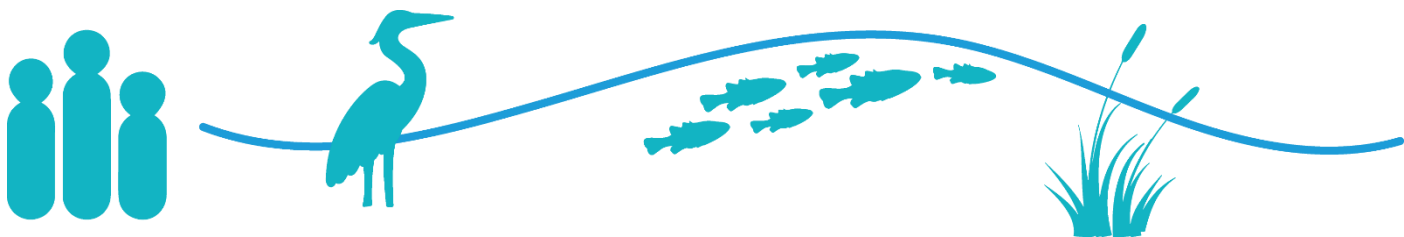


COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT PLAN

**The Coorong, Lower Lakes and Murray Mouth (CLLMM)
Research Centre: Communications & Engagement Plan
2023–26. DRAFT**





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THE COORONG, LOWER LAKES AND MURRAY MOUTH (CLLMM) RESEARCH CENTRE: COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT PLAN 2023–26. DRAFT I

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Respect and reconciliation

Aboriginal people are the First Peoples and Nations of South Australia. The Coorong connected waters and surrounding lands have sustained unique First Nations cultures since time immemorial.

The Goyder Institute for Water Research acknowledges the range of First Nations' rights, interests and obligations for the Coorong and connected waterways and the cultural connections that exist between Ngarrindjeri Nations and First Nations of the South East peoples across the region and seeks to support their equitable engagement.

Aboriginal peoples' spiritual, social, cultural, and economic practices come from their lands and waters, and they continue to maintain their cultural heritage, economies, languages and laws which are of ongoing importance.





About CLLMM Research Centre

The term CLLMM Research Centre encompasses all our activities including delivery of the research portfolio and engagement and knowledge sharing with community, First Nations, and end users.

Background

The Goyder Institute for Water Research Coorong, Lower Lakes and Murray Mouth (CLLMM) Research Centre was announced by Federal Minister for the Environment and Water, the Honourable Tanya Plibersek, in October 2022 following the advocacy of Rebekah Sharkie MP, Deputy Premier Susan Close and local community members. The Centre entered its establishment phase as of 1 July 2023. The CLLMM Research Centre is being delivered by the Goyder Institute for Water Research through its partnership with the South Australian Government through the Department for Environment and Water, CSIRO, Flinders University, the University of Adelaide and the University of South Australia. The Institute received \$8 million from the Australian Government over 4 years from 2022–23 to establish the CLLMM Research Centre to work with communities to investigate the impacts of climate change on the CLLMM region.


Objectives and outcomes


The objective of the CLLMM Research Centre is to deliver locally driven, innovative, and impactful research that reflects community and First Nations priorities to provide an evidence base to address critical needs of the CLLMM region. The CLLMM Research Centre will also bring together our First Nations, local community and scientists to create and share knowledge, and support our well-informed and engaged community and empower our future generations to be part of the solution.

The intended objectives of the CLLMM Research Centre are to:

- Provide critical knowledge to inform the identification of future management actions such that CLLMM biota and ecosystems adapt to a changing climate, the desired environmental outcomes of the Basin Plan are achieved, and international (Ramsar) obligations are met.
- Support community well-being, including that of First Nations, through knowledge creation and provision to support management actions for the restoration of a healthy CLLMM that supports local values and the integration and incorporation of the scientific knowledge of First Nations, the community, governments, and researchers into the management of the region.
- Enhance the long-term prosperity of the CLLMM region through locally based research in which community and First Nations can participate and lead in cultural and scientific activities.
- Establish the CLLMM region as a world-leader of the creation, integration, and adoption of the scientific knowledge of First Nations, communities, governments, and researchers for the sustainable management of wetlands; and
- Develop internationally recognised environmental water leaders in South Australia a local community engaged in science to address future challenges for the region.

By achieving the above objectives, the CLLMM Research Centre will deliver the following high-level outcomes:

- Long term prosperity of the CLLMM region through locally based research that empowers community and First Nations to participate and lead in cultural and scientific activities.
 - Establish the CLLMM region as a world leader in the creation, integration, and adoption of the scientific knowledge of First Nations, communities, governments and researchers for the sustainable management of wetlands; and
 - Influence the desired environmental outcomes of the Basin Plan and international obligations are met.
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A further intended outcome is the successful implementation of the principle of inclusive participation in the operation of the CLLMM Research Centre. The CLLMM Research Centre is approaching its research portfolio creation in a collaborative bottom-up manner, where community and First Nations can have direct involvement in the development and implementation of research projects as well as engagement activities. It is intended that this approach will create a basis for community and First Nations to feel meaningfully connected and supported by the CLLMM Research Centre. Together, we will showcase the CLLMM region as a leader of locally driven knowledge creation and exchange that informs management.

Location

The CLLMM Research Centre is situated in Goolwa, South Australia, in the heart of the nationally and internationally significant CLLMM region. The Goolwa office of the Research Centre will provide a base for the team and researchers, as well as a central point to host community discussions and forums, education events for all ages and provide an immersive experience through virtual and augmented reality to deepen connections with the local environment.

Capacity and activities

The CLLMM Research Centre is managed by four locally based staff under the guidance of Goyder Institute for Water Research Director. The CLLMM Research Centre has access to world-leading scientists, including those from Goyder Institute partners, the South Australian Department for Environment and Water (SA DEW), Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), Flinders University, the University of Adelaide and the University of South Australia. The CLLMM Research Centre will draw on the passion and knowledge of the community and First Nations to develop and implement its research portfolio. Additionally, the Research Centre is focused on undertaking knowledge sharing and exchange with community, First Nations and stakeholders.



The region

The Coorong, Lower Lakes, and Murray Mouth (CLLMM) region (Figure 1) is critical for the prosperity of the local community, South Australia, and Australia. The region supports cultural values that underpin the well-being of First Nations people; and recreational, aesthetic, and economic values of the community, including productive commercial and recreational fisheries and other industry, including and an important tourism industry. Located at the end of the one million km² Murray-Darling Basin (MDB), the CLLMM region is of significant environmental, social, cultural and economic value. It is the only place in the Basin where the river meets the sea, where the mixing of the river, tributaries, lakes, sea, and Coorong support a productive, dynamic, culturally rich, complex, and diverse ecosystem.

The region defined by the CLLMM Research Centre includes the regulated lower section of the Murray River below Murray Bridge; Lake Alexandrina and Lake Albert; Goolwa Channel, the Mt Lofty tributaries (Angas River, Currency Creek, Finniss River); the Murray Mouth; the North and South lagoons of the Coorong; and the near shore marine environment. The geographic scope of the Centre's research activities will also include, where appropriate, the local wetlands areas within the surrounding landscape.



FIGURE 1. THE COORONG, LOWER LAKES AND MURRAY MOUTH (CLLMM) REGION.





Communications and Engagement

The purpose of this plan is to outline how the Coorong, Lower Lakes and Murray Mouth (CLLMM) Research Centre will communicate, engage and disseminate knowledge generated from the research programs to First Nations, community and end-users. First Nations and community are a core value of the CLLMM Research Centre and will be integral to its successful outcomes and outputs.

Key communication and engagement objectives


The communications and engagement program will:

1. Raise awareness of the CLLMM Research Centre and its events and activities
 - a. build on and improve existing collaborations and connections between governmental departments and local First Nations community & organisations.
2. Create opportunities for involvement in Centre programs.
 - a. incorporate First Nations and community knowledge, culture, and people into the research projects delivered by the CLLMM Research Centre.
3. Facilitate the communication and dissemination of knowledge created through the CLLMM Research Centre
 - a. provide broader awareness of the environmental, economic, and cultural importance of the CLLMM region to all audiences across the Murray-Darling Basin.
 - b. provide critical knowledge to First Nations, communities, and end users and to ensure that knowledge will inform decision making.
 - c. enhance prosperity and capacity of the community to mitigate the effects of climate change.

Current communications

Since the establishment of the CLLMM Research Centre, communications and engagement activities have already commenced. An initial community survey has been dispersed through a wide variety of media platforms within the region. It is intended the survey capture community values as well as identification of research themes and topics. The themes and topics realised from the community survey will be taken into consideration by the Research Centre Advisory Forum (RCAF) for prioritisation of research projects.


Community Conversation workshops have already begun to introduce the Research Centre and begin building relationships within the community. These will serve as another platform to identify themes and topics for consideration by the RCAF for prioritisation for research projects.



Who is this plan for?

The key parties for communication and engagement programs are as follows:

PARTIES	HOW COULD THIS KEY PARTY...		WHAT INFORMATION NEEDS TO BE COMMUNICATED?	METHOD OF COMMUNICATION (FORMAL OR INFORMAL)
	INFORM THE RESEARCH CENTRE	BE INFORMED BY THE RESEARCH CENTRE		
State Management agencies (DEW, Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board, Hills and Fleurieu Landscape Board, PIRSA)	Collaboration, existing research activities, community engagement management, decision making timeframes	Research outputs, dissemination	Activities, outputs, timeframes	Formal
National management agencies (MDBA, DCCEEW)	Collaboration, existing research activities, community engagement management, decision making timeframes	Research outputs, dissemination	Activities, outputs, timeframes	Formal
Community groups	Community engagement, knowledge generation	Dissemination and knowledge generation	Activities, outputs, opportunities for involvement	Formal (e.g. social media, website, media release, community forums/events/workshops)
Non-government organisations	Collaborations, community engagement, knowledge generation	Research outputs, dissemination	Activities, outputs, opportunities for involvement	Formal and Informal (e.g. social media, website, media release, community forums/events/workshops)
Community	Collaboration, community engagement, knowledge generation	Dissemination and knowledge generation	Activities, outputs, opportunities for involvement	Formal (e.g. social media, website, media release, community forums/events/workshops)



First Nations	Collaboration, community engagement, knowledge generation	Dissemination and knowledge generation	Activities, outputs, opportunities for involvement	Formal (e.g. social media, website, media release, community forums/events/workshops)
Local government agency	Collaboration, existing research activities, community engagement, management, decision making timeframes	Research outputs, dissemination	Activities, outputs, opportunities for involvement, timeframes	Formal and informal (e.g. social media, website, media release, community forums/events/workshops)

Each group is unique and has different interests in the CLLMM Research Centre's programs. Therefore, communication and engagement strategies will vary to suit the interests of the different key parties.





What is good communication and engagement?

We recognise that good communication and engagement is not simply about sharing information, but also listening to our community. This process builds relationships within the community and gives everyone a sense of participation and inclusion. We at the CLLMM Research Centre believe that community is the foundation of our region and our work, and thus should drive our research priorities.

Principles that guide the way we communicate and engage


Principles will be guided by the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation.


Inform	Informing the First Nations, communities, and organisations with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the research.
Consult	Consulting First Nations and community on each step of the centre's programs.
Involve	Involving First Nations, community, and organisations into every step of the research projects (e.g., planning, monitoring, analysis etc.), not only the consultation process.
Collaborate	Collaboration between First Nations, community, and key parties in each aspect of the research program.
Empower	Following the previous steps supports empowerment of/builds capacity for First Nations, communities, and organisations to continue to care for the environment beyond the term of the CLLMM Research Centre, making informed decisions with the new knowledge generated together.

Importantly, we believe that good communication and engagement will have the following:

Inclusion	Working with the community and all interested communities, including First Nations to participate in scientific and engagement activities
Collaboration	Bringing First Nations, community, government agencies and researchers together to generate and disseminate knowledge
Capacity	Building knowledge across the community to grow the capacity and capability of the community to mitigate and/or eliminate future climate change impacts
Sharing	Knowledge sharing between First Nations, community, and management agencies to inform management actions and community values

When engaging with First Nations community and organisations, some other basic engagement principles will be followed to ensure it is culturally responsible and appropriate. These principles include but are not limited to:

- Approaching First Nations organisations, clan groups and community members in appropriate contexts. For example, engaging the correct RNTBC of a local area for general cultural heritage and native title rights & interests.
 - Engaging broader First Nations community members and organisations in various capacities to provide opportunity for varied opinions and inputs from a larger audience.
 - Avoiding contribution to engagement fatigue through communication with other government agencies. This is to ensure that there is no unnecessary overlap of engagements with First Nations organisations and community for projects requiring similar engagement tactics, outcomes, and outputs.
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- Engaging as early and often as possible to ensure the timelines of cultural protocols and processes can sufficiently be considered when planning research projects.

Participants of CLLMM Research Centre engagement activities, including researchers, will be guided by practices defined by AIATSIS principles, found [here](#).

For more information regarding First Nations engagement, please refer to 'The Coorong, Lower Lakes and Murray Mouth (CLLMM) Research Centre: First Nations Engagement Plan 2023-26.'

How we communicate and engage

Communication and engagement activities will be delivered across a range of platforms, but can largely be placed into 4 components:

1. School Programs

The school education sub-program will involve schools throughout and outside of the region with an interest and facilities within the CLLMM. Activities will be directly aligned to the science program, with place-based learning employed such that outputs of the work of students can be used within the research projects and students can 'learn by doing', develop an understanding of the research process and see the application of their work. This will be delivered in partnership with existing school education programs, such as the MDBA's Education Program.

2. Virtual reality immersive experiences


A state-of-the-art virtual reality platform will be developed to enhance the general public's appreciation of the value and understanding of the region and to support planning for the region. The platform will be complementary to field visits to the region, allowing users to explore the region in greater detail remotely than what can be achieved in the field. Users will be able to explore information on the cultural, economic, environmental and social values of the region through four interactive portals: 1) Natural history; 2) Current conditions and the conditions faced during the Millennium Drought (1998-2010); 3) Benefits of Environmental Flows; 4) Climate Futures. This will include the capacity to consider environmental water provision scenarios (such as habitat availability of key species) and future climate scenarios to support planning for both short and long-term timeframes. In addition, it will provide capacity for researchers use the platform to support the design of Science Projects and to engage the community on findings and outcomes of projects (e.g. potential climate impacts and adaptation measures). The platform will have mobile facilities that can be used in all engagement activities of the Research Hub, including outside of the region. This will include the Community Science Forums and school education sub-program.

3. Annual community science forums

Annual community science forums will be held to communicate the findings of the research to the general public. These will include a combination of presentations, discussions and research demonstration activities. In addition, the Research Hub will participate in other research dissemination activities undertaken within other programs, such as the Water Environment Research Program Community Forums and Healthy Coorong, Healthy Basin Community Science Forums.

4. Other platforms

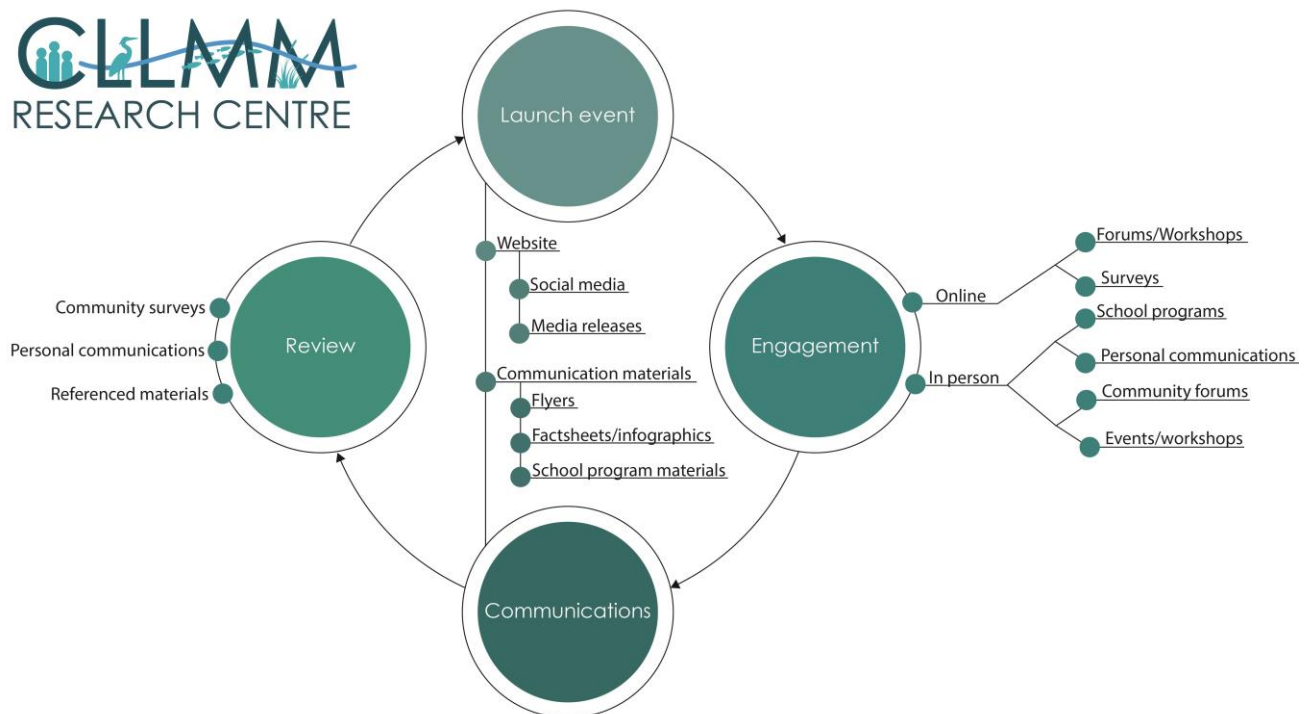
Other platforms will include information sharing across online/digital platforms (e.g., website, social media, electronic newsletters), reporting (e.g., technical reports, and scientific publications), and through community avenues (e.g., regular community discussions/forums/workshops, media releases (online, radio, and/or in print)).



The action plan-how will we achieve these objectives.

The foundation of the CLLMM Research Centre is in community engagement. Initial engagement events will be used to gather the communities priorities for the region: cultural, economical, environment, and community. Following this component, information will be transferred to the research team to inform the communities established priorities. While the research team is investigating the project componenets, we will continue to maintain transparency as well as consult with the community about project componenets, but also potential opportunities for involvement. As results develop over time, this information will be disseminated to the community for consideration, collaboration, and knowledge growth to empower the community. To develop new considerations for research projects, develop educational programs for school aged children and work with community to focus on areas they have identified as important for further analysis, consideration or change. Communication and engagement activities will be continued through every step of the Research Centre's development.

Each activity and/or event will undergo the cycle below (outputs and engagement platforms may differ dependent on the activity/event):




Risks

Refer to CLLMM Research Centre Risk Assessment.


Evaluation

Evaluation of success for communication and engagement activities will be determined by the effectiveness of information transfer to the community. Throughout the delivery process, information will be presented across a wide range of platforms (see section 3.6 'How we communicate and engage). Metrics for platform use will be recorded alongside, regular information surveys to establish the effectiveness of community engagements. Furthermore, the use of information presented in informing policy making will be included in evaluation plans.



Evaluation methods include:

Measure	Metric
Reach	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Media coverage• Social media reach
Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mentions by other organisations
Satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sentiment• Media and social media sentiment• Feedback to staff• Annual review
Behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Partnerships• Social media engagement
Engagement and uptake	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feedback from users• Follow-up surveys





CELLMMA RESEARCH CENTRE



The Goyder Institute for Water Research is a research alliance between the South Australian Government through the Department for Environment and Water, CSIRO, Flinders University, the University of Adelaide and the University of South Australia.

