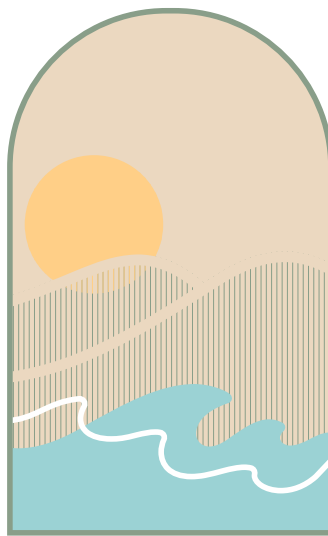
From ridge to reef, we protect and conserve this unique and beautiful environment as a one integrated and living natural entity for the benefit of all Victorians.

To guide us towards our vision, we have identified five strategic priorities that we believe will create the most impact for the environment, community and economy of the Great Ocean Road.

These priorities are:



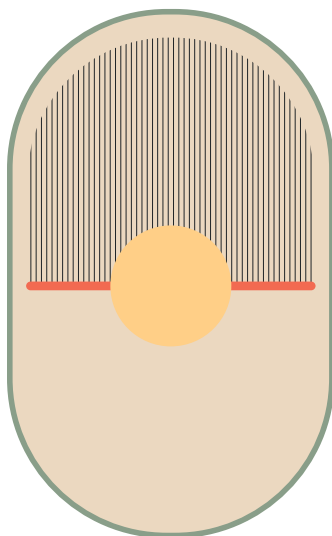
IMPROVE
ECOSYSTEM
HEALTH



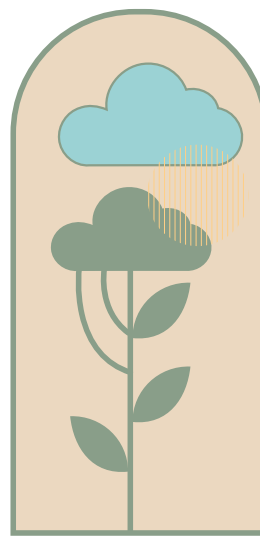
DELIVER WORLD CLASS
REGENERATIVE TOURISM
AND VISITOR EXPERIENCE



SUPPORT ABORIGINAL
SELF DETERMINATION



PARTNER TO BUILD
CLIMATE RESILIENCE
AND ADAPTATION



BUILD
ORGANISATIONAL
EXCELLENCE

IMPROVE ECOSYSTEM HEALTH



We will deliver innovative land and marine management to protect and improve natural and cultural values while supporting sustainable use and resilient ecosystems through science-based decision-making and strong partnerships.

This approach will enhance ecological integrity, health and build long-term resilience of environmental, social, economic and cultural values for current and future generations.



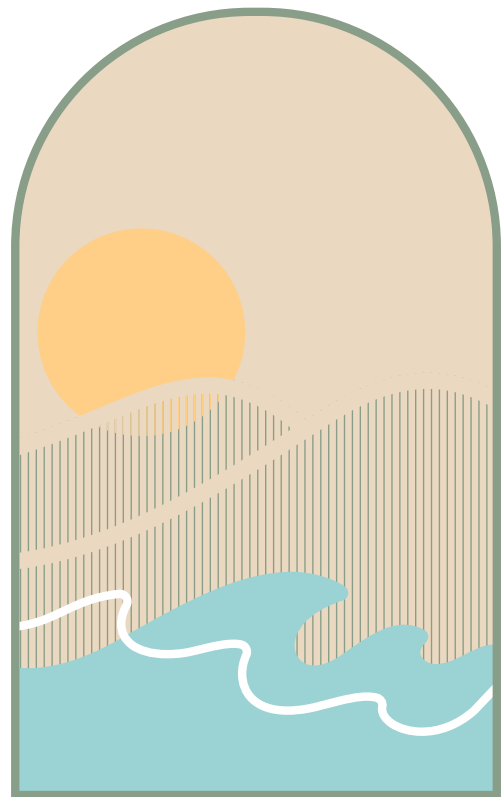
Outcomes that will be delivered – our focus for the next 5 years

- 1.1 Natural ecosystems are protected and enhanced
- 1.2 Visitors and communities help strengthen and improve ecosystem health
- 1.3 Monitoring, research and reporting guides decision-making
- 1.4 Innovative partnerships, funding and delivery mechanisms are identified and established.

How we will measure success

- Ecosystem health and resilience improvements
- Fit-for-purpose strategic planning that supports ecosystem health and appropriate land use across the coast
- Community and visitor stewardship and behaviour change programs
- Integrated monitoring and reporting, including against recognised evaluation frameworks
- Strengthened partnerships are delivering improvements to land and marine ecosystems, including in our ports.

DELIVER WORLD CLASS REGENERATIVE TOURISM AND VISITOR EXPERIENCE



Working together, we will establish our organisation as a national leader in delivering world-class regenerative tourism and visitor experiences that inspire people, protect and restore ecological integrity and health, support First Peoples' connections to Country and sustain vibrant local communities.

Our regenerative approach will help us protect, conserve and enhance the natural environment and cultural heritage of the Great Ocean Road coast and parks – supporting its use and enjoyment by future generations with world-class facilities and inspiring experiences that connect people with nature while protecting what makes this region so special.



Outcomes that will be delivered – our focus for the next 5 years

- 2.1 The Great Ocean Road is recognised and enjoyed as a world-class regenerative and nature-based tourism destination
- 2.2 Visitors are actively contributing to conservation of the landscapes and seascapes that make the region extraordinary
- 2.3 Traditional Owner knowledge, values, and voice is embedded into the design and delivery of visitor experiences
- 2.4 Visitor infrastructure and accommodation meets world-class standards and is maintained to a level that reflects the significance of the destination
- 2.5 Sustainable visitation distributes pressure equitably, to protect sensitive ecosystems, and ensure that high demand locations remain accessible and enjoyable without permanent ecological cost
- 2.6 Long-term financial sustainability through value-aligned commercial activity.

How we will measure success

- The Twelve Apostles Visitor Centre is operating as one of Australia's pre-eminent examples of regenerative tourism visitor experience
- Visitation is managed to protect and enhance the environment and regional economy and the benefits are shared
- Improved community and visitor satisfaction with our coast and parks
- Greater community and stakeholder confidence and trust in us
- Partnerships and joint initiatives with Traditional Owners, industry and academic bodies
- Improved ecological health of the coast and parks, with visitor facilities upgraded, improved and open
- A pipeline of infrastructure and asset renewal projects delivered on time and budget
- New, appropriate recreational and commercial opportunities generated.

SUPPORT ABORIGINAL SELF DETERMINATION



We will acknowledge, respect, protect and promote Aboriginal cultural values, practices, heritage and knowledge.

This approach will help us involve and partner with Traditional Owners in policy development, planning, and decision-making – integrating their bio-cultural knowledge and land management practices into the way we work and manage public land.



Outcomes that will be delivered – our focus for the next 5 years

- 3.1 Integration of traditional ecological knowledge into parks management, land use and construction projects
- 3.2 Self determination is supported by our processes, practices and decisions
- 3.3 Aboriginal staff are supported to advance and develop in their roles
- 3.4 Compliance with Victoria's self-determination framework, Statewide Treaty and any Recognition and Settlement Agreement
- 3.4 Land and Sea Country ecosystems are healthy and resilient.

How we will measure success

- Strengthened partnerships are delivering improvements for Land and Sea Country, with cultural values protected
- Partnerships with Traditional Owners that facilitate the integration of traditional ecological knowledge into coast and parks management
- Strengthened organisational capabilities, including systems, processes and knowledge, to ensure compliance with the Cultural Heritage Act and Native Title Act in operations and project delivery
- Our partnerships are supporting First Nations tourism experiences on land we manage.

PARTNER TO BUILD CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND ADAPTATION



We will be a leader in climate resilience and adaptation for the region, with a deliberate focus on coastal hazard management as the highest immediate risk.

We will integrate climate mitigation and adaptation into how we work to maintain the resilience of coastal and marine ecosystems, protect cultural and natural values, support safe and sustainable visitation and support continued community use and enjoyment of the coast for generations to come.



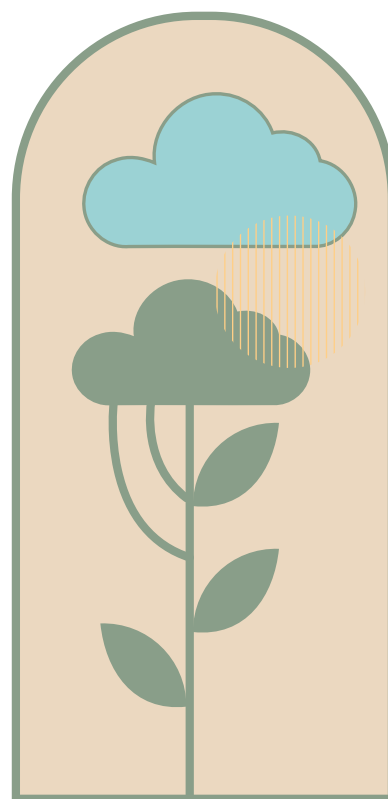
Outcomes that will be delivered – our focus for the next 5 years

- 4.1 Coastal hazard risks are understood and effectively managed , with timely and appropriate actions delivered across the coast
- 4.2 Adaptation planning extends beyond coastal hazards to support trusted and enduring resilience for coastal communities and environments
- 4.3 Decision-making is informed by the facts, monitoring and research
- 4.4 Innovative funding and delivery mechanisms are established.

How we will measure success

- Finalisation and implementation of the Great Ocean Road Regional Coastal Adaptation Plan (RCAP)
- Natural capital is embedded into strategic land use planning, partnerships, and delivery of projects
- Our climate action and coastal hazard adaptation planning is aligned with Victoria's Resilient Coast – Adapting for 2100+ Framework
- Delivery of coastal monitoring programs to actively manage risk, increase knowledge and raise awareness
- Our approach to managing coastal hazards is trusted by the community.

BUILD ORGANISATIONAL EXCELLENCE



We will build organisational excellence by aligning our purpose, people, systems, and culture to deliver consistent, high-quality outcomes for our communities and stakeholders.

We will empower our people to deliver evidence-based strategies and continuously improve our systems and processes so we can effectively protect and enhance the coast and parks of the Great Ocean Road.



Outcomes that will be delivered – our focus for the next 5 years

- 5.1 Higher Quality Outcomes and Services
- 5.2 Stronger Strategic Performance
- 5.3 Increased Trust and Credibility
- 5.4 A High Performing, Engaged Workforce
- 5.5 Greater Efficiency and Better Use of Resources
- 5.6 Improved Stakeholder and Community Outcomes.

How we will measure success

- The organisation achieves more of what actually matters and is seen as a lead example of coastal stewardship
- We are built to thrive, not just survive
- Partners, communities, and regulators trust our leadership and judgement
- Productivity rises, turnover falls, and we are a place people want to work because of our strong, vibrant culture
- Communities and partners receive higher quality outcomes and feel more connected to our work.

OUR PLANNING FRAMEWORK



GORCAPA's planning framework is a comprehensive approach that unifies land-use planning, environmental protection and visitor management across the coast and parks of the Great Ocean Road.

It ensures that one of Australia's most iconic landscapes is protected and thoughtfully managed for decades to come.

- This strategic plan outlines our high-level five-year vision and objectives.
- Our annual Corporate Plans build on this, with detailed and funded initiatives to deliver projects and outcomes aligned with our strategic objectives. Our Land Use Strategy also leverages this work, providing an additional guidance document for decision making.
- We complete quarterly performance reporting against Corporate Plan initiatives and well as yearly Annual Reports, including annual financial statements, that are publicly available.

OUR GUIDING LEGISLATION AND FRAMEWORKS

GORCAPA is established by the *Great Ocean Road and Environs Protection Act 2020* (GOREP Act) and appointed as the land manager for the land listed in Schedule 1 of the GOREP Act on or by 1 November 2025.

It is a public entity for the purposes of the *Public Administration Act 2004* and a public body for the purposes of the *Financial Management Act 1994*.

GORCAPA is part of the Victorian Government and accountable to the Minister for Environment (the Minister) for delivery of the object for which it is established, its performance and for operating in the public interest.

It operates within the limits of its authority and the defined boundaries set out in legislation, Statement of Obligations (issued under Section 62F of the GOREP Act), Ministerial Directions (issued under Section 53 of the GOREP Act), and Ministerial Statements of Expectations. It must operate within Government's broader policy framework and where required deliver on specified community service obligations.

GORCAPA is a **public non-financial corporation** that both generates income on land that it manages and receives State appropriations for specific park management activities (such as operating local ports and the management of national parks) and for major capital works. The GOREP Act provides GORCAPA with the autonomy to retain revenue generated on land that it manages and to expend those funds on activities related to its legislated object and functions.

GORCAPA is a **park manager** and must manage the parks and reserves consistently with the requirements and obligations of relevant public land Acts and State policies that together form the land governance framework for the protection, management and use of public land. The public land Acts are the:

- *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*
- *Forests Act 1958*
- *Land Act 1958*
- *National Parks Act 1975*
- *Wildlife Act 1975*

GORCAPA is appointed as the local **port manager** for the local ports on land that it manages under the *Port Management Act 1995*. It is also appointed as the waterway manager under the *Marine Safety Act 2010* for those local ports and Port Campbell Bay.



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