

# Gippsland Lakes Environment Report 2021

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## Summary



The Gippsland Lakes are important to the Gippsland community and support important cultural, social, environmental and economic values. Most of the Gippsland Lakes system has international recognition as a Wetland of International Importance through the Ramsar Convention. Information on the health of the Lakes is constantly being gathered and updated. From time to time this monitoring information is compiled to report on the condition of the lakes, evaluate the status of monitoring programs and identify areas for improvement.

This Gippsland Lakes Environment Report assesses the current condition of the Lakes based on most recent available data. It also highlights some key knowledge gaps and importantly establishes a framework for future condition assessments.

Recognising the importance of the Lakes to the community, the Victorian Government invested \$12.5m for the period 2015 -2020 to protect and improve the ecological and community values supported by the Lakes. This builds on significant, ongoing government investment since 1998. In 2021 the Victorian government committed an additional \$7.5 million over three years to implement projects to improve the health of the Gippsland Lakes.

The task to maintain the health of the Gippsland Lakes requires a long term commitment by government in partnership with the community and other organisations and groups. A robust approach is currently in place to manage and improve our understanding of the lakes including:

- coordinated management through the Gippsland Lakes Coordinating Committee and Ramsar site coordination;
- strategic planning through the Gippsland Lakes Ramsar Site Management Plan and the Gippsland Lakes Priorities Plan;
- working collaboratively with Traditional Owners and other land and waterway managers to deliver priority projects across the Lakes;
- regular monitoring of the Lakes and values of the Ramsar site;
- partnering with the community to deliver projects on the ground;
- improving knowledge through learning as we go;
- sharing information through the Love our Lakes website and other forums.

## Understanding the summary brochure symbols

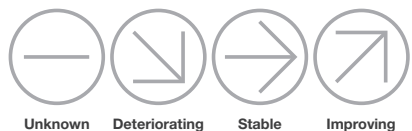
### Status

**Status** is represented by four categories, for each indicator a threshold has been defined for each category (i.e. at what point would you consider an indicator in “good” condition?). These are provided in the technical report




















### Trend

**Trend** is the direction of change and presented in four categories: improving (towards better condition); stable; deteriorating (getting worse) and unknown.



# Water quality

Indicator	Status and trends			
	Unknown	Poor	Fair	Good
Salinity		 Lake Wellington		 Lakes King & Victoria
			 Dowd Morass	 Heart Morass
Dissolved oxygen		 Lake Victoria		 Lakes King & Wellington
Suspended sediments			 Lake Victoria	 Lakes King & Wellington
Total nitrogen		 Lakes Victoria & Wellington		 Lake King
Dissolved inorganic nitrogen		 		
Total Phosphorus		 Lake Wellington		 Lakes King & Victoria
Dissolved inorganic phosphorus				 
Nutrient loads (TN and TP)				 
Chlorophyll-a			 Lake Wellington	 Lakes King & Victoria

Continued...

Algal blooms



Toxicants



Lakes Victoria & Wellington











Lake King

## Fauna

Indicator	Status and trends			
	Unknown	Poor	Fair	Good
Fish abundance		 Black Bream and Yellow-eye Mullet	 Tailor	 Silver Trevally
Fish diversity				
Waterbird abundance		Total abundance, Black Swan, Eurasian Coot, Fairy Terns, Little Terns, Little Black Cormorant, Chestnut Teal		
Waterbird diversity				
Burrunan dolphin abundance				






# Habitats

Indicator	Status and trends			
	Unknown	Poor	Fair	Good
Seagrass: extent				
Seagrass: condition				
Saltmarsh: extent				
Saltmarsh: condition				
Variably saline wetland vegetation: extent				
Variably saline wetland vegetation: condition				
Freshwater wetland vegetation: extent				
Freshwater wetland vegetation: condition				



# Shoreline stability

Indicator	Status and trends			
	Unknown	Poor	Fair	Good
Silt jetties				
Gippsland Lakes				
Outer barrier				



GIPPSLAND LAKES



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