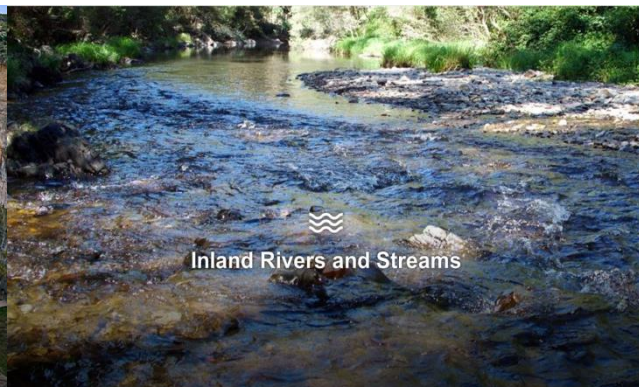


Reforming State of the Environment Reporting in Victoria

EIANZ, Annual Conference, Perth

29 October 2015



Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability Act 2003 (Victoria)

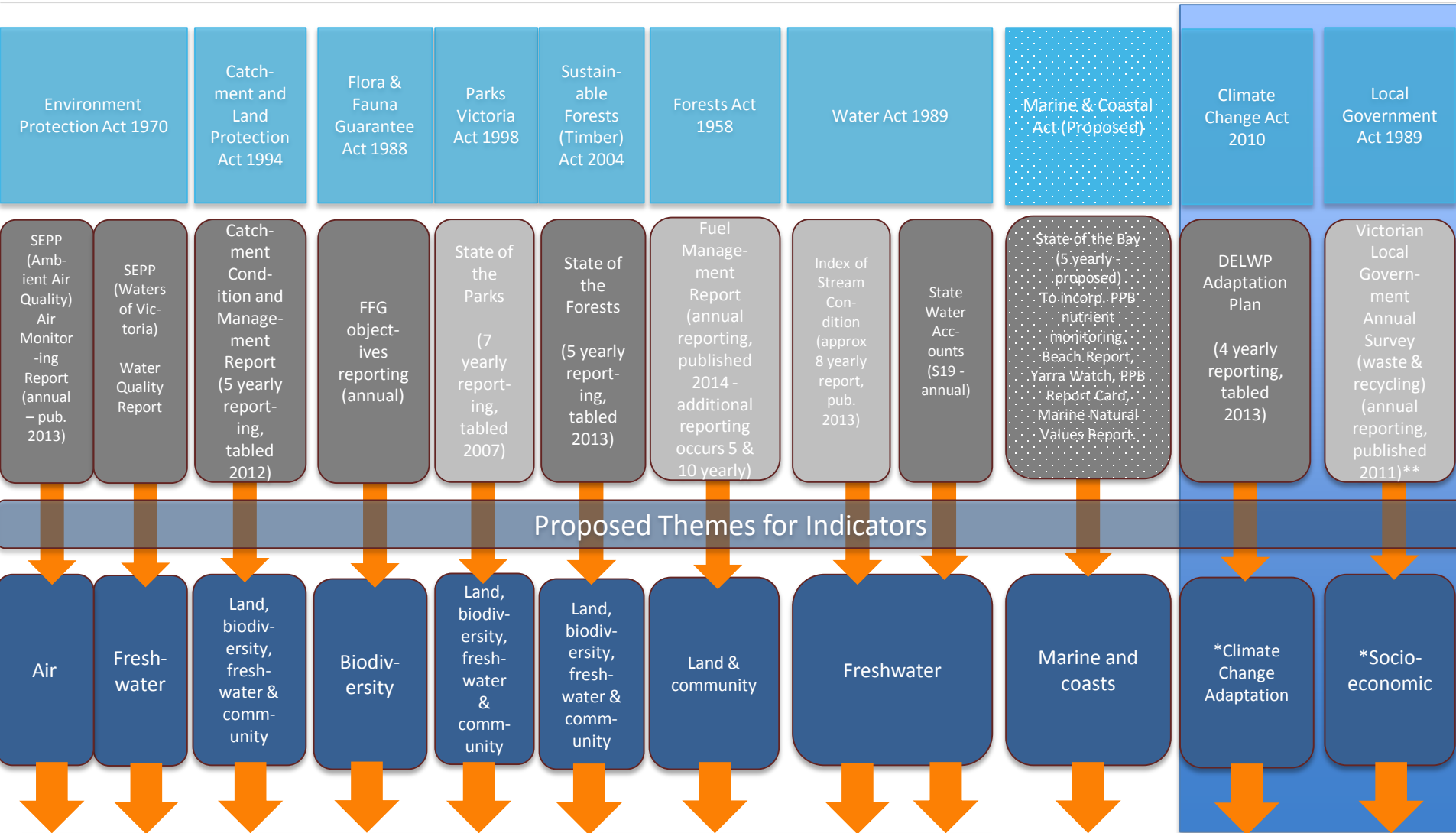
- ▶ Established in 2003
- ▶ Independent Commissioner reports on the state of Victoria's environment every five years
- ▶ Report (and framework for reporting) must be tabled in Parliament
- ▶ Government must table response within 12 months

Timely to reflect on SoE reporting from a value and use perspective:

- ▶ after 10 years
- ▶ two SoE reports,
- ▶ more than 300 recommendations
- ▶ growing citizen demand for environmental action and digital services
- ▶ dynamic Victorian policy environment and international opportunities



The Status Quo



Victorian State of the Environment Report (CES Act 2003)

*Climate change adaptation and socio-economic indicators to be developed separately.
**Waste reporting is only one component of socio-economic reporting.

SoE reporting review

Formal and informal consultation including four key projects:

1. Investigation of Victorian SoE reporting practices
2. Benchmarking of national SoE reporting practices
3. Scan of international SoE reporting practices and
4. *Interviews with the portfolio leaders and policy makers who should be key end-users*

1. Have you utilised either the 2008 and/or the 2013 State of the Environment report in your role?
2. Where do you see the greatest potential for the report into the future?
3. What might the review of State of the Environment reporting accomplish to be of the most practical value?

The leaders told us:

the independence of the Commissioner and environmental reporting are important

BUT.....

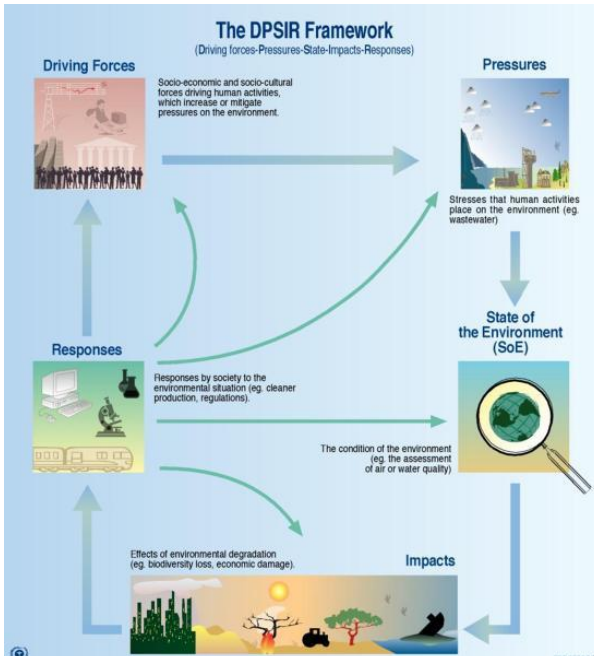
very limited use is made by them of the SoE Report and the role of the Commissioner requires clarity

Use SoE reporting as a platform for a broader change to drive better environmental outcomes

Less resources on reporting; more resources for the environment

From status quo....

.... to innovation.



Environment New Zealand
Statistics New Zealand

A Framework for Reporting in New Zealand

newzealand.govt.nz

THE EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT STATE AND OUTLOOK 2015
SYNTHESIS REPORT

European Environment Agency

WHAT IS THE TREND IN THE STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT?

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY OBJECTIVE	Assessment of environmental trends	ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY OBJECTIVE	Assessment of environmental trends
1. Reduced Greenhouse Impact	Greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere are rising. This is primarily due to the use of fossil fuels, mainly for electricity and heat generation, industrial processes and transport. An international climate agreement is needed to avoid warming of more than 2°C and reduce the risk of dangerous climate change. If a global response needs to be taken then limited by 2050 and reduced to around 1.5°C by the end of the century.	6. Polluted Lakes and Streams	There are low priority and negative trends in freshwater environments. The reduction of lakes and estuaries is being an impact, but more action and more resources are needed to get close to the objective.
2. Clean Air	Excessive concentrations of air pollutants cause significant damage to human health, vegetation and natural heritage. Further action is needed to reduce emissions from industrial sources, transport and other sources. The most important document that has been done with the environment was the 2014 National Air Quality Plan. The plan sets out a strategy to reduce air pollution and improve air quality by 2020.	9. Good Quality Groundwater	Expanded and improved monitoring is essential to capacity to identify, prevent and rectify groundwater pollution. This is supported through the EIPs conducted in drinking water sources. The work to protect groundwater resources must be continued. Measures within environmental economic assessment, water management and agriculture must be strengthened and the use of natural groundwater must be reduced.
3. Natural Acidification Only	Some improvement has occurred in the acidification of surface waters, but the trends to limit acid rain emissions. Further action is needed to reduce emissions from industrial sources, transport and other sources. The most important document that has been done with the environment was the 2014 National Air Quality Plan. The plan sets out a strategy to reduce air pollution and improve air quality by 2020.	10. A Balanced Marine Environment: Healthy Coastal Areas and Activities	Eutrophication, toxic pollutants and to some extent high winds remain major problems for the marine environment. These problems are affecting marine biodiversity, sea levels and the performance of a number of marine fisheries and other sectors. To achieve the objective, more attention to the state of the marine environment is needed through the EIPs conducted in drinking water sources. The work to protect groundwater resources must be continued. Measures within environmental economic assessment, water management and agriculture must be strengthened and the use of natural groundwater must be reduced.
4. A Non-Toxic Environment	Some newly listed environmental trends are slowly decreasing in the assessment and in targets, while other hazardous substances are increasing. However, for many substances, no data is available to assess the concentration in targets and the assessment base. Despite the listed substances and other products, very little is the direct measure of hazardous substances. If substances of very high concern, which are already listed, have been introduced within the EU, they will have to be assessed. However, for many substances, no data is available to assess the concentration in targets and the assessment base. Despite the listed substances and other products, very little is the direct measure of hazardous substances. If substances of very high concern, which are already listed, have been introduced within the EU, they will have to be assessed.	11. Thriving Wetlands	Wetlands continue to be lost through drainage and agriculture is changing. Natural and cultural values and ecosystem services are being damaged. The abandonment of drainage, cropland change, urban sprawl and nitrogen deposition remain a problem. The nitrogen carrying water capacity needs to be improved. Environmental assessment in different sectors needs to be improved.
5. A Protective Ocean Layer	Thinning of the ozone layer has stopped, with much evidence indicating that it has started to recover. There are uncertainties in the assessment. However, trends in both the scientific and policy objectives. There is some concern about the ozone layer from the ozone depletion of stratospheric ozone-depleting substances, and emissions from industrial activities.	12. Sustainable Forests	Increasing foresting remains an issue. The need to set forest management and monitoring, and environmental assessment in different sectors needs to be improved.
6. A Safe Radiation Environment	Nuclear programs can be seen as largely many aspects of this objective. However, the inclusion of the objective has been changing over the period. In what respects to the objective, the risks and activities to managing and nuclear accidents need to change. Over a 40-year period, some countries will continue to manage their risk. It can be decided for other countries to change.	13. A Viable Agricultural Landscape	The trend indicates is still conflicting in water, and many habitats and species do not take a favorable environmental state. The production capacity of agriculture has generally continued to be satisfactory. To achieve the objective, sustainable water agriculture, expansion of drinking water and other activities, and other activities, need to be strengthened. The quality of water resources in the environment must continue to be improved.
7. Zero Eutrophication	Excessive loads of nutrients and other substances are still causing eutrophication. The inclusion of the objective has been changing over the period. In what respects to the objective, the risks and activities to managing and nuclear accidents need to change. Over a 40-year period, some countries will continue to manage their risk. It can be decided for other countries to change.	14. A Significant Mountain Landscape	Nature, agriculture and other activities are used by a variety of interests. Wild cover, mining and other activities are still causing eutrophication. The inclusion of the objective has been changing over the period. In what respects to the objective, the risks and activities to managing and nuclear accidents need to change. Over a 40-year period, some countries will continue to manage their risk. It can be decided for other countries to change.
		15. A Good Built Environment	The biggest challenge to achieving the environmental quality objective is urbanization. The progress of the built environment is still causing eutrophication. The inclusion of the objective has been changing over the period. In what respects to the objective, the risks and activities to managing and nuclear accidents need to change. Over a 40-year period, some countries will continue to manage their risk. It can be decided for other countries to change.
		16. A Rich Diversity of Plant and Animal Life	Many species and habitats are at risk and ecosystems are becoming more fragmented. More action is needed to protect and restore biodiversity. The inclusion of the objective has been changing over the period. In what respects to the objective, the risks and activities to managing and nuclear accidents need to change. Over a 40-year period, some countries will continue to manage their risk. It can be decided for other countries to change.

Assessment of environmental trends. The environmental assessment system also includes a general goal, which applies to the state of the environment in general, and to the state of the environment in the long term.

KEY: The trend is in the direction of the assessment is positive. **WARNING:** The trend is in the direction of the assessment is negative. **CRITICAL:** The trend is in the direction of the assessment is very negative. **NO DATA:** The trend is in the direction of the assessment is not known.

EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT AGENCY



Victorian 2018 State of the Environment Reporting Framework

State and Benefit

- ✓ *Delivering a report*
- ✓ *Delivering public sector reform*

Focus on:

- ▶ improved efficacy of environmental reporting
- ▶ increase focus & effort on monitoring
- ▶ community access to information
- ▶ improved accountability of government
- ▶ improved transparency of government
- ▶ environmental reports that talk to each other

Dynamic policy environment (2015-2018)

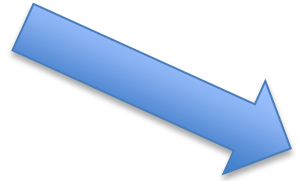
- **Our Environment, Our Future**
- **Legislative change & review: Climate Change Act, FFG Act, new Marine and Coastal Act**
- **Policy initiatives: Biodiversity Strategy, Water Plan, Climate Change Adaptation Plan, Riparian Action Plan, Victorian Floodplain Management Strategy**
- **Response to VAGO *Effectiveness of Catchment Management Authorities (2014)***

Align with international and local frameworks:

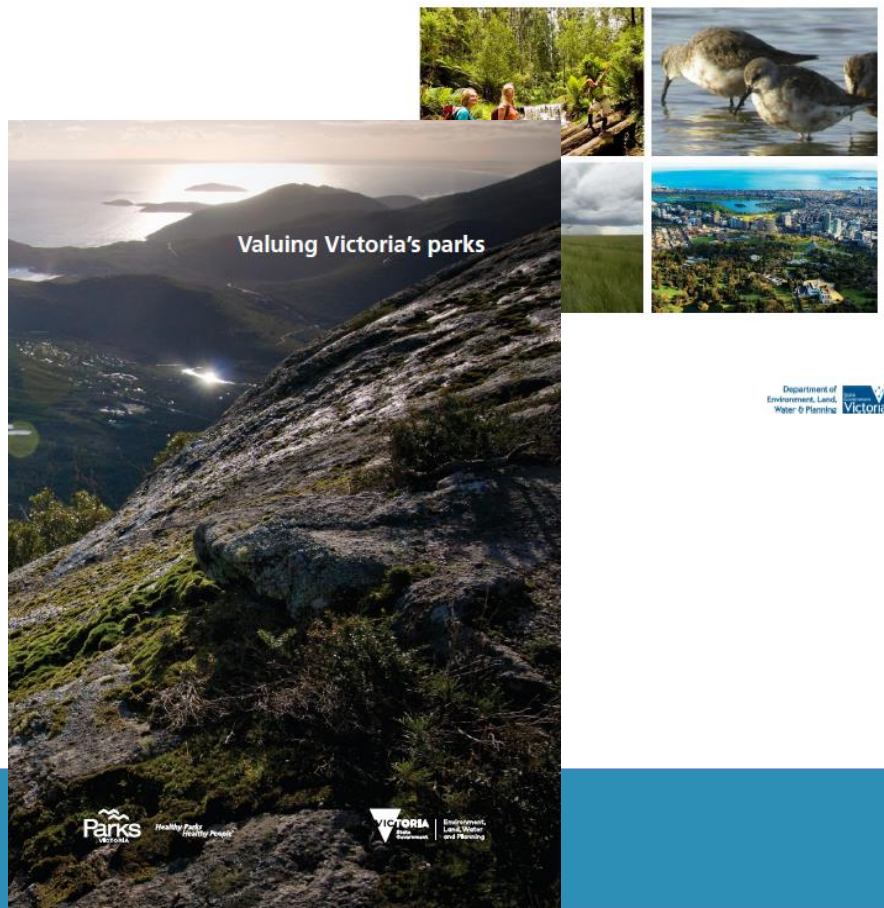
- **Sustainable Development Goals (UN)**
- **System for Environmental-Economic Accounts (UN)**
- **Wentworth Group of Concerned Scientists [Blueprint for a Healthy Environment and a Productive Economy](#)**
- **Victoria's Future Economy Project**

Build on the evidence base of the 2013 Victorian State of the Environment Report.

System of Environmental-Economic Accounting 2012 Central Framework



Valuing and accounting for
Victoria's environment:
Strategic Plan 2015-2020



Valuing Victoria's parks

Department of
Environment, Land,
Water & Planning
Victoria

Parks
Healthy Parks
Healthy People

VICTORIA
State Government
Department of
Environment,
Land, Water
and Planning

Key Reform Steps

1. Aligning Victoria's statutory environmental reporting
2. Transitioning to digital reporting
3. Establishing a state-wide set of indicators:
 - ▶ condition & extent
 - ▶ socio-economic
 - ▶ climate change

Aligning Victorian environmental reports

2014/15

2016

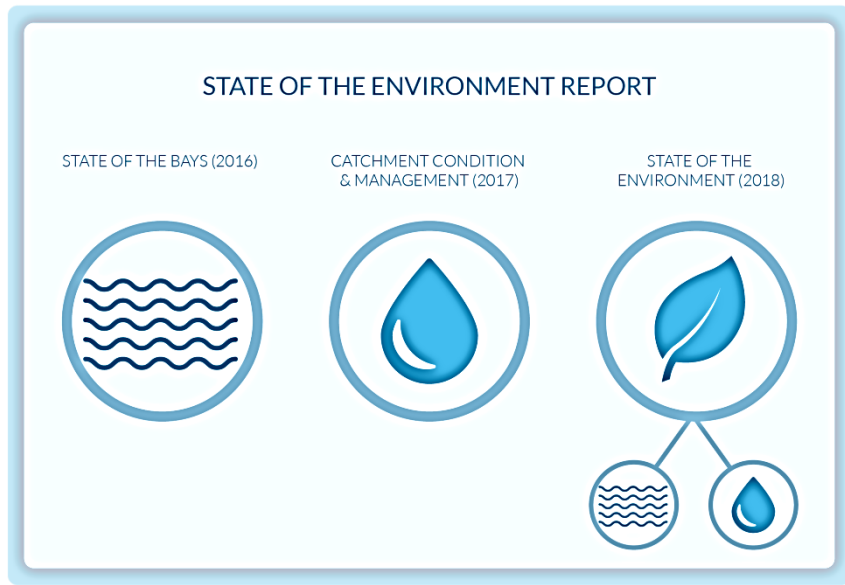
2017

2018



Review & Redesign

Framework

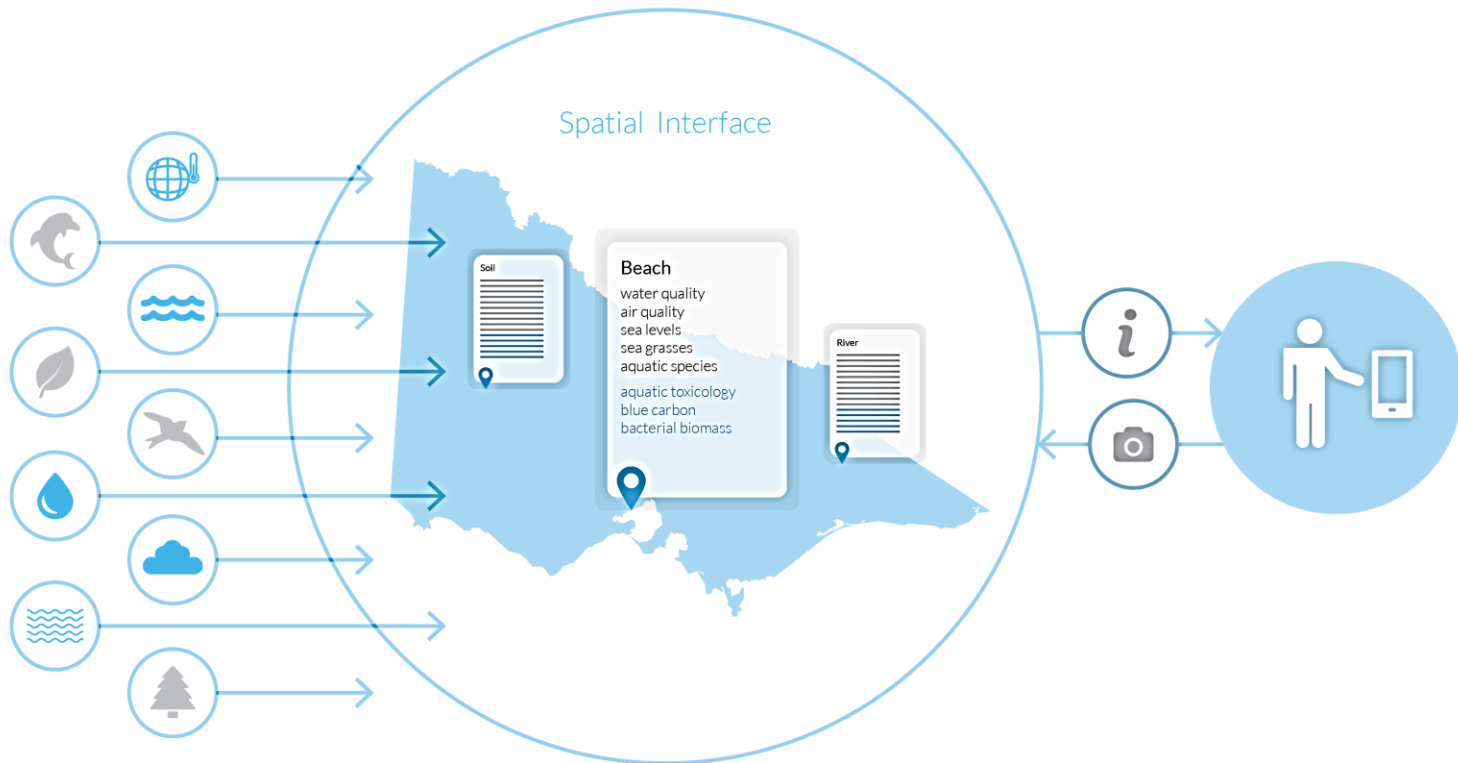


The shift to digital

Multiple sources of data

Multiple layers of data

Information anytime, anywhere



Accurate information when you need it

- ▶ 2018 SoE will be entirely online
- ▶ Maintains currency of information
- ▶ Allows Victorians to interact with information:
 - ▶ and tailor its use to answer specific queries relevant to them
- ▶ Enables information to be accessed anywhere, anytime, at different scales
- ▶ Enhances the utility, relevance and practicality of environmental information
- ▶ Harnesses citizen science



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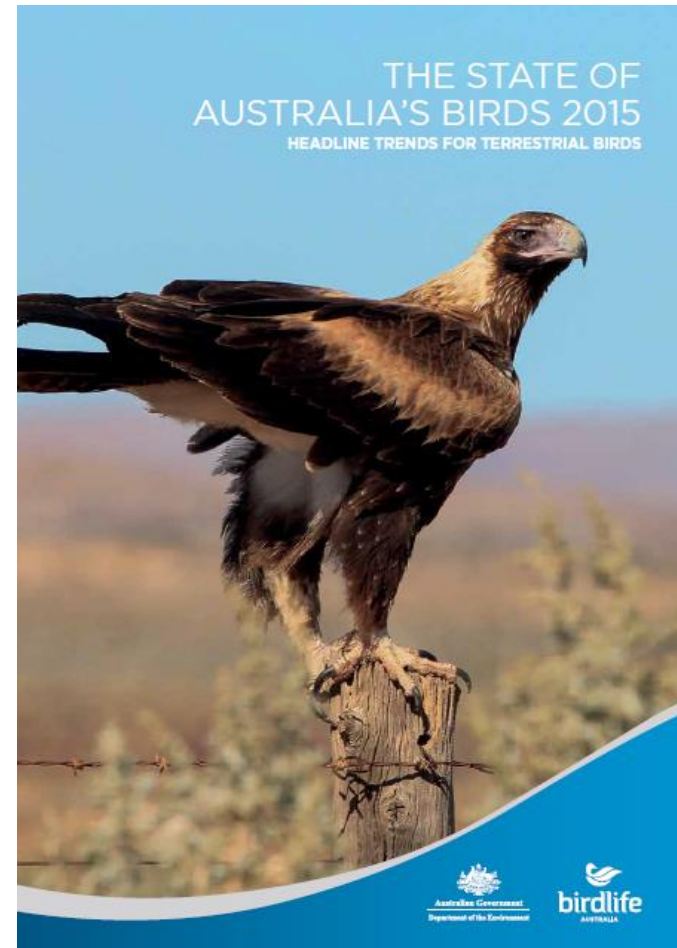
[About](#) ▾

Spot. Log. Map.

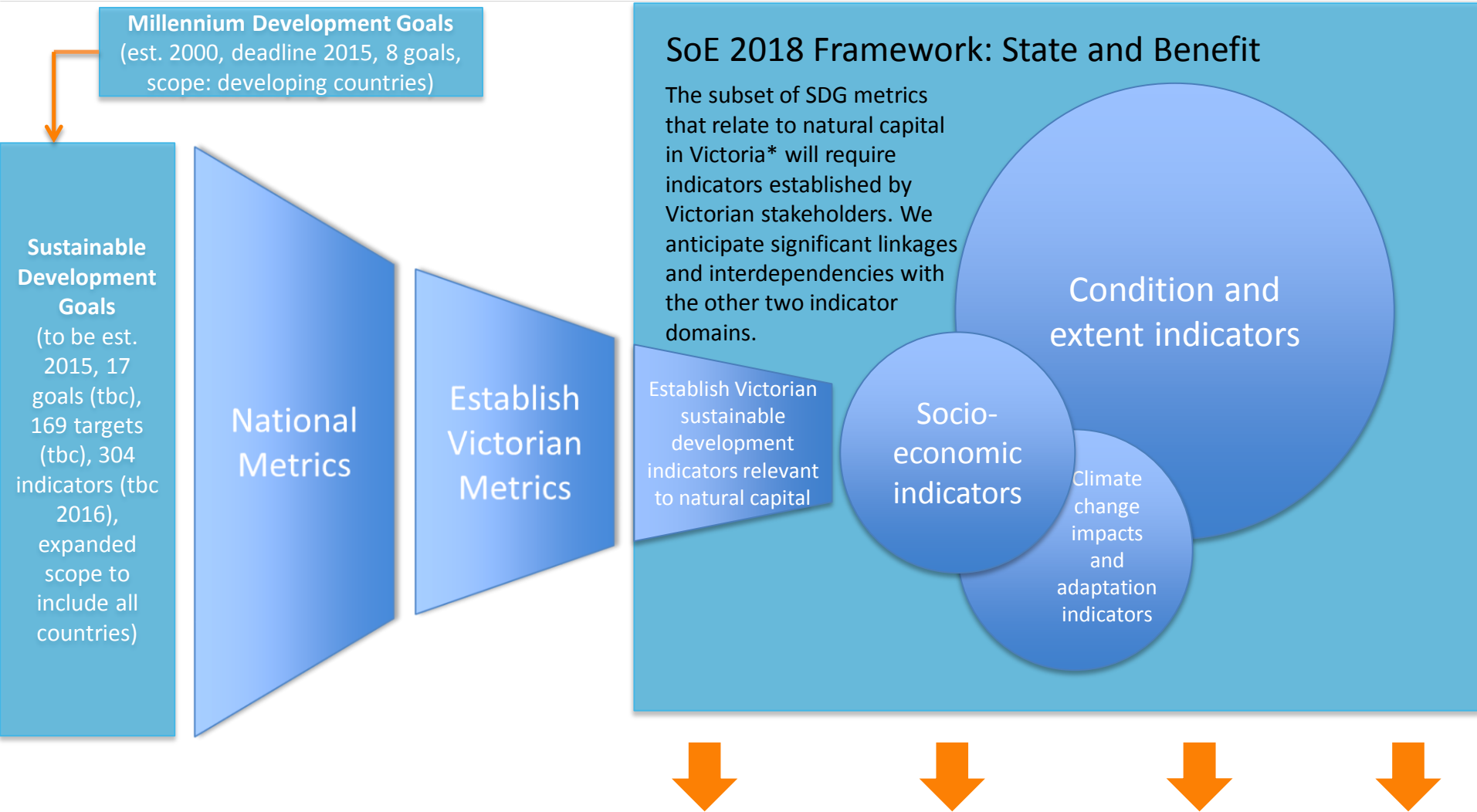
Redmap (Range Extension Database & Mapping project) invites the Australian community to spot, log and map marine species that are uncommon in Australia, or along particular parts of our coast.

[FIND OUT MORE >](#)





Challenging the Status Quo



* Relating to the impact of socio-economic drivers on natural capital or the socio-economic benefits derived from natural capital.



“Governments and instrumentalities can no longer act like Moses handing down tablets of stone – they must become policy co-construction platform/marketplace providers and participants.”

Keep in touch



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