



Southern Rivers Catchment Management Authority: Landcare Benchmarking Survey 2012

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**Catchment Management
Authority**
Southern Rivers

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The objective of this report was to benchmark the capacity of Landcare groups; the extent of engagement of Landcare groups in NRM and CMA activities; and beliefs about the effectiveness of the Southern Rivers CMA and community engagement in NRM.

A questionnaire was distributed by Southern Rivers CMA community support officers to Landcare groups as an Acrobat form, which when completed was automatically returned to the consultants. The survey was undertaken from March to May 2012 and completed forms were returned from 38 Landcare groups.

Landcare group characteristics

It was found that 40% of Landcare groups had been operating for less than 10 years, with 12 years being the average years of operation for a Landcare group.

Across all Landcare groups, 60% had less than 10 active members, with the average number of active members in Landcare groups falling from an average of 18 members in 2008 to an average of 12 members in 2012. In addition, 20% of all Landcare groups were not active or had low activity levels; 40% have moderate activity levels and an additional 40% had high activity levels. The current activity levels within Landcare groups were similar to those reported in the 2008 survey.

Landcare groups were asked to identify threats to their group and the groups' ability to meet their objectives. The most common threat, identified by 91% of Landcare groups focused on issues associated with their membership and in particular the lack of members and the ageing of the existing membership. Additional threats included apathy towards Landcare and NRM issues and a range of issues associated with the characteristics of individual Landcare groups.

Of the NRM issues being addressed by Landcare groups, 78% of groups were currently addressing issues related to the management of weeds and a further 27% were addressing issues related to erosion and the control of erosion.

When Landcare groups were asked to consider the most significant changes that might occur to their Landcare group or its activities over the next 10 years, the majority (71%) reported changes to the composition and characteristics of Landcare members, including specifically concerns about an ageing membership (27%).

Health of Landcare groups

An assessment of the health of each Landcare group was made by evaluating the characteristics of each group in relation to 16 specific items.

The highest health scores were associated with the social relationships within the group and clarity about the Landcare group's role and purpose. On the other hand, the lowest scores focussed on the group's membership and specifically the capacity to attract and retain new members and the ease of finding people to fulfil leadership roles within the group.

Relationship with the Southern Rivers CMA

Of the 38 Landcare groups, only one indicated they had had no contact or communication with the CMA in the last 12 months. Of those Landcare groups who had contact with the CMA in the last 12 months, the two most common types of contact with the CMA included gaining advice of assistance from CMA staff and attending a meeting or event organised by the CMA.

In 2008, 84% of Landcare groups believed they had an effective relationship with the CMA, which increased significantly to 97% of all Landcare groups in 2012.

There was a very positive relationship between Landcare groups and the Southern Rivers CMA, where the majority of Landcare groups believed that:

- The CMA took the views of Landcare groups into account in decision making;
- Landcare groups had a high level of trust in the CMA;
- There had been effective communication between the CMA and Landcare groups;
- The CMA provided regional leadership in relation to NRM; and
- The CMA had an ongoing commitment to maintaining relationships with Landcare groups.

Of particular note was that since 2008 there had been a significant improvement in trust, communication and commitment between the CMA and Landcare groups and that significantly more Landcare groups were now more likely to believe the CMA provided leadership in relation to NRM.

Knowledge of the Southern Rivers CMA

All respondents were asked to consider all the members of their Landcare group and judge how much knowledge their membership had of the Southern Rivers CMA. Amongst Landcare groups, 54% indicated their membership had average or below average knowledge of the CMA.

In 2008, 9% of Landcare groups indicated they had a high or moderately high understanding of regional NRM process undertaken by the CMA. This level of understanding has increased significantly, with 31% now indicating a high or moderately high understanding of regional NRM process undertaken by the CMA.

Southern Rivers CMA support

Amongst all Landcare groups, 97% or 37 of the 38 Landcare groups indicated that in the last 12 months the Southern Rivers CMA had provided support to their Landcare group.

Amongst those Landcare groups that had received support, support was provided primarily by community support officers (84%) and catchment officers (55%), with the majority of Landcare groups indicating the type and level of support provided to be either 'good' or 'very good'.

Amongst Landcare groups who had received support from the CMA, the three most valuable areas of CMA support were identified as (i) access to technical support and advice; (ii) project or strategic planning assistance; and (iii) assistance in obtaining funding.

When asked, 87% of Landcare groups indicated they would need support or additional support from the CMA in the next 12 months, with the three most common areas of additional support being (i) access to technical support and advice; (ii) assistance in obtaining funding; and (iii) project or strategic planning assistance.

Beliefs about community engagement

The majority of Landcare groups believed the CMA had:

- had supported sufficient activities for community engagement;
- moderate to high levels of participation by the community in NRM activities
- a well understood process for engaging with the community; and
- a more strategic than opportunistic approach to engaging with the community.

Landcare groups were now more positive about the CMA and its community engagement activities than they were in 2008. For instance, relative to 2008 they are now more likely to believe that the CMA supports sufficient activities for community engagement; that the community is participating in these activities and that the CMA has clear and well understood processes for engaging with the community.

Funding and incentives for NRM

Across all Landcare groups, 68% indicated that within the last two years their group had received funding for NRM, with 75% also indicating they had had moderate or greater success in obtaining external funds. However, Landcare groups varied in terms of their knowledge of grants and incentives provided for NRM, with 22% of Landcare groups indicating they had low knowledge of NRM grants and incentives.

Effectiveness of the Southern Rivers CMA

The majority of Landcare groups believed the CMA was successful in progressing towards the achievement of NRM targets and that their Landcare group had a successful relationship with the CMA. In addition, Landcare groups are now significantly more likely, when compared to 2008, to believe the CMA is achieving its NRM targets and that they have a successful relationship with the CMA.

1 INTRODUCTION

The Southern Rivers Catchment Management Authority (SRCMA) is one of 13 regional natural resource management (NRM) bodies in NSW. The CMAs were established in 2004 and each CMA has developed a Catchment Action Plan (CAP) and Investment Strategies to support the management of natural resources and achievement of NRM targets within each region.

In achieving the NRM targets as identified in the CAP, capacity building and engagement are integral activities which need to be undertaken to *enable* the achievement of core NRM targets and objectives. These enabling activities, which lead to intermediate outcomes within the program logic of NRM, include for example increasing community awareness and knowledge of NRM issues and increased participation and involvement in NRM activities. By increasing the capacity and involvement of landholders and other stakeholders more broadly in NRM, the greater the likelihood that the resource condition targets, as identified in the CAP are able to be achieved.

This project is the second benchmarking project undertaken in the Southern Rivers CMA region and provides a basis for monitoring Landcare group capacity, beliefs and involvement in NRM in the Southern Rivers region.

2 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

There were two primary objectives associated with this project.

The first objective was to assess the awareness and support provided by the Southern Rivers CMA to Landcare groups; the requirements for CMA support to Landcare groups in the future; the health of Landcare groups and the attitude of Landcare groups towards community engagement undertaken by the CMA.

The second objective was to compare the findings of the current survey (2012) against the findings from the previous survey undertaken in 2008 and to identify significant changes in the awareness, attitudes and beliefs of Landcare groups.

3 METHODOLOGY

There were two core components to the project methodology which included (i) the design of the questionnaire and (ii) the survey of Landcare groups.

3.1 Questionnaire design

The questionnaire was based on the previous questionnaire used in a survey of Landcare groups in 2008¹. The questionnaire was designed so that it could be self-completed. Furthermore, the questionnaire consisted primarily of structured and close ended questions, which because they are more quantitative, are more suited to a monitoring program, where comparisons and trends can be examined across time.

¹ Fenton, D.M. & Rickert, A. (2012). *Southern Rivers Catchment Management Authority: Landcare groups benchmarking survey*. Southern Rivers CMA, Wollongong, NSW.

The questionnaire (Appendix A) included questions which focussed on:

1. Southern Rivers CMA support to Landcare groups;
2. NRM funding and incentives to Landcare groups;
3. Landcare group relationships with the Southern Rivers CMA;
4. Beliefs about community engagement;
5. Effectiveness of the Southern Rivers CMA; and
6. Characteristics of Landcare groups.

3.2 Survey sampling

The sampling frame consisted of all Landcare groups within the Southern Rivers NRM region². The sample excluded District Landcare associations who were included in the sample of non-Government stakeholder in the survey of stakeholder organisations³.

The questionnaire was distributed by Southern Rivers CMA community support officers to Landcare groups as an Acrobat form which enabled it to be emailed as an attachment. The form was completed using Acrobat software and was automatically returned as an Acrobat form to the consultants once completed⁴.

The survey was undertaken from March to May 2012 and completed forms were returned from 38 Landcare groups (33 Landcare groups completed forms in 2008).

Table 1 indicates the position of survey respondents from each of the Landcare groups that participated in the survey.

Table 1. Survey respondents position in Landcare group

Response	Count	Percent
Convenor, coordinator or organiser	10	27.0
Member or volunteer	7	18.9
Secretary	7	18.9
Chair (inc interim chair/past chair)	4	10.8
Executive member	3	8.1
President	2	5.4
Treasurer	2	5.4
Leader	1	2.7
Project Director	1	2.7
Total	37	100.0

Note: One Landcare group did not report the position of the survey respondent

Source: EBC (2012)

² CMA staff estimated the number of Landcare groups in the region to be approximately 100, which included groups that were both active and inactive.

³ Fenton, D.M. (2012). *Southern Rivers CMA: Stakeholder organisations benchmarking survey 2012*. Southern Rivers CMA, Wollongong, NSW.

⁴ In some instances Landcare groups printed and completed the form and returned it in the mail to the CMA

4 LANDCARE GROUP CHARACTERISTICS

Table 2 shows the distribution of responses from Landcare groups within each Landcare district, with 50% of returned questionnaires being from the Far South Coast and Eurobodalla Landcare districts.

Table 2. "In which Landcare district are you located?"

Response	2008		2012	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Far South Coast	5	16.7	10	27.0
Eurobodalla	5	16.7	9	24.3
Illawarra	2	6.7	6	16.2
Upper Shoalhaven	6	20.0	5	13.5
Upper Snowy	6	20.0	4	10.8
Shoalhaven	2	6.7	3	8.1
Snowy Interstate	4	13.3	0	0.0
Total	30	100.0	37	100.0

Note: Three Landcare groups in 2008 and one Landcare group in 2012 did not identify the Landcare district in which they were located.

Source: EBC (2012)

Forty percent of Landcare groups had been in operation for less than 10 years, with the average year's operation for a Landcare group being 12 years (Table 3).

Table 3. "How long has your group been in operation?"

Years	2008		2012	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
1-5	5	20.8	10	27.0
6-10	4	16.7	5	13.5
11-15	10	41.7	13	35.1
16-20	4	16.7	7	18.9
21+	1	4.2	2	5.4
Mean (years)	12.8		11.7	
Total	24	100.0	37	100.0

Note: Nine Landcare groups in 2008 and one group in 2012 did not identify the number of years they had been in operation. There was no significant difference in the means.

Source: EBC (2012)

Table 4 shows that the average number of active members in Landcare groups has fallen from an average of 18 to an average of 12 members between 2008 and 2012.

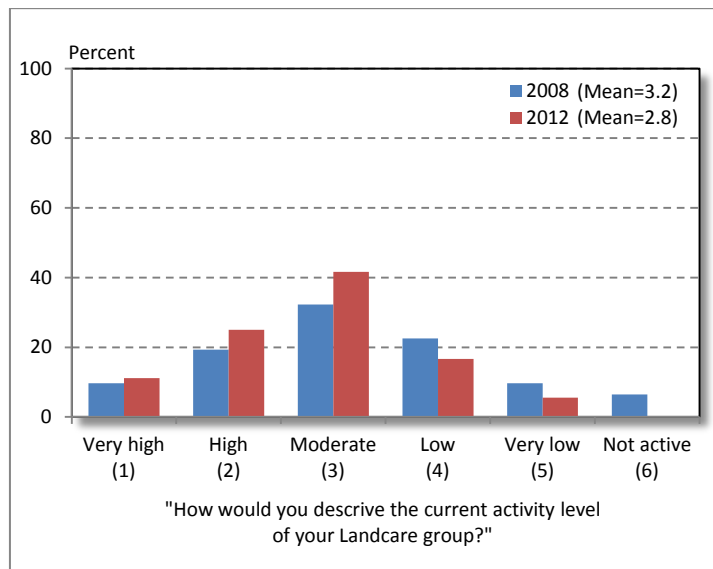
Table 4. "About how many active members would you say there are in your Landcare group?"

Number of active members	2008		2012	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
0	3	10.0	0	0.0
1-5	3	10.0	9	24.3
6-10	3	10.0	13	35.1
11-15	4	13.3	8	21.6
16-20	10	33.3	3	8.1
21-25	1	3.3	1	2.7
26-30	2	6.6	2	5.4
31+	4	13.3	1	2.7
Mean (number)	17.9		12.0	
Total	30	100.0	37	100.0

Note: Three Landcare in 2008 and one Landcare group in 2012 did not identify how many active members they had. There was a significant difference in the means.

Source: EBC (2012)

Figure 1 shows the current activity level of Landcare groups, where approximately 20% of all Landcare groups were not active or had low activity levels; 40% have moderate activity levels and an additional 36% had high activity levels. The current activity levels within Landcare groups are also similar to those reported in 2008.



(Note: There was no significant difference in the means)

Figure 1. Activity levels of Landcare groups

Table 5 shows the common threats to Landcare groups and their ability to meet their objectives. The most common threat, identified by 91% of Landcare groups focussed on issues associated with their membership and in particular the lack of members and the ageing of the existing membership.

Additional threats as shown in Table 5 included characteristics of the community, including apathy towards Landcare and NRM issues (14%); and a range of issues associated with the characteristics of individual Landcare groups.

Table 5. "If you were to list the most common threats to your Landcare group and its ability to meet its objectives, what would they be?" (2012)

Response	Count	Percent
Membership characteristics		
Lack of volunteers and members (Inc. younger volunteers)	12	34.3
Ageing membership	11	31.4
Availability of members (time and too busy)	9	25.7
Health issues amongst members	3	8.6
Burn out of members	1	2.9
Total	32	91.4
Community characteristics		
Apathy in community (lack of interest, motivation)	5	14.3
Poor understanding by local nurseries/gardeners	4	11.4
Lack community support	3	8.6
Absentee landholders	1	2.9
Total	12	34.3
Landcare group characteristics		
Conflict and poor communication in group	2	5.7
Lack of focus on objectives and project identification	2	5.7
Lack of leadership (people to take executive positions)	2	5.7
Insufficient activity to provide enthusiasm to group	1	2.9
Insufficient encouragement and recognition	1	2.9
Lack of technical and negotiation skills	1	2.9
Need to promote Landcare group in community	1	2.9
Bad or poor publicity	1	2.9
Lack of communication with other Landcare groups	1	2.9
Cover a large geographic area	1	2.9
Total	12	34.3
NRM issues		
Control of weeds	4	11.4
Erosion	1	2.9
Fertility, carbon and nutrient storage in soils	1	2.9
Availability of data on fauna and flora diversity	1	2.9
Stream incision	1	2.9
Salt attacks from ocean	1	2.9
Total	9	25.7
Funding and resources		
Funding (loss, lack of and availability))	9	25.7
Total	9	25.7
Extreme weather conditions	2	5.7
Leaches and ticks	1	2.9
Total	35	100.0

Note: This is a multiple response table which means that for each row an individual may be counted in multiple columns.

Source: EBC (2012)

In terms of the NRM issues being addressed by Landcare groups, 78% of Landcare groups were currently addressing issues related to the management of weeds and a further 27% were addressing issues related to erosion and the control of erosion (Table 6).

Table 6. "What are the major natural resource management issues your Landcare group is currently addressing?"

Response	Count	Percent
Weeds	29	78.4
Erosion control	10	27.0
Biodiversity (maintain and improve)	5	13.5
Pest animals	5	13.5
River management	5	13.5
Revegetation	4	10.8
Dieback	2	5.4
Riparian vegetation	2	5.4
Providing environmental information to landholders	1	2.7
Carbon in the soils	1	2.7
Coastal estuary management	1	2.7
Threatened species conservation	1	2.7
Encouraging fauna	1	2.7
Encouraging landowners to not grow potential pest plants	1	2.7
Fire management	1	2.7
Habitat survey and linkage	1	2.7
Impact of inappropriate infrastructure	1	2.7
Lack of funds	1	2.7
Maintenance of completed projects	1	2.7
Off stream watering	1	2.7
Nesting hollows in trees and food plants	1	2.7
Protection of SE region's native grasslands	1	2.7
Seeking outside help (ie contractors)	1	2.7
Sustainable farming	1	2.7
The management of newly gazetted land	1	2.7
Threat of mining	1	2.7
Too much work for to do and not enough people on the ground	1	2.7
Understanding of native flora and fauna	1	2.7
Total	37	100.0

Note: This is a multiple response table which means that for each row an individual may be counted in multiple columns.

Source: EBC (2012)

When Landcare groups were asked to consider the most significant changes that might occur to their Landcare group or its activities over the next 10 years (Table 7), the majority (71%) reported changes to the composition and characteristics of Landcare members, including specifically concerns about an ageing membership (27%)

Table 7. "Think about your Landcare group and its activities over the next 10 years. What are the most significant changes you expect to occur?"

Response	Count	Percent
Membership characteristics		
Ageing of membership	9	26.5
Younger membership	3	8.8
Lack of members	3	8.8
Increase in membership	3	8.8
Need to motivate members	1	3.0
New staff and coordinators	1	3.0
Members will include more people on small holdings	1	3.0
Transition as founding members retire	1	3.0
Greater separation between those with and without email	1	3.0
Maintaining active leadership	1	3.0
Total	24	70.6
NRM issues		
Increase in weeds	9	26.5
Creation of more resilient natural environment	1	3.0
Control of feral animals	1	3.0
Emphasis on carbon capture	1	3.0
Growth of plants and thickening of foliage	1	3.0
Identification of sites for catchment protection	1	3.0
Monitoring recovery from controlled burns	1	3.0
Restoration of biodiversity	1	3.0
River health	1	3.0
Lining reserve areas through corridors	1	3.0
Wider sphere of operation for habitat survey and planting	1	3.0
Total	19	55.9
Community issues		
Increase in community awareness or knowledge	7	20.6
Increase in population	1	3.0
Increase in development (subdivisions)	1	3.0
Threat from Council roadside management	1	3.0
Greater conflict over development	1	3.0
Increase in community involvement	1	3.0
Increased water storage on floodplains	1	3.0
Threats from mining	1	3.0
No further takeover of community land by Council for development	1	3.0
Need for increased coordination amongst agencies	1	3.0
Total	16	47.1
Group or organisational characteristics		
Continue as is	3	8.8
Increase or expansion of activities	3	8.8
Need for increase in funding	2	6.0
Completion of works	1	3.0
Reduction in activities	1	3.0
Outsource labour requirements	1	3.0
Help small landholdings increase productivity	1	3.0
Increased need for support and assistance	1	3.0
Scoping and funding of on ground works	1	3.0
Total	14	41.2
Farming and landholder issues		
Development of environmentally friendly farming opportunities	1	3.0
Grazing management	1	3.0
Smaller landholdings	1	3.0
Total	3	8.8
Total	34	100.0

Note: This is a multiple response table which means that for each row an individual may be counted in multiple columns.

Source: EBC (2012)

5 HEALTH OF LANDCARE GROUPS

An assessment of the health of each Landcare group was made by evaluating the characteristics of each group in relation to 16 specific items (Appendix A). Each item was assessed using a seven point scale with endpoints being 'exceptional' and 'very poor'.

Table 8 and Figure 2 show the highest scores to be associated with the social relationships within the group and clarity about the Landcare group's role and purpose. On the other hand, the two lowest scores focussed on the group's membership and specifically the capacity to attract and retain new members and the ease of finding people to fulfil leadership roles within the group.

Table 8. Health item scores (7=Exceptional; 1= Very poor)

Response	Mean score
Social relationships within the group	4.8
Clarity of role and purpose	4.6
The group's skills base and experience amongst members	4.4
Access external support when required	4.4
Clarity about what group is trying to achieve and how it will get there	4.3
Running meetings, managing finances and communicating	4.3
Planning activities	4.1
Ability to attract financial support (grants, sponsors, donors, etc.)	4.0
Capacity to find answers to specific problems or needs	4.0
Rating of confidence to try new things or tackle new issues	3.9
Connection of group to other groups and organisations	3.7
Recognition of the group amongst the wider community	3.5
Capacity to attract and retain new members	2.8
Ease of finding new people to fill leadership roles	2.0

Note: Each item was scored on a seven point scale with endpoints 7 exceptional and 1 very poor. The questionnaire in Appendix A shows the specific question wording used for each item

Source: EBC (2012)

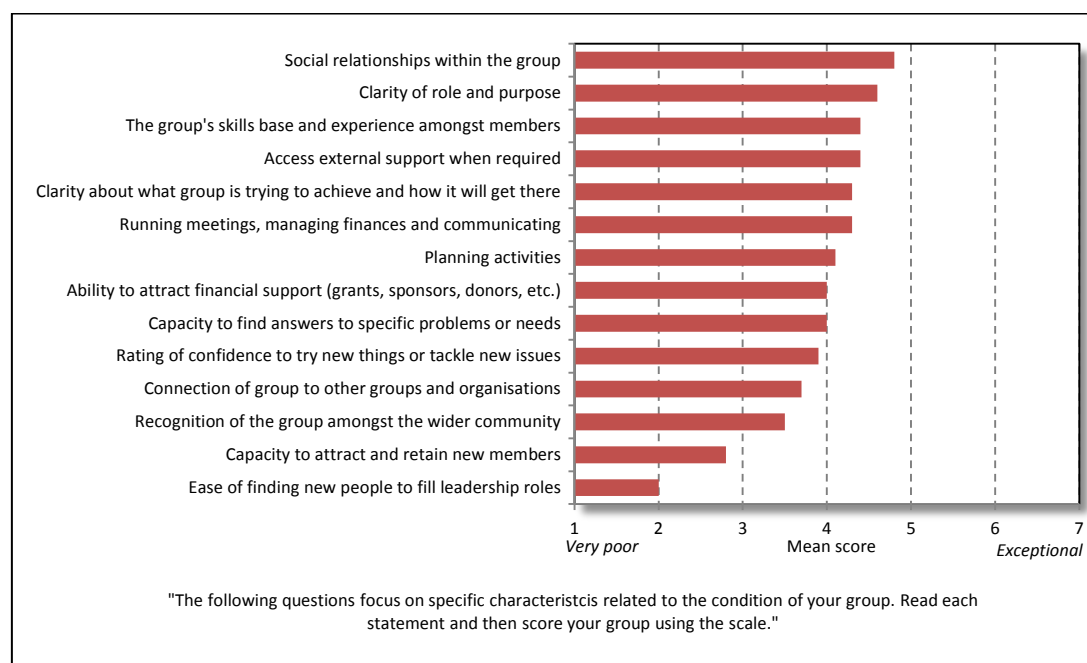


Figure 2. Health of Landcare groups

6 RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SOUTHERN RIVERS CMA

When completing questions about the Landcare groups' relationship with the Southern Rivers CMA, all respondents were asked to firstly review a list of CMA staff in order to ensure they understood which of those staff with whom they had contact with were from the CMA. Landcare groups often have contact with individuals from Government and non-Government organisations, including the Southern Rivers CMA; and this initial procedure enabled Landcare respondents to clearly identify which of those individuals were from the Southern Rivers CMA.

In 2008 and 2012 only one Landcare group indicated they had had no contact or communication with the CMA in the last 12 months.

Of those Landcare groups who had contact with the CMA in the last 12 months, the type of contact they reported with the CMA is shown in Table 9. The two most common types of contact with the CMA in both 2008 and 2012 included gaining advice of assistance from CMA staff and attending a meeting or event organised by the CMA.

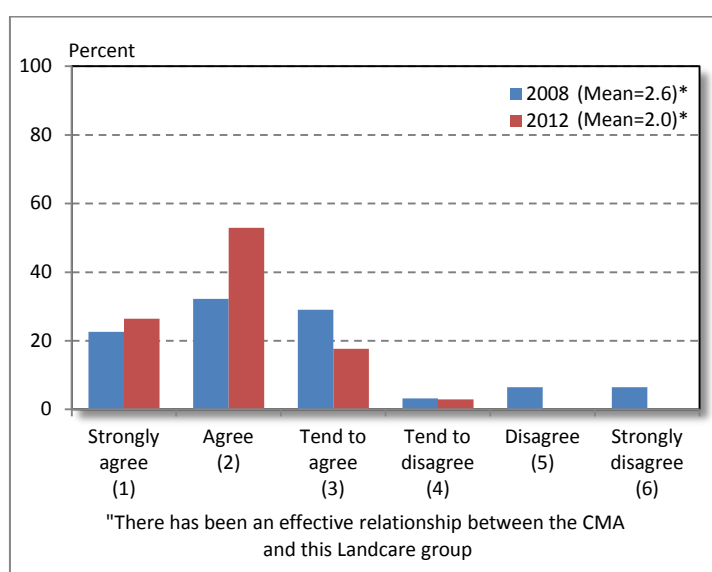
Table 9. "In the last 12 months has your organisation had any contact or communication with the Southern Rivers CMA?"

Response	2008		2012	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Gained advice or assistance from CMA staff	26	83.9	34	91.9
Attended a meeting or event organised by the CMA	27	87.1	23	62.2
Received written information from the CMA	23	74.2	22	59.5
Applied for funding or incentives through the CMA	17	54.8	16	43.2
Obtained funding or incentives through the CMA	19	61.3	15	40.5
Other type of contact or communication	2	6.5	8	21.6
Total	22	100.0	37	100.0

Note: This is a multiple response table which means that for each row an individual may be counted in multiple columns.

Source: EBC (2012)

Figure 3 shows that in 2008, 84% of Landcare groups believed they had an effective relationship with the CMA. This increased significantly to 97% of all Landcare groups in 2012.

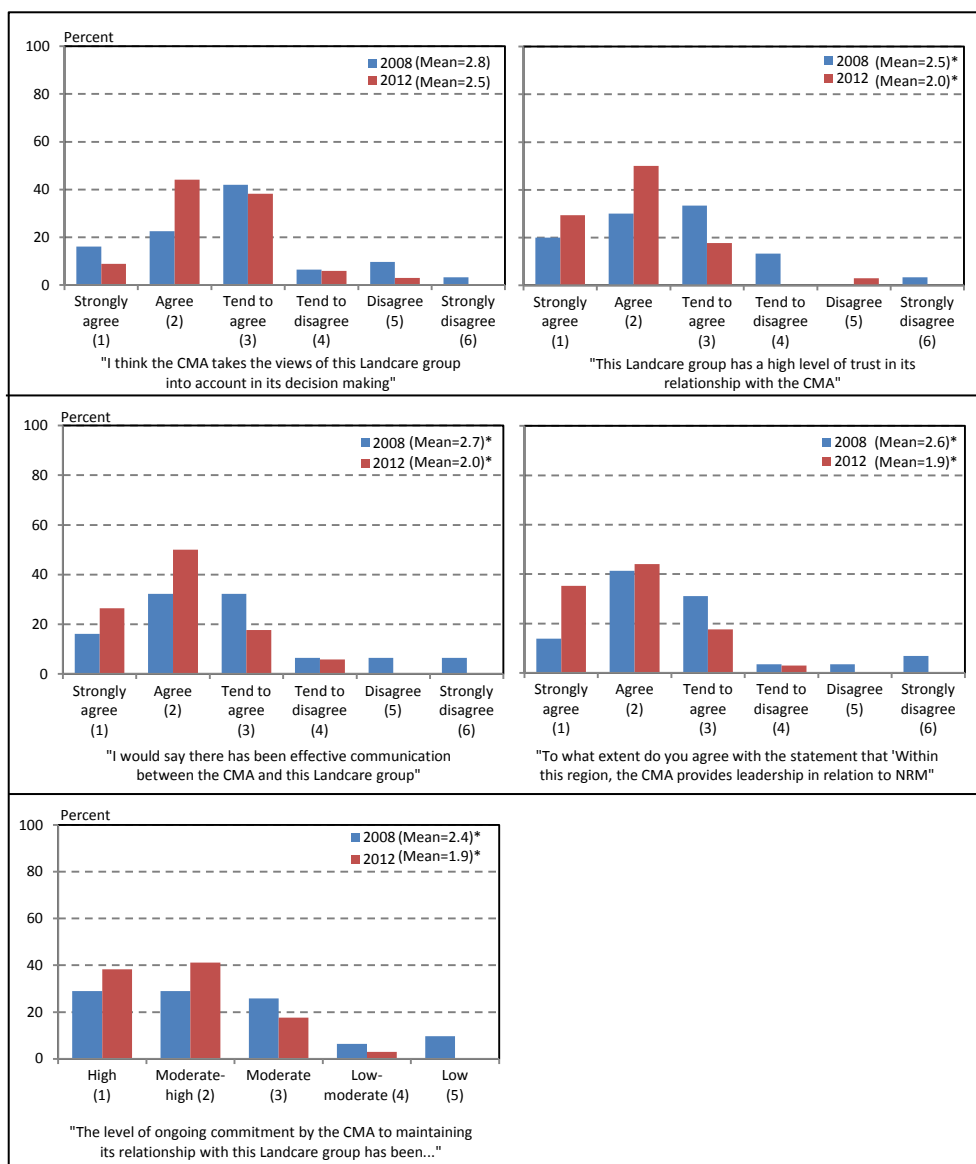


(Note: * indicates a statistically significant difference between the means)

Figure 3. Effectiveness of the relationship with CMA

The quality of the relationship between Landcare groups and the Southern Rivers CMA is also shown in Figure 4. These graphs not only show a very positive relationship between Landcare and the Southern Rivers CMA, but in most instances that the relationship has improved significantly since the 2008 survey. The majority of Landcare groups believed that:

- The CMA takes the views of the Landcare groups into account in decision making;
- Landcare groups have a high level of trust in the CMA
(significant improvement between 2008 and 2012);
- There has been effective communication between the CMA and Landcare groups
(significant improvement between 2008 and 2012);
- The CMA provides regional leadership in relation to NRM
(significant improvement between 2008 and 2012); and
- Landcare groups believe the CMA has an ongoing commitment to maintaining its relationship with Landcare groups *(significant improvement between 2008 and 2012).*

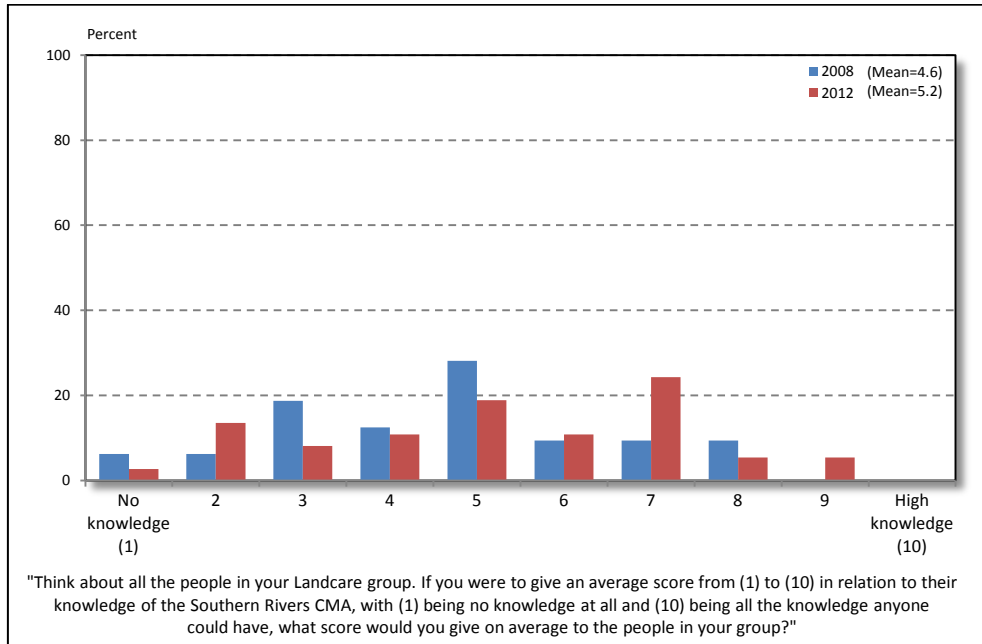


(Note: * indicates a statistically significant difference between the means)

Figure 4. Landcare group relationships with the CMA

7 KNOWLEDGE OF THE SOUTHERN RIVERS CMA

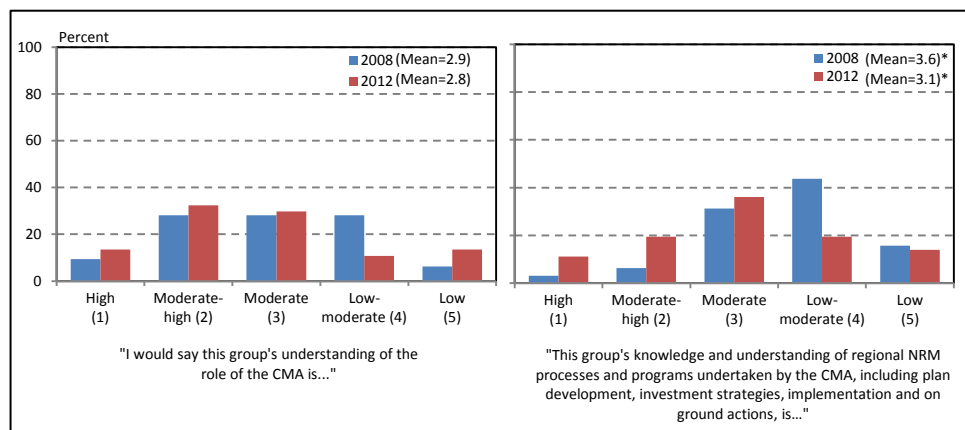
Each respondent was asked to consider all the members of their Landcare group and judge how much knowledge their membership would have on average of the Southern Rivers CMA. Figure 5 shows knowledge of the CMA amongst Landcare members to be slightly below average, with 54% of Landcare groups indicating their membership had average or below average knowledge of the CMA.



(Note: There was no significant difference in the means)
Figure 5. Knowledge of the CMA

Figure 6 also confirms the information presented in Figure 5, with Landcare groups split three ways between those with a low, moderate and high understanding of the role of the CMA.

In 2008, 9% of Landcare groups indicated they had a high or moderately high understanding of 'regional NRM process undertaken by the CMA, including plan development, investment strategies, implementation and on-ground actions'. As shown in Figure 6 the level of understanding has increased significantly with 31% now indicating a high or moderately high understanding of regional NRM processes undertaken by the CMA.



(Note: * indicates a statistically significant difference between the means)
Figure 6. Knowledge of the role of the CMA

8 SOUTHERN RIVERS CMA SUPPORT

Amongst all Landcare groups, 97% or 37 of the 38 Landcare groups indicated that in the last 12 months the Southern Rivers CMA had provided support to their Landcare group. This compares to 2008, in which 94% or 31 of the 33 Landcare groups received support from the CMA.

Amongst those Landcare groups that had received support (Table 10), support was provided primarily by community support officers (84%) and catchment officers (55%).

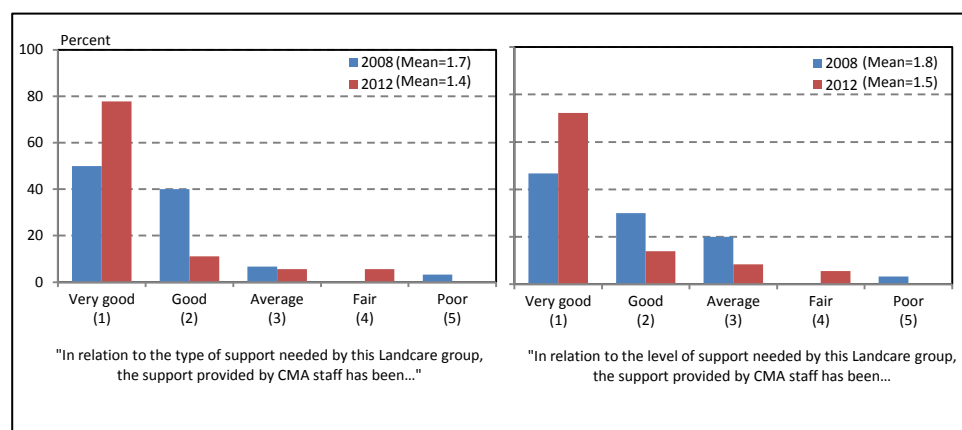
Table 10. "Look at the list of CMA staff on the back page of this questionnaire. In the last 12 months has your Landcare group had support from any of the CMA staff identified on this list?" (2012 only)

Response	Count	Percent
Community support officers	32	84.2
Catchment officers	21	55.3
Administration staff	7	18.4
Managers	7	18.4
Total	38	100.0

Note: This is a multiple response table which means that for each row an individual may be counted in multiple columns. Respondents referred to a list of CMA staff included in the questionnaire (see Appendix A).

Source: EBC (2012)

Figure 7 shows that the majority of Landcare groups in 2008 and 2012 believed the type and level of support provided by the CMA to be either 'good' or 'very good'.



(Note: There was no significant difference in the means)

Figure 7. CMA support to Landcare groups

Amongst Landcare groups who had received support from the CMA (Table 11), the three most valuable areas of CMA support were identified as (i) access to technical support and advice; (ii) project or strategic planning assistance; and (iii) assistance in obtaining funding.

Table 11. "The support provided by CMA staff which our Landcare group has valued includes..."

Response	2008		2012	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Access to technical support and advice	21	70.0	27	75.0
Project or strategic planning assistance	17	56.7	27	75.0
Assistance in obtaining funding	20	66.7	25	69.4
Training opportunities	21	70.0	22	61.1
Help in developing partnerships with others	9	30.0	19	52.8
Help and support in providing local Landcare events	10	33.3	12	33.3
None of the support particularly valued	2	6.7	0	0.0
Total	30	100.0	36	100.0

Note: This is a multiple response table which means that for each row an individual may be counted in multiple columns.

Source: EBC (2012)

When asked, 87% or 33 of 38 Landcare groups indicated they would need support or additional support from the CMA in the next 12 months. This compared to 94% or 31 of the 33 Landcare groups in 2008.

As shown in Table 12, the three most common areas of additional support included (i) access to technical support and advice; (ii) assistance in obtaining funding; and (iii) project or strategic planning assistance.

Table 12. "What type of support or additional support would you like from the CMA [in the next 12 months]. Would it include...."

Response	2008		2012	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Access to technical support and advice	21	67.7	27	87.9
Assistance in obtaining funding	22	71.0	25	75.8
Project or strategic planning assistance	20	64.5	23	69.7
Help in developing partnerships with others	19	61.3	19	57.6
Training opportunities	17	54.8	16	48.5
Help and support in providing local Landcare events	7	22.6	7	21.2
Other support needs	6	19.4	9	27.3
Total	31	100.0	33	100.0

Note: This is a multiple response table which means that for each row an individual may be counted in multiple columns.

Source: EBC (2012)

Table 13 provides a more detailed description under each of the headings identified in Table 12, of the specific type of support required in the next 12 months.

Table 13. Descriptions of the specific type of support required

Response	Count	Percent
Access to technical support and advice		
Assistance in making our groups work more widely known	2	
Access to staff for advice on environmental issues we may be involved in	1	
Advice organizing an event for Bush Care Major Day Out media release	1	
Advice to give landholders in the management of their properties	1	
Assistance in erosion control on the upper reaches of Woodward's Creek	1	
Assistance in integrating with other projects in the area	1	
Assistance with mapping	1	
Continued support for training and coordination of contract labour	1	
Expert advice on restoration of flora and fauna bio-diversity	1	
General advice on weed identification and control methods	1	
Grasses advice and other contacts	1	
Grazing management	1	
Legal obligations working with endangered ecological communities	1	
Noxious weed management	1	
Planning, community development and networking	1	
Planting, planning and maintenance (negotiation with farm managers)	1	
Recommendations and advice on appropriate tools for specific jobs	1	
Sheets of information about direct seeding for Bush Care Major Day Out	1	
Specific land care management, erosion, weed control issues	1	
Spray training. Assistance with weed control, tools and equipment	1	
Training for volunteers and expert advice regarding native flora	1	
Translating our draft catchment action plan into action	1	
Tree planting, earthworks, evaluation work to protect a river bank from erosion	1	
Vegetation control methods	1	
Weed and erosion control	1	

...continued

Table 13. Descriptions of the specific type of support required (*continued*)

Response	Count	Percent
Assistance in obtaining funding		
Funding opportunities and writing funding applications	10	30.3
Administration of finding applications and projects	1	3.0
Contacts with interesting parties and advice regarding volunteers	1	3.0
Feedback on grant applications	1	3.0
Mapping, data gathering and working with State and National guidelines	1	3.0
Marketing our protected grasses in perpetuity	1	3.0
Need funds to cover costs (work bees, maintain tools admin)	1	3.0
Obtain funds to complete previous project. Develop a catchment plan	1	3.0
On integration with catchment and government plans	1	3.0
Project funding sought to complete, or extend previous projects.	1	3.0
Will be looking to obtain funds to do on ground works	1	3.0
Project or strategic planning assistance		
Planning future direction as a group	2	6.0
Appropriate procedures, contacts, best practice examples, etc.	1	3.0
An area wide full catchment approach to projects undertaken	1	3.0
Complete current projects. Expanding network of people in catchment	1	3.0
Coordination with other groups to form corridors of nature and pest control	1	3.0
Data availability to identify issues (salinity and strategies to address issues)	1	3.0
Development of a management plan	1	3.0
Regional flora/fauna restoration to historically accurate levels of bio-diversity	1	3.0
General guidance in what is required for projects	1	3.0
Assistance in preparing the applications	1	3.0
Help with accurate species surveys and mapping	1	3.0
To connect with a project that the CMA applied for funding for - revegetating a creek in Braidwood. I want to see this initiative extended further up Monkittee creek and to be involved	1	3.0
Identifying priority areas for works	1	3.0
Identifying strategic directions to maximise positive outcomes	1	3.0
Understanding of how Landcare groups fit into ESC environmental 'picture'	1	3.0
Negotiation assistance with private owners and land managers	1	3.0
Planning days	1	3.0
Planning on how to go about weeding projects	1	3.0
Plant guards and stakes	1	3.0
Species surveys and mapping	1	3.0
Workshops, projects, help planting grasses	1	3.0
Help in developing partnerships with others		
Awareness of other groups, including their plans, projects and objectives	4	12.1
How to initiate a Landcare group which includes rural landholders	2	6.0
Identifying and initiating future partnerships	2	6.0
Access to people who can connect us with local projects	1	3.0
An area wide full catchment approach to projects	1	3.0
Coordination with other groups for project funding	1	3.0
Help in organizing and promoting events	1	3.0
Networking base	1	3.0
Suggestions and introductions	1	3.0
Targeted planning days	1	3.0
To involve other landowners in the catchment	1	3.0
With Local Government and State agencies	1	3.0

...continued

Table 13. Descriptions of the specific type of support required (*continued*)

Response	Count	Percent
Training opportunities		
How to use chemicals	2	6.0
How to write media releases	2	6.0
Bush regeneration, property management, weed control (spraying)	1	3.0
Bushcare training (encourage new members)	1	3.0
Catchment planning	1	3.0
Continued Bushcare training	1	3.0
Developing sustainable farming techniques and plant identification	1	3.0
Feral animal control (baiting and firearms - foxes, pigs, goats, dogs, cats)	1	3.0
First aid and chemical use and application	1	3.0
Land management skills (to identify issues e.g. salinity, weed outbreaks)	1	3.0
Macro invertebrate training as part of Water watch	1	3.0
Opportunities in sustainable agriculture and education	1	3.0
Ongoing Coast care training	1	3.0
Team development and goal setting	1	3.0
Weed recognition and eradication techniques	1	3.0
Help and support in providing local Landcare awards, dinners or similar events		
Ecological information to widen appeal of Landcare group	1	3.0
Coordination, advice and speakers	1	3.0
Funding support	1	3.0
Helping to generate more community involvement for our project	1	3.0
I just love the annual Landcare Christmas party. Also any other events	1	3.0
Media releases and promoting events	1	3.0
Other areas of support		
Advice, funding opportunities, working bees etc	1	3.0
Encouraging new members	1	3.0
Engaging Bushcare contractors (Koori group, CVA, local contractors)	1	3.0
Farming techniques and weed control	1	3.0
Help promoting group at a local level to attract more interest and volunteers (templates for flyers, letters, media releases etc.)	1	3.0
Interacting with other people/groups developing/protecting native grasses	1	3.0
Liaise with local youth to educate them about Landcare's aims/achievements	1	3.0
Letter from CMA advising landowners of their responsibilities (weeds)	1	3.0
Total	33	100.0

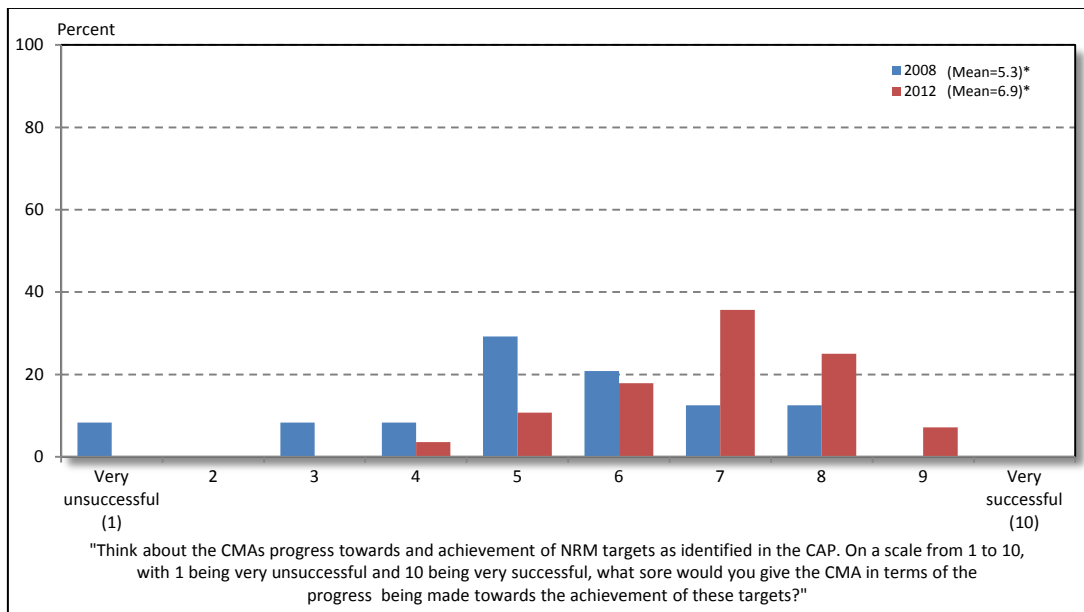
Note: This is a multiple response table which means that for each row an individual may be counted in multiple columns.

Source: EBC (2012)

9 EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SOUTHERN RIVERS CMA

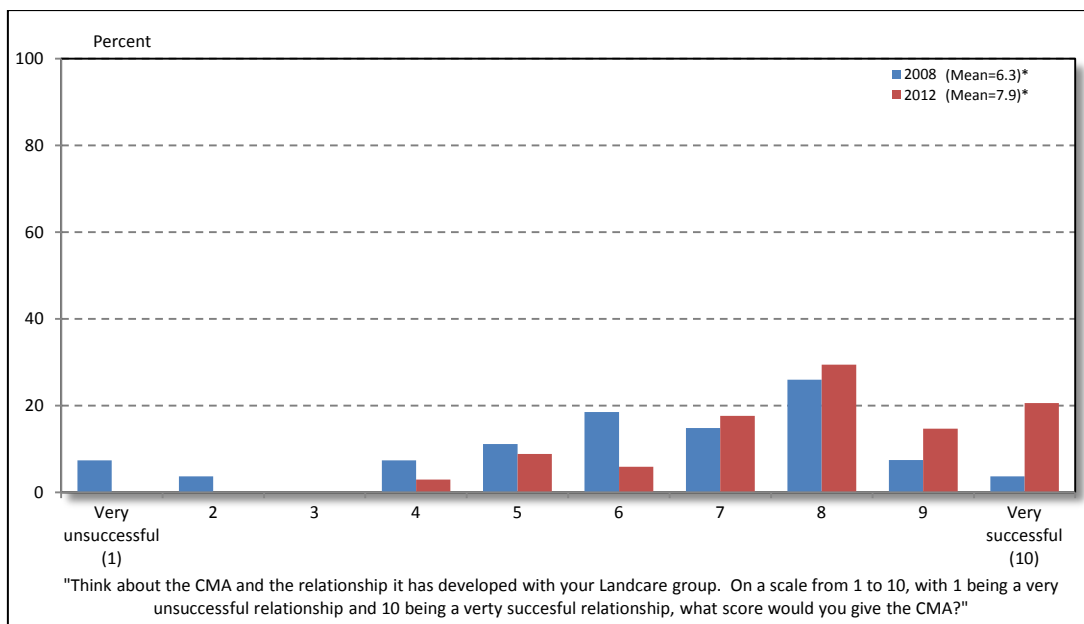
Landcare groups' beliefs about the effectiveness of the Southern Rivers CMA were assessed through understanding (i) how successful they believed the CMA was in progressing towards the achievement of its NRM targets and (ii) how successful the relationship was between the CMA and their Landcare group.

The majority of Landcare groups believed the CMA was successful in progressing towards the achievement of NRM targets and that their Landcare group had a successful relationship with the CMA (Figures 8 and 9). Interestingly, Landcare groups are now significantly more likely when compared to 2008 to believe the CMA is achieving NRM targets and that they have a successful relationship with the CMA



(Note: * indicates a statistically significant difference between the means)

Figure 8. Effectiveness of the Southern Rivers CMA in achieving NRM targets



(Note: * indicates a statistically significant difference between the means)

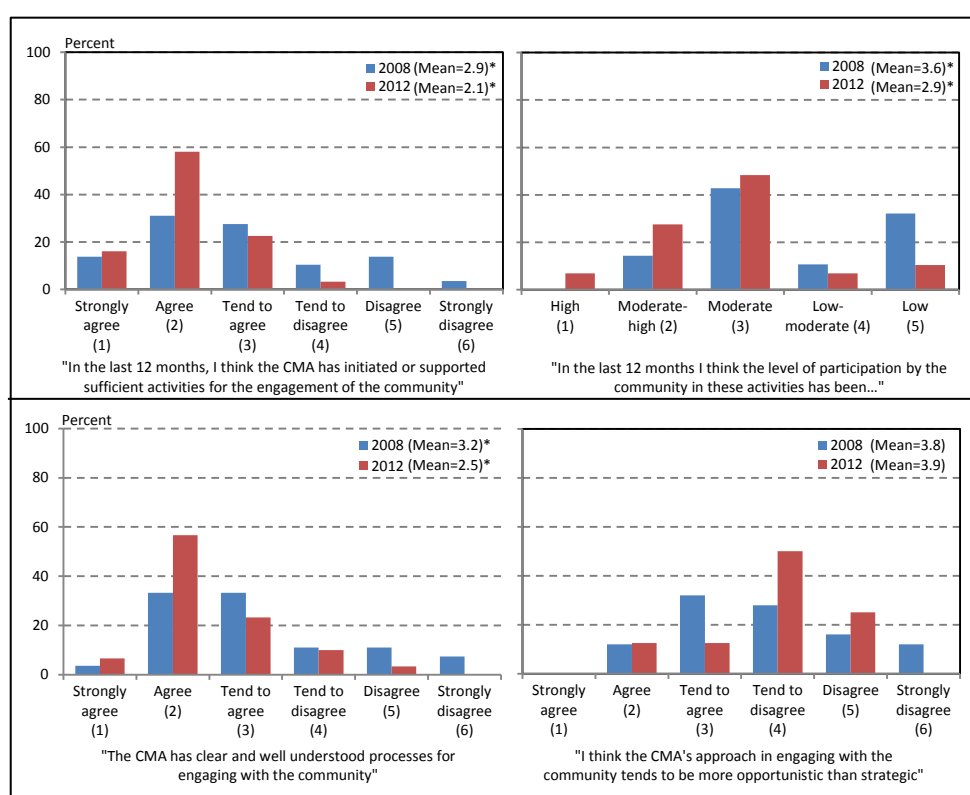
Figure 9. Relationship between Landcare groups and the Southern Rivers CMA

10 BELIEFS ABOUT COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

As shown in Figure 10, the majority of Landcare groups believed⁵ the CMA had:

- had supported sufficient activities for community engagement;
- moderate to high levels of participation by the community in NRM activities
- a well understood process for engaging with the community;
- a more strategic approach to engaging with the community.

What is also evident in Figure 10 is that Landcare groups are now more positive about the CMA and its community engagement activities than they were in 2008. For instance, they are now more likely to believe than in 2008 that the CMA supports sufficient activities for community engagement; that the community is participating in these activities and that the CMA has clear and well understood processes for engaging with the community.



(Note: * indicates a statistically significant difference between the means)

Figure 10. Beliefs about community engagement

⁵ Respondents were informed that the term 'community' in the questions referred to residents, landholders, organisations and groups in the region.

11 FUNDING AND INCENTIVES FOR NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Across all Landcare groups, 68% indicated that within the last two years their group had received funding for NRM. This compares to 78% in 2008. Table 14 shows the range of activities for which funding was obtained.

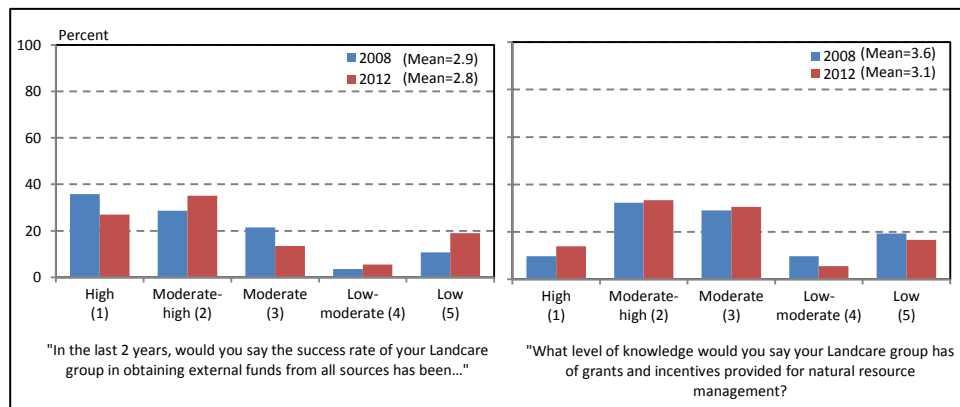
Table 14. "What was the NRM funding for....?" (2012 only)

Response	Count	Percent
Riparian works/management	6	27.3
Weed management and control	6	27.3
Small equipment, tools and resources	2	9.1
Caring for our Country projects	2	9.1
Community education	1	4.5
Caring for Coasts projects	1	4.5
Community Action grant for Budjong Chain-of-Ponds	1	4.5
Sustainable land management and Biodiversity	1	4.5
Employment of commercial contactors	1	4.5
Provision of training and equipment	1	4.5
Total	22	100.0

Note: Three Landcare groups did not identify the purpose of the NRM funding.

Source: EBC (2012)

Figure 11 shows that in the last two years, 75% of Landcare groups indicated they had had moderate or greater success in obtaining external funds. However, Figure 9 also shows some diversity in the knowledge Landcare groups have of grants and incentives provided for NRM, with 22% of Landcare groups indicating they had low knowledge of NRM grants and incentives.



(Note: There was no significant difference in the means)

Figure 11. Funding for natural resource management

Appendix A
Landcare Questionnaire

(Some minor modification to the format of the questionnaire as presented in Appendix A may have occurred as the questionnaire was distributed as an Acrobat form)



Southern Rivers NATURAL RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT (NRM) BENCHMARK SURVEY:

Landcare Survey

This survey, which includes all Landcare groups within the Southern Rivers CMA region, is being undertaken for the Southern Rivers Catchment Management Authority. The objective of the survey is to monitor changes in the level of engagement and support provided by the CMA over time. The questionnaire includes an assessment of:

Your group's interaction and knowledge of the CMA; Support provided by the CMA to your Landcare group; The quality of partnerships and relationships; Community engagement; and

The effectiveness of the CMA

The questionnaire should take no longer than 15 minutes to complete and should be completed by someone who is knowledgeable of the Landcare group, the views of its members and its relationship with the CMA. Try and answer all questions. However, there maybe some questions which you feel you cannot answer. In this case leave the question blank.

Landcare groups which complete and return the questionnaire will be included in a random draw for two \$250 prizes which can be used towards Landcare group activities.

If you require assistance please contact your local Landcare Coordinator or Community Support Officer whose details can be found on the email accompanying this form.

You can complete this as an Adobe Acrobat form and submit it via email once completed.

If you do not have a version of Acrobat which supports this form, print and complete the form. Return it by fax to the CMA (02 4224 9669) or post to the CMA at Southern Rivers CMA, PO Box 3095, Wollongong East, NSW 2500.

Submit this questionnaire via email

Email submission will use your default email client.
You will see a file attached to the email which you should also save in case there are problems sending the email

READ THIS FIRST! - THE SOUTHERN RIVERS CMA

The Southern Rivers CMA has offices in Bateman’s Bay, Bega, Braidwood, Cooma, Nowra and Wollongong. CMA staff from these offices provide support to individual landholders, organisations and groups throughout the region. On the last page of this questionnaire you will find a list of CMA staff from the different offices. Before you complete this questionnaire take some time to review the list of CMA staff you are familiar with. Note that the list includes several Community Support Officers who are employed by partner organisations through funding from the CMA.

YOUR LANDCARE GROUP AND THE SOUTHERN RIVERS CMA

1. In the last 12 months has your Landcare group had any contact or communication with the CMA?

- No
- Yes...what type of contact or communication has occurred? *(You may tick more than one)*
 - Attended a meeting or event organised by the CMA
 - Gained advice or assistance from CMA staff
 - Applied for funding or incentives through the CMA
 - Obtained funding or incentives through the CMA
 - Received written information from the CMA

Describe any other type of contact

2. Think about all the people in your Landcare group. If you were to give an average score from one (1) to ten (10) in relation to their knowledge of the Southern Rivers Catchment Management Authority, with one (1) being no knowledge at all and ten (10) being all the knowledge anyone could have, what score would you give on average to the people in your group?

Score...

SUPPORT PROVIDED BY THE SOUTHERN RIVERS CMA TO YOUR LANDCARE GROUP

3. Look at the list of CMA staff on the back page of this questionnaire.

In the last 12 months has your Landcare group had support from any of the CMA staff identified on this list?

- Yes
- No..... Go to Question 8

4. Again using the list of staff on the back page, what type of staff have you had support from?

(You may tick more than one category)

- Catchment officers
- Community support officers
- Managers
- Administrative staff

5. In relation to the **type of support** needed by this Landcare group, the support provided by CMA staff has been...

- Very good Good Average Fair Poor

6. In relation to the **level of support** needed by this Landcare group, the support provided by CMA staff has been...

- Very good Good Average Fair Poor

7. The support provided by CMA staff which our Landcare group has valued includes...
(You may tick more than one)

None of the support has been particularly valued

or

Access to technical support and advice

Assistance in obtaining funding

Help in developing partnerships with other groups and organisations

Help and support in providing local Landcare awards, dinners or similar events

Project or strategic planning assistance

Training opportunities

Other areas of support which include...

8. In the next 12 months do you need support or additional support from the CMA and its staff?

Yes

No..... Go to Question 10

9. What type of support or additional support you would like from the CMA? (You may tick more than one)

Access to technical support and advice

...What type of technical support and advice do you need?

Assistance in obtaining funding

...What type of assistance do you need?

Help in developing partnerships with other groups and organisations

...What type of help do you need?

Help and support in providing local Landcare awards, dinners or similar events

...What type of help do you need?

Project or strategic planning assistance

...What type of assistance do you need?

Training opportunities

...What type of training do you need?

Other areas of additional support, which include...

FUNDING AND INCENTIVES

10. In the last 2 years, would you say the success rate of your Landcare group in obtaining external funds from all sources has been...

- High Moderate-high Moderate Low-moderate Low

11. What level of knowledge would you say your Landcare group has of grants and incentives provided for natural resource management?

- High Moderate-high Moderate Low-moderate Low

12. Within the last two years has your Landcare group received funding for NRM?

- No
 Yes..... what was the funding for?

LANDCARE GROUP CHARACTERISTICS

13. What is the name of your Landcare group?

14. In which Landcare district are you located?

Landcare District...

15. How long has your group been in operation?

Years...

16. How would you describe the current activity level of your Landcare group?

- Very high High Moderate Low Very low Not active

18. How many active members would you say there are currently in your Landcare group?

Active members...

19. If you were to list the most important threats to your Landcare group and its ability to meet its objectives, what would they be?

1.

2.

3.

20. What are the major natural resource management issues your Landcare group is currently addressing?

1.

2.

3.

21. Think about your Landcare group and its activities over the next 10 years. What are the most significant changes you expect to occur?

1.

2.

3.

22. How would you rate your Landcare group's capacity to respond to these changes?

- Very high High Moderate Low Very low

ASSESSING THE HEALTH OF YOUR GROUP

23. The following questions focus on specific characteristics related to the condition of your group. Read each statement and then score your group using the scale.

a. How clear is your group about what it is trying to achieve and how it will get there?	<input type="text"/>
b. How clear is your group about what its role is and its purpose for existing?	<input type="text"/>
c. How good is your group at planning its activities?	<input type="text"/>
d. How easy is it to find new people to fill leadership roles?	<input type="text"/>
e. How good is your group at running meetings, managing finances and communicating?	<input type="text"/>
f. How good is the recognition of your group among the wider community?	<input type="text"/>
g. How good is your group at attracting financial support (grants, sponsors, donors, etc.)?	<input type="text"/>
h. How good is your group at attracting and retaining new members?	<input type="text"/>
i. How good is your group at finding answers to specific problems or needs?	<input type="text"/>
j. How well-connected is your group to other groups and organisations?	<input type="text"/>
k. How does your group rate its confidence to try new things or tackle new issues?	<input type="text"/>
l. How good is your group's skills base and experience amongst members?	<input type="text"/>
m. How good are the social relationships within your group?	<input type="text"/>
n. How easy is it for your group to access external support when required?	<input type="text"/>

QUALITY OF PARTNERSHIPS AND RELATIONSHIPS

24. I would say this group's understanding of the role of the CMA is...

- High Moderate-high Moderate Low-moderate Low

25. This group's knowledge and understanding of regional NRM processes and programs undertaken by the CMA, including plan development, investment strategies, implementation and on ground actions, is...

- High Moderate-high Moderate Low-moderate Low

26. I think the CMA takes the views of this Landcare group into account in its decision making.

- Strong agree Agree Tend to agree Tend to disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

27. This Landcare group has a high level of trust in its relationship with the CMA

- Strong agree Agree Tend to agree Tend to disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

28. I would say there has been effective communication between the CMA and this Landcare group

- Strong agree Agree Tend to agree Tend to disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

29. There has been an effective relationship between the CMA and this Landcare group

- Strong agree Agree Tend to agree Tend to disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

30. The level of ongoing commitment by the CMA to maintaining its relationship with this Landcare group has been...

- High Moderate-high Moderate Low-moderate Low

31. To what extent do you agree with the statement that "Within this region, the CMA provides leadership in relation to NRM"

- Strong agree Agree Tend to agree Tend to disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The following four questions are about you believe – there are no right or wrong answers. If you feel as though you cannot answer the questions then leave them blank. The term 'community' means residents, landholders, organisations and groups....

32. In the last 12 months, I think the CMA has initiated or supported sufficient activities for the engagement of the community

- Strong agree Agree Tend to agree Tend to disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

33. In the last 12 months I think the level of participation by the community in these activities has been...

- High Moderate-high Moderate Low-moderate Low

34. The CMA has clear and well understood processes for engaging with the community

- Strong agree Agree Tend to agree Tend to disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

35. I think the CMA's approach in engaging with the community tends to be more opportunistic than strategic

- Strong agree Agree Tend to agree Tend to disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SOUTHERN RIVERS CMA

36. Think about the CMAs progress towards and achievement of Natural Resource Management targets as identified in the CMA Catchment Action Plan. On a scale from one (1) to ten (10), with one (1) being very unsuccessful and ten (10) being very successful, what score would you give the CMA in terms of the progress being made towards the achievement of these targets?

Score..

37. Think about the CMA and the relationship it has developed with your Landcare group. On a scale from one (1) to ten (10), with one (1) being a very unsuccessful relationship and ten (10) being a very successful relationship, what score would you give the CMA?

Score..

38. Name of person completing the form (optional)

39. Position in Landcare group (ie., Chair, Executive member, member)

40. Email contact

Submit this questionnaire via email

Email submission will use your default email client.

You will see a file attached to the email which you should also save in case there are problems sending the email

LIST OF SOUTHERN RIVERS CMA STAFF

Wollongong

Megan Rowlatt	Community Support Officer
Andrew Britton	Community Support Officer
Michael Andrews	Catchment Officer
Jane Caldwell	Catchment Officer
Ken Davies	Catchment Officer
Martine Fraser	Catchment Officer
Neil Rendell	Catchment Co-ordinator
Noel Kesby	Manager
Sonia Cvetkovski	Admin Officer
Neil Rendell	Catchment Co-ordinator

Nowra

Eric Zarella	Community Support Officer
Jason Carson	Community Support Officer
Leesa Swan	Catchment Officer
Lyall Bogie	Catchment Officer
Peter Pigott	Catchment Officer
Sandy Fritz	Catchment Officer
Stan Braddick*	Community Support Officer
Adam Gietzelt	Catchment Officer
Michael Fiedler	Catchment Officer
Carol Richter-Robson	Admin Officer
Chris Presland	Manager
Laura Babian	Catchment Co-ordinator

Braidwood

David Hilhorst	Catchment Officer
Donna Hazell	Catchment Co-ordinator
Frank Exon	Catchment Officer
Felicity Sturgiss	Community Support Officer
Kristy Moyle	Community Support Officer
Mathew Dickinson	Catchment Officer
Richard Stone	Catchment Officer
Sky Kidd	Catchment Officer
Amanda Flack	Admin Officer
Bev D'Arcy	Admin Officer
Ian Vardanega*	Catchment Officer
Rebecca Bradley	Catchment Officer

Bega

Andrew Taylor	Catchment Officer
David Newell	Community Support Officer
Don McPhee	Manager
Graham Scott	Catchment Officer
Helen Davies	Catchment Officer
Justin Gourvenet	Catchment Officer
Len Gazzard	Catchment Officer
Les Kosez*	Community Support Officer
Liz Clark	Catchment Officer
Sue-Anne Nicol	Catchment Co-ordinator
Laura Babian	Catchment Officer
Alison Rodway	Catchment Officer
Shannon Brennan	Catchment Officer
Karen Walker	Catchment Officer
Nikki Wagner	Admin Officer

Batemans Bay

Peter Gow	Community Support Officer
Kirsti Sampson	Catchment Officer
Kaye Bysouth	Catchment Co-ordinator
Karen Lee	Community Support Officer
David Crass	Catchment Officer
Bernadette Thompson	Admin Officer
Jillian Keating	Catchment Officer
Andrew Kirkley	Catchment Officer

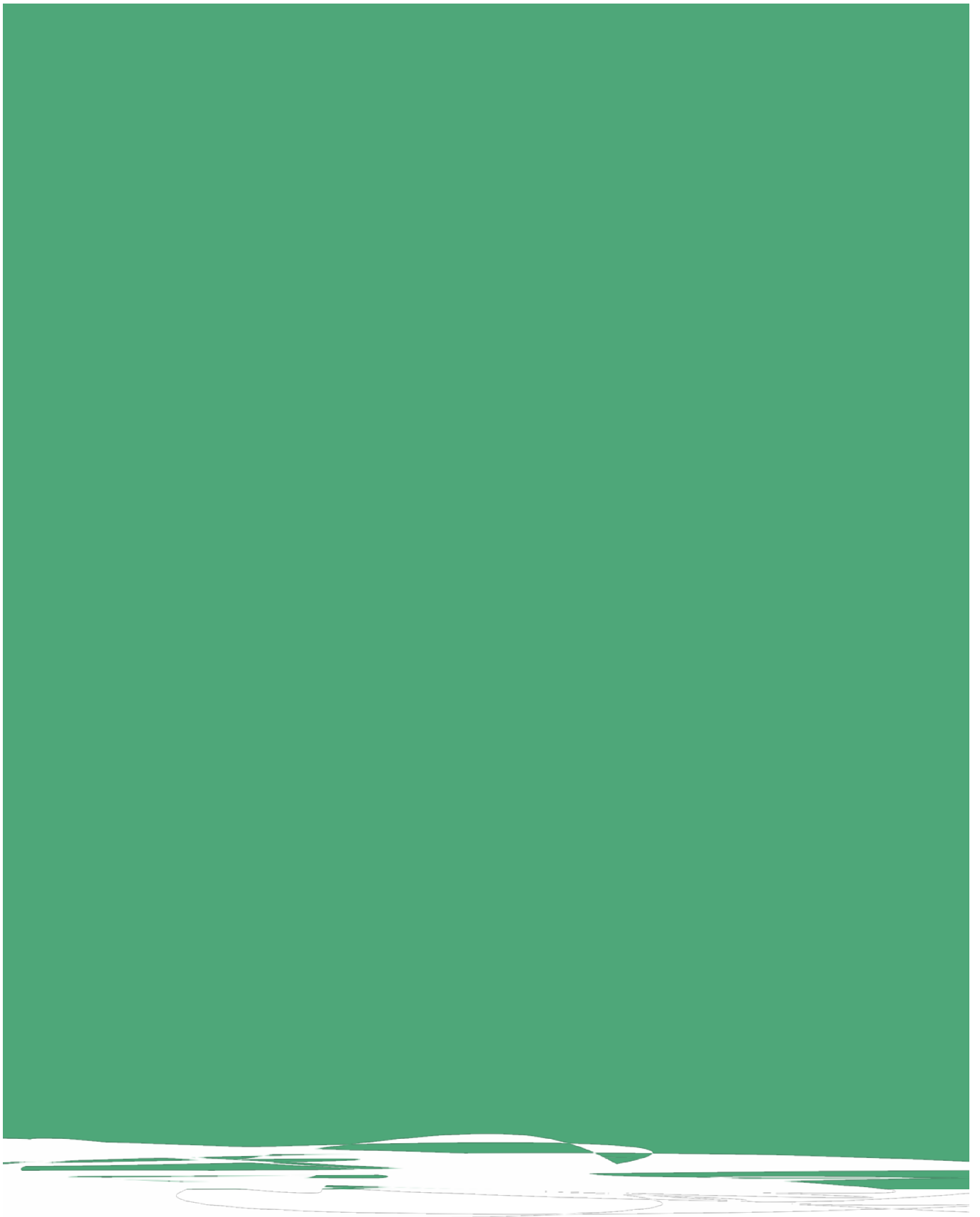
Bombala

Andrea Mitchell	Community Support Officer
Anthony Reid	Community Support Officer

Cooma

Mark Robertson	Community Support Officer
Danny Henderson	Catchment Officer
Leon Miners	Catchment Officer
Tim Fletcher	Catchment Officer
Brett Miners	Manager
Hasna Hanna	Admin Officer

* People formerly employed by CMA



**Catchment Management
Authority**
Southern Rivers

Southern Rivers Catchment Management Authority

Level 1, 84 Crown Street, Wollongong NSW 2500 | PO Box 3095, Wollongong East NSW 2500
Telephone: 02 4224 9700 | Facsimile: 02 4224 9669 | Website: www.southern.cma.nsw.gov.au